The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

SEPTEMBER 1952

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NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Shakespeare Fellowship will be held on Saturday, 11th October, 1952, at a new meeting place, the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, at 3 p.m. After the business has been transacted there will be tea and conversazione. It is hoped for a large attendance.

MEETINGS

On 8th March, Mr. Percy Allen gave a stimulating talk on "What Oxford (Shakespeare) and his rival poet (Chapman) thought of one another," and on 19th April Miss Ruth Wainewright read an interesting paper on "The Sources of Measure for Measure," the chief of which was the old play *Promus and Cassandra* by George Whetstone.

The Annual Dinner, held at the English Speaking Union, Charles Street, W.1, on 24th April, was a great success. The speech of the evening was that of the Chairman, Mr. Christmas Humphreys, Senior Treasury Counsel at the Central Criminal Court. He made the following points which had convinced him, as a lawyer, of the incongruity of the case whereby the authorship of the Shakespeare plays and poems was attributed to William Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon.

(1) The rustic, illiterate background which preceded his London sojourn. The same background, but plus wealth, which followed his (almost unknown) activities in London. Between them the traditional London period as the glorious courtier poet and historical dramatist. Mr. Humphrey's view was that the perfect unity of the two extremes means that the middle period is an illusion.

(2) He said the reason for the Shakespearean scholars' resentment of illumination by intelligent persons was that we all dislike the overthrow of our gods; that popular opinion likes to regard Will Shaksper as one of the people, on the principle of 'local boy makes good,' and that if the truth was admitted the teashops of Stratford-on-Avon would close.

But for those who love the truth wherever the truth is to be found, we are here to-night to give honour where honour is due, and justice to England's greatest son.

We are indebted, not only to Mr. Thomas Looney, who wrote *Shakespeare Identified in the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, but to Mr. Cecil Palmer who published the book, and we deeply regret his death. We have lost one of our real friends and loyal supporters. Mr. Humphreys outlined Mr. Looney's case for Edward de Vere—the identity of the early, signed poetry of De Vere and that of the mature "Shakespeare"; the eighteen special characteristics which are the essence of Shakespeare's works and De Vere's identity with these very points; his upbringing and background which match precisely the scholarship, travels and life history revealed in the plays and poems, and the reference by Gabriel Harvey to De Vere's preoccupation with the pen when he should be waging war after the tradition of his illustrious family—"Thy countenance shakes a spear."

The whole Elizabethan period, the personalities who figured in it, the Queen especially, were surrounded by an aura of mystery. Lord Oxford, the 17th Earl, was the greatest mystery of all. A courtier poet, written about by his contemporaries as "the most excellent among the rest if his doings could be found out," and "the best for comedy"! Where then were his manuscripts? Why did he go into retirement for a great number of years and no record kept? Why was he, during those years drawing the large sum of £1,000 a year from the Queen? Why was he under a cloud?

Mr. Humphreys said he believed that no one man wrote Shakespeare. The Queen, a brilliant woman in her education and abilities, gathered around her a brilliant assembly of courtiers—poets, song writers, adventurers, historians—men of great ability chained to her skirts and to the court. "Why should not such men have used a common pen name?"

Mr. Looney's approach to the problem appealed to Mr. Humphreys enormously. He said, "In a long and complicated murder trial on which I was working at the Old Bailey, I once adopted a similar method. There were eight facts which built up a man. I recited them, and asked 'What other man could there be in England to whom these precise facts apply?' That is the case for Edward de Vere, whom I believe to be the central genius of the immortal works. Have we the right to be silent any longer while the Earl of Oxford lies unhonoured in his Hackney grave? Common justice and gratitude cry aloud for recognition."

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE BLIND EYE

In the *Times Literary Supplement* for 27th June, 1952, there was a review of the fifth volume of that valuable annual production *Shakespeare Survey*, the editor of which is Prof. Allardyce Nicoll. The reviewer remarked that the sketch of the monument was " important as it proves that it presented the same appearance in 1737 as it does to-day."

The Editor of the *News Letter* wrote to the *T.L.S.* pointing out that this observation was irrelevant as the date of the alteration of the monument was earlier than suggested. As it appears at present in Stratford Church, it was depicted in an edition of Shakespeare published in 1725. In previous editions, published in 1709 and 1714, for which Nicholas Rowe, poet laureate, was responsible, the figure was the same as in Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656)—a cadaverous one with goatee beard and hands on a sack. Presumably therefore some alteration was made between 1714 and 1725. The letter was not published.

In reviewing the Editor's latest book, *London Mystery and Mythology*, the reviewer said the author tells us he had " turned fifty before he adopted the Baconian theory of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays." The Editor of *T.L.S.* was informed that the writer of the book under review is not a Baconian and that further there were references to Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, in this connection. Surprise was expressed that the reviewer had not heard of the Oxford theory inasmuch as it had been before the literary public thirty-two years, it being inferred that anybody, in the words of the reviewer, who ceased to acquiesce in the credulity that has its centre at Stratford-upon-Avon," must fly to Bacon. This letter also was not published.

NEW RECRUITS

It is a pleasure to report that Dr. Florence R. Sabin, of Colorado, referred to in the previous issue of the *News-Letter*, has now joined the Fellowship.

Another new member is John de Vere, Lord Wakehurst, who spoke at the Quatercentenary Dinner in 1950. We are delighted to have his support.

Our former President, Lt.-Col. M. W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E., has now published (at 8/6) a third edition of his book, *Lord Oxford and the Shakespeare Group*. The publishers are Alden Press (Oxford) Ltd.

The Fellowship is greatly indebted to the Honorary Secretary, and to Mrs. Robins and Miss Amphlett, for their services at the Annual Dinner.

THOMAS LOONEY ON THE DEFENSIVE

At the Annual General Meeting of the Shakespeare Fellowship on 6th October, 1951, Mr. H. Cutner read three articles by Mr. Thomas Looney which appeared in the *Freethinker* in 1923 in reply to "A Defence of the Stratfordian Case " by a Mr. George Underwood. The following are some cogent passages:

" From *Venus* in 1593 to the authentic *Hamlet* of 1604 we have the greatest period prior to the Folio. As the Earl of Oxford was in retirement during those years and died in 1604, it will be seen that not only do his circumstances fit the case, but that his death marks with peculiar precision the close of this very eventful period . . . It is, of course, common knowledge that when at length the Folio appeared it contained very many plays universally admitted to have been written before those published in 1598, proving that the 1593-1604 issues were from a large accumulated stock, and that the work of publication was stopped short suddenly in 1604, with a number of plays on hand awaiting their turn to be trimmed up for printing. Equally striking was the slight resumption of publication a few years later (1608-9). There were three plays involved (*Troilus*, *Pericles*, *Lear*) and the *Sonnets*; and in every case there was some quite unusual feature, indicating the complete withdrawal of the author's hand.

The *Sonnets* especially give a very distinctive stamp to this 1608-9 revival of publication, and may be said to focus the entire ' Shakespeare ' mystery. A set of no less than 154 poems of an intimately personal nature, poems that had taken many years to compose, and had been carefully preserved, come to light from some unknown quarter, ushered in by an alien pen with a mysterious dedication to an unrecognisable ' begetter,' whilst the supposed writer of them lives on for some years supinely indifferent to the outrage, meekly acquiescing in the publisher Thorpe's assumption that he was done with sonnet writing. The simplest explanation surely is that the poet himself was dead, and that his manuscripts had therefore passed legitimately into other hands. Not, however, until the Oxford hypothesis was adopted could this very natural explanation of the mystery be so much as thought of, though once mooted, it was immediately observed that the poet's death was directly implied in the very terms of the dedication, the expression ' ever-living ' never being applied to any man during his lifetime.

According to the only accepted dates of the poems themselves, the latest are understood to have been written immediately after the death of Queen Elizabeth. So that ' Shakespeare,' having composed sonnets for many years, stopped suddenly and for ever at the exact time of the death of the Earl of Oxford; the exact time, too, when the great publishing period closed with the authentic *Hamlet*. Then for five years they lay, without the

addition of a single verse, till they were published in the extraordinary manner just described, at the precise time when Oxford's affairs were wound up, and his widow gave up the house at Hackney which they had occupied during the publishing of the plays, and where he had died. The evidence that 'Shakespeare' died in 1604 is about as conclusive as circumstances could make it.

During the last years of Oxford's life, and up to the very time of his death, publishers were evidently able to secure 'Shakespeare' plays for publication. From this time onward, although the manuscripts of many of these plays were lying somewhere, and although, according to the best authorities, publishers would have been only too glad to have got hold of and publish them, with the exception of the 1608-9 irregularities, nothing whatever fell into their hands until 1622-3. In the First Folio, containing some twenty plays not previously published, Heminge and Condell are introduced claiming that they had collected the works and thus prevented them from perishing irrecoverably. Is it not amazing that eager and vigilant publishers should have been unable to secure a single one of those floating manuscripts, yet when a couple of actors set about gathering them in from miscellaneous and unspecified quarters, the whole shoal come into the net at once? Would such a story have been credited in any but a 'Shakespeare' connection? Even Sir Sidney Lee seems to jib at it; and yet, if it is once rejected, and the false pretensions of the First Folio established, the house of Stratford loses its foundation and falls into irretrievable ruin . . .

Such being the circumstances in which the plays were published, all questions relating to when they were written are matters of doubtful conjecture. No candid reader of Captain Holland's book, *Through Oxford Glasses*, will, however, be likely to doubt that early Shakespeare plays are related by their topical allusions to times antecedent to those commonly assigned; and that this revision is all in favour of Oxford, who was eleven years older than Bacon and ten years older than Derby.

At the other end of the series we find that, even on the assumption of an author who died in 1616, it has been necessary to suppose that he abandoned his literary vocation in the heyday of his powers, leaving his latest masterpieces to be completed by strange pens, and so botching the close of a phenomenal career that Sir Arthur Quiller Couch is forced to conclude that '*something had happened*.' If this is bad for Shakespeare, it is worse for Bacon, who outlived him by ten years, and worse still for Derby who outlived him for no less than 26 years. To Oxford alone does the very natural explanation apply, that the author was cut off in the midst of his work, and that others had to step in and make the best of a sad fatality. And this is the exact situation represented in the First Folio."

There has also come to hand a letter of 29th August, 1927, addressed by Mr. Looney to a Mr. Hadden. The following is an extract:

". . . Had I been disposed at any time to doubt the reality of my 'Shakespeare' discovery —which I can assure you I never have been— letters like the one you have so kindly sent to me through Mr. Palmer of which I now possess quite a large number, would have sufficed to reassure me on the point. It is perhaps more in the quality than in the actual number of these appreciative communications: the evidence they afford of competent and painstaking examination of the argument, that I can see a guarantee of the ultimate acceptance of the Earl of Oxford as the author of the 'Shakespeare' works.

Accept therefore my warmest thanks for all your trouble in expressing your views, and for the very generous terms in which you refer to my effort. Naturally I expected a more rapid spreading of the new theory than has taken place; but even if it must wait until I have passed away before the significance of my special contribution to the Shakespeare problem has been grasped by the literary world the delay will not be without some personal compensations. The select few who are able to do justice to the evidence gives me a public large enough for any desire for publicity I may have. The desire to see the success of the work is, however, a different matter, and I plead guilty to an ardent desire to see Edward de Vere acclaimed in England as 'Shakespeare' before my term here expires—with whatever personal inconvenience to myself such recognition might bring."

GEORGE GASCOIGNE

George Gascoigne, April 1562 *to January* 1, 1578, *or Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford,* 1930.

This astounding book contains such an amount of documentary material about Edward de Vere that it ranks among the most important contributions to the problem of identifying "Shakespeare." (Unfortunately, it is out of print, but there is a copy in the British Museum Library; another in the Library of Congress in Washington.)

The author, William Kittle, is said to have been Professor of English Literature at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis. He died several years ago. With great perseverance, he spent eight years of research in the library of the University of Wisconsin, some months in the Congressional Library, and nearly a year and a half in the British Museum Library and Public Record Office in London, in the effort to solve some of the problems underlying the various works which from 1562 to 1577 appeared over the name of George Gascoigne.

In the first two chapters, Mr. Kittle shows that there were at least three George Gascoignes in or near London from 1542 to 1577. Two of them

did *not* write the poems of 1562-1577. And if there was a third Gascoigne, then this name was a pseudonym for a poet. And this other poet turns out to have been no other than Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.

There is much more to be said about Mr. Kittle's book. It is not an easy book to read or to summarise. A large number of poems had appeared under the name of "Gascoigne." For one reason or the other, in the year 1577, it was made known that the poet had died. But this was not true, it was a "jest," and 86 days after his "Obituary" on 7th October, 1577, the poet sent to Queen Elizabeth his "Grief of Joy," stating:

> "But without the confirmation of your favorable acceptance (your Majesty well knoweth) I will never presume to publish any thing hereafter and that being well considered."

"The Well implyed Life & Godly Ende of Gascoigne" was a pledge by the Poet to discontinue his writings on matters of state, a pledge which was kept, states Mr. Kittle.

The author also shows that G. Gascoigne (alias de Vere) had been in Holland several times, first in 1572 when he was 22—and married. His account "The Spoyle of Antwerp" was written late in 1576.

Mr. Percy Allen in his *The Case for Edward de Vere*, had already pointed out that there existed some close and mysterious connection between de Vere and Gascoigne. He was particularly struck by the coincidence that both poets were deeply impressed by a cloud-burst which had taken them by surprise in their early youth, while they had not taken along a cloak to protect them; that this rainfall is commemorated both in the Sonnets and in a poem by "Gascoigne." We find too these parallel passages:

The Earle of Oxford, in his poem *Revenge of Wrong*: "*Patience is perforce a pinching pain.*"

William Shakespeare, in *Romeo and Juliet* (I, v.):

"*Patience perforce* . . . makes my flesh tremble."

George Gascoigne, in a poem signed *Meritum petere, grave*, contained in *A Hundred Sundrie Flowers*:

"Content thyself with *patience perforce* . . ."

and twenty lines later in the same poem:

"Believe me now it is a *pinching payne*,
To think of love, when lovers are away."

A great number of such parallels, or "co-incidences," will be found. They constitute no absolute proof of the identity of the three writers, but once this identity has been established on entirely different grounds, they do seem to furnish a fair sort of confirmation of this thesis.

Much more will have to be said about these studies on some later occasion. Let me express my conviction that in the poems published in the volume *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowers* we have discovered a large part of the first poems written by the youthful Shakespeare, prior to the Sonnets.

Another matter, still to be investigated and cleared up, is the coincidence that both the two last Sonnets (by "Shakespeare") and the narrative by "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe," admittedly a pesudonym, seem to refer to a love adventure which may have reached its climax in Bath—and ended in disappointment.

The poem "Dan Bartholmew of Bath" was published in 1573, the same year when Queen Elizabeth visited Bath on her "Progress." Enough said for the moment!

"His name I hide," the poet says, "Let's call his name 'Dan Bartholmew of Bath'."

"Which verse he wrote in Bathe . . .
And there I saw him when he wrote the same
I saw him there with many moans dismayed
I saw him there both fryse and flask in flame.

Lo, thus I lye, and restlesse rest in Bathe.
And wylt thou knowe howe here I spent my time
And howe I frawe my dayes in dolour styll?

And up on foote I set my ghostly corse
And when the stony walles have oft renewed
My pittius plaintes, with Ecchoes of remorse,
Then doe I crye, and call upon thy name."

Some readers may, like myself, see a connection between these lines of lament and the Sonnet No. 87, beginning with the line:

"Farewell, too dear for my possessing,"

and ending with the line:

"In sleep a King, in waking no such matter!"

"For with my friend I went to Bathe, though loth" the poet Gascoigne says in his Bartholmew.

"A man plays many parts in life," it has been said, and this is particularly true, it seems, of Edward de Vere! There is as yet much research to be done in regard to the identification of Shakespeare. In any event, Mr. Kittle's book is one of the most important contributions to this ticklish problem.

J. R. Mez.

OXFORD AND THE 'FAERIE QUEENE'

By H. Amphlett

We know, because Spenser himself says so in his dedicatory verse preceding the six and a half Books of the *Faerie Queene*, that under some fanciful disguise the Earl of Oxford figures in this story of chivalry, but up to the present date has anyone suggested which knight or what personage prefigures the noble earl under whose auspices Spenser's labours went to press?

I wish to make a suggestion.

The verse which Spenser penned to his patron and which figures third in the list, following the

verses to Sir Christopher Hatton and the Earl of Essex, runs as follows:

" To the Right Honourable the Earle of Oxenford, Lord high Chamberlayne of England, etc.
Receive, most noble Lord, in gentle gree,
The unripe fruit of an unready wit,
Which by thy countenance* doth crave to bee
Defended from foule Envie's poisnous bit
Which so to doe may thee right well befit.
Sith th' antique glory of thine auncestry
Under a shady vele is therein writ,
And eke thy own long living memory
Succeeding them in true nobility;
And also for the love which thou dost beare
To th' Heliconian ymps, and they to thee,
They unto thee, and thee to them most deare:
Deare as thou art unto thy self so love
That loves and honours thee, as doth behove."

Under their various disguises some personages are definitely recognisable: Gloriana, Belphoebe and Britomart are all representations of the Queen in different aspects as the stories require; the Red Cross Knight is the Earl of Leicester—we actually see him fighting " Belge " in the Low Countries—Sir Artegall, perhaps the lordliest of the knights, is Sir Arthur Grey de Wilton, Spenser's particular patron. Can we place de Vere with equal certainty?

The last three Books of the *Faerie Queene*, in which I believe Oxford is deftly and sympathetically touched in, were published in 1594 at the time when the Earl of Oxford had retired to Stoke Newington and was pouring out the bulk of his dramatic work, whilst to outsiders, who knew nothing of this side of his activities, he seemed to have withdrawn from active life—notwithstanding he had told them—

" I never am less idle than when I am alone."

To Spenser, who had already described him, in the *Tears of the Muses* as " sitting in idle cell " he had become a hermit, and thus it is, I believe, that he figures in the *Faerie Queene*, Book VI—Cantos V and VI.

To understand the story it must be explained that the fair Serena, straying across the meadows to gather flowers with which to make a garland for her hair, had been suddenly attacked by the Blatant Beast (a representation of that envy and malice which Spenser wishes de Vere to ward from his poem). The Beast had dashed away with the fair maiden in its mouth, and her squire and Sir Artegall, who had been sitting in the shade of a tree, seized their weapons and flew to her rescue, and so great was their prowess that the Beast dropped its prey and beat an ignominious retreat, but the poor Serena had been badly bitten by its rusty iron teeth! It was needful to get help; therefore they placed her on a horse and slowly journeyed across a plain until they found, remote from the world's annoyances, a little Hermitage.

" And nigh thereto a little Chappell stode
Which being all with yvy overspred
Deckt all the roofe, and shadowing the roode
Seem'd like a grove faire braunched over-hed
Therein the Hermite, which his life here led
In streight observance of religious vow,
Was wont his houres and holy things to bed
And therein he likewise was praying now
Whenas these knights arriv'd they wist not where nor how.

They stay'd not there, but streightway in did pas,
Whom when the Hermite present saw in place,
From his devotion streight he troubled was;
Which breaking off he toward them did pace
With stayed steps and grave beseeming grace;
For well it seemed that whilome he had beene
Some goodly person, and of gentle race,
That could his good to all, and well did weene
How each to entertaine with curt'sie well beseene.

And soothly it was sayd by common fame,
So long as age enabled him thereto
That he had been a man of mickle name
Renowned much in arms and derring doe
But being aged now, and weary to
Of warres delight and world's contentious toyle,
The name of knighthood he did disavow,
And hanging up his armes and warlike spoyle
From all this world's encombraunce did himselfe assoyle." (set free)

There follows a description of the manner in which he entertained the knights and Serena with simple food and lodging; how they spent a troubled night owing to the pain of the wounds caused by the teeth of the Blatant Beast, and finally how, next morning, Sir Artegall set off on further adventures leaving the squire and Serena in the Hermit's care to be cured.

Canto VI opens with a description of the malady the Hermit is called upon to remedy:

" No wound, which warlike hand of enemy
Inflicts with dint of sword, so sore doth light
As doeth the poysnous sting, *which infamy*
Infixeth in the name of noble wight;
For by no art, nor any leeches might,
It never can recured be againe;
Ne all the skill, which that immortall spright
Of Podalyrius did in it retaine
Can remedy such hurts: *such hurts are hellish paine.*"

(The last line echoing de Vere's own phrase.)

" For he right well in leeches craft was seene;
And through the long experience of his dayes,
Which had in many fortunes tossed beene
And past through many perillous assayes.
He knew the diverse went of mortall wayes
And in the mindes of men had great insight;
Which with sage counsell, when they went astray,
He could enforme and then reduce aright
And all the poisons heale that wound the weaker spright.

*'Thy countenance shakes a spear': Gabriel Harvey. (To defend the poem from poisonous envy).

For whylome he had been a doughty knight
As any one that lived in his dayes,
And proved oft in many perillous fight
Of which he grace and glory wonne alwaies
And in all battels bore away the baies
But being now attackt with timely age,
And weary of this world's unquiet wayes
He took him selfe unto this Hermitage,
In which he lived alone, like careless bird in cage."

But no leech could cure the wounds gouged in the soul by malice—to-day a psychiatrist would be called in—so the kindly hermit talked wisely to his patients, telling them—"in your self your only helpe doeth lie to heal your selves," and, by following his advice, they were duly cured.

First and foremost, this is a story to delight the casual reader—a story in quaint, picturesque poetry, but underneath it figures the portrait of the great nobleman, retired from the bustle of the Court, whose great "insight into the minds of men" made him eminently suitable to cure the wounds inflicted by envious malice from which he had himself so cruelly suffered.

For those who see Oxford in *Heremite the Hermite*, by George Gascoigne, this will come as another clue to the way in which de Vere was regarded by sympathetic contemporaries.

DERBY AS SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare's Identity. William Stanley, 6th Earl of Derby, by A. W. Titherley. Wykeham Press, Winchester. £1 7*s*. 6*d*.

It is a pity that Dr. Titherley should have chosen a title so closely resembling that of Thomas Looney's book. The choice cannot have been due to ignorance for he has obviously read Looney with care, and even admiration. He could not, however, have known that a new edition of *Shakespeare Identified* was being contemplated at the very moment that his own book went to press. Oxfordians must console themselves with the thought that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Dr. Titherley is a scientist, and he makes a great point of applying the methods of science to the problem of Shakespeare's identity. Unfortunately his methods are, in places, so very scientific, and even mathematical, that the untrained mind must inevitably accept his conclusions on trust or not at all, and so is thrown back upon the hazards of intuition. The book is intended for those who are prepared to "think deeply" on the subject, and the author foresees that many readers will skip "the more abstruse matter in small print." Such readers should, however, be grateful to him for making it possible to skip without loss of continuity, for there is much in his book which no student of the authorship controversy can afford to miss.

Dr. Titherley's claim to have *proved* Derby's authorship by means of a comparative study of handwriting and spelling habits must be left to the experts on calligraphy and the mysterious laws which govern statistics, though to the uninitiated the problem seems to be hopelessly complicated by the fact that there are *no* extant manuscripts of the Shakespeare plays. There are, however, the much-discussed three pages of the *addition* to the MS. play of *Sir Thomas More*, which are certainly Shakespearean in style, and are believed to be in the autograph of the composer, not of a scribe. Attempts to identify the writing as Shakespeare's by reference to the signatures of his will have been inconclusive, and now Dr. Titherley comes forward with the startling discovery that the "three pages" (though not, of course, the signatures) are in the hand of Derby. I cannot argue with him on this point, but I suspect that there are those who can, and will.

Meanwhile, if Dr. Titherley has not succeeded in proving that William Stanley, Earl of Derby, was Shakespeare, he has at least clarified and added to the reasons for believing that William Shaksper, Gentleman of Stratford, was not. In an illuminating chapter on "Ben Jonson and the Folio" he analyses the ambiguous and self-contradictory nature of "honest Ben's" testimony. Besides the overt allusions to Shakespeare (or Shaksper), he deals with the cryptic allusions in *Every Man Out of His Humour* and *Poetaster*, and quotes the first nine lines of the highly significant epigram on an unnamed *broker* of plays:

"Poor Poet-ape, that would be thought our chief,
Whose works are e'en the frippery of wit,
From brokage is become so bold a thief,
As we, the robb'd, leave rage and pity it.
At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean,
Buy the reversion of old plays; now grown
To a little wealth and credit in the scene
He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own:
And told of this he slights it.
Tut such crimes,
The sluggish gaping auditor devours;
He marks not whose 'twas first: and aftertimes
May judge it to be his, as well as ours.
Fool! as if half eyes will not know a fleece
From locks of wool, or shreds from the whole piece?"

"These scathing words of contempt," says Dr. Titherley, "which undoubtedly sum up Jonson's opinion of Shakespeare (i.e. Shakspere) at the time, together with Greene's words, engendered subsequent orthodox opinion that the poet was a plagiarist; for they are a plain echo of Greene's denunciation of Shake-scene and his description of the boasting procurer, but in neither case is Shakespeare the subject."

Of the alternatives to Shaksper as author of the plays, Dr. Titherley says: "only three can be taken seriously—Bacon, the Earl of Oxford and

the Earl of Derby." He then proceeds, according to certain tests of doubtful validity, to eliminate the first two. There is a whole chapter on Bacon, while references to Oxford are scattered throughout the book, his shortcomings being finally summed up as follows: "(1) his character, which was cantankerous and even revengeful, (2) his name (Edward), which was not Will or Willy, and his initials, which were not W. S., (3) his ineligibility for the throne, (4) his handwriting, and (5) various time-considerations." For Dr. Titherley the last is probably the deciding factor, since he starts from the assumption that the dates of most of the plays are *known* with "tolerable precision." He recognises that there is a good deal to be said for the Oxfordian case, but "when the external evidence in favour of such Oxford-Shakespeare identity is dissected critically, much of it is found to apply *equally well* to the Earl of Derby" (italics mine).

The life of the 6th Earl of Derby and a brief family history of the Stanleys are given in Chapter II. Passing over his ancestors—William, the 6th Earl, was born in 1560, ten years later than the Earl of Oxford, and four years before his namesake of Stratford-upon-Avon. In his youth he travelled extensively for about five years. He succeeded to the Earldom in 1594, and in January of the following year married Elizabeth Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford. Four years later he is known to have been "penning comedies for the common players" at a lodge on the Castle Hedingham estate, which by this time was the property of his wife and her sisters. He died in 1642, having survived William of Stratford by twenty-six years and his father-in-law, the Earl of Oxford, by thirty-eight. Assuming for a moment that he *was* "Shakespeare"—it is perhaps understandable that he should have written no new plays (even on the orthodox chronology) after the age of fifty-two. What seems incredible is that he should not have supervised with more care the publication of the First Folio, not to mention the Second.

GWYNNETH BOWEN.

THE LORD GREAT CHAMBERLAIN ENGLAND

At the present time, when the arrangements for the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II—in which the Lord Great Chamberlain has an important part—are in preparation, it may be of interest to recall some part of the history of that high hereditary office of which Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was the holder during the greater part of the reign of the first Elizabeth.

The Lord Great Chamberlain has charge of the administration of the Palace of Westminster, i.e. the Houses of Parliament. He has a leading rôle in the opening of Parliament by the Sovereign. On such occasions as the Coronation the office takes on something of its old magnificence, and the Lord Great Chamberlain becomes a very important person indeed. The Sword of State is in his charge, and it is he who selects a peer to carry it before the Sovereign in royal processions. On great occasions he and the Earl Marshal—this being the other great hereditary office, held by the Dukes of Norfolk—are on either hand of the Sovereign. For instance, their place was just in front of Queen Elizabeth I in the procession to St. Paul's Cathedral after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588: they occupy like positions when the Sovereign goes to the House of Lords to open Parliament; and when George V lay in state in Westminster Hall they stood on either hand at the foot of the catafalque, with similar places before the coffin at the funeral.*

The office was granted by Henry I about 1133 to Aubrey de Vere and his heirs. The Earldom of Oxford was granted to his son Aubrey. After the attainder of the 9th Earl, Richard II restored the Earldom to a later Aubrey, as 10th Earl, and the heirs male of his body, and the earldom descended through the male line until the latter failed, and the earldom became extinct, when Aubrey, the 20th Earl, died in 1703; though there were several occasions when the holder left no son and the title passed to a younger son of a previous holder, or his male issue. There were periods between 1388 and 1485 when the earldom was extinguished by the attainder of the holder, but it was restored in favour of the next heir in the male line. The office of Lord Great Chamberlain was granted to various others during parts of that period, but was restored to the 13th Earl by Henry VII after Bosworth (1485).

When John, the 14th Earl, died in 1526 without issue, a most unusual thing happened. By a Royal Award of Henry VIII, confirmed by Act of Parliament, it was determined that certain of his estates passed to his three sisters as his co-heiresses, while his cousin, John, as heir male, took the ancestral estates and (as 15th Earl) the Earldom, and, apparently, the Lord Great Chamberlainship, though this last was not expressly mentioned. Strangely enough, Henry VIII appears afterwards to have made separate life grants of that office to the 15th Earl, and after his death (1540) to three other persons in turn, while Edward VI granted it to two others, all strangers in blood to the 15th Earl. There were charges made by Protector Somerset against the 16th Earl (who succeeded in 1540), as a result of which that Earl alienated to Somerset practically all his estates, recovering them after Somerset's execution in 1552. It would seem that some at least of these separate grants, temporarily depriving the 16th Earl of the office, were part of Somerset's high-handed usurpations. In spite of those grants, it was the 16th Earl who acted as Great Chamberlain

* At the funeral of George VI last February the Lord Great Chamberlain was not present for some reason: possibly uncertainty as to the present holder of the Office, as explained below.

at the coronations of Edward VI (1547), Mary (1553) and Elizabeth (1558), and they have always since been ignored, and the Act of Parliament following Henry VIII's award has been treated as governing the Vere family title to that office, which passed to the 17th Earl and to his son, the 18th Earl, who died without issue in 1625.

Robert de Vere, descended through males from the 15th Earl, and Robert Bertie, Baron Willoughby de Eresby, son of Mary, younger sister of the 17th Earl, then both claimed the Earldom and the office. Baron Windsor, son of Katherine, elder half-sister of the 17th Earl, made no claim. The House of Lords, on the advice of a majority of the Judges, held that the Earldom passed to the heir male, Robert de Vere (as 19th Earl), but that the office passed to Willoughby de Eresby. It has been asserted that the office should rather have gone to the three daughters of the 17th Earl by his first wife (Anne Cecil), Elizabeth, Bridget and Susan, in whose shoes the present Duke of Atholl, Earl of Abingdon, and Marquess of Bute would respectively now stand. This however is not so: they were only half sisters of the 18th Earl, while Mary was sister of the whole blood of the 17th Earl, and her son, by the rules of descent then applicable, became heir general of the 18th Earl.

In 1660 the then Baron Windsor claimed the office, without success: descended from a half sister of the 17th Earl, he could not be heir to the 18th Earl.

The descendant of Robert Bertie, the Duke of Ancaster, having died in 1779 without issue, his two sisters claimed the office, and in 1781 the House of Lords, on the advice of the Judges, decided that it passed to them jointly, as co-heiresses, duties to be performed by deputy approved by the Crown. The office was thus treated as if it descended to co-heiresses like landed property, the rules as to which (according to a view strongly held) are not applicable to a hereditary office. The duties of it could not be performed by a woman, and it could not originally have been intended that it should be held by one who could only perform the duties by deputy. Still less could it have been contemplated that it could pass into several hands jointly. In the case of the only other hereditary office of State—Earl Marshal—as well as of two others no longer existing—descent has never been to co-heiresses, but either passed to the eldest, or the Crown has resumed and made a fresh grant of the office.

As will be seen below, the office of Lord Great Chamberlain is now shared by as many as seven persons, which seems to indicate clearly enough the inconvenience, to say the least, of the decisions of 1781 and 1902.

Though treated as descending like landed property, the office was not attached to the ownership of Castle Hedingham or any other property—unlike, for example, the picturesque office of King's Champion, which is the service (in Grand Serjeanty) by which the Dymoke family have for centuries held the Manor of Scrivelsby, in Lincolnshire, and which would pass with the manor to the new owner, should that family part with it. It is interesting that the 16th Earl of Oxford's advisers had realised that there was a doubt whether the office would devolve with or might become separated from the Earldom and the family castles and estates, and by a deed executed shortly before he died in 1562 he sought to ensure that they should all pass from heir male to heir male. The 1626 decision declared this not to be effective to govern the title to the office, and that it must devolve on the heir general.

The matter was much debated again in 1902, prior to the Coronation of Edward VII, when the Committee of Privileges of the House of Lords had before them claims by the descendants of the two Bertie sisters of 1779 (the Earl of Ancaster, Earl Carrington, and the Marquess of Cholmondeley), and a claim by the Duke of Atholl as heir both of Dorothy, eldest sister of the 14th, and Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the 17th Earl of Oxford.

Counsel for the Crown sought to show that the Earls of Oxford after 1526, and in consequence the Bertie family, had not been rightful holders of the office. If counsel had been right, none of the claimants could have succeeded. Not unnaturally it was decided to abide by the decisions of 1626, 1660 and 1781, as they had been acted upon for so long—unsatisfactory as was the result.

The office—still a reminder of the greatness of the Veres, Earls of Oxford—is accordingly now held jointly by descendants of the two Bertie sisters of 1779—the present Earl of Ancaster, four daughters of the late Marquess of Lincolnshire and a child of a deceased daughter (representing one of those sisters), and the Marquess of Cholmondeley representing the other sister—the duties being performed in turn during successive reigns by those three branches of the Bertie descendants, the last-named Marquess taking a double turn and the ladies discharging the duty by a deputy approved by the Crown. It would appear that for the present reign it will be the turn of the Marquess of Cholmondeley; during the reign of the late King the duties were discharged by the late Earl of Ancaster, who died in September 1951, and the present Earl as his deputy.

The information given above has been collected from many sources, including the voluminous records of the 1902 proceedings.

J. Shera Atkinson.

"CLOAK OF FOLLY"

Cloak of Folly is the title of a novel by Burke Boyce (Harper & Brothers, New York, $3), published in 1949, and re-issued in 1951. It is a story of the life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, in the form of a novel, based in the main on the

facts recorded in B. M. Ward's *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, but portraying de Vere as the concealed author who wrote under the name "William Shakespeare."

The story is told well and interestingly, though the elaborate imaginative descriptions of his association with Ann Vavasour and some other passages are rather too vivid in their detail—too "modern"—for refined taste. The imaginative description of de Vere's duel with Thomas Knyvet covers several pages—almost thrust by thrust—and the writer has in similar ways made an attractive story from the barer narrative in Ward's strictly historical account.

The interest of the book to members of the Shakespeare Fellowship lies in the publicity it affords to the case for the identity of de Vere with William Shakespeare. The writer does not treat the subject as a controversial one, and makes the authorship, which he treats as an established fact, fit in naturally with de Vere's career.

The almost complete absence of dates, no doubt deliberate as the book is written as a novel, gives the historically-minded reader a little trouble in keying the events of the story to their background.

It is noticed that, following Ward, Boyce suggests that it may have been arranged for de Vere to become a royal ward on his father's death when in 1561—the year before this occurred—Queen Elizabeth was a guest at Castle Hedingham. In fact, the wardship resulted from his being the heir to great estates, held *in capite* of the Crown, and was not a royal favour but one of the most burdensome incidents of feudal tenure. The Crown maintained the minor, but took the whole income of his estates during the minority, and a heavy fine when he came of age, and had the right to direct whom he should marry, under pain of a further fine for any disobedience.

J. S. A.

THE "SHAKESPEARE" COUNTRY

To those members of the Shakespeare Fellowship who may wish to do further research in the true Shakespeare country, the following information may be welcome.

(1) A 16th century siege house, known as Garrison House, at Wivenhoe in Essex, has been restored by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings for the National Trust, and has been leased as a guest house. The very competent guardian is Mrs. Tilling. It stands near the church, on the river side, near the site of the Manor House, or Hall, where the 17th Earl of Oxford had his Country Muses. The Hall was demolished in 1928, following a small fire, and the bricks sold for some rebuilding at an unknown place. We were told a search was made then for the foundation bricks which were believed to be Tudor, though the demolished Hall, judging by the picture we saw, was probably late Georgian.

In the Church there is an ancient font, dug up several years ago, on which is a shield at the top left hand corner of which is the De Vere mullet argent, considerably worn down.

In the Church registers of burial, two items of interest to Oxfordians are to be seen (the Verger, Miss Reid, has the keys of the chest containing the registers and other documents).

1572 18th December Maistres Gainsworth, gentlewoman to the Right Honourable Countisse of Oxenford.

1572 25th December The Earle of Oxenford's faukener.

As the Earl and Countess were married during December 1571, it seems that the first part of their married life was spent at his Manor at Wivenhoe.

According to the register of burials, it was interesting to note that the year of the first plague at Wivenhoe was 1603-1604.

(2) On the font at Finchingfield, Essex, is a shield with the De Vere star on it.

(3) On the font at Bures church also is the De Vere star.

(4) The star is also on the tower of the Church at Earls Colne, but the De Vere tombs which were there (later taken to the Priory at Earls Colne) are now lodged in the private chapel of Colonel Probert, a mile over the hill from the station at Bures. Four male ancestors and one female ancestor of Edward de Vere are there represented in stone.

A very ancient figure (broken) of Alberic, lies on the floor. The figure of Robert de Vere, the 5th Earl of Oxford (1295), the Crusader—with legs crossed—lies with his feet resting on a *boar*.

The figure of Robert de Vere, the 9th Earl of Oxford and Duke of Ireland (1392) has his feet resting on a lion couchant. On none of these three figures nor their tombs are there any stars visible.

The stone effigy of Richard de Vere, the 11th Earl of Oxford (1417), has his feet resting on a lion couchant. His head is resting on a hollow, broken roll, or pillow, on whch is a *boar* with the head broken off. At his side is the figure of his Countess, Alice (daughter and heir of Sir Richard) de Sergeaux. The De Vere star appears on this tomb on the shields.

(5) Colonel Probert's address is "Bevill's," Bures, Essex. He showed us at his house a portrait his father bought of Henry, the 18th Earl of Oxford, painted by Paul Van Somer (1576-1621). By his appearance, Henry was about thirty years of age at the time.

KATHLEEN LE RICHE.

LETTERS TO EDITOR.

Dear Sir,

NICHOLAS HILLIARD AND EDWARD DE VERE

At the end of Miss Amphlett's most interesting article on this subject in the *News-Letter* of March 1952, she suggests that the well-known miniature Portrait of a Gentleman by Hilliard in the Salting Bequest at the Victoria and Albert Museum, is a portrait of Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. It is such a delightful picture that one is tempted to accept that *it may* indeed be the "Italianate Englishman."

However, some questioning among those who have done research upon its origin has brought to me the following information:

(1) The Victoria and Albert Museum experts say the costume is 1590, when de Vere was 40 years of age. This is a picture of a young man.

(2) He is too tall for De Vere, who, according to Thomas Nashe, was "but a little fellow" (see B. M. Ward's biography, pp. 191-2 and 395, as well as the engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar of Marcus Gheeraedts' original drawing in 1578, opposite p. 192).

(3) The legend on the miniature is "*Dat poenas laudata fides.*" ((My praised faith procures my pain), whereas De Vere's portrait would have borne a motto with something more relevant to Ver, or Truth.

(4) There is always a problem of iconography with Elizabethan miniatures: *every bit of decoration means something*, allegorical or symbolical. It is not there for purely aesthetic reasons as in modern art. These decorations mean somebody who is, apparently, not Oxford.

It is very probably Charles Blount—afterwards Lord Mountjoy (1563-1606). He was Lord Deputy in Ireland and succeeded where Essex failed. He was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth first, and then the lover of Lady Penelope Rich, whom he married in 1605.

KATHLEEN LE RICHE.

Dear Sir,

SHAKESPEARE'S FAREWELL

When the Shakespeare Fellowship was founded in 1922, its purpose was for research and propaganda. With this in mind, can we accept Dr. Mez's statement in the *News-Letter* of March 1952 that *The Tempest* is, *by common consent*, almost, if not the last play by Shakespeare?

The method of research upon which we are all engaged does not admit of proof by common consent. That line of reasoning can well be left to the Stratfordians, as also Dr. Mez's statement. 'There exists not a single proof that Lord Oxford could *not* have been at least the main author.'

During his visit to London in April, 1951, Dr. Mez rightly laid stress on the artistic perception which recognises the music of Mozart or the poems of Shakespeare. I would therefore earnestly ask him to compare this, from *The Tempest* (III, 2, 149),

Caliban: ". . . in dreaming,
The clouds, methought, would open, and show riches,
Ready to drop upon me, that when I wak'd,
I cry'd to dream again."

But in *Hamlet* (III, 1) the soliloquy reveals the root of De Vere's "grief of mind" (so poignantly expressed in his signed poems) and his dread of dreams:

"To die;——to sleep:——
To sleep! perchance to dream;—— ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause:"

Never in his early poems, nor in the Sonnets, nor anywhere in the authentic Shakespeare is there a smug belief in the finality of death, or that "Our little life is rounded with a sleep." (*The Tempest*, IV, 1, 148.)

Though Oxford was a sceptical Christian, he is haunted by its basic ideas. There is a ghost in *Hamlet* and in *Macbeth*. In both *Othello* and *King John* the leading characters talk of being damned for what they have done. *Richard II* is full of scriptural allusions. There is no notion of everything vanishing in a clap of thunder which is of the essence of Renaissance sorcery. (See Dr, E. M. W. Tillyard on this subject.)

From De Vere's earliest writings there is always apparent the analytical soul-searching, the witty play on words; the luminous perception of the motive behind a deed; the singing quality of the lines and inspiriting love scenes. The lovers make love; they do not play chess, as in *The Tempest.* In this play, the familiar characteristics which mark our "ever-living poet" give way to those of a peevish wizard.

For those who prefer, for their own reasons, to include *The Tempest* in the canon, Mr. Looney gave four names of authorities on the orthodox Shakespeare who date the play before 1604 (see *Shakespeare Identified*, p. 506). But, following his own poetic perception, *by which means he identified our poet*, Mr. Looney then states the case for the specially un-Shakespearean character of *The Tempest.* His view is supported by Hunter, Greenwood and (according to the *News-Letter* of March 1947) prominent members of the Shakespeare Fellowship.

Edward de Vere certainly had intimations of the "Fell sergeant, death," and his Sonnets reveal that he did not receive these precursors placidly. It is well to bear in mind, however, that these visitations were intermittent, and that the evidence

is that he was not expecting death when it came. In July, 1603, eleven months before he died, he petitioned for his rightful participation in the coronation ceremony of King James I. A month before that, he had urged, through his brother-in-law, Baron Cecil of Essendon (Robert Cecil) and was granted, on 18th July, the Bailiwick of the Forest of Essex. During the following month, his pension of £1,000 was reaffirmed by the King. These are not the circumstances of a man who *knows he is dying* and *therefore* (if such incongruities can be) writes a farewell to the stage in a play which is radically different from all his previous creations, *leaving many of those unfinished* so that they were obviously completed by another hand!

It was in 1604, the year of the Earl of Oxford's death, that the Second Quarto edition of *Hamlet* was published, as Sir Sidney Lee wrote, "from a more complete and accurate manuscript." But a third, revised and more fully developed version was printed in the First Folio in 1623. Is it not more likely that the final year, or months, of Lord Oxford's life were occupied in this revision? May we not accept that his philosophy did *not* change fundamentally; that he did *not* lose his power of poetry; and that his real Farewell was a plea arising out of his conviction of his immortality in verse, that his cousin, good Horatio de Vere, should pause from felicity awhile to report his cause aright and clear his wounded name?

Far from agreeing with Miss Bowen that Mr. Looney has taken a disastrous course in excluding *The Tempest*, I nevertheless agree that she has prepared her facts most carefully to support her own opinion. It is unwise, however, to accuse those who follow Mr. Looney's careful deduction from facts, as laying themselves open to the charge of wishful thinking.

Is it not also rather unwise, without evidence, for Dr. Mez to assume that Mr. Looney had not closely read Professor Elze's arguments? Mr. Looney refers to Karl Elze's date (1604) for *The Tempest* on p. 506 of his book.

KATHLEEN LE RICHE.

SHAKE-SPEARE AND MONTAIGNE

When, in the *News-Letter* of March, 1952, Dr. Mez stated that *The Tempest* was the only known drama in which Montaigne references occur, he was presumably referring to references from Florio's translation of Montaigne's Essays, and he is of course quite correct. In the interest of Shakespearean research it must however be pointed out that there are very many more references, not from Florio, for Florio had not translated at that time, but from the original French editions published in 1580 and 1588.

After having studied The Essays (actually in Florio's translation) pretty carefully during the last twenty years, I find about 100 passages in eleven plays of Shake-speare which are inspired by passages from Montaigne. The details are as follows:

Date written.	*Play.*	*No.*	*of Passages.*
1580-81	*Taming of the Shrew*	9	From the 1580 Edition.
1581	*Much Ado about Nothing*	7	
1582	*Romeo and Juliet*	8	
1582-83	*Richard II*	12	
1583	*Henry IV*	7	
1583-84	*Hamlet*	28	
1584-85	*Winter's Tale*	1	
1587-88	*Twelfth Night*	10	From the Additions added in 1588 Edition.
1588	*Measure for Measure*	11	
1588-89	*Othello*	11	
1589-90	*As You Like It*	1	
		105	

If any members be sceptical on this point, I can give them the passage, the subject, and the page, in Everyman's edition of Florio's translation. Some perhaps are rather far-fetched, particularly one on "the jealousy of goats."

H. H. HOLLAND.

EARL'S COLNE AND COLME-KILL

The *News-Letter* of March 1952 refers to *Macbeth*, Act II, Scene IV (erroneously printed Scene II), which mentions "Colme-kill," where Duncan's body is interred, and says that E. de Vere's ancestors, the old Lords of Oxford, had been buried at "Earl's Colne" not far from Hedingham Castle; whereon the correct observation is made: "How strange that Mr. Shakspere of Stratford should have written this."

Allow me to observe in this connection the following. The believers in the Stratford myth have "Colme-kill" identified as the Isle of Iona, so for instance the Dutch Shakespeare translator Burgersdÿk (1884-1888), who translated it by: "Sint Columbaan's cel," explaining it to be the Isle of Iona, where the Scottish kings used to "be interred."

In the above-mentioned article the obsolete term "kill" is explained to mean something like "shallow" or "river" or a village as preserved in the well-known American "Cats-kill." It is notable that "Cats-kill" existed already when New York, as New Amsterdam, was still a *Dutch* possession.

During the Dutch period called "Kaats-kil," it had nothing to do with cats (perhaps with "kaatsen," i.e., game of handball?). The Dutch name is, for instance, mentioned by Dickens in his book *American Notes*, a description of a voyage he made to U.S.A. in 1842. He speaks of "Kaats-kill Mountains."

Hedingham and Wivenhoe were situated on or near the Colne, the latter not far from the Colne estuary, and in this connection it is interesting to note that many of the estuaries in the Dutch provinces Holland and Zeeland *nowadays are still*

called "*kil*," and that on shallow, sandy "killen" (plural) in Zeeland, just as in the Essex estuaries, oyster-culture is, or used to be, carried on.

S. A. van Lunteren, LL.D.

Miss Katharine E. Eggar has written to the same effect:

"As a matter of fact, Macduff is here referring to the Island of Iona, the burying place of the Kings of Scotland, which in Gaelic is Icolumkille, i.e. The Isle of St. Columba's Church. Kill, the Gaelic for Church (or Hermits' *Cell*), is continually met with in Scottish place-names, and always implies a place of worship, e.g. Ballinakill (the village by the Church), Kilmichael, Kilbean, Kilmartin, Kilbrannon (the Church of S. Michael, S. John, etc.)."

Sir,

I have been much interested in Mr. B. R. Saunders's article on "The Scales of Justice" in your *News-Letter* of September, 1951. His suggestion that "Sagittary" in *Othello* I, i, 173, and *Othello*, I, iii, 136, might be a scribe's confusion with "Saggiatore" seems plausible and would fit the context admirably . . . if only Saggiatore= Assayer can be taken to mean the office of an Assayer or officer of law, i.e. a Place of Justice or Court of Law.

Now, as the use of Saggiatore in that meaning could hardly be claimed to derive from the imagination of the English author, the only alternative is that he had heard it in Venice, or read it in some book dealing with Venice.

Unfortunately "Saggiatore" cannot be attested with that meaning. Not only is it absent from all the books which may have been read by the author of the play, but Prof. Carlo Izzò, a resident of Venice, who was good enough to go carefully through the more recent relevant books dealing with the judiciary institutions of the old Republic in the sixteenth century, did not find any mention of "Saggiatori" in any of them (see *Venezia e le Sue Lagune*, Venice, 1847 (a cura d'una speciale commissione . . .), Vol. I, App. IV: Delle *Magistrature Venete*, pp. 47-77; Giovanni Orlandini, *Storia delle Magistrature Venete*, Venice, 1898; Giovanni Orlandini, *Organismo Politico-Amministrativo della Repubblica, Veneta*, Venice, 1908; etc.)

Prof. Mario Praz, the well-known professor of English Literature at the University of Rome, adds (letter of June 5th, 1952) that outside of Venice, in Italy, generally, there is no example either of the use of the word "Saggiatore" in the desired meaning.

Mr. Saunders's suggestion thus remains unsupported by any proof, and as the "some inn" explanation is highly unsatisfactory, perhaps the French Shakespeare scholar Georges Lambin is not far wrong when he writes (letter of April 25th, 1952 : "Je pencherais assez pour le pluriel latin 'Sagittarii' et les 4 statues de soldats—des hallebardiers toutefois plutot que des 'archers'—décorant la porte d'honneur de l'Arsenal et dont je viens de voir une gravure du XVIIIe siecle trés suggestive."

Franck L. Schoell.

There was a crowded audience at the City Literary Institute in February last to hear Mr. T. L. Adamson on 'Why I am an Oxfordian.' He said he had lectured on Shakespeare for many years at the Institute and elsewhere. A doubt about authorship that had gradually arisen in his early days had crystalised later in a conviction that the Stratford man could not possibly have written the plays. So he carefully studied the Baconian theory, only to reject it. Then he came across Looney's *Shakespeare Identified*, and knew that at last he had found in Oxford the man whose personality and experience were so clearly revealed in the plays. Mr. Adamson instanced Oxford's jealous accusations against his innocent wife that to a great extent spoiled his life. The theme of jealousy he had treated three times in the plays, once lightly, once seriously, once tragically.

Some of the audience were converted.

[*Editor's Note*—In Prof. Porohovshikov's 'Rutland' book, *Shakespeare Unmasked* (1940), reference is made to an ancient book *De Situ Urbis Venetia*, in which is mentioned a street in Venice called Vicus Sagittarius, presumably leading to a building called the Sagittary. Shakespeare clearly knew Venice.]

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