

The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

APRIL 1954

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NOTICES

Members of the Fellowship will each receive an extra copy of this issue* of the *News-Letter*, which it is hoped they will pass on to a friend or public library. But, whatever happens, it would be "an unpardonable error"—to quote Lord Oxford's letter to Bedingfield—"to have murdered the same in the waste bottom of (your) chests!"

THE ANNUAL DINNER will be held at the Commonwealth Headquarters of the English-Speaking Union, 37 Charles Street, Berkeley Square, London, on Friday, 23rd April, at 6.45 p.m. for 7.30. Tickets 16/6. The Chair will be taken by Mr. John Russell, and the toast to the Ever-living memory of Edward de Vere will be proposed by Miss Katharine Eggar. The toast to the Fellowship will be proposed by Mr. John O'Leary, Editor of *The Essex Review*, and Mrs. Le Riche will reply. Mr. T. L. Adamson will propose the toast to the Guests.

The last meeting of the season will take place at the Poetry Society's Rooms, 33 Portman Square, at 3 p.m. on Saturday, 24th April, when Professor Georges Lambin will speak on "Shakespeare's Footprints in France and Italy". Professor Lambin is inclined to favour the Earl of Derby as author of the famous plays, but his main contention is that Shakespeare—whoever he was—must have travelled extensively on the continent of Europe. He has published four essays under the general title "Sur La Trace d'un Shakespeare Inconnu", which first appeared in the magazine *Les Langues Modernes*. The essays can be obtained from the library and Miss Ruth Wainwright has made an English translation, which she would be very willing to lend to members on application. M. Lambin, who has joined the Fellowship, is paying us a special visit from Paris, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will come to hear him. The lecture will be in English.

THE LIBRARY. Mr. John Russell, who has given a home to the Fellowship Library for the last years, has asked to be relieved of the work involved, and Miss Wainwright has kindly offered to have it at her flat, at 4 Collingham Road, S.W.5. (Telephone : Fremantle 4419). Our thanks are due to Mr. Russell for having made the books once more accessible to members after a long period in packing cases.

PROPOSED VISIT TO HATFIELD HOUSE.

At the special request of some of our members a visit to the above historic house has been arranged for Saturday, 1st May. The meeting-place is Portman Square, opposite Daniel Neals, at 1.45. when the journey will be made by Green Line Coach. Tea in the Old Elizabethan Palace.

MEETINGS

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, at 3 p.m. on Saturday, 10th October. About twenty-five members attended, including our President, Rear-Admiral H. H. Holland, who, for reasons of health, had been unable to come for several years. He was warmly welcomed by members, but had declined in advance to take the Chair, which was taken by Mr. T. L. Adamson.

After the reading of the Minutes of the last meeting and the Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports, a telegram, paraphrasing Oxford's well-known lines, was read :

"No greater pain than seeing other men
obtain what we miss. Greetings success John
R. Mez."

Miss Ruth Wainwright read the Report on the Study Circle, and the meeting then proceeded to the election of officers and other business, after which tea was served.

On 12th December, Capt. R. Ridgill Trout read an excellent paper, entitled "Churchyard and Company", at the Poetry Society's Rooms, 33 Portman Square.

The meeting on 23rd January was held once more at the Alpine Club, and the lecturer was Mr. Milton Waldman who though not a member of the Fellowship, is interested in our researches from the historical point of view, and kindly agreed to address us on a subject of his own choosing—*Elizabethan Moods and Attitudes*. He gave us a brief but fascinating study of the Elizabethan mind.

On Saturday, 20th February, 1954, for the 5th lecture of the S. F. Season, Miss Eggar read an enlightening and, at the same time, amusing paper on the *Lost Plays of Edward de Vere*.

The word "lost" was judiciously chosen, being borrowed from Arthur Collins, who, in 1772, said of de Vere. "an excellent poet and comedian whose compositions are *lost* or worn out". For

these plays, which Miss Eggar believes to be de Vere's, were culled from the Revels Accounts, where, more often than not, all we know of them is their titles.

Gilbert Talbot, writing to his father, Lord Shrewsbury, recorded the performance of a play before the Queen in which de Vere acted, and it is easy to imagine that he, who was afterwards extolled for the writing of comedies, was also the author of this "device" which was "better than it happened to have been performed".

Miss Eggar, in pointing out these plays for Court presentation which she believed de Vere wrote, thus built up for him a background for his budding genius. He did not spring into Court limelight with *Love's Labours Lost* or the *Comedy of Errors*, but spent many years trying out his "pupil pen", thus gaining style and confidence.

Which of these plays in the long Revels Accounts came wholly or in part from Oxford's pen, must in all probability remain for ever conjectural, but surely it would not be over-stepping the bounds of credibility to say that one of these must have been a version of the Romeo and Juliet story of which he had translated a rhymed narrative, and one of the earliest recorded tragedies of the Revels Books. It was a theme, Miss Eggar thought, that had haunted de Vere in his youth, and was intensified by his visit to Verona, and saw its full expression in the "Romeo and Juliet" which we now know as Shakespeare's.

But the real excitement of the afternoon was provided by Captain Broadwood, one of the Directors of the Old Vic Company, who made the proposition that Miss Eggar should be "persuaded" to lay the case for Oxford as Shakespeare before a meeting of the Vic-Wells Association.

This suggestion was received with enthusiasm by all present, and Captain Broadwood promised to proceed in the matter, which it would not be able to arrange for some months owing to the Association's long-planned programme.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Members' Activities

The Shakespeare Fellowship has joined the Old Vic Club, and in return for an annual subscription of 2/6, (for the Fellowship as a whole) is entitled to a shilling reduction per seat for parties of twelve or more. A party of fourteen went to the second night of *Coriolanus* on 24th February. For Oxfordians this play has the stamp of the noble author, with his contempt for the masses.

The Old Vic Club also has lectures, play-readings and discussions, and it is to be hoped that in the near future a lecture on the Oxford theory will figure in their programme.

On 9th December, 1953, Mrs. le Riche gave a talk to the Irish Literary Society on "The Mysterious Shakespeare", who, of course, turned out to be the Earl of Oxford. The chair was taken by Miss Olga Allen, M.B.E., and about forty-five

people were present. There was a lively discussion afterwards, with Mr. John Brophy in leading the opposition, but the audience was obviously impressed and some converts were made.

On 21st January, 1954, the Editor of the *News-Letter* addressed an audience of about a hundred under the auspices of the Oxford Heretics Club. He had a good reception and there was no sign of hostility.

Overseas Members

Front page news in *The Denver Post* of the 4th of October, 1953, was the death, at the age of 81, of Dr. Florence Sabin. Elsewhere in the paper was her portrait. Dr. Sabin, described as the "most eminent American woman scientist of her day", was a member of the Shakespeare Fellowship. She was introduced by another enthusiastic American member, Mrs. Elsie Holden, also of Denver. Dr. Sabin was credited with reducing Denver's tuberculosis death rate from 54.7 to 27 persons per 100,000 between 1930 and 1941. In a warm tribute the Mayor of Denver said she was one of the greatest persons he had ever known. "I will all my life treasure the time I was privileged to spend with her. She was learned, she was wise, she was humble. She loved the world and every living creature in it".

The following letter to the Editor, dated 8th of October, 1953, from La Jolla (U.S.A.) intimates a most welcome addition to our ranks:

"I wish to thank you and your treasurer for your gracious letters. Also for the interesting pamphlets. My father, Mark Twain, would have been a most enthusiastic follower of your movement, for although he was on the wrong track (Baconian) he certainly disbelieved that Shakespeare, the actor, wrote the plays".

Our enthusiastic member Mr. T. M. Aitken draws attention to the fact that the film star, Orson Wells, has written as follows:

"Shakespeare. I think Oxford wrote Shakespeare. If you don't agree there are some awful funny coincidences to explain away".

An Irish member, Mr. Kennedy-Skipton, writes as follows:

"I belong to the Dublin Shakespeare Society (54 Fitzwilliam Sq.) This is a Literary and Dramatic Society and stages two Shakespeare plays a year. It numbers about sixty members."

I have read two papers to them in two years,— (1) The Tragedy of Shakespeare. (2) Shakespeare and the Great Unknown. Both on the Shakespeare—Oxford theory. They created great controversy and greater interest, inasmuch as two members have become converts. One, the late president, is researching madly, the other, Mrs. Heathy who has recently joined The Shakespeare Fellowship. The latter is now in Czechoslovakia, and whilst on a visit here gave us some very interesting facts about Shakespeare out there. The plays are staged in an Elizabethan manner quite unwittingly.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

Mr. Levi Fox, M.A., F.S.A., Deputy Keeper of the Records of the Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon and Director of the Birthplace Trust, has published, through the Corporation mentioned, an excellent book entitled *The Borough Town of Stratford-upon-Avon*.

It is thoroughly documented, entertaining and informative, and, with 159 pages and many pictures, in these days the price of 10/6 is very reasonable. It is worth while anybody purchasing it, but if it is asked what use it is to anti-Stratfordians the answer is that it is of great value. In fact there is no evidence whatever produced that William Shakspeare (of course this spelling is not to be found in the book) wrote anything, or that anybody believed that he did. "By 1592", we read, "his contemporaries were impressed and some of them indignant about the quality and popularity of the work of the 'upstart crow'."

"His association with companies of players and the production of his plays can be substantiated by documentary evidence from this time onwards". Then why not cite the documentary evidence? The fact is it does not exist.

It is notable that Mr. Fox says nothing of Shakspeare's life in London. Of course there is no reference to Henslow and his singular ignorance of Shakespeare's existence.

In the first volume of that valuable annual *Shakespeare Survey* (1948) Mr. Levi Fox wrote:

"The records do not indicate precisely at what house in Stratford-upon-Avon William was born. Local tradition alone assigns the western part of the Birthplace property as his birthplace".

This was quoted in a letter from the Editor of the *N.L.* which appeared in the *Listener*. It is in accordance with Halliwell-Phillipps who wrote "Refer to the real history of the matter, and we shall find we have no authentic information respecting the particular house in which our great dramatist first saw the light". Likewise a more modern and also orthodox writer—Dr. F. S. Boas, in *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* (1896), wrote:

"In 1575 John Shakespeare increased his property by the purchase of two houses in Henley Street, including the one which tradition, on very insufficient grounds, has identified as the poet's birthplace".

In Mr. Fox's book there are, of course, several allusions to the *Birthplace*, but nowhere is there to be found any hint of dubiety as to its identity. Nor is it suggested there has been much alteration, although even Sir Sidney Lee admitted that probably only the cellar remained as it was in the time of the bard.

How amazing it is to read that the earliest recorded Shakespearian productions in the town were by a company of strolling players, led by John Ward, in 1746! Yet earlier—in the sixteenth century as we are told, Stratford had many

companies of strolling players. There is an entertaining account of the Stratford "Jubilee" in 1769, and it is most remarkable that regarding the hero of the occasion not a single play or excerpt from his work was performed! However, it is beyond credence as Mr. Percy Allen has suggested, that Garrick was to be numbered amongst the sceptics. He wrote an *Ode upon Dedicating a Statue to Shakespeare*, and, we are told, the whole affair in which he was a star artist, "involved him in a heavy financial loss".

It is not denied that Stratford in Shakespeare's time was given to dramatic entertainment.

"The companies which visited Stratford most frequently were the Earl of Worcester's players who paid visits between 1568 and 1584; the Queen's players with five visits between 1568 and 1597; and the Earl of Leicester's Company, with three between 1572 and 1587—The players of Lord Berkeley, the Earl of Essex, and the Earl of Derby each appeared twice, and solitary visits were paid by the companies associated with the Earl of Warwick, Lord Stafford, Lord Strange, the Earl of Oxford, the Countess of Essex, Lord Ogle, and Lord Chandos. The last payment of ten shillings to players visiting the town during Shakespeare's lifetime was in 1597".

This is badly put, as it might imply that other companies that were paid a different sum came later. No doubt, however, it is intended to mean that no players visited Stratford after 1597. Even so, it is surprising that it cannot be said that any of them performed Shakespeare's plays. Maybe there are no details of the plays produced, but if they were written by the great townsman of Stratford, the omission of some record of this is remarkable. By 1597, even according to orthodox chronology, a number of Shakespeare's plays had been produced in London.

It is not concealed that in 1622—the year before the publication of the First Folio—"according to an entry in the Chamberlain's accounts, the sum of six shillings had to be paid from borough funds to the King's players for not playing in the Hall".

When Mr. Ivor Brown lectured on Shakespeare under the auspices of the National Book League, the Editor asked him to explain the extraordinary fact that there is no evidence that any play of Shakespeare's was performed at Stratford in the lifetime of the alleged author,—Mr. Brown was obviously nonplussed. He had perhaps never before given consideration to this matter. After a pause he suggested Puritan prejudice against the stage. This is the one given by Mr. Fox.

"As early as 1602, at a time when the Puritans in London were clamouring for the closing of the theatres, the Corporation of Stratford ordained 'that there shall be no plays or interlewdes played in the Chamber, the Guildhall, nor in any parts of any house or Courte from henceforward upon payne that whatsoever of the

Baylief, Alderman and Burgesses of this Boroughe shall gyve leave or licence thereunto shall forfeyte for every offence 10 shillings'. In 1612 the Corporation again 'verie seriously' considered 'the inconvenience of plaies' and decided that their sufferance was not only contrary to orders already made but 'against the examples of other well-governed Cities and Burrowes'; the fine for breaking the order was accordingly increased to £10."

But is it likely that Puritan prejudice would have prevailed against local pride in having produced so famous a dramatist as Shakespeare?

Mr. Fox's reference to the Stratford monument is most misleading

"One more thing, in reference to this antient Town is observable," wrote Sir William Dugdale in his *History and Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), 'that it gave birth and sepulture to our late famous Will Shakespeare' and to emphasize his point as it were, he included in his book an engraving of the poet's monument based on a drawing made some twenty years before."

It is not revealed how the date of the drawing is known. Mr. Fox entirely ignores the fact that this monument differs from the present one, and there is no suggestion that Dugdale was careless or unreliable. Surely some readers will refer to Dugdale and get a surprise when they do.

William Camden is several times mentioned. In 1586 he found Stratford "a proper little mercate town".

"Travellers, like William Camden who visited the town during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, continued to be impressed by its bridge and church, and by its apparent prosperity as a market centre", writes Mr. Fox.

Camden mentioned the builder of the bridge, Sir Hugh Clopton—one time Lord Mayor of London—but neither he nor the other visitors mentioned Shakespeare.

Yet Camden knew of him as a poet, for in 1605, in his book *Remaines Concerning Britaine*, he included him amongst its great poets. Obviously he did not connect him with Stratford. In 1586, it is agreed, he would still be unknown. But later editions of *Britannia* also ignore him.

Of course, no reference is made to Henry James' delightful story *The Birthplace*—a résumé of which has been published in the *News-Letter*.

THE ARISTOCRATIC LOOK

Nothing could be more remarkable amongst the orthodox than the partiality of the author of the plays for the well-born. The following are quotations that may well be cited by anti-Stratfordians:

COLERIDGE. In his *Lectures on Shakespeare*, Coleridge twice refers to Shakespeare as possessing the mind of an aristocrat.

I. Section IV. (*Notes on some other plays of Shakspeare*). "If he must have any name, he

should be styled a philosophical aristocrat, delighting in those hereditary institutions which have a tendency to bind one age to another . . ."

II. Section VII. (On Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy*.)

"It is worth noticing that of the three greatest tragedians, Massinger was a democrat, Beaumont and Fletcher the most *seévile jure divino* royalist, and Shakspeare a philosopher;—if aught personal, an aristocrat".

LESLIE STEPHEN. *Shakespeare as a Man*. "I do not see how any man could have been more clearly what may be called an intellectual aristocrat. His contempt for the mob may be good humoured enough, but is surely unequivocal: from the portrait of Jack Cade promising like a good Socialist that the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, to the first, second, and third citizens who give a display of their inanity and instability in *Coriolanus* and *Julius Caesar*. Shakespeare may be speaking dramatically, through *Ulysses* in *Troilus and Cressida*, but at least he must have fully appreciated the argument for order and understood by order that the cultivated and intelligent should rule the common herd, who have as little direct voice in state affairs as Elizabeth and James could have desired."

W. CREZENACH. *The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare*.

"Side by side with the poets who earned their living by composing dramas we may observe a few members of the higher aristocracy engaged in the task of writing plays for the popular stage, just as they tried their hands at other forms of poetry for the pure love of writing. But the number of these high-born authors is very small and their appearance is evanescent. Edward, Earl of Oxford known chiefly as a lyric poet, is mentioned in Puttenham's *Art of English Poesie* as having earned, along with Edward's the Choir Master, the highest commendation for Interlude. Meres also praises him as being of the best for Comedy".

MORTON LUCE. *Handbook of Shakespeare's Works*.

"Shakespeare nowhere identifies himself with the people, but writes as from some higher grade of society".

CHURTON COLLINS. *Studies in Shakespeare*.

"The author of the Shakespeare plays was essentially aristocratic in temper and sympathy. He was profoundly interested in the public events of the time, playing the drama as a commentary on current state affairs and a direct means of political education".

FRANK HARRIS. *The Man Shakespeare and his Tragic Life Story*.

Shakespeare's love of good blood, a belief in its wondrous efficacy, it is one of his permanent and most characteristic traits.

"Everyone who has read his works with any care must admit that Shakespeare was a snob of the purest English water. Aristocratic tastes were natural to him, inherent in the delicate

sensitiveness of his beauty-loving temperament, but he desired the outward and visible signs of gentility as much as any podgy millionaire of our time and stooped as low to get them as a man could".

"In all his writings he praises lords and gentlemen and runs down the citizens and common people".

Amongst contemporary writers Clifford Bax and Ivor Brown could be cited. None of these, however, seems embarrassed by the fact, as they well might be.

There were surely plenty of bourgeois in Stratford, and it would be surprising if one of their townsmen should so set himself to disparage them.

"Shakespeare was not of us", cries Browning, whilst lamenting the defection of Wordsworth from the ranks of progress and liberalism, "Milton was for us. Burns, Shelley were with us and they watch from their graves. But Shakespeare? Where is there a line to entitle him to a place in the brotherhood? Bottom the Weaver with the ass's head remains his type of the artizan, and the mutable rank-scented many is his type of the masses".

Thus wrote ERNEST CROSBY in *Shakespeare's attitude towards the Working Classes*.

Mrs. THEODORA PHILPOT

Mrs. Philpot, of whose death we heard recently with regret, was, in the years just before the Second World War, a most energetic and inspiring member of the Fellowship.

She organised a Study Group among her friends living in Hampstead who met at each other's houses and shared the fruits of their research with much zest.

Mrs. Philpot, with the co-operation of Mr. T. L. Adamson and Mr. and Mrs. Shera Atkinson, even galvanised the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute into allowing a course of twelve fortnightly Lectures on *Hidden Elizabethan Poets* by Katharine E. Eggar to be held at the Central Square Building during the winter of 1938/9.

On the death of her husband, Mr. Hamlet Philpot, she left London for Oxford, where she continued her investigations, and succeeded in introducing a number of friends in the de Vere Authorship.

IMPORTANT. Mr. Philpot, son of Mrs. Theodora Philpot, is taking steps for the sale of the books on the Authorship question collected by his mother. He has had an offer of £25, but wishes to give the S.F. the first offer to purchase.

The Committee feel that the opportunity of securing this valuable addition to the Library should not be missed, and they have therefore agreed to purchase it. The Fellowship's funds being low, it has been suggested that members may like to subscribe towards the sum required, and amounts of any figure will be acceptable, and should be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. T. L. Adamson.

BROOKE HOUSE, HACKNEY

On a biting cold snowy day, the 28th of January, a number of the members of the Shakespeare Fellowship gathered together in Hackney to look at what they feared might be, but hoped would not be, the last of Lord Oxford's home there, Brooke House. With them came representative bodies interested in the preservation of ancient buildings, as well as the Town Clerk, Mr. Sorrell, and his Public Relations Officer, Mr. Allen.

Four years ago the Shakespeare Fellowship made a plea to the London County Council to allow a plaque to be erected on the tower of St. Augustine's church where Lord Oxford was buried. They refused permission, giving as their reason that the "Committee feel the evidence for the Earl of Oxford's residence at Brooke House is presumptive and not conclusive".

The facts however provide valid and conclusive evidence:

1. In 1596 Brooke House was bought by the Earl's second Countess, Elizabeth Trentham.
2. From 1596 Lord Oxford's letters were subscribed "from Hackney".
3. The Middlesex Session Rolls record that "On 17th May, K. James I (i.e. 1604) a true bill is found that at Hackney in the dwelling of the most noble Earl of Oxford certain persons robbed Agnes Thomas of various garments and money".

(The Mystery of Mr. W. H. by B. R. Ward).

4. The burial register at Hackney—St. Augustine's—now St. John's Church, records the death of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, on the 24th June, 1604, and of his Countess in December 1612.

5. In 1609 the Dowager Countess alienated the Manor of Hackney (i.e. this is the Kingshold) with 4 messuages, 2 cottages, 2 tofts etc. 100 acres of land, 50 of meadow, 100 of pasture, and 20 of wood, in the Parishes of Hackney and Tottenham, to Fulke Greville (afterwards Lord Brooke).

Interest in Brooke House was re-kindled, when on the 2nd of December, 1953, Miss Nan Loosely, a staunch and keenly observant member of the Fellowship, read in her daily paper that there had been a fire at Brooke House, and she at once telephoned M. s. Le Riche whom she knew had been campaigning for the restoration of this crumbling historic house for many years.

The result was this gathering together of interested persons to inspect the derelict building and discuss its future.

In a dark draughty corridor, where the smell of burnt wood still hung in the air, Mrs. Le Riche gave detailed information to two reporters, and the following day there appeared on the front page of the *Hackney Gazette* a lengthy and well written article. *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph* both gave space to the problem which is of so much interest to Oxfordians, but at the date of going to

press the L.C.C. Town Planning Committee have not given their ultimatum on the fate of Brooke House.

Mrs. Le Riche wrote a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* which they published as follows:
February 12th, 1954.

HACKNEY TUDOR

Sir—Before it is too late will you be good enough to make public the dismay that is felt in many quarters at the dilapidation of Brooke House, Hackney? This elegant Tudor mansion—one of the very few relics of this once-fashionable residential suburb—was a Royal dower house. When Queen Elizabeth held her Court at Hackney in 1587 she stayed there.

In the long list of illustrious residents was Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, whose players were known as "Shakespeare's Company".

Later, until his death in 1604, it was the residence of the Lord Great Chamberlain, Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

Until a few years ago Brooke House, though damaged by a bomb, was still its dignified self. But through lamentable neglect, lead thieves have lit their fires in it and mischievous children have caused such destruction that the L.C.C. education authorities, who own the site, are considering complete demolition.

But much of it can still be saved. The beautiful Hunsdon ceiling is propped up and sandbagged for protection, and the foundations could remain, walled around, for posterity to restore if we will not.

Once these foundations are ripped up, as they must be if a modern building is set up, this most valuable monument to our glorious past will be obliterated for ever.

Yours, &c.,

(Mrs.) KATHLEEN LE RICHE.

SIR EDMUND CHAMBERS

As lovers of Shakespeare—by whatever name—let us forget our differences for a moment to pay tribute to the memory of a great scholar, Sir Edmund Chambers, who died on 21st January. His principal works were *The Medieval Stage* (1903); *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923) and *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (1930). However much we may disagree on the subject of Shakespeare's identity, these two last books are, and will remain, a mine of information on players and playwrights, performances and publications of plays in Shakespeare's time. Sir Edmund had a great respect for facts and never ignored or distorted them even when they seemed to raise more problems than they solved.

GWYNETH BOWEN.

TURBERVILLE'S TRAGICAL TALES

BY KATHARINE E. EGGAR

When the dark beauty of *Love's Labours Lost*—Rosaline—sets Biron a year's discipline to be carried out while she and her friends keep Court mourning with their Princess, she tells him to test his confident and unthinking habit of jesting by visiting the speechless sick and seeing how his quips and scoffs appear to him in the light of great suffering.

It is a strangely serious note to sound in that light-hearted play, and the conversation between the girl's merry, nimble, "stirring spirit" and the "mocking lord" is usually, in acting, scampered over as if it were merely an insignificant obstacle delaying the final tableau. It is in reality the deep in one gallant soul calling to the deep in another, and infinitely touching if we read it as reality.

What lies behind this check of the gay spirit? Is it some personal experience of sickness and pain?

We know from numerous allusions that Oxford did, from time to time, suffer from various ills, and that in the last years of his life that there was an "infirmity" which frequently interfered with his activities: but for our immediate purpose I would draw attention to the months of 1569 when he was "sick at Wyndstore".

It was with these two things in mind—Rosaline's schooling of Biron who had been the originator of the jest which had fallen so flat, namely, the Russian disguising of the four oath-bound suitors; and Vere's sickness in 1569—that I came across some notes which I had made of a very rare book *The Tragical Tales* by George Turberville, "translated in the time of his troubles out of sundry Italians".

I found that annexed to these Tales, were certain "Epistles and Sonnets with some other broken pamphlets and epistles sent to certain of his friends in England at his being in Muscovia, Anno 1569".

At the head of one of these sets of verses, "He declares that albeit he were imprisoned in Russia, yet his mind was at liberty and did daily repair to his friend," and writes:

"Now find I true that hath been often told—

No man may reave the kingdom of the mind.

Though keeper's charge in chains the captive hold

Yet can he not the soul in bondage bind.

That this is true, I find the proof in me

Who captive am and yet at libertie."

There was enough here to give food for thought and speculation: Russia, Imprisonment, Troubles, the Kingdom of the Mind, and the date 1569.

Then there was the author—one of those many Elizabethans about whom nothing authentic is known, but whose invented biographies are accepted without question.

The author in this case calls himself "George Turberville", and is, to judge by what he says of himself, and what the "verie friend" to whom he dedicates his labours says about him to the Reader, a very youthful and modest beginner. To this Robert Baynes "George Turberville" offers "*My worde, thy wish; my debt and thy desire; I mean, my booke*" as "this fould mishapen Beare"—a description which recalls the "laughing" verse-preface to *Romeus and Juliet* of 1562, that long rhyming tale of the Verona lovers, which I ascribe to the boy Bulbecke. Continuing, Turberville twice alludes to "my want of health" and to having lost inspiration, "hating the harp wherein was all my pride"; and when he adds,

"The blooming rage that erst inspired my brain,
Saturnus' chilling humour doth restrain",
it seems to indicate a "Saturnian" illness such as rheumatic fever, and in winter. That his "troubles were those of sickness is clear, when he hopes that the one who knew his cares, his wailful woes and his depression, will excuse the faults in the work,

"For in my life I never knew such fits
As while I wrote this work did daunt my wits".

Such indications, however, mean nothing to the ordinary reader who prefers to trust to the account of Turberville by Anthony á Wood which is the only source of information, and one built up in the usual impressive atmosphere of what appears to be scholarly investigation.

Wood, finding a Nicholas Turberville in some register, decided that this was the "loving brother" referred to by George, and proceeded by an ingenious mixture of generations and pronouns to give our George a biography as "a younger son of Nicholas T. of Whitchurch in Dorset"—a biography which really belongs to his grandfather, the fifth son of Joh. Turberville of Bere-Regis.

It was *this* Turberville, Henry, 5th son of "Joh." who was educated at Winchester School, a fellow of New College, and Member of the Inns of Court "where he was much admired for the excellencies in the art of poetry", (this last sentence being, I conclude, Wood's supposition by reason of "George's" romancing in verse).

"Afterwards", goes on Wood, using this word as a convenient way of joining up the false conjectures, "being esteemed a good person for business as having a good and ready use of his pen, he was entertained by Tho. Randolph, Esq., to be his secretary when he received the commission from Q. Elizabeth to go ambassador to the Emperor of Russia." Where "at spare hours he did exercise his muse and wrote poems describing the Places and the Manners of the Country and People of Russia, Anno 1568".

Turberville himself makes no allusion to any secretarial duties or to his Ambassador, but says that "The Author being in Muscovia writes . . . of the state of the place not exactly, but at all adventures: and minding to have described *all* the Muscovite manners, brake off his purpose upon some occasion". We are not told what "occasion"

may have caused him to change his plan; but after giving, as the rather shocked Edinburgh Editor of 1837 says, "a very extraordinary idea of the barbarous state of society in Russia"; he advises his friend "Parker", in bidding him farewell, "to repaire to Sigismundus booke if he list to know Russia well."

"To him I recommend myself", he adds, "to ease my pen of pain:

And now at last do wish thee well and bid farewell again".

I think we may conclude that Sigismundus has been, all through the source from which George's weary but "ready" pen has drawn these "extraordinary" accounts of Muscovia! and that the whole thing was a gallant effort to steer the ship of the mind through the storms of sickness. When the fountain of originality had ceased to play and the harp of his own music had become hateful to his weary soul, reading and translating other men's writings were all that the tired brain and feverish body could deal with: yet out of these painful efforts he contrives to make something that he hopes will entertain his friends. And here it should be noted that the "verie friend" Robert Baynes, in his recommendation of the young quill "though yet it tread the path of *green* delight", alludes to the cost which has been borne in order that each man may enjoy freely the pleasure provided by the Author.

The last verse of Turberville's address to his readers runs thus:

"I burn the bee, I hold the hive,
The Summer toil is mine;
And all because when winter comes
the honey may be thine."

Only two or three years later we have the verses, which without any reasonable doubt were Vere's own, attached to his publication of Bedingfield's translation of Cardanus' *De Consolatione*. The lines are longer, the thought is deeper, the language is richer, but the echoes are unmistakable.

"The idle drone that labours not at all
Sucks up the sweet of honey from the bee;
Who worketh most to their share least doth fall.
With due desert reward will never be.

So he that takes the pain to pen the book
Reaps not the gifts of goodly golden muse;
But those gain that, that on the work shall look,
And from the sour the sweet by skill shall choose
For he that beats the bush the bird not gets,
But who sits still and holdeth fast the nets".

In the light which our knowledge of Vere's life throws on all the circumambient literature, we may see that this "Russia" was a sick-room and that Rosaline's prescription for Biron was due to what real experience of long and painful illness may have taught our naturally mocking and ruthless poet.

DE SHAKESPEARE NOSTRATI

By H. S. SHIELD

1. "I remember, the Players have often mentioned it as an honour to *Shakespeare*, that in his writing, (whatsoever he penn'd) hee never blotted out line. My answer hath beene, would that he had blotted a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted. And to justifie mine owne candor, (for I lov'd the man, and doe honour his memory [on this side Idolatry] as much as any). Hee was (indeed) honest, and of an open, and free nature: had an excellent *Phantsie*; brave notions, and gentle expressions: wherein hee flow'd with that facility, that sometime it was necessary he should be stop'd: *Sufflaminandus erat*; as *Augustus* said of *Haterius* His wit was in his owne power; would the rule of it had beene so too. Many times hee fell into those things, could not escape laughter: As when hee said in the person of *Caesar*, one speaking to him; *Caesar thou dost me wrong*. He replied: *Caesar did never wrong, but with just cause* and such like; which were ridiculous. But hee redeemed his vices, with his vertues. There was ever more in him to be praysed, then to be pardoned".

2. This passage from Ben Jonson's *Timber* was written after 1623. How long after, we do not know, but the joke about *Caesar* was still fresh in 1625, when he used it again in *The Staple of News*. It seems not usually stated, how much has been borrowed from the elder *Seneca* (*Controversiae* IV, preface), though the italicised *remember* (*Seneca's* favourite "*memini*") may be intended to direct the reader to look up the parallel passages. *Seneca* is criticising the forensic eloquence of the lawyer *Haterius*.

S. *tanta erat illi velocitas orationis, ut vitium fieret, itaque Divus Augustus optime dixit: Haterius noster sufflaminandus est . . .*

B.J. wherein hee flow'd etc. (above)

S. *ita ut regi posset . . . regi autem ab ipso non poterat . . .*

B.J. his wit . . . would the rule of it had beene so too.

S. *saepe incidebat in ea quae derisum effugere non possent . . .*

B.J. Many times he fell . . . could not escape laughter.

S. *redimebat tamen vitia virtutibus et plus habebat quod laudares quam cui ignosceres.*

B.J. But hee redeemed etc., to end.

3. Thus Jonson's justification is found to be taken practically word for word from *Seneca*. Evidently he intends us to refer to the same source, when considering his remarks about the Players. We do not find an impromptu writer, but we do find an impromptu speaker. *Haterius* was the

only Roman orator who did not prepare and revise his speeches beforehand, but delivered them extempore. That was a fault. *Tacitus'* estimate may be quoted in conclusion: "copious but careless, celebrated while alive, but forgotten after his death".

4. In his praise of *Shakespeare* the Author, in the Folio, Jonson not only depicts a completely different character, but takes his classical parallels from the works of poets who have survived. For the *Shakespeare* of *Timber*, he chooses this forgotten lawyer, who was not a poet, not a playwright, nor even an author, but merely a verbose talker. The two types are poles apart, and the reasonable inference is, that he speaks of different "*Shakespeares*". He gives us a clue in the title. The adjective, *nostras*, means primarily, "of the writer's own country", used of some product that may be either native or foreign. There being no foreign "*Shakespeare*", the epithet seems otiose here. Probably Jonson intended the meaning to be, "of the writer's own place, i.e., London. Mr. *Shakespeare* of London is to be distinguished from Mr. *Shakespeare* of *Gorhambury*, of *Stratford*, or of any other birthplace.

5. Space does not permit the citation of other references there may be to Mr. *Shakespeare* of London. From Jonson we learn that he was an actor, "said in the person of *Caesar*", means "said in the *persona*, or *stage character* of *Caesar*". It must have been on the public stage, for Jonson expected the allusion to be recognised by the audience at the *Staple of News*. Hence, he was a professional actor. Whether his unblotted lines were original compositions, writings from memory, or merely fair copies which he "conveyed" to the theatre, matters little, as Jonson had a poor opinion of them. Clearly, they were not the work of the great Author. The resemblance between a lawyer, who has to speak from his brief, and an actor, who has to speak his lines, is obvious. If Jonson has some secret to reveal, *Haterius* is the clue.

6. None of the candidates for the authorship appears to fit with Mr. *Shakespeare* of London. The noble Earls, Derby, Oxford, Rutland, or even Southampton cannot be meant. Jonson was not an intimate friend of any, he was not in a position to tell them to "put the brake on their speeches", and could hardly say that they often made *gaffes* when acting on the public stage.

Bacon seems excluded, if only by Jonson's own record, that when he spoke, "the fear of every man that heard him was, that he should make an end"!

Shakspeare of Stratford is often supposed to be identical. In regard to him, all things seem to be possible, but his loving friend, Jonson, has ridiculed the hardly-gotten armorial bearings in Sogliardo's coat of many colours with its dressing of mustard, and again in *Crispinus'* punning devices and change of name. However, if Shakspeare is the man, then, *ex hypothesi*, he cannot be the Author.

It is clear that Jonson is not attempting to tell us who the Author was. By his references to the forgotten Haterius, who was obviously not for all time, he indicates that Mr. Shakespeare of London, though he had many amiable qualities, was *not* the Author. In fact the Spear, like Pluto's helmet, seems to confer absolute invisibility on the Shaker thereof.

"Degree being vizarded
Th' unwortheist shows as fairly in a mask".
Troilus and Cressida
H.A.

SHAKESPEARE'S ANNIVERSARY

BY KATHLEEN LE RICHE

Although Mr. Looney, possibly quoting from *The Dictionary of National Biography*, gives the birth date of EDWARD DE VERE, the SEVENTEENTH EARL OF OXFORD as the 2nd April, 1550, at Earls Colne, Capt. B. M. Ward, Lord Oxford's Biographer, quoting Hatfield MSS. Cal. XIII, 142, gives the date as 12th April, 1550, at Castle Hedingham.

At the College of Arms, Queen Victoria Street, London, I have seen the manuscript book (Vincent 445) discovered by Mr. Percy Allen, which was written by Percival Golding, the youngest son of *Arthur Golding* who was half brother to Margery Golding, Edward de Vere's mother. On page 51, Percival—Edward's cousin—writes:

"Edward de Veer, only son of John, borne ye Twelveth day of Aprill A°. 1550, Earle of Oxenforde . . ."
which date has been accepted by most subsequent writers.

Because of the changes in the Calendar, and the confusion arising therefrom, I have had some correspondence with Dr. A. Hunter, of the Royal Astronomical Society, and have consulted other authorities in compiling the following chart, which may be a help to those engaged on research on early manuscripts:

Until 1066 the first day of the year was 25th December. This year was extended until 31st December.

1067 began on 1st January and this date continued until 1155.

1155 began on 1st January and was extended until 24th March of the following year, comprising therefore of 15 months.

1156 began on 24th March, and so did every year until 1751.

1751 began on 25th March and ended 31st December. This is the last of the "old style" *Julian Calendar* in England.

1752 began on 1st January and continued until 2nd September, when a break of 11 days was made to conform with the new *Gregorian Calendar*. The year then continued from 14th September until 31st December.

1753 began 1st January and continued until 31st December, and so the years have continued since, without alteration.

The Julian Calendar, founded 46 B.C. had an error of about 3 days in 400 years. Dr. Hunter writes:

"Thus in the old calendar the date of the vernal equinox (for instance) gets earlier and earlier as the centuries pass. It occurred on 21st March at the time of Council of Nice, 325 A.D., but by 1582, when the new calendar was first introduced, it was ten days earlier—so much as to be practically inconvenient. Pope Gregory XIII therefore introduced the "Gregorian" calendar, which dropped these 10 days by calling the day after October 4th the fifteenth of October instead of the fifth, and kept matters right in the future by making such century years into leap years as are exactly divisible by 400."

This new calendar year is on the average almost exactly equal to the astronomical year.

"The Greek Church and the Protestant sects refused to adopt this change and it was not made in England until 1752, by which time the error had increased to 11 days. Russia and some central European states did not change till the present century. . . . The date in the Gregorian calendar corresponding to 1550 April 12 in the Julian calendar, is 1550 April 22."

As the Julian calendar was the one in use in England during the Elizabethan period as well as the whole period covered by our Shakespeare research, we are concerned only with the *ten* days discrepancy, not *eleven* as suggested in the *American News-Letter* of April 1941, and elsewhere.

For purposes of clarity it is better to transcribe dates for those years which begin on 25th March, by giving the later year as well. For instance: 24th March 1550/1. Continental dates should be given with the corresponding English dates after 4th October, 1582 when the calendar was changed there.

Admiral Holland's reference to Hamlet's remark "The time is out of joint", seems to me an important reference to the date of the first production of the play. He writes to me:

"If we wish to observe the astronomical or solar anniversary of the birth of Edward de Vere we should do so on the 22nd April, but the calendar anniversary is the 12th April".

SOME COMMENTS ON AN EARLY DEDICATION TO DE VERE

When De Vere was only fourteen years old, Arthur Golding dedicated to him his translation of *Trogus Pompeius*, a brief extract of which is given by Ward in his "Life".

It seems, however, worthy of being quoted more fully, as having sunk deeply into the mind of the future dramatist of the historical plays, and also of *Hamlet*.

It will be remembered that *Trogus Pompeius* wrote a universal history of all the most important events that had happened from the beginning of the world to the age of Augustus, divided into 44 books.

Born in Gaul, 41 B.C.—his father was one of the friends and adherents of Julius Caesar.

We are told that "with the historical narrative there were interwoven interesting descriptions relating to geography, ethnography, and natural science. This history which was greatly admired for its purity and elegance was epitomised by Justin—probably in the 2nd century A.D. The original histories are lost".

It was this Epitome or *Abridgement* that was translated by Arthur Golding.

The Dedication runs :

The Abridgement of the Histories of Trogus Pompeius by Justine. 1564. Translated by Arthur Golding.

To the Right Honorable and his singular good Lord and Mayster, Edward de Vere, Erie of Oxenford, Lord Great Chamberlain of England, Viscount Bulbeck etc. Arthur Golding wisheth health and prosperitie with furtherance in knowledge and encrease of Honer.

"Right Honorable. I find in perusing of ancient writers that it hath been the custom of the greatest estates and Princes in the world when they have had intermission from the serious and weighty affairs of their realms to bestow their idle times in reading and perusing 'stories. For we read that Artaxerxes surnamed Logmanus the fifth King of Persia, used to have the Chronicles both of his predecessors and of his own time also, read before him a-nights when he went to rest. And Alexander the Great had that noble writer of the famous battle of Troy in such veneration, that he never went anywhere but he had his works about him, nor never slept but he had them under his pillow.

Moreover coming into school and finding not Homer's works there he gave the master a buffet with his fist ; meaning thereby that in knowledge of histories was a thing so necessary to all estates and degrees that it was an offence to withhold them".

Golding, it is to be noted, makes no clear distinction between the use of histories or poems. —Justin or Homer.)

It is interesting to recall that at the entry of the *Players*, Hamlet says, "look where my *abridgement* comes".

And, afterwards he refers to them as historians, i.e. "Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time". (Act II, Scene II.)

The Dedication goes on,

"For like as in *Music* many notes and many times make one concert and one Harmonie, so also in an *History*, the variety and multitude of examples tend all to *one end*, that is the *advancement of Vertue and the defacing of Vice*, offering themselves as a most clear and perfect *Mirror* wherein for a man to behold, I say not the outward portraiture and lineaments of his body, but the very *lively image and express figure of his inward mind* instructing him how to guide and order himself in all things.

"Compare the above with Hamlet", speech to the players :

"for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, *whose end* both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as *t'were* the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure".

And now Golding continues with a passage which seems to describe drama rather than history :

"For what can be a greater inforcement to chivalry, than not barely to hear, but in a manner *presently to behold* the sage and grave consultation of expert *Captaynes—the speedy putting in practice of things devised*, the policies and stratagems in executing them and the favourable assistance of fortune to the same, with fame and renown of valiant enterprises.

What can be a greater encouragement to Vertue, than to see men raised from low and base degree (as it were out of the dust) unto high estate and honour ?

To see Realms flourish, to see Commonwealths prosper, to see good men exalted and evil men suppressed, to see peace and tranquility observed? to see nations willingly offer obedience, to see long continuance in felicity ?

On the contrary part, what can be a greater dehortation to Vice, than to have *laid before one's eyes*, not only the heinousness and enormity of the offence, but also the miseries, calamities, shames and punishments worthily ensuing from the same, with endless reproach and infamy after death ?

And consequently what can be more commodious and profitable than an *Historie* ?"

Ward, referring to another of Golding's Dedications to his nephew,—the translation of Calvin's version of the Psalms, says—

"It would seem to have been a last effort of his tutor to influence his pupil in the direction

of Puritanism, but such efforts were doomed to disappointment. The movement of the time that appealed to Oxford was not the Reformation but the Renaissance."

This is true, but De Vere's early poems, as J. T. Looney pointed out in his preface to them, had a moral fervour that distinguished them from those of other Court poets. And, though Shakespeare was no puritan, it has been remarked again and again that he was a profound moralist, in that he painted Virtue and Vice in their true colours.

Golding now continues in a lighter vein—and in curiously pictorial language:

"And what can be more pleasant, or more satisfying to man's nature (which is always desirous of news and covetous of knowledge) than sitting quietly by himself to receive tidings of things done through the whole world, *To behold* the places, the persons, the times, and the things with th' order and circumstances in doing of the same?"

To see so many running streams, so many high mountains, so many raging seas, so many wild forests and deserts, so many strange beasts

So many large countries . . . so many well-governed commonwealths . . . and so many *sundry sorts of people* . . .

And that in such sort as every thing may seem, not to be reported, but *to be presently in the doing?*"

The whole of this passage surely applies even better to watching a play, with its changing scenes, than it does to reading "an historie".

After some significant comments on the style of Justin, (which there is no space to quote), Golding refers to the reason why he has dedicated his work to his young nephew, quoted by Ward (Chapter II, P. 23). And he concludes with the examples of Epinodas, Prince of Thebes, and Arymba, King of Epirus who cultivated not only the martial arts of war, but also excelled in learning and the arts of peace.

The latter "Being very young at the decease of his father, was, by the advice and consent of the whole realm, during his nonage, sent to Athens to be instructed in learning and philosophy.

At his return into his own realm again, he chose a sage and grave counsel . . . and finally so established the state of the commonwealth that he seemed to have made the Realm new."

Did not this Prince, so like De Vere in circumstances, remain in his mind, when he came to write the story of the Prince of Denmark, who has become the very type of philosophising genius, but who . . . "was likely, had he been put on,

To have proved most royally."?

A discerning critic has recently praised a performance of *Hamlet* for the reason that he interpreted him as "no pallid poet", but suggested that he was in fact "a renaissance Prince".

The Dedication concludes with these words:

"Let these and such other examples (where your Lordship shall find store in this work)

encourage your tender years, running in the renowned footsteps of your famous ancestors, to proceed in learning and virtue (which are the only ornaments of nobilitie, or rather the true nobilitie itself) . . . and Yourself thereby become equal to any of your worthy Predecessors in advancing the honour of your noble house: *whereof as your great forwardness giveth assured hope and expectation*".

Fourteen years later, Gabriel Harvey in his exhortation to Oxford shows how well he had indeed followed these examples.

"I have seen many Latin verses of thine, yea, even more English verses are extant; thou hast drunk deep draughts not only of the Muses of France and Italy, but hast learned the manners of many men, and the arts of foreign countries".

But his final words suggest that conflicting ideals might involve so rich a personality in tragedy, even if they were to be resolved in great poetry and drama.

"O thou hero worthy of renown, throw away the insignificant pen, throw away bloodless books, and writings that serve no useful purpose"

At this time, Harvey's advice would be congenial but Golding's tuition had impressed the sub-conscious mind of the nephew whose true vocation even he did not suspect.

RUTH M. D. WAINEWRIGHT.

OXFORD JUNIOR ENCYCLOPEDIA

It will be gratifying to members of the Shakespeare Fellowship to know that, in the Biographical volume of this important encyclopedia (Oxford University Press 30/-) which goes to every Secondary School in the country, the Earl of Oxford is mentioned (with Francis Bacon, but no other names) as a candidate for the authorship of the works of Shakespeare. William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon is described as a "shadowy figure". Reference is made to "various unproved traditions"; and "if we like we can believe that he began his career in the London theatre by holding horses at a playhouse door".

We may claim this as a significant breaking through of the light in hitherto closed academic circles.

The first review of the book by S. P. B. Mais, says:

"The article on Shakespeare is guarded and non-committal. He is described as a shadowy figure, much of whose life remains conjectural".

It will be remembered that the joint Editor of the Encyclopedia is Mr. Robert Sinclair who accepted the invitation, and came to the last Annual dinner of the Shakespeare Fellowship, after having read Mr. J. T. Looney's book.

KATHLEEN LE RICHE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mrs. Dorothy Ogburn, joint author with her husband of *This Star of England*, has written to the Editor at some length regarding the reception of their book by Shakespeare Fellowship Members. The thesis that the Earl of Oxford was the father of the Earl of Southampton by Queen Elizabeth has certainly met with repudiation by the majority of English Oxfordians.

The length of Mrs. Ogburn's letter precludes its inclusion in the *News-Letter*, but from it I will quote two passages:

"So long as English men and women insist on the virginity of Elizabeth Tudor, they will never establish the authorship of Edward de Vere".

"We have been shocked by the unsympathetic, if not indeed antagonistic, response we have received from the English Oxfordians whom we had innocently regarded as our colleagues and allies. Even in the beginning, the letter from the Honorary Secretary acknowledging receipt of the two copies of *This Star of England* which we had artlessly sent to the members of the Fellowship bore 'a frosty sound'."

The following letters have been received from Fellowship members expressing their reasons for rejecting the Ogburn's conclusions and explaining any seeming lack of sympathy.

Dear Sir,

May I trespass upon your valuable space to reply to Mrs. Dorothy Ogburn's indignant letter at my "irresponsible attack".

The "frosty" reception of *This Star of England* by Oxfordians is not, let me say emphatically, unmindful of the phenomenal research that has produced this, the most documented life of Edward de Vere we have been privileged to read. The equation Vere Shakespeare is proved to the last decimal.

Why then do the authors spoil their case by the stale Parliamentary trick of tacking a bad bill on to a good one and hope that both will pass without criticism?

If a belief that Oxford is the playwright must be linked with the shocking heresy that Southampton was his son by the Queen, the ranks of Stratford may well exult!

Clear cut evidence is conspicuous by its absence. The awkward bits of the jigsaw are rammed home with a mallet!

Text picking from the plays and sonnets is no substitute for **FACTS**—the self-same phrases have already been worn thin to show that Bacon, Marlowe, Manners, or Stanley wrote them.

Even the Plays let the Ogburn theory down. Bertram in *All's Well* (mirror of Vere's life) flies the Court from plain boredom—not fear of wrong doing.

The following evidence, I suggest, shows quite clearly the fallacy:

1. THE EVIDENCE OF CHARLOTTE STOPES—biographer of Southampton—who, in her famous eight years' search through family records found nothing that suggested that the Countess was not his true mother, or that he was of Royal birth.

2. THE EVIDENCE OF THE COURT. Our present Queen gets little enough privacy—how much less did the first Elizabeth have with a retinue of gossiping Maids of Honour and ambitious Nobles. When scandal did arise (as ten years earlier it apparently did with the Earl of Leicester) the Court was a whispering gallery of comment. Fining or ear-cropping had to be meted to accusers *outside* the Court. At the crucial time, the Queen developed smallpox—a disease well suited for keeping the inquisition at bay.

But Mr. Phillips has demonstrated clearly that all was normal in June 1573—indeed on 7th March, the Queen is negotiating with La Mothe Fenelon who is begging her marriage with Alencon (the "deformity" would be seven months by this time). Maids of honour, crafty diplomats, thrusting courtiers are not so easily hoodwinked!

3. THE EVIDENCE OF THE TWO HENRYS. One of the strangest off-shoots of the Ogburn theory is that, with an illegitimate son by the Queen named Henry Wriothesley, Lord Oxford *christened* his first legitimate son by Elizabeth Trentham *Henry* also! With an incomparable gift for choosing names, de Vere choses for his beloved son the one that will stab his memory—and prove highly dangerous at Court. It is unthinkable.

4. THE EVIDENCE OF LADY HENEAGE. Vere's sonnet to Wriothesley,

"Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime"
is perfectly applicable to the Countess of Southampton who was Mary Browne, a noted Court beauty. Can we say this of the redwigged Queen with the blackened teeth?

The letter begging her son's life, after the Essex Rebellion, quoted in the September *News-Letter*, is (say the Ogburns) a "frame-up". I find it the frantic outpouring of a mother pleading with a relentless queen. Why, in all sense, would a foster-mother plead at all if Elizabeth is the true parent?

5. THE EVIDENCE OF THE TRIAL. The historical fact is that Essex was intriguing against the Queen with the King of Scotland, not to put Southampton on the throne. In the Trial—when heads were at stake—not a whisper of a claim by Wriothesley came up—despite Coke's browbeating of Essex and even when he and Southampton were sentenced to death and the broken Essex raved about his associates freely—not even with the axe at his throat did he mention the Royal Blood of his accessory! Moreover, if Oxford, being one of the Peers at the Trial, declared his

own son guilty, and sentenced him to death, and the Queen (after commuting his sentence to imprisonment in the Tower) left him to languish there without a thought for him even on her death bed—they would have been as unnatural parents as the world ever saw.

6. THE EVIDENCE OF OXFORD'S CLAIMANT. The Ogburns' suggestion that in 1603 the elderly Earl pressed Southampton's claim to the throne to Lord Lincoln demonstrates clearly how slender the theory is. Not *one* mention of Wriothesley's name occurs in Sir John Peyton's statement and when the Claimant is named 'he knew hym to be so weake in body, in friends, in abylytie and all other means to rayse any com-bustyn in The State as I never feared any danger to proseyd from so feeble a foundation'. How can this apply to Wriothesley? Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower, would surely have said: 'I knew him as one of my prisoners'. Can the weak individual described be the dashing Wriothesley, aged 30, who as soon as he was freed from prison, rode "with great commendation" at the solemn tilting at the King's coronation—(p. 1202) and finished by fighting in the Low Countries. A very *feeble foundation* indeed!

No, Mr. Editor, it won't do!

"Dear my love, you know

You had a father: let your son say so".

pleads Vere to his Fair Youth, Southampton—and in so writing tells us exactly—

- (a) The Youth's father is dead (he died in 1581).
- (b) Oxford is *not* the father; had he been he would have put *have*. The sonnets were secret—he need not date them.

FRANCIS L. NICHOLS.

Dear Sir,

If I was "frosty" in thanking Mr. and Mrs. Ogburn for their very generous gift to the Fellowship of two copies of *This Star of England*, I sincerely apologize both to them and to the members whom, as Honorary Secretary, I represent, for I am quite sure that they are not, and would not wish to appear, ungrateful.

I must explain that the letter to which Mrs. Ogburn refers was not primarily a "thank you" letter. It was a *business* letter—a rather lengthy reply to a letter from Mr. Ogburn enquiring about the prospects of publication in this country. Voicing the opinion of the committee, I was somewhat pessimistic, but now that the book has been accepted for publication here, I am sure we all wish the authors every success. Unfortunately I can only find one page of a rough draft of my letter, but this was probably the paragraph which gave offence:

"It is only fair to add that there are many things in your book with which I, and other members of the Shakespeare Fellowship disagree, particularly your conclusions with regard to the parentage of the Earl of Southampton. Mr.

Allen, of course, is of your opinion, but I think he is in the minority. *I must be honest with you about this, if only to preserve my right of public criticism in the "News-Letter or elsewhere"*.

I wrote this entirely on my own initiative, and for the reason given. As secretary, I have no opinions, but as an individual I must be free to express my own individual opinion.

Further on, I said "The two copies which you so kindly sent for the library have arrived safely, but not many people have yet had the opportunity of reading them". The books had not been addressed to me (though I had received a copy from another source), but I was replying, after making the necessary enquiries, to a question of Mr. Ogburn's.

As I could not give the book unqualified praise I felt that such favourable comments as I might have added would only seem impertinent. It surely goes without saying that all Oxfordians accept a great deal of the evidence assembled in *This Star of England*, and if it succeeds in persuading a wider public to accept the validity of this basic evidence, we shall all be delighted. My only fear is that the whole book will be judged, and our case with it, by the parts which seem to many of us both inessential and unconvincing. I should like, however, to thank the Ogburns for the enjoyment I derived from other parts, and for making readily accessible so much documentary material.

GWYNNETH BOWEN.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for showing me Mrs. Ogburn's letter. Her implication that I have not read her and her husband's book is quite unfounded.

By making their hypothesis public they have exposed it to the light of impartial examination. Because I cannot accept their theory (page 817—"*For the Third Earl of Southampton was the son of Oxford and Elizabeth*"—their italics) upon which they base their interpretation of Shakespeare's poetry, my refutation is not thereby "scathing and insulting".

To the reasons I gave in the September 1953 *News-Letter*, I add this: I find it difficult to believe that Lord Oxford would name his heir, the Eighteenth Earl, Henry, while his first (alleged) son, Henry Wriothesley was still living.

The reasons I reject Mr. and Mrs. Ogburn's theory that Lord Burghley was not serious about the proposal that the Earl of Southampton should marry his grand-daughter, Elizabeth de Vere are these:

1. Four different, but serious writers whose books are with me at the moment—J. T. Looney, B.M. Ward, Sir Sidney Lee and Mrs. C. C. Stopes, accept the evidence available that Burghley was eager to assure his grandchild's future by this marriage.

2. Sir Thomas Stanhope's letter to Burghley dated 15th July, 1590, gives apologetic explanation

and rebuttal of the reports that he had planned to seek the young Earl for his own daughter,

"having evermore found myself so bound unto you as I have donne I name it treachery, because I heard before then, you intended a match that way to the Lady Vayre". (Vere).

3. On the 19th September, 1590, Viscount Montague, the grandfather of the Earl of Southampton wrote to Lord Burghley recalling their talk at Oaklands and explains the delay in getting the young Earl to come to a decision about the proposed marriage, thus:

"First my daughter affirms upon her faith and honour that she is not acquaynted with any alteration in her sonnes mynd from this your grandchild. And we have layd abrode unto him both the comodityes and hindrances likely to grow unto him by change".

Mrs. Stopes quotes D.S.S.P. Eliz. xxxiii. 71 for this letter which she quotes with the one above on pages 36-7 of her *The Third Earl of Southampton*.

4. On page 86 she quotes from Foley's English Jesuits, IV. 49 an extract from the priest, Henry Garnet's letter:

"The young Earl of Southampton, refusing the Lady Vere, payeth £5000 of present payment".

These private letters show a very serious attitude indeed *by the persons concerned* towards Lord Burghley's marriage proposals.

5. Then there is the internal evidence of the Sonnets wherein we see Lord Oxford himself, with "forty winters" on his brow in that very year (1590) of the proposed match with his daughter, writing seventeen sonnets urging the beautiful youth to marry, which theme he reiterated in his *Venus and Adonis* (1593) which he dedicated to Henry Wriothlesley.

As for using evidence produced by Sir Sidney Lee—Mr. Looney did. And may I here pay posthumous tribute to Sir Sidney whose *Life of William Shakespeare* was published eleven years before Mr. Looney's *Shakespeare Identified*. He had the honesty to prelude his biographical statements by variations on the word "doubtless".

All Oxfordians owe a debt to Stratfordians and other heretics for unearthing relevant documents. It is only a matter of courtesy to acknowledge the source of such findings where they are used. It in no way commits one to the theory propounded by the author named.

With regard to the portraits; I, too, have seen, and possess, photographs of portraits of Queen Elizabeth and the Third Earl of Southampton, and I see no resemblance between them.

Far from being unsympathetic to Mr. and Mrs. Ogburn, I only wish that so great a labour had a surer foundation.

KATHLEEN LE RICHE.

Dear Sir,

My short article on *This Star of England* did not pretend to be a review, or appraisal, of the

book as a whole; and, for reasons of space, I was obliged to confine myself strictly to the two points which I attempted to make.

I do not think I can usefully add anything to what I then wrote, except perhaps to say that if the evidence which the authors themselves adduced to support their case is now rejected by them as doubtful or valueless, on the ground that Leicester (if I understand correctly) would say anything the Queen wanted him to say, and that Talbot may not have been correctly informed, there remains no case for me to contest.

It seems possible that the authors were not acquainted with my book on the Sonnets, where they would have found some of my reasons for concluding that the mother of the "Fair Youth" was dead; and I do not see why this conclusion should be called "extraordinary, even fantastic". Mothers do die sometimes.

In the same book they would have found some of my reasons for stating that "he and the poet were living in the same home for a number of years". But Southampton was brought up in the household of Burghley, as Master of the Queen's Wards, and did not share the home of Lord Oxford. Therefore, if my premise is correct, my conclusion that Southampton cannot have been the fair youth necessarily follows.

My article was not meant to be (and, in fact, was not) an attack upon the book. It was meant to be an impartial criticism of the direct evidence adduced by the authors in support of what I took to be their main thesis. I tried simply to state the facts, expressing no personal feelings, and venturing neither upon praise nor blame.

G. W. PHILLIPS.

Sir,

With reference to your article on a portrait by Nicolas Hilliard of a man holding a hand emerging from clouds, with the words *Amoris Attici ergo* on the background, I wonder are any readers aware that in the British Museum is Hilliard's sketch for a great seal of Ireland, in which from either side a hand appears out of clouds holding up the Royal Cloak just below shoulder level. This same design also appears in the actual second great seal of England. Hilliard, of course, designed the seals of Elizabeth's reign.

The speculation as to what this means in both the seal and the miniature above mentioned is intriguing. Does it, in the case of the seal, signify an unseen power from above supporting her on her throne? or is it a subtle suggestion that a human power behind the scenes was the real ruler? If she said, "He that placed me on the throne hath power to keep me on it", "He" has been taken to mean God, quite naturally, if we swallow the usual historical verdict upon her. It is not impossible that "He" refers to Burleigh, or could it refer to Satan or an occult power which would be practically the same. Personally I do not altogether accept the idea that the portrait referred to in the *News-Letter* is Vere.

The picture of the seal and the design for it appears in the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, 26th June, 1953, of which I have sent a copy so that it could be shown at a meeting to those who are interested.

H. K. KENNEDY-SKIPTON, F.R.S.A.
Dublin.

Dear Sir,

May I call your readers' attention to these three books by an American, William Kittle:

1. *George Gascoigne, April, 1562, to January 1st, 1578, or Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604.* Published by W. F. Roberts Company, Washington D.C., 1930, 217 pp.

2. *Edward: de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604.* The Buchanan Company, Washington D.C., 1935, 252 pp.

3. *Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford and Shakespeare.* The Monumental Printing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1942, (edited and published after Mr. Kittle's death, Copyright by Christy Ann Kittle), 209 pp.

All these books are now available at the British Museum Library.

Dr. JOHN RICHARD MEZ.

ADDENDA

FOUR PAMPHLETS BY REV. GERALD RENDALL

- (a) "Ashbourne" Portrait of Shakespeare.
- (b) Arthur Golding Translator—Personal and Literary—Shakespeare and Edward de Vere
- (c) Shakespeare in Essex and East Anglia.
- (d) Ben Johnson and the first Folio Edition of Shakespeare's Plays.

PAMPHLET BY G. BOWEN
Shakespeare's Farewell

PAMPHLETS BY MRS. KATHLEEN LE RICHE

- (a) The Essex Review
- (b) Shakespeare in Essex

Shakespeare's Last Plays by E. M. W. Tillyard
1 copy.

Oxford Shakespeare Case Corroborated by Percy Allen. 1 copy.

Lord Burghley in Shakespeare by G. W. Phillips.
1 copy.

Sunlight on Shakespeare's Sonnets by G. W. Phillips
1 copy.

Sur la trace d'un Shakespeare Inconnu by G. Lambin.

Lord Oxford and the Shakespeare Group by Montague W. Douglas.

Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford by William Kittle. 3 copies.

* Owing to the temporary indisposition of Mr. William Kent, this issue of the *Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter* has been edited by the Asst. Hon. Secretary, Miss Hilda Amphlett.

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71 Union Road, S.W.4. (Mac. 2007).

The Hon. Editor is always glad to receive MSS., newspaper-cuttings, letters, etc., for publication.