



Charles Arundel later died on the Continent, a pensioner of Philip II. His written catalogue of Oxford's "vices" must be accepted with allowances due the testimony of a proven traitor and political termite. But several of his comments on the literary Earl are extremely interesting when studied in connection with the Healey theory.

For instance, Arundel claims that on numerous occasions he has heard Oxford express commendation of the patriotism of "Dr. Sanders and Lord Baltinglas."

Both of these men were prominent in the Irish "holy war" that seriously threatened English control during 1579 and 1580.

James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald raised the banner of revolt. He was accompanied by the famous Dr. Nicolas Sanders, who bore a papal legate's commission. For several months this rebellion caused keen anxiety to the English overlords. It was finally put down with much bloodshed.

In her *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*, Mrs. Clark argues that Dr. Nicholas Sanders is the original of the miracle-worker referred to by Shakespeare under the nickname of "Saunders Simpcox" in *2 Henry VI*, II, 1.

Soon after the Fitzgerald-Sanders abortive attempt to throw off English rule, during the summer of 1580, James Eustace, Third Viscount Baltinglas, took up arms against Elizabeth's Lord Deputy, Arthur Grey. Baltinglas issued a vigorous protest against "the severities and injustice inflicted by Elizabethan officials on the people of Ireland. He repudiated recognition of a woman as head of the Church." Baltinglas and his followers put up a determined but hopeless fight which finally ended with the leader's escape to the Continent. His estates being confiscated by the Crown, one house in Dublin was granted to Edmund Spenser who then served the Lord Deputy Grey as secretary.

The objections of Lord Baltinglas to English rule were based on humanitarian and constitutional grounds. He has always been considered an Irish patriot of high principle and stainless character. Lord Oxford may have known him personally. In any event, according to Arundel's testimony, the playwright Earl admired Baltinglas as a man of heroic mold despite the latter's enmity to the English government. *This attitude fits the Healey Shakespearean thesis perfectly.* It is a fact, moreover, that one of Shakespeare's marked characteristics is his ability to recognize heroic qualities in

the opponents of his dramatic protagonists. The inexplicable treatment of Joan of Arc, who is pictured as a harlot, is the outstanding exception that proves the rule. Is it just another "mere coincidence," as Oscar James Campbell and other orthodox pundits would have it, that the poetical nobleman here is accused of displaying the same admiration for the valor of an official enemy which Shakespeare so frequently expresses?

The Healey analysis from other angles is equally suggestive of Lord Oxford's creative hand in the plays. The knowledge of Irish folklore and music which Mr. Healey proves to have been among the Bard's accomplishments cannot be verified, through any Stratfordian clue. But here again, Lord Oxford is known to have been in close personal touch with repositories of such knowledge.

Edmund Spenser, who secured his first leasehold in Ireland as a result of the attainder of Lord Baltinglas and who lived in the land long enough to become a recognized authority on its customs and folklore, enjoyed the familiar acquaintance of the poet Earl. Spenser's dedicatory sonnet to Oxford in the 1590 edition of *The Faery Queene* not only enlists the nobleman's good will because Spenser needs patronage, but most significantly hails the nobleman as himself a great poet, a beloved initiate of the *Muses*:

And also for the love which thou dost bear  
To th' *Heliconian imps* and they to thee,  
They unto thee, and thou to them most dear . .

We may with reasonable assurance picture Edmund Spenser as a frequent dinner guest of "the passing singular odd"<sup>1</sup> Earl of Oxford during Spenser's visits to London. And as the two poets linger over their apples, cheese and wine, we can visualize the bohemian nobleman, famous throughout England for his love of the curious and the outlandish, "as well the histories of ancient times, and things done long ago, as also of the present estate of things in our days,"<sup>2</sup> lending eager ear to Spenser's tales of the wild Irish kerns who worship the moon "and do use to make the wolf their gossip."<sup>3</sup>

The author of *As You Like It* displays just such familiarity with Celtic folklore when he has Rosa-

1. Gabriel Harvey's description of Oxford in *Speculum Tuscanismi* (1580)
2. Arthur Golding's reference to Oxford's personality in the dedication to *The Histories of Trogus Pamppeius* (1564)
3. See Edmund Spenser's *View of Present State of Ireland* (1596)

lind mock the love-sick chorus of Phebe, Silvius and Orlando with:

Pray you, no more of this; 'tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon.

Earlier in the comedy, Rosalind—who, in her disdain for love-rhymes displays the same unusual characteristic that distinguishes Spenser's Rosalind of *The Shepheard's Calendar*—has laughed Orlando's forest-strewn verses to scorn:

I was never so berhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat, which I can hardly remember.

Here is not only a reference to transmigration, but to the claim of such Irish historians as Gerald de Barry that rats had been expelled from the Isle of Saints by the Bishop of Ferns, whose books they had probably gnawed and who used rhymes to effect his spells upon the rodents.

We can well imagine both Edmund Spenser and the witty and learned Earl of Oxford mulling over such bits of Irish legend as these. But it is difficult indeed to assume that the Stratford businessman would acquire similar *curiosa* from nowhere in particular.

"One may ask," says Mr. Healey. "where Shakespeare got his knowledge of Irish mythology, legend and literature. It formed a phenomenally exceptional knowledge in the England of his day, where it was not even known that it existed. Not to speak of Irish songs and ballads found in the plays. *Indeed, the subject of Shakespeare's knowledge of Irish music alone holds much more than the merit of mere novelty to the ripe Shakespearean scholar.* . . . There are ten . . . Irish folk-lore songs alluded to in the Plays, but every song is *concealed under an alias.*"

As the partisan and well-wisher of such Irish patriots as Sanders and Baltinglas and the personal friend of Spenser, Oxford was well circumstanced, it would seem, to acquire just such knowledge. Moreover, he had one outstanding advantage here which made it possible for him to evaluate and utilize for dramatic purposes the so-called "hidden music of Eire."

For Lord Oxford was himself a musician of outstanding talent. He even figures in English political history in a musical interlude on the occasion of the execution of Essex for high treason. The story is too well known to repeat in detail here. But all of the Earl's biographical commentators stress his addiction to music, as well as to poetry and the drama.

By the same token, every musical authority who writes on Shakespeare reaches the conclusion that the Bard had so thorough an appreciation of musical technique that many of his finest stage effects are achieved by the scientific application of this knowledge. Louis C. Elson's *Shakespeare In Music* gives many instances in point. His discussion of the wonderful subtlety with which music is employed to characterize Ophelia's mental collapse is illuminating. Of Scene 2, Act I, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Elson says: "This scene could easily give rise to an entire chapter of musical comment and elucidation."

It seems certain that no creative artist possessing technical ability of this high order would be able to conceal it in his person as effectively as the citizen of Stratford did. *His most assiduous biographers have been unable to trace a single contemporary reference to their man which offers any musical connotation whatever.* To claim for such a will o' the wisp every personal accomplishment that the author of the plays and poems exhibits, without bothering to substantiate such claims with *bona fide* documentation, may be acceptable practice in the realm of scholarship presided over by Prof. Campbell and his fellow obscurantists, but it will hardly pass muster among serious students of the Shakespeare problem.

Here again Lord Oxford is the one great concealed poet of his age who can be definitely shown to have embodied in his own person the knowledge and innate ability to meet the musical requirements of "Mr. William Shakespeare's" creative role, as both Messrs. Healey and Elson define them.

During the 1590 decade the Earl who already numbered among his proteges such Shakespearean "source" writers as Thomas Watson, Anthony Munday, Thomas Churchyard, John Lyly and Robert Greene—not to mention his uncle, Arthur Golding—became the acknowledged patron of the famous Anglo-Irish composer John Farmer.

Farmer held the post of organist and master of the children of the choir in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, according to the Chapter Acts of that church, reprinted in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (3rd Edition). He was one of the most gifted composers and musical arrangers of the Elizabethan era, a pioneer in the fields of the madrigal and counterpoint of different orders.

In 1591 Farmer dedicated his first studies in counterpoint to Edward de Vere, "Earle of Oxenford." *Divers and Sundry Ways . . . to the Number of Forty, Upon One Playn Song* carries a signifi-

cant statement of its composer's relationship to the nobleman who, like his prototype in *All's Well*, is known to have sold many "a goodly manor for a song":

"Hereunto, my good Lord, I was the rather emboldened for your Lordship's great affection to this noble science (i.e., music) hoping for the one you might pardon the other, and desirous to make known your inclination this way. . . . Besides this, my good Lord, I bear this conceit, that not only myself am vowed to your commandment, but all that is in me is dedicated to your Lordship's service."

At this time, as his volume states, John Farmer was living in London "in Broad Street, near the Royal Exchange."

On August 10th, 1596, the records of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, tell us that Farmer was sworn in as "Vicar Corral" in place of Robert Jordan, "resigned." He held this position until 1599, when he appears to have returned to London to resume a close personal relationship to the Earl of Oxford.

During the same year he published another work, which insures his immortality in British musical history. This was *The First Set of English Madrigals to Four Voices. Newly composed by John Farmer, practitioner in the art of Musique. Printed at London in Little Saint Helen's by William Barley . . . Anno Dom. 1599.*

Again Farmer dedicates his labors to his "very good Lord and Master," the "Earle of Oxenforde."

The wording of this dedication is so interesting from the personal angle that it should be read at length:

Most honourable Lord, it cometh not within the compass of my power to express all the duty I owe, nor to pay the least part; so far have your honourable favours outstripped all means to manifest my humble affection that there is nothing left but praying and wondering. There is a canker worm that breedeth in many minds, feeding only upon forgetfulness and bringing forth to birth but ingratitude. To show that I have not been bitten with that monster, for worms prove monsters in this age, which yet never any painter could counterfeit to express the ugliness, nor any poet describe to decipher the height of their illness, I have presumed to tender these Madrigals only as remembrances of my service and witness of your Lordship's liberal hand, by which

I have lived so long, and from your honourable mind that so much have all liberal sciences. In this I shall be most encouraged if your Lordship vouchsafe the protection of my first-fruits, for that both of your greatness you best can, and for your judgment in music best may. *For without flattery be it spoke, those that know your Lordship know this, that using this science as a recreation, your Lordship have overgone most of them that make it a profession. Right Honourable Lord, I hope it shall not be distasteful to number you here amongst the favourers of music, and the practisers, no more than Kings and Emperors that have been desirous to be in the roll of astronomers, that being but a star fair, the other an angel's choir.*

Thus most humbly submitting myself and my labours and whatever is or may be in me to your Lordship's censure and protection, I humbly end, wishing your Lordship as continual an increasing of health and honour as there is a daily increase of virtue to come to happiness.

Your Lordship's most dutiful servant to command,

JOHN FARMER

Here we have unimpeachable contemporary documentation regarding Lord Oxford's ability as a musician which should convince the most skeptical that he was fully capable of applying creatively all of the musical technique, taste and feeling which Elson and other authorities find throughout the Shakespearean plays.

The Earl's relationship to the scholarly choir-master of the Dublin Cathedral should also help make plain the avenues through which the mysterious Bard acquired his intimate knowledge of the folk tunes of Eire.

As invariably happens when new arguments, based upon *bona fide* documentation and genuine logic, are presented to identify the actual personality behind the professional mask of "Mr. William Shakespeare," Lord Oxford's Irish sympathies, together with his acceptance as a musical colleague by the composer of *The First Set of English Madrigals*, open up many interesting contributory lines of evidence that the playwriting Earl was the center of the great Elizabethan creative enigma. Some of these new-found facts, subsidiary to present purposes, deserve further study. I hope to present them in an early issue of this same publication.

Charles Wisner Barrell

## Washington Physicist Speaks

On February 10th, Dr. John Howard Dellinger, author and distinguished physicist connected with the National Bureau of Standards, authority on Radio Communication, and member of many commissions dealing with Radio Communication both at home and abroad, gave a talk before a group of some thirty people on "Who Wrote Shakespeare?" He prefaced his talk by relating the story of his and his wife's visit to Stratford-on-Avon and the shock they received on reading the four lines of doggerel on Shaksper's tomb, which they compared with some of the immortal lines written by the poet. He reviewed the few facts known about Shaksper, separated tradition from recorded facts, and pointed out that thought on the subject will be greatly clarified by considering Shaksper and the poet as two different persons.

Dr. Dellinger then described the searches that have been made for the actual author. These have taken three main lines: (a) comparison of style, expressions, metaphors, and ideas; (b) the revelations of supposed ciphers in the works; (c) deduction of the author from self-revelation in the works. He described the claims of Bacon, Rutland, Derby, and the "syndicate" theory. Method (a) has failed or at least has been insufficient because it seems to bolster the claims of several contestants. Method (b) has been discredited. Method (c) is the successful one of J. Thomas Looney, author of "Shakespeare" Identified in *Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*. He told of Mr. Barrell's work with the portraits, and concluded with the statement that the Oxford hypothesis bids fair to clear up much of the mystery about Shakespeare.

Considerable discussion followed the talk. The question most difficult for some of Dr. Dellinger's hearers to meet was the dramatist's reasons for concealment and the related question of how Shaksper came to be thought of as the author. Also discussed were the First Folio prefaces.

These are questions which invariably come up when the problem of Shakespeare authorship is under discussion. In possible amplification of Dr. Dellinger's replies, it may be said, in part that they may be answered by a well known fact: there was a convention in Elizabeth's time, with almost the force of law, which forbade a nobleman to publish his writings under his own name. It is true that a

few of Lord Oxford's youthful poems were published with his signature attached, but it is doubtful if anything was so published with his permission after the War with Spain began in 1586. As Lord Great Chamberlain of England, he had duties to perform in a war which seriously threatened his country. Strong evidence exists which indicates that his was the figure behind the stage propaganda intended to unite the nation's religious factions in a patriotic endeavor to win the war. We may believe that he could pursue this work more effectively by keeping his own personality in the background. After 1590, in which year his playing company was dissolved for an infraction of the religious code governing the stage, badly mutilated versions of plays later known as Shakespeare's crept into print. These versions, according to careful scholars, were written down from memory by a prompter or actor and were printed by a "pirate" printer, that is, entirely without the permission of the author. After a succession of these appeared, it is reasonable to believe that the dramatist insisted on his true manuscripts being preserved in print, though, being bound by the convention already mentioned, it was necessary that they be published under a pseudonym. How the name Shakespeare came to be adopted is not entirely clear and the arguments pro and con are too lengthy to enter into at this time.

The part played by Ben Jonson in the writing of the prefaces to the First Folio, a part which has caused much controversy, was most plausibly argued by Mr. J. Thomas Looney in the April number of the NEWS-LETTER. Mr. Looney seems to have solved this mystery as completely as he solved the problem of the authorship in "Shakespeare" Identified.

E. T. C.

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## Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey, priceless heritage of the past, has been bombed! Can vandalism go further? That beautiful building of antique stone, coronation seat of kings and queens, sepulchre of the great, tomb of the Unknown Soldier, has been struck by the hand of a malicious pigmy. That shrine, to which Americans turn their feet on their first visit to England, must be restored and the hope for its restoration must be one of the determining factors for a speedy victory in this terrible war!

NEWS-LETTER  
THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP  
AMERICAN BRANCH

VOLUME II                      JUNE, 1941                      No. 4

*President*

Louis P. Bén  zet, A.M., Ph.D.

*Vice-Presidents*

James Stewart Cushman

Mrs. Eva Turner Clark

*Secretary and Treasurer*

Charles Wisner Barrell

Occasional meetings of the American Branch will be held, for which special notices will be sent to members. Dues for membership in the American Branch are \$2.50 per year, which sum includes one year's subscription to the NEWS-LETTER.

The officers of the American Branch will act as an editorial board for the publication of the NEWS-LETTER, which will appear every other month, or six times a year.

News items, comments by readers and articles of interest to all students of Shakespeare and of the acknowledged mystery that surrounds the authorship of the plays and poems, are desired. Such material must be of reasonable brevity. No compensation can be made to writers beyond the sincere thanks of the Editorial Board. Articles and letters will express the opinions of their authors, not necessarily of the editors. They may be sent to Charles Wisner Barrell, 17 East 48th Street, New York, N. Y.

## New York Public Library

The announcement on May 5th that Mr. Owen D. Young's collection of literary treasures had been presented to the New York Public Library brought a thrill of pleasure to all who have enjoyed the privilege of working in that inspirational centre. This magnificent gift will be housed in that part of the Library known as the Berg Memorial Rooms, founded by Dr. Albert A. Berg, noted bibliophile, and will soon be open to research by accredited scholars.

Among 10,000 rarities, our first choice on the list is the Shakespeare First Folio, 1623, known as the Dean Sage copy. Besides valuable first editions of famous books, there are many manuscripts and autograph letters, wonderful material for scholarly researchers.

## Our President's Boston Lecture

On April 5th, President Bén  zet, as one of a series of speakers in the "Contemporary Writers" lecture course of Boston University, gave an hour and a half speech on the Oxford-Shakespeare controversy before a good sized audience, composed largely of high school teachers from Boston and vicinity.

Professor Everett L. Getchell, head of the English Department, in introducing Mr. Bén  zet, confessed that after a two hour conversation with the latter some two years ago, he had begun a serious study of the Oxford case, with the result that he had been completely converted. The audience gave Mr. Bén  zet close attention and asked many illuminating questions afterward, with the result that many announced that a new light for them had fallen on some dark places in the Shakespeare story. Among the auditors was Sir Thomas Beecham, the well known musical composer and conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, who remarked after the lecture to Professor Getchell that at last he had heard a satisfying solution of the "Shakespeare mystery."

The lecture received favorable comment in three Boston newspapers and brought out a sympathetic editorial in the Boston Post of April 5th.

## Important Books

The announcement can now be made that, in spite of submarines, we have at last secured from London six copies of Captain B. M. Ward's *Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, an invaluable study of the life of Edward de Vere. These few copies are on sale by the Shakespeare Fellowship, 17 East 48th Street, New York, at \$6.00 each, 10 cents additional for postage.

Following the fire of last December, when all copies of Mr. J. Thomas Looney's "*Shakespeare Identified in Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*" remaining in London were lost in that dreadful holocaust, the few copies on consignment to the Shakespeare Fellowship, American Branch, have been advanced in price to \$10.00 each, 10 cents additional for postage.

Members will be happy to pay this advance in price when they know that the money goes direct to Mr. Looney.

## De Vere Theory Growing in California



On a recent trip to the Pacific Coast the editor had the pleasure of a visit with Mr. Flodden W. Heron, De Vere enthusiast at San Francisco.

Mr. Heron is credited with being the first person to use postage stamps of literary people in First

Editions of their works. This was in 1926. These stamps were issued by foreign governments because such honors had not then been bestowed upon American authors. Being the owner of a fine library, and as stamps of some of his favorite authors (Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns, Lewis Carroll, A. Edward Newton and others) had not appeared, he proceeded to have stamps of these authors made for his personal use.

As an earnest member of the Shakespeare Fellowship and an ardent supporter of the De Vere theory, he had stamps made depicting Edward De Vere as Shakespeare (see copy above) and these he uses on his "Shakespeare" correspondence.

Mr. Heron was one of the earliest advocates of the plan for the United States to grant postal immortality to authors, composers and others, the plan that resulted in the popular Famous American Series of U. S. postage stamps issued last year.

This idea stems from the old English custom of including authors in the lists of people for whom streets and roads (there are almost as many roads as streets in London) are named. The old maps of London show a Shakespeare Road, and incidentally, we find that not far distant from it is Heron Road. This last was named after an author of the late eighteenth century, who was an ancestor of our San Francisco member. We learned that Mr. Heron has written the Lord Mayor suggesting that, in the new London that is now being planned for after the war, the above mentioned Shakespeare Road be changed to De Vere road because the latter is the real author whom it was originally intended to honor.

Many members of our Fellowship feel that the day will come when the beautiful Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, containing its priceless literary treasures, will be re-dedicated to the right "Emperor, by the Grace of God, of all literature." Mr. Heron goes further and declares that all additional proof and evidence of Edward De Vere,

Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, being the author of the masterful plays and sonnets, will come from within the walls of the Folger Shakespeare Library itself, where the world's greatest collection of books on the subject is available to and in use by students and researchers.

During April, the Shakespeare-De Vere birthday anniversary month, Mr. Heron addressed the following clubs in San Francisco on the subject: The Browning Society, the Novo Club, Pi Chapter Study Group, The Literary Anniversary Club and the San Francisco Club. The last mentioned was held in the Shakespeare Garden in Golden Gate Park. To all of these talks Mr. Heron takes with him his personal collection, plays and parts of plays from the First, Second, Third and Fourth Folios and other rare books and manuscripts of the Elizabethan period and thus really illustrates many of his statements.

For his subject he used *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*, which is the title of a book by the writer. We hope that other members will take a more active part in keeping before their several communities the progress we are making in the solving of the world's greatest literary mystery.

Eva Turner Clark

## Richard II

A reviewer of Mr. J. Dover Wilson's edition of *King Richard II*, published in 1938, has this to say: "He (Mr. Wilson) holds that although Shakespeare had an actor's knowledge of *Thomas of Woodstock* and had read Daniel, his chief source was a lost play on Richard II written by a scholar of wide reading (possibly the author of *The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England*) who even drew on unprinted fourteenth-century French manuscripts. This account of the sources is not revolutionary, though it uses and brilliantly develops some neglected modern studies."

If Mr. J. Dover Wilson would take a little time to investigate the Oxfordian theory of Shakespeare authorship, he would find in Edward de Vere, Lord Oxford, "a scholar of wide reading" and one quite capable of writing *Richard II*. He would find it unnecessary to assume a "lost play" on the subject. Such an assumption is only necessary for the building up of the Stratford Shakspeare, whose birth in 1564 precludes the possibility of his having written such a play in the early 1580's, when he was under twenty years of age.

## Bénézet versus Campbell

President Bénézet, in March, sent to the editors of Harper's an answer to the article "Shakespeare Himself" by Professor Campbell, which had appeared in the July number of that magazine. He pointed out that Dr. Campbell chose to concentrate on the Ashbourne portrait and to ignore the fact, made so clear by Mr. Barrell, that *three* likenesses of the Bard of Avon, under the all-seeing eye of the X-ray, had been revealed as portraits of the one man in all England who had had the education, the experiences and the leisure to qualify him to write the immortal plays and poems. He asked Mr. Campbell why he called the schoolmaster story, which comes from Aubrey alone, "most authentic," the while dismissing as unworthy of belief the butcher's apprentice story, which is given both by Aubrey and by Dowdall. He called attention to the fact that while Campbell pictures John Shaksper as possessing a "small fortune," Sir Edmund Chambers admits that beginning with William's seventh year the family were in straitened circumstances. He replied to Dr. Campbell's claim that John S. could write, and frequently did so, when nobody was looking, by quoting Malone's Prolegomena, in which this scholar points out that out of nineteen persons who signed a paper, ten of whom were aldermen and the rest burgesses, "seven only could write their names; and among the twelve marksmen is found John Shaksper." He disposed of Green's famous "Shake-scene" reference with the argument printed in a previous NEWS-LETTER.

He asked Mr. Campbell how an actor with as little education as the Stratford youth could have found time to read the hundreds of books which Anders and Neilson and Thorndike prove that the author of the plays had read. He reminded him that to date no one has dared challenge the proofs of Cairncross, that "Hamlet" first appeared in 1588. He cited a sample week from the diary of Henslowe in which it is recorded that at the "Rose," from June 3rd to June 9th, 1594, the following plays were given: "Hester and Ashueros," "Jew of Malta," "Andronicus," "Cutlacke," "Bellendon" and "Hamlet," asking how any actor who was rehearsing a new play every day had leisure to produce two masterpieces per year and "pick up" knowledge of law, music, Italian, French, and the language and social customs of a stratum of society

from whose homes and councils he had been strictly barred.

He refuted Campbell's claim that Shakespeare betrays that he is a landlubber whenever he wrote of the sea, by quoting Elze on the playwright's "extraordinary and undeniable knowledge of seamanship." He quoted Lord Campbell and Lord Penzance on the poet's flawless and minute knowledge of law in refutation of Dr. Campbell's claim that the Bard knows no more on this subject than dozens of other writers of the period.

He showed that Mr. Campbell is finally driven to the oft-quoted argument that a "genius" needs no education. But a genius, as Mr. Barrell has said, is not born speaking five languages. He asked Professor Campbell twenty questions: why the Shakespeare mss. were said to be so rare and precious in 1609, why at that time they were in the possession of "grand possessors"; why Shakespeare, after 1605, "reverts to his old habit of collaboration," whereat Sir Sidney Lee is so greatly puzzled; who lost the four thousand pounds on the publication of the First Folio; why the Stratford man, who sued P. Rogers for two shillings, utterly failed to mention to his family in his will, the precious manuscripts which he has handed over, spurlos versenkt, to his two actor friends, etc., etc.

The editor of Harper's sent the mss. to Professor Campbell, then sent Mr. Bénézet Mr. Campbell's comments, which by the way were very brief and ignored all the major issues. He sent Mr. Campbell's reply (a copy) to Mr. Bénézet with an explanation that there was such a crisis in Greece and Yugoslavia that there was no space in Harper's to devote at present to Shakespeare and such subjects. He added that having read Mr. Looney's book he had a sneaking leaning towards the Oxford theory but could not accept it in toto, or words to that effect. So ended the attempt to induce Harper's to give some space to the other side of the debate. It is the same story: until some "recognized Shakespeare authority" comes out for the theory, orthodox-minded editors and publishers shy away from it. There was a still greater war crisis last June, but yet there was room for a Shakespeare article at that time. This is why we are forced to print our own NEWS-LETTER.



## "Unbelief in the Belief"

*Several requests have been received that Mrs. Davidson's paper on THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY, read before the Columbia Delphian Chapter, December 12, 1940, be printed in the NEWS-LETTER. It is with great pleasure that we are able to accede to these requests, though, because of the limitations of space, the paper has necessarily been somewhat briefed. To Mrs. Davidson, for her courtesy in supplying us with a copy of her address, we extend our grateful thanks.*

It is not news that the District of Columbia has two famous libraries. It is not news that the Library of Congress has grown about a nucleus of books that the renowned Thomas Jefferson felt obliged to sell in his need during his last days.

Nor is it news or a current event that the Folger Shakespeare Library is the result of fifty years of endeavor and research, and erected by a multi-millionaire to the glory of himself and as a memorial to the man he believed to be the author of the greatest comedies, tragedies, and poems of all time.

There are many people, however, who believe that this memorial is in honor of the Wrong Man. Twenty years ago, to have said so *out loud* would have brought down scorn, contempt, derision, perhaps "eggs, onions, even wire baskets" upon one's helpless pate!

But now those who voice their "unbelief in the belief" that Mr. Folger was right and dedicated this structure to the right man are daring to express their unbelief in his belief, and are daring unhesitatingly, for good and valid reasons. The beautiful, unique memorial may have a re-dedication in a time to come!

If Mr. Folger could have lived another fifty years and searched more deeply, he might have had other convictions and have felt constrained to right a wrong by ordering an atoning inscription to be carved across this white Georgia marble façade in memory of the Right Man, the man who did write these imperishable sonnets, poems, and plays.

Mr. Folger began at the bottom, earned his way through Amherst College, then a law course, and eventually became chairman of the Standard Oil Corporation. As he accumulated wealth, his interest in Shakespeare increased and he began the purchase of books on the subject. Some 75,000 volumes cost him \$4,265,000 and to house them he built the beautiful Library at a cost of about \$2,000,000. So valuable was this collection that it was brought from New York to Washington in an armored car

with five guards to assure adequate protection. In this cargo were many fascinating historical relics and mementoes of the Elizabethan era, plus two famous portraits. Of them more anon!

Chicago, New York, even Stratford-on-Avon, were considered for the site of this memorial and collection. Mr. Folger gave as his reason for deciding on Washington that he was an American and Washington was the capital of his nation. He paid his respects, however, to England and Stratford. The Tudor interior is evidence. The window in the Reading-Room is a copy of the principal window in Trinity Church, Stratford, where the bones of Mr. Folger's right man are supposedly interred with that famous curse upon any one who dares to disturb them!

The portrait bust on the wall above these said bones is now believed to be a forged copy variation of the lineaments of the Right Man! This bust has been found to have been made fifty years or more after the reputed bones were placed in the floor of this church.

A very great man lived in the Elizabethan Era, a man who used for a sufficient reason a mask, a pen-name, "William Shakespeare." Why? It was a convention in Elizabeth's day that no member of her court should publish his writings under his own name. This convention was strictly observed, otherwise any statement from the pen of any official would have been given political interpretation. Anonymity was important for an official who was directing stage propaganda. This was the reason for the mask, "William Shakespeare."

Thousands of volumes are on shelves claiming that the Stratford man wrote the matchless dramas and sonnets and a thousand more claiming that the right man is Sir Francis Bacon. His followers proudly call themselves Baconians. The Baconians *have* the honor to be the first to challenge the claims of the followers of the Stratford man.

Now another group, with not so many volumes to their credit, have moved into the ken of these two claimants and dare to say that the name of the Right Man has at long last been ferreted out. But why this long, long wait? Do you recall what Mark Twain said about the weather? Everybody is talking about it, but no one does anything about it!

This long time indifference continued for several centuries while England was changing from feudalism, and wars—continual wars, pending wars—dulled interest in literature. This mental apathy did not relax until the 19th century. Education brought back interest in the literature of the Eliza-

bethan Era—the era of Shakespeare, Spenser, Bacon, Sidney, Greene, Marlowe, Golding—an era of the most remarkable minds that England has produced.

Then came voices of Unbelief in the Belief that the man who held horses for “the Quality”—saved his tips, a penny-pincher—could possibly have been the author of the superfine literature found in these sonnets and plays!

The Honorable John Bright, England’s great statesman and politician, said: “No one but a fool would believe that this hostler was the author of these immortal masterpieces.” Many Englishmen have voiced their doubts. In this country, Emerson, Whittier, and a long list of Americans, also have voiced their unbelief. Statesmen, literary men, students, scholars, professors have said they did not believe the Stratford man could have written these masterpieces, but they did not know who did. Like Mark Twain’s weather, they merely *talked* about their unbelief.

But a psychological moment came! It was left to an English schoolmaster to lift the veil from this centuries-old mystery! His approach was systematic and scientific. This is not the time nor the place to review the process by which this scholarly schoolmaster developed his discovery of the man who did write these plays and sonnets. When he had satisfied himself that he had solved the problem, the World War was in progress. Prudently he placed the manuscript of his story of the identification of the true author in the keeping of the Librarian of the British Museum, where it remained until the Armistice. Soon after, his manuscript, with the revelation of identity and the claim that he had brought the Right Man from behind his mask, was published under the title “*Shakespeare Identified in Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*,” written by J. Thomas Looney.

As time passes, more and more authentic discoveries are being made about this Man with a Mask—the Lord Great Chamberlain who bore the canopy for his Queen. There are fewer scorners and scoffers and a great lull in expletives, for there is much to consider—and reconsider!

It would be supererogation to anticipate the pleasure you will have when you read how and where Mr. Looney found the key to this age-old mystery. How thrilled, how awe-stricken he must have felt when he discovered that the sonnets and the plays were largely biographical!

Mr. Looney’s book will tell you that in a poem he found correspondences, parallels, analogies, and

coincidences to passages in the sonnets and plays, and just how he found the author who knew law, Latin and Greek, French and Italian, was master of the highest type of English, knew astronomy, music, history, ornithology, knew all about horses and horsemanship, was a feudalist, an aristocrat, and lived at court!

The Library of Congress has perhaps the largest collection of “Shakespeareana” in the world. On the shelves you will find volumes on all sides of this famous controversy about the Man who left such an achievement behind him. Can any one believe that a mere hostler, who lived in the small hamlet of Stratford-on-Avon and whose only language was a dialect, was able to write these sonnets and plays?

When you have read what the Stratford proponents have to say, then read the schoolmaster’s “*Shakespeare Identified in Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*”; follow it by reading *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*, by Eva Turner Clark, and her other book, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare’s Plays*; also Captain B. M. Ward’s *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*. There are many others. It is truth about the life and writings of Edward de Vere that is desired. *Vero nihil verius*, nothing truer than truth, was the motto of the Earls of Oxford.

Such tools of scientific accuracy as X-ray and infra-red photography have now penetrated this same age-old secret. We have scientific proof that Edward de Vere, Lord Oxford, posed for three well-known ancient portraits that have been regarded as portraits of the Stratford man for some two hundred years. One, known as the Hampton Court Shakespeare, is owned by the royal family of Great Britain; the other two are in the Folger Library, Washington, being known as the Ashbourne Shakespeare (by the Dutch painter, Cornelius Ketel) and the Janssen Shakespeare. The discovery that these portraits had undergone fraudulent treatment was made by none other than Mr. Charles Wisner Barrell, Secretary of the American Branch of the Shakespeare Fellowship, a Shakespearean scholar and authority, and an expert photographer.

Mr. Barrell applied his X-rays with the permission of the Folger authorities and the same courteous permission was granted by the Hampton Court authorities. The resulting photographs show that the lineaments and *over-painted* symbols in these three portraits belong to Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford. There is, at Welbeck Abbey, an untampered portrait of Edward de Vere owned

## Christopher Marlowe

### Certain Perplexing Problems

A book of special interest to students of Shakespeare is the recently published *Christopher Marlowe, A Biographical and Critical Study* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940), by the eminent Elizabethan scholar, Dr. Frederick S. Boas. Investigation into Marlowe's life during recent years has been fruitful and the newest findings have been incorporated into Dr. Boas's latest book. What will be said here will be in no sense a review of the book, which deserves careful reading.

Because the period when Marlowe flourished coincided with an important part of the life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and the supposed rise of William Shakespeare in the dramatic world of London, there are questions to be asked, problems to be considered.

Christopher Marlowe, born in Canterbury, son of a shoemaker, entered Corpus Christi College, Cambridge University, towards the end of 1580 under a scholarship established by the learned Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury. "In 1587 he had held his scholarship for the maximum of six years, on the presumption, as it would seem," says Dr. Boas, "that he intended to take holy orders." Something happened between Lent and June of that year which impelled the University authorities to withhold from him the Master of Arts degree towards which he had been working, but at this point the Privy Council intervened and said that "he should be furthered in the degree he was to take this next Commencement: Because it was not her Majesties pleasure that anie one employed as he had been in matters touching the benefit of his

*Continued from page 46*

by the Duke of Portland, and another at Bestwood Lodge owned by the Duke of St. Albans. If the cheaters could have had access to these portraits, they would doubtless have camouflaged them.

If Mr. Folger could have lived a few years longer and have seen how Science is corroborating and supplementing the labors of Mr. Looney and Mr. Barrell, he would doubtless now be in the ever increasing ranks of the group who call themselves Oxfordians.

*Elizabeth R. Davidson*

Countrie should be defamed by those that are ignorant in th' affaires he went about." Marlowe took the degree at the Commencement in July.

The fact that there were three Christopher Marlowes at Cambridge about the same time, with the name variously spelled as Marley, Morley, or Marlor, has brought confusion to the identification of the dramatist in different situations. It is, however, apparent that it was the dramatist who was entrusted with a confidential mission to Rheims, headquarters of English Catholics plotting the invasion of England and the dethronement of the Queen, a mission to which the Privy Council refers in vague terms.

Since Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Part I, was produced on the London stage in this same year of 1587, Dr. Boas, with others, believes he must have written it while still in residence in Corpus Christi.

A question here intrudes itself but, before asking it, we must take a look at the dramatic movement of the period. In 1586 a grant of one thousand pounds a year was given by the Queen to the dramatist Earl of Oxford for a purpose not disclosed. The stage at once became more active, to the point that the King of Spain showed more resentment than he had ever displayed in all his life on hearing an account "of the masquerades and comedies which the Queen of England orders to be acted at his expense." (Lippomano, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*.) Since we know that Lord Oxford's secretary, John Lyly, was "vicemaster" of Paul's and "foolemaster" of the Theatre, where the Queen's company played, we have only to link together these facts to realize that Oxford was the directing force behind this greatly increased activity of the stage. As it is about the same time that we begin to hear about the University Wits, it can be assumed that, in order to keep a heavy program going, Lord Oxford appealed to recent graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, and even to those on the point of graduation, who gave promise of dramatic ability, to assist in this important work of stage propaganda.

By 1587 the work was well organized and it is at this point that Marlowe appears in the picture with his *Tamburlaine*. Following the defeat of Bajazeth, Tamburlaine "beholds himself as master not only of the lands but of the seas, with his Persian fleet and men-of-war sailing about the Indian continent,"

Even from Persepolis to Mexico,  
And thence unto the Straits of Bualter,  
Where they shall meet and join their force  
in one,

Keeping in awe the Bay of Portingale,  
 And all the ocean by the British shore;  
 And by this means I'll win the world at last.

This passage seems more applicable to the Spanish King than to Tamburlaine and Dr. Boas comments upon it as follows: "The last lines seem to be almost an ironic anticipation of the proud aims with which Philip of Spain was so soon after the production of the play to send the Invincible Armada to its doom." There seems no reason to doubt that the intent of this passage, indeed of the whole play, was to arouse the public to the menace threatening England. Since the newspaper and the radio did not then exist, stage propaganda was the easiest method by which people could be stirred to action.

Our question must now be asked. Was the Earl of Oxford, dramatist, patron of playing companies, and believed to be director of stage propaganda, the person who discovered Marlowe's dramatic ability? Was he the person who brought Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* to the London stage for the express purpose of teaching the people what might be expected of a ruthless conqueror, as Philip of Spain, with his war like preparations, then threatened to be?

A quarto edition, 1594, of *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage*, states that this tragedy was played by the Children of Her Majesty's Chapel. Dr. Boas says there is no record of any performance of this company in London between 1584 and 1601, and asks when *Dido* was acted. The records do state that, 1 January 1584, Lyly's *Campaspe* was played before her Majesty by her Majesty's Children and the Children of Paul's, and, 3 March 1584, Lyly's *Sapho and Phao* was played before her Majesty by the same companies, the warrants for payment in both cases calling the combined companies the Earl of Oxford's players. There is reason to believe that this combination of companies was known for several years by the names of the two companies composing it, sometimes one and sometimes the other, and again, by the name of the patron, Lord Oxford. Walsingham's spy reported in January 1587 that the Earl of Oxford's company was one of those which regularly set up players' bills in the city every day in the week. In this connection, through these years as we have already said, John Lyly was acting as secretary to Lord Oxford, while at the same time he was directing plays at Paul's and at the Theatre, where the adult Queen's company gave performances, as we know by Gabriel Harvey's statement in 1593, that Lyly "bath not played the Vicemaster of Poules, and the Foole-

master of the Theatre for naughtes." This indicates that, since his secretary Lyly was "vicemaster" of Paul's, the Master was Lord Oxford. One of the popular companies through the late 1580's was a second Queen's company, mentioned somewhat obscurely, which must have been her Majesty's Children of the Chapel. This company, in combination with Paul's Children, or Boys, when not playing at Court, was known as the Oxford Boys. While the 1594 quarto of *Dido* says that play was performed by the Children of Her Majesty's Chapel, it must be remembered that this company was known by two other names and some light may be thrown on its early performance by a more careful investigation than has been made of the records of Paul's Boys and Oxford's Boys. Dr. Boas notes that Sir Edmund Chambers has shown that the stage-setting of *Dido* is similar to that of Lyly's court-comedies, which is significant in view of the argument above.

Dr. Boas says (p. 66), "There were three principal adult companies acting in London when Marlowe arrived there in 1587. The Queen's men had been formed in 1583 and had absorbed a number of the chief players from the companies of the Earls of Leicester and Oxford and others. The period of their special vogue was ended by the death of Richard Tarlton in 1588." Besides the Queen's, he names the company of which the patron was the Lord Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, and the company of Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, these two companies being amalgamated about 1590. What seems doubtful about Dr. Boas's statement is that Tarlton's death in 1588 ended the special vogue of the Queen's men. That it contributed may be true, but that it was the sole reason for the retrocession from high favor of the Queen's seems questionable when we remember that 1588 was the year of the Spanish Armada, with the minds of the populace fixed on the war with Spain. What had a more devastating effect on the Queen's company than either the war or Tarlton's death seems to have been Puritan opposition to the stage which was growing in violence from 1588, when the Marprelate tracts began to be published through 1589, to 1590, when the dissolution of Paul's Boys was forced for showing Martin Marprelate on the stage as an ape. The Queen's company was equally guilty of a similar infraction of the religious code of the times and, while not actually dissolved, then lost its vogue. But this was two years after Tarlton's death.

In 1589 Marlowe was arrested for participation in a fatal affray in which Thomas Watson killed

William Bradley, son of the landlord of the Bishop Inn at the corner of Gray's Inn Lane and Holborn, though both were later released, the jury finding that Watson had killed the victim in self-defence. Thomas Watson is believed to have been the poet of that name, author of *Hekatompathia*, the remarkable annotations of which are considered the work of the Earl of Oxford, the series of sonnets having been dedicated to him.

Marlowe's two sureties at the time of his arrest for his part in the affray were Richard Kitchen, Gent., of Clifford's Inn, and Humphrey Rowland, a citizen of more humble rank. Among the numerous activities Dr. Boas reports of Kitchen is that, "On 11 April 1594 he was indicted at the Guildhall for an assault on John Finch, and after the case had been removed to the Queen's Bench it was discharged in 1595-6." Was this the John Finch who became one of the numerous husbands of Anne Vavasor? It was this Anne Vavasor whose *affaire d'amour* with the Earl of Oxford in 1581 threw them both in the Tower for a brief period; a few years later she became the mistress of Sir Henry Lee, the Queen's Champion-at-Arms; in 1618, having more husbands than the law allowed, she was fined two thousand pounds. As she had married John Finch, "alias Freeman of the City of London, gent.," some time before 1590, it would seem possible that Richard Kitchen, attorney, may have been attempting to protect his client, the Earl of Oxford, against demands of John Finch for his wife, the former Anne Vavasor. This is of course, pure surmise but is plausible, especially in view of the fact that, after the death of Sir Henry Lee, Anne used every means possible to secure money from his estate, being in continual dispute with his heirs. Some important influence must have been brought to bear which secured the removal of the case of assault from the Guildhall, where the indictment was brought in April 1594, to the Queen's Bench, where it was discharged more than a year later.

Regarding Marlowe's other surety, Humphrey Rowland, Dr. Boas comments, "It is one of the minor mysteries of Marlowe's career how this East Smithfield maker of lanterns and churchwarden should have been one of his sureties and been accepted for the considerable sum of twenty pounds." In a study of his career, Dr. Boas states that in 1583 Lord Burghley wrote a letter to the Lord Mayor asking permission for Rowland, "a very honest poore man," to be admitted to the Cutler's Company. The fact that the Lord High Treasurer interested himself in this man to such a degree would indicate that

the man had been useful to him, had perhaps at one time been in his service, or possibly in the service of his son-in-law, Lord Oxford, and when occasion demanded, made further use of his services, supplying, as in the case of Marlowe, "the considerable sum of twenty pounds."

The conclusion seems to be that the Earl of Oxford, as director for the Queen of stage propaganda in support of the war against Spain, attempted to save one of his gifted young playwrights from the clutches of the law by providing sureties and influence, for we know Marlowe escaped penalty other than the brief imprisonment at the time of his arrest.

Thomas Kyd, dramatist and associate of Marlowe, was arrested 12 May 1593 and among his papers were found fragments of a disputation denying the divinity of Christ. Kyd protested to the Lord Keeper, Sir John Puckering, in a letter some time later, that the disputation had been written by Marlowe, who in the meantime, 30 May 1593, had been killed. In his protest to the Lord Keeper, Kyd says: "My first acquaintance with this Marlowe, rose upon his bearing name to serve my Lord although his Lordship never knew his service, but in writing for his plaiers." Upon this statement, Dr. Boas remarks, "It is one of the most tantalizing problems in Marlovian biography that Kyd omits to give a clue to the identification of this lord of whose household he had been a member in some capacity for nearly six years, and for whose company Marlowe wrote." Dr. Boas then considers the patrons of three important playing companies, the Lord Admiral, Lord Strange, and Lord Pembroke, none of whom seems to fit the picture, though he inclines to Lord Strange, later for a short period Earl of Derby.

Since John Lyly was directing the comedians of the Theatre and of Paul's (or Oxford's) Boys, while at the same time he was acting as secretary to the Earl of Oxford, it is a natural inference that Oxford was the Lord of whom Kyd wrote in 1593 (though of a period two or three years earlier). Kyd states that he had been a member of his Lord's household for nearly six years, that is, since 1587, only a few months after Lord Oxford had received the very large grant of one thousand pounds a year for a secret purpose, believed to be stage propaganda, the exact amount tradition says "Shakespeare" spent each year. It has been proved that Shakspeare of Stratford could never in any year have had an income of more than a quarter of that amount.

The Earl of Oxford was on terms of intimate

friendship with the patrons of the three playing companies named by Dr. Boas and, through the period of the war with Spain, doubtless supplied the companies with plays, some written by himself, others by the various University Wits under his direction. This somewhat speculative problem deserves more careful research than has yet been accorded it.

Eva Turner Clark

Since the foregoing article was written, The Times Literary Supplement (London), January 13, 1941, has been received and in it is published a letter from T. W. Baldwin, of Urbana, Illinois, which throws light on one of the problems mentioned by Dr. Boas. The letter follows:

In his "Christopher Marlowe," pp. 278-9, Professor Boas continues to be puzzled by Gabriel Harvey's line, "Weepe Powles, thy *Tamberlaine* voutsafes to dye," which he continues to take, though most unwillingly, as a reference to Marlowe. But Harvey has himself proceeded immediately to identify the person to whom he was alluding.

*Weepe Powles, thy Tamberlaine voutsafes to dye.*

L'enuoy.

The hugest miracle remains behinde,  
*The Second Shakerley Rash-swash to binde.*

A few lines later Harvey has also "a friendly *Caveat* to the *Second Shakerley* of Powles" i.e., Nashe. In "Pierce's Supererogation," dated April 27, 1593, nearly five months earlier, Harvey had referred to "a thing lighter than Tarletons Toy and vayner then Shakerleyes conceit, that is, Nash," and had called him "the booted Shakerley." But it is only in the publication of September 16, 1593, that Nashe becomes "the second Shakerley of Paul's." In the meantime, the plague had evidently got the first Shakerley of Paul's as Harvey says, Harvey's gentlewoman is now binding the second: i.e., Nashe. The first Shakerley (Peter) of Paul's is merely referred to as the *Tamburlaine* of Paul's as he was. "He appears to have been a frequenter of Paul's and to have been notorious for his swaggering behaviour" (McKerrow, "Nashe," Vol. IV, p. 155, and references there given). Marlowe himself does not enter into Harvey's allusions here. Harvey has not that to answer for.

## "The Shakespeare Documents"

The Stanford University Press has issued in two volumes "The Shakespeare Documents, Facsimiles, Transliterations, Translations, and Commentary," by B. Roland Lewis, Professor of English and Director of the Shakespeare Library of the University of Utah. Only 850 copies have been printed and bound and the type has been destroyed, so it is in effect a limited edition, says the announcement. "Here are new and independent transcripts of the original Shakespeare documents, with fresh English translations of the often difficult Medieval Latin. Chronological order has been followed throughout. Each document is printed not as a short excerpt but *in extenso* and is critically edited to the end that the entire body of material may be presented in terms of a sustained and organic whole." Professor Lewis pursued his studies in the important libraries and repositories of original material in this country and in England and deserves great praise for producing so painstaking a work. Typographically, these volumes are a fine example of the book-maker's craft.

Whether they be Oxfordians or Stratfordians, all students of Shakespeare will wish to examine this publication with care, for to most of us the view of original documents is impossible. Facsimiles of these documents, of which thirty-seven are given, are therefore of great value. While this work is perhaps the most important in its field ever published, there is apparently no evidence that is really new in its pages and *nothing* to upset the beliefs and opinions of Oxfordians.

## Shakespeare in Texas

On Tuesday, May 6th, the Henderson County Woman's Club, under the presidency of Mrs. William R. Bishop, entertained members and friends at the clubhouse at Athens with a general program covering the activities of the different departments through the year.

The Literary Department had made "The Man Who Was Shakespeare" their study and Mrs. W. R. Love gave an interesting summary of the year's work on that subject. Members were full of enthusiasm after each meeting and their friends asked to attend some of the meetings. They said the study was a pleasure from the very first lesson to the last.

## Shakespeare Had Read Dante

### Paget Toynbee's Reasoning Fallacious

In the August-September number of the NEWSLETTER I was privileged to set forth some of the striking parallel passages and equally suggestive "echoes" which have led me to the belief that Edward de Vere, the real "Shakespeare," had read and remembered Dante. I did so however under an admitted drawback: owing to war conditions I had been unable to get access to a book of some importance in this question, viz., Dr. Paget Toynbee's "Dante in English Literature from Chaucer to Cary" (London, 1909). Since my little article appeared I have luckily been able to refer to that remarkable collection of the citations from and allusions to Dante scattered through centuries of English literature, and I deem it only fair to those who did me the honour to accept my little article that I should now put before them candidly what Paget Toynbee has said on the subject. The great Dante scholar wrote as follows:

"The question as to whether Shakespeare had any knowledge of Dante has been discussed of late years at great length and, it must be confessed, with a certain lack of sobriety, by sundry Italian and Shakespearean scholars. Shakespeare's works have been ransacked for traces of Dante's influence and considerable ingenuity has been expended in attempting to prove his indebtedness. Many parallel passages and so-called imitations have been adduced, as in the case of Spenser, but the result is far from convincing. Some of the parallels are fairly close and one or two most striking, as for example, between Shakespeare's 'top of judgment' in *Measure for Measure* (Act II, Sc. 2) and Dante's 'cimia di giudizio'

(*Purg.* VI.37); or the expression 'ape of Nature' applied by Shakespeare to an artist in *The Winter's Tale* (Act V, Sc. 2) and Dante's similar use 'Scimia di natura' (*Inf.* XXIX.139); but the majority are wholly illusive. What can be more absurd, for instance, than to suppose, as one of these 'curious indagators' would have us do, that Shakespeare could not have written such a line as 'I drink, I eat, array myself and live' (*M. for M.*, Act III, Sc. 2) without going to Dante, 'Emangia, e bee, e dorme, e reste penni' (*Inf.* XXXIII.141), for it? Few who have examined the evidence such as it is will have any hesitation in endorsing the conclusion of the well-known Shakespearean scholar (Dr. F. J. Furnivall) who expressed his belief that 'if Shakespeare had known Dante he would have so used him and so often as to leave no doubt on the point.'" Introduction to *Dante in English Literature*, p. xxiv.

It will be observed that while Paget Toynbee scouts the possibility of Shakespeare having known Dante, he furnishes three instances of verbal parallelism, one of which ("top of judgment") occurs twice in Shakespeare, as pointed out in my essay. So convinced is he of the correctness of his assumption that he deliberately leaves Shakespeare out of his long list of English authors who knew Dante and deals with him summarily, in the Introduction, in the words quoted above. But there are two obvious fallacies in Toynbee's reasoning. First, he was a Stratfordian, like almost everybody else at the time he wrote, and to him it was therefore an *a priori* impossibility that William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon could have ever seen a copy of Dante's works, or read them if he did see them. Had he been told about Dante by somebody like Florio, for instance, he would not have remembered precise phrases. Therefore, *en hypothesi*, there can be no echoes of Dante in what Shakespeare wrote.

Moreover, reasons Toynbee, since William Shakspeare never left England and could not himself ever have had any direct knowledge of the Florentine poet, we can safely dismiss the question—another example of the arbitrary assumptions and prejudiced refusals to consider evidence in which Stratfordians are *necessarily* involved by their basic position. He can see easily enough the parallels in other writers whom he *knows* to have

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The Literary Department of the Henderson County Woman's Club has given an example which could well be followed in other clubs through the country. Combining a study of Oxford as Shakespeare with the history of England and other countries touched upon in the plays makes as fascinating a winter's program as can well be imagined. We recommend it to others!

been in Italy; to take one case out of hundreds, Milton's "And without desire to languish without hope" (*P. L.*, X, 995) with Dante's "Senza speme vivemo in desio" (*Inf.*, IV, 42). But, in the one case of Shakespeare, and Shakespeare only, a striking verbal parallel means nothing to a Stratfordian and to say that it does mean something is to him "absurd." Secondly, in his haste to endorse the conclusion of Dr. F. J. Furnivall, a learned Shakespearean of the old school, Toynbee has made the same assumption as did Furnivall himself. He has obviously assumed that Dante was as well and widely known at the close of the sixteenth century as he was in the nineteenth; otherwise there is no point in Furnivall's remark.

"Curious indagators" may therefore continue their efforts undismayed by the arbitrary dictum of Paget Toynbee who was obviously precluded by his Stratfordian faith from looking with an open mind at the evidence which lay before him and which should have meant more to him than to ordinary students. Meanwhile Oxfordians may rejoice that here, as in so many other instances, our opponents unconsciously help us to prove our case.

*J. J. Dwyer*

## "The Passionate Pilgrim"

Scribner has recently published a facsimile reproduction of the 1612 edition of Shakespeare's "The Passionate Pilgrim," edited by Professor Hyder Edward Rollins. It is reproduced from the copy in the Folger Shakespeare Library.

## Old Vic

Writing in the *Herald Tribune*, February 23rd, Henry Albert Phillips tells us that the Old Vic is on the list of London theatres reported damaged or destroyed by Nazi bombs.

He says, "As a structure, Old Vic was not important. It was grimy and ugly, both inside and out. Nor was it an antique. Its significance lay in the circumstance that it carried on a tradition of the English stage. . . . In an English sense, it was the 'people's theatre.'" He then questions whether the British theatre will go down with the demolition of such a temple of the mask and wig as Old Vic and asks whether the bombing of Guild Hall means that with the toppling of Gog and Magog the British commonwealth goes down with them.

Such a possibility is not to be thought of. "We have documentary evidence in the case at least twice over," says Mr. Phillips. "The Great Fire of

London destroyed nearly all the theatres of London and half the churches. A chronicle of the time feared that they would never rise again. Both rose in better form. When Cromwell, with his Roundheads, came into power, the London theatre was snuffed out 'forever' as a scourge. With the Restoration, more than a generation later, came the resurrection of the theatre, ornamented with new glory and endowed with new strength. And now, with Hitler laying waste the London theatre, for a third time, they tell us that this surely will be the end of the English stage. It is just a matter of a confusion of terms. Britons simply can't be blotted out, come what may. Neither can the English stage."

## Interest at West Point

Cadet Harold A. Neill, of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, a former student of Dr. Bénézet's, created a sensation when he sprang the Oxford theory as a solution for the Shakespeare mystery on a class in upper-class English at the Academy. He wrote his former chief, asking for more data, and when this arrived, wrote a thesis on the subject which so impressed his professors that he was invited to give a talk on the subject to the fourth class. This provoked so much interest that he has been invited to repeat it, with more time devoted both to the original lecture and to questions. To the young soldiers it is more apparent than to a layman that "Shakespeare's" knowledge of the arts of war is too accurate and too deep to have been "picked up" by a rustic from a West-country village who had never seen a camp or a skirmish in his life.

## News from England

Letters have been recently received from Mr. Looney, Mr. Allen, Mr. Dwyer, and from Mrs. Fitzroy Carrington. All are full of courage and hope, in spite of the devastation surrounding them. All speak of our NEWS-LETTER and are glad when it arrives, as it gives them a short respite from their troubles.

In April, Mr. Allen issued a four-page NEWS-LETTER for English members of the Shakespeare Fellowship, which shows that the cause in England still flourishes, even under the greatest difficulties that mind can conceive. New addresses are given for the officers and the Editorial Notes reveal that a number of lectures have been delivered this past winter and are projected in future by Mr. Allen and by Mr. Adamson. Short articles by Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Barrell, and Admiral Holland are included.