

Quarterly

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"Money Is a Good Soldier"

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF never spoke more to the point. No campaign can be carried to a successful conclusion without money to activate purposes and personnel.

THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP is engaged in a campaign to rout medieval thinking, misrepresentation and the tyranny of authorized supposition from the most important field of English literary history. At the same time, our primary objective is constructive. It is to bring to light and to publicize as widely as possible all contemporary documentation of the Shakespearean Age which corroborates the identification first set forth in the year 1920 by the late John Thomas Looney of Edward Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, as the true creative spirit of that vital era—the actual personality behind the pen-name of "William Shakespeare."

Money is needed NOW to carry on this work. Much has already been accomplished with the barest minimum of financial backing. But the time has come when our material resources must be made adequate to the full pursuit of our objectives. Communication we have in abundance—facts of indisputable validity in showing the poet-playwright Earl as the "Gentle Master" who owned the magic nickname which still dominates English creative art, whose lineaments and personal insignia can be discerned beneath the over-painted surfaces of ancient "Shakespeare" portraits, and in whose tragic life-story can be found so complete a synthesis of Shakespearean creative motivation and the personal reasons for this Lord Chamberlain's posthumous concealment under the long-respected Stratfordian camouflage will be recognized as a necessity enforced by the prejudices and pressures of the powerful social class he had once belonged to.

Money is needed to drive these facts home to

the intelligent reading public which is the final arbiter in all such contests between the proponents of new and illuminating fact and those who profit by the maintenance of accepted supposition. The efforts of THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP to collect, coordinate and make available all essential facts regarding the career of the Shakespearean Earl of Oxford since the organization of the American Branch eight years ago have been effective in two outstanding particulars.

We have rallied to our standard a goodly force of men and women of open-minded vision, logic and common sense. We have at the same time irritated so many of the self-appointed "authorities" in the field of Stratfordian research and biography that no orthodox version of a Shakespearean book or commentary is now considered complete unless it contains a warning to its readers to beware of Oxfordian "heresies." These warnings are usually embellished with derogatory references to the mental capacity of anyone who would dare entertain the notion that a great and learned nobleman could have had either the ability or the incentive to accomplish the creative miracles assigned by said "authorities" to a native of Stratford-on-Avon whose personal qualifications for the same task have always lacked contemporary corroboration. Instead of facing up to the advocates of the Oxford-Shakespeare evidence and besting them in fair and logically founded argument, it is now considered most effective form for the spokesmen of Stratfordia to smother all opposition in ridicule. An organized effort to misrepresent Oxfordian aims and accomplishments has become apparent. Wherever the accepted "authorities" can exert pressure upon editors or publishers to prevent publication of the Oxford discoveries, they do so with alacrity. Several examples of this type of

underground activity have been brought to our attention during the past year. Fear is, of course, the basis of all such misrepresentation. Every Stratford "expert" is vitally concerned in protecting his personal stake in the very large vested interest which standardized Shakespearean biography now represents. What, indeed, would be the value of the copyright to Professor Dustin Mildoo's charming dream-life of William of Stratford if the reading public should suddenly learn that the playwright Earl of Oxford was the authentic "Gentle Master William"?

And it is to publicize more effectively just such contemporary evidence that THE FELLOWSHIP needs adequate financial backing. The Working Fund Committee which has this pressing problem in hand consists of Dr. L. P. Bénézet, Mr. Gelett Burgess and Mr. Charlton Ogburn. The immediate goal has been set at \$5,000.00—certainly modest enough, it would seem, in view of the constructive work that has been accomplished by members of THE FELLOWSHIP during the past eight years. If you have not already contributed to this Working Fund, your generous co-operation is respectfully urged.

Revising Some Details of an Important Discovery In Oxford-Shakespeare Research

One of the uncompleted tasks which the late Mrs. Eva Turner Clark had in mind prior to her lamented passing last April, was the revision of her translation of Henry Peacham's Latin anagram on the title-page of his Minerva Britannia which is featured in the concluding chapter of her book, The Man Who Was Shakespeare. Mrs. Clark felt that certain details of her rendering of Peacham's philological puzzle could be improved, while an escaped error in the transcription of her manuscript added to her dissatisfaction. In accordance, therefore, with Mrs. Clark's known desires, we have asked Mr. John L. Astley-Cock of the Chicago Tribune, who took honors in the classical languages during his years at Trinity College, Cambridge, and is today the most accomplished Latin scholar actively associated with The Fellowship in this country, to undertake this work of revision. Mr. Astley-Cock's paper will undoubtedly be read with interest by every open-minded student of English literary history fortunate enough to secure a copy of this issue of the QUARTERLY.

In order to make plain all of his arguments, we are reproducing first Mrs. Clark's version of her discovery as originally published.

The Man Who Was Shakespeare*

By EVA TURNER CLARK

Chapter XXI

IN 1612, was published Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britannia*, a book of singular value to our argument. At the top of the title-page is the following inscription: "MINERVA BRITANNA or a Garden of Heroical Devises, furnished, and adorned with *Emblemes and Impresa's* of sundry natures, Newly devised, moralized, and published, By HENRY PEACHAM, Mr. of Artes."

Beneath, within an architectural framework, in a nearly square rectangle, is an oval which con-

tains the proscenium arch of a theatre, with the curtain drawn back sufficiently to permit the view of the right hand and arm of an otherwise unseen person, evidently a dramatic author. The hand is writing with a quill pen an inscription in Latin in such a way that, while it is readable to the author, it appears upside down to the onlooker facing the curtain. By reversing the picture, we find that the unseen dramatic author is writing *Menit. vide bori* (By the mind shall I be seen). In a day when anagrams were popular, the upside

*Copyright, November, 1937, by Eva Turner Clark.

wn inscription obviously suggests a hidden meaning in the words, a meaning which should betray the name of the unseen author. The anagram that Latin inscription reads as follows:

TIBI NOM. DE VERE

Tibi nom. de Vere means that the self or true name of the unseen dramatic author is de Vere, family name of the Earl of Oxford. The abbreviation of *nomen* is common in early records and the period which might indicate an abbreviation is found between the first two words of the inscription. The English translation, "By the mind shall be seen," records the opinion of Peacham that, while the name of the author might not be known, his work would be.

This thought is amplified in a second Latin inscription written upon a ribbon intertwined about a laurel wreath surrounding the oval, and reads *Vivitur in genio; caetera mortis erunt*, that is, in English, "One lives in his genius, other things depart in death." The great dramatic author who still lives in his genius, though he has been dead more than three centuries, is Shakespeare, and yet we find Henry Peacham declaring him to be de Vere. SHAKESPEARE indeed was but the *nom de plume* of DE VERE!

Minerva Britannia was dedicated to Henry, Prince of Wales, King James's eldest son who died not long after, to the grief of the nation. That anagrams were in the author's mind is seen in the Latin dedication: *Epigramma Authoris se facit servum modo patre superstite Princeps, Primus at Imperio Servus Hic, INDE regit. ICH* *ANAGRAMMA.*

That is, the two emphasized words of the dedication were an anagram of the Prince's motto, *ICH* *ANAGRAMMA*, meaning "I serve."

Prince Henry was a devoted lover of the stage and was the patron of one of the important playing companies while he lived. Unfortunately, the records of the Court Revels seldom give the names of plays presented but the Prince, with his quick intelligence and his interest in the drama, would have been an admirer of the Shakespeare plays. He would have been intrigued by the mystery of the noble author of the previous reign, some of whose plays had been printed under an assumed name and a number of others he had seen produced on the stage, though not yet printed. Of course the Prince knew the story of the real author, and did Peacham and a few others, and it was to please the Prince in his enjoyment of the mysteri-

ous that Peacham incorporated the enigmatic picture in his titlepage.

One wonders if Peacham intended the verses on page 169 of *Minerva Britannia* to suggest the explanation of the enigma. The Latin motto which heads the page, *Haud conveniunt*, meaning out of harmony, is followed by the picture of a boat, the device of the Earl of Oxford, and the following verses suggested by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: 10.

I much did muse, why Venus could not brooke,
The savadge Boare, and Lion cruell feirce,
Since Kinges and Princes, haue such pleasure tooke,
In hunting: haply cause a Boare did peirce
Her *Adon* faire, who better lik'd the sport,
Then spend his daies, in wanton pleasure court.

Which fiction though devis'd by poets braine,
It signifies unto the Reader this;
Such exercise Love will not entertaine,
Who liketh best, to live in Idlenes:
The foe to vertue, Cancker of the wit,
That brings a thousand miseries with it.

This is the story of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, of course, and Peacham's interpretation of Adonis's disdain of Venus gives a plausible explanation of the absence from Elizabeth's Court of the Earl of Oxford after he had regained the Queen's favour at the age of thirty-two. In his two-and-a-half years' absence from court, he had learned to enjoy a different kind of life from that of a courtier. While it was of vast importance for him to regain the Queen's favour so that he could go to Court if necessary, he never dallied there hereafter. He was too busy with his dramatic work, writing plays and directing their production, soon to be followed by his directing of stage propaganda in aid of the War against Spain, to spend his time idling at Court.

In a poem of twenty-two verses called "The Author's Conclusion," which is addressed to Queen Elizabeth, long dead, Peacham mentions among her courtiers, "The loyal Vere, and Clifford stout,"

With other numberlesse beside,
That to have seene each one's devise,
How lively limn'd, how well applide,
You were the while in Paradise:
Another side she did ordaine,

To some late dead, some living yet,
Who serv'd ELIZA in her raigne,
And worthily had honour'd it.

Now what they were, on every Tree,
Devises new, as well as old,
Of those brave worthies, faithfullie,
Shall in another booke be told.

Ten years later appeared Henry Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622). In a chapter on *Poetrie*, he says: "About Queene Maries time flourished Doctor Phaer who in part translated Virgils *Aeneids*, after finished by Arthur Golding." . . . "In the time of our late Queene Elizabeth, which was truly a golden age [for such a world of refined wits, and excellent spirits it produced, whose like are hardly to be hoped for, in any succeeding age] above others, who honoured Poesie with their pennes and practice (to omit her Maestie, who had a singular gift herein)

were Edward Earle of Oxford, the Lord Buckhurst, Henry Lord Paget; our Phoenix, the noble Sir Philip Sidney, M. Edward Dyer, M. Edmund Spencer, M. Samuel Daniel, with sundry others: whom (together with those admirable wits, yet living, and so well knowne) not out of Envie, but to avoid tediousnesse I overpasse. Thus much of Poetrie."

Following in the path of Webbe and Puttenham (or Lumley) in the 1580's, of Meres in 1598, and Harvey's *Axiophilus* in the same year, Peacham testifies to the high quality of the poetry written by the Earl of Oxford, and, significantly, he does not mention Shakespeare, a name he knew to be the *nom de plume* of Oxford.

MENTI VIDE BORI—TIBI NOM. DE VERE ERRATUM

Pp. 253, 257. For MENTI VIDE BORI, read MENTE VIDE BORI.

The Latin Anagram on the Title-Page Of Peacham's "Minerva Britanna"

A Footnote to An Important Oxford-Shakespeare Discovery

By JOHN L. ASTLEY-COCK

THE TITLE-PAGE to *Minerva Britanna*, published in 1612 by Henry Peacham, a reproduction of which constitutes the frontispiece to Mrs. Eva Turner Clark's *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*, demands fuller elucidation than is accorded it in the text of that interesting volume, where the Latin is obscured by a misprint and some additional slips in grammatical readings.

Interpretation of the Peacham inscription may seem unduly technical, but to substantiate the argument some linguistic detail is unavoidable.

Before, however, proceeding to a dissection of the Latin, there are certain features in the composition of the engraving to be noted. Of the right hand guiding the pen, Mrs. Clark says:

"The right hand and arm of an otherwise unseen person, evidently a dramatic author."

From the phrase "evidently a dramatic author" it is obvious that Mrs. Clark regards the hand as that of Edward de Vere, the playwright Earl of Oxford. This she confirms, but unfortunately mistranslates VIDE BORI as "I shall be seen."

Of the pen, it will be noticed that the point is still resting on the scroll, showing that the word has really not been completed. Now the second person singular of the Latin future indicative passive has two inflections, either "-e" or "-is": the latter is used here since the letter "i" is essential to the Anagram. Thus, the completed word would be VIDEBORIS—"Thou shalt be seen." But the writer *could* refer to himself in the second person singular.

Thus, VIDEBORI MENTE on the centre scroll should be translated "In the mind thou shalt be seen"; i.e., only in the mind of the reader will the personality of De Vere become apparent. Now for a critical examination of the lateral scrolls.

VIVITUR IN GENIO are the words on the left side, which Mrs. Clark translates "One lives in his genius." Of this translation, two criticisms are offered.

(1) It is submitted that for IN GENIO should be read INGENIO.

While "in" is a preposition governing the

Ablative case, here it is only the conventional folding of a scroll which makes *IN* appear as a preposition; actually it is a first syllable.

Furthermore, two salient points in the lettering have been overlooked: the periods after *VIVITUR* and *INGENIO*, showing that the words are completed, and the double hyphens after *VIVI* and *IN*, showing that the words are continued.

the Greek optative has become merged into the Latin subjunctive.

This is a *latent* interpretation by which *VIVITUR INGENIO* would mean "By his genius he is brought to life."

Latin verbs inflected with the sense of a Greek middle are common in Elegiac poetry.

Admittedly, some scholars may regard this inter-



Rebus-anagram from Title-page of Peacham's *Minerva Britannia* (1612).

(2) *VIVITUR* is a passive inflection.

This word necessitates more elaborate consideration since it admits of two renderings. Bearing in mind that Peacham styles himself in the engraving as "Mr. of Artes", it is no undue assumption that he was familiar with grammatical nuances both in Latin and Greek. Consequently, "*vivitur*" may be construed (A) as Impersonal, or (B) as Middle. The former is obvious, the latter controversial.

(A). Regarded as an impersonal verb, "*vivitur*" could be translated exactly as a verb similarly selected in any other phrase would be translated: e. g. "*Sic vivitur*"—Such is life!

This is the *patent* interpretation, and *VIVITUR INGENIO* would mean "His genius abides!"

(B). Regarded as a Middle; "*vivitur*", though alive in form, is used in the sense of the Greek middle voice.

The middle voice of the Greek verb has disappeared in Latin by the same process whereby

pretation as "forced", but it suggests itself by background of circumstance.

One idiomatic use of the middle is that known as Factive; i. e. to *effect* something. It is this sense, conjecturally, that Peacham intended. *De Vere* is *made* to come to life by magic of word in Sonnet and Play; moreover, this conception is complementary to the idea contained in "*mente videboris*" where, to posterity for all time, he "will be seen in the mind's eye."

CAETERA MORTIS ERUNT are the words on the right scroll, which Mrs. Clark translates "Other things depart in death." Two criticisms are offered here; the use of the present tense and a deficient import of expression.

(1) *ERUNT* is future, as sequence of tense requires since "*videboris*" is also future.

(2) The force of the Latin is lost by rendering *CAETERA* (the rest) as if it was "*Alia*" (other things).

CAETERA inclusively implies *De Vere's* author-

ship, his high state office, his paternity of Edward Vere The Younger, the Dark-eyed Lady of the Sonnets, in fact his entire milieu, personality and attainments.

Adequately to render "Caetera mortis erunt", some stronger phrase seems requisite. For example, "Everything else will be obliterated by death."

Having now, so to speak, established the argument, it is logically permissive to apply the hypothetico-deductive method to an analysis of Henry Peacham's mind anent the Inscription.

The works of Ovid were much admired by Edward de Vere, the *Metamorphoses* in particular, first translated into English in 1565 by his uncle and tutor Arthur Golding, and throughout the plays there are numerous allusions showing familiarity with the Roman poet. Peacham was well aware of all this, and the entire inscription pays cryptic compliment to De Vere's skill in prosody.

It may be ventured, therefore, that it is by no means accidental that the two lateral scrolls

together comprise a Pentameter line.

But a Pentameter line without a preceding Hexameter line is only half a distich.

Flight of fancy, however, can invent the missing half of the couplet by combining the words on the centre scroll—

MENTE. VIDEBORI

with the Anagram which Mrs. Clark has so perspicuously derived—

TIBI NOM. DE VERE

and adding three more words, cognizant all the while that "aio" (I affirm) is a case of 'Peacham loquitur'.

So with apologies to Ovid and Peacham is presented:—

Est tibi nomen Vere in mente videboris, aio:

Vivitur ingenio, caetera mortis erunt!

By thy imagination's skill shalt thou, Vere, be revealed:

Resurrected by thy talent, all else by death concealed!

Pictorial Clues and Key Initials

THE MINERVA BRITANNA word and picture emblem into which Henry Peacham has woven his tribute to the concealed genius of Edward Vere, Earl of Oxford, includes certain important details that have not been covered in the foregoing analyses by Mrs. Clark and Mr. Astley-Cock.

One of these is the encircling laurel wreath, symbolizing poetic eminence.

Another is the background sketch, suggesting an ancient Greek theatre, and giving classic authority to the hand of the hidden playwright which appears through the modernized proscenium.

Third, and perhaps most revealing of all, is the emphasis that Peacham gives the key letters "E. V." on the scroll bearing the MENTE. VIDEBORI legend. This latter device provides the best of visual proof that Peacham intended the cognoscenti to seek the solution of his rebus-anagram by proceeding from a well defined focal point, such as the period separating the two most important words of the Latin anagram. The drip from the moving pen accentuates this clue. "E. V." evokes the one possible hidden genius contemporary with Henry Peacham whose career had closed before 1612, and that is the personally well-documented but professionally pseudonymic poet-dramatist nobleman, Edward Vere. Stratford-

ians will find even greater difficulty in trying to discount Peacham's tribute to the mysterious Lord Chamberlain than the Baconians have in endeavoring to torture the anagram into words of praise for Sir Francis Bacon. Regarding the Edward Vere spelling, Lord Oxford's private name was frequently written in this style, the French or Latin *de* being an extra flourish, added for honorary purposes only. No member of the Vere family appears to have used the *de* prefix except the Earls of Oxford. And even they did not always apply it personally.

In order to feature the key characters "E. V.," Peacham arbitrarily employs periods to indicate each complete word throughout his anagram, except in those cases where the curved design of the scroll prevents. There would be no particular reason for doing this unless at least one of these periods serves some outstanding purpose, such as a focusing point to rivet attention upon the contiguous lettering.

Peacham may very well have adopted this scheme from Thomas Thorpe's period-peppered dedication of the 1609 quarto of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* to his coadjutor in that surreptitious enterprise, Master Printer William Hall.

Thorpe uses the stops to break up Hall's name

into Cockney phonetics and create a pun. His addiction to the latter vice is confirmed by his dedication in 1600 of another questionably acquired masterpiece to another publishing associate. The work was Marlowe's translation of Lucan, and the recipient of the dedication was Edward Blount, later to be associated with the publication of Shakespeare's First Folio. Thorpe hailed Blount as follows: "Blount, I will be blunt with you . . ." The *Sonnets* dedication begins thus:

TO. THE. ONLIE. BEGETTER. OF.

THESE. INSVING. SONNETS.

Mr. W. H. ALL. HAPPINESSE.

Here we see that where one punctuation mark is so carefully over-emphasized, the value of the words or letters should be quite as plain without

any. Hence, the emergence of the name,

Mr W H ALL.

Peacham employs his periods with greater subtlety and artistic economy. For the centralized stop which is needed to abbreviate NOMEN to NOM, also serves to indicate the true initials of the great creative spirit concealed within the anagrammatic emblem.

Finally, as Mrs. Clark points out, the identification of Oxford as the real dramatic genius of the Shakespearean Age is confirmed in Peacham's striking tribute in his 1622 *Compleat Gentleman* to the same Earl of Oxford whose literary nickname is now definitely known to have been "Gentle Master William." C.W.B.

Shakespeare's Jester—Oxford's Servant

By ABRAHAM FELDMAN

IN SHAKESPEARE'S *First Folio*, under the caption of "The Names of the Principall Actors in all of these Playes," appears the name of Robert Armin. From various sources, including his own published writings, Armin is known to have been one of the outstanding comedians of the period. Beginning as a protégé of the famous Dick Tarleton some few years before the death of that low-comedy genius in 1588, Armin had become a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Players by 1598, continuing with the same group after it passed under the patronage of James First as the King's Men. He therefore participated in the production or revival of many of the great "Comedies, Histories and Tragedies." The Editors of the *QUARTERLY* take pride in presenting Mr. Abraham Feldman's summing up of the heretofore neglected evidence which shows Robert Armin as the self-admitted servant of the playwright Earl of Oxford at the same time that he is known to have been a member of "Shakespeare's Company." Mr. Feldman's discovery is an important one, adding one more illuminating fact to Elizabethan stage and literary history. It is safe to say that this would never have come about, however, unless this talented instructor in English had been open-minded enough to act upon evidence previously published in these pages proving Oxford to be the true "Lord Chamberlain" of Elizabethan theatrical fame. The dynamic value of our Oxford-Shakespeare research is thus once more triumphantly corroborated. It can also be stated that without the *QUARTERLY* to give these facts permanence, they would all still be slumbering in manuscript, much to the satisfaction of the editorial group whose past and future is devoted to the maintenance of the inviolability of the Stratford myths and conjectures. We have known for some time that the so-called "scholarly" journals both in this country and Great Britain blacklist all writers devoted to any angle of the Oxford-Shakespeare case, and that their reviewers and commentators receive definite instructions never to mention the 17th Earl of Oxford except in a derogatory way. Evidently convinced that their livelihood as English literary "experts" may be jeopardized if any fundamental truth of the great Earl's actual relationship to the development of dramatic art in his age were to be widely accepted, they take pains to see that the pages of no publication over which they may be able to exert influence are opened to any forthright and logical discussion along such lines. The deplorable dullness, triviality and childish lack of logic that permeates the standardized Shakespearean "research" of all such "scholarly" periodicals is, meanwhile, one of the main reasons why English literary history has fallen to its present low estate. No one is to be allowed to express an opinion about the greatest creative personality the race has produced unless he agrees beforehand to accept the approved myths and patent perversions of circumstance upon which these self-appointed lawgivers have set their seal. Of course they have a definite stake in the maintenance of such a condition. It is to be found in the hundreds of books already put into print by the brotherhood, many of which are required reading now in English classes throughout the

world. The value of all such works would be materially lessened if Oxford were ever to become known as the real man behind the long-apparent camouflage of the Stratford wall memorial, the Jonson double-talk, the over-painted portraits, etc. So we were not surprised to learn that Mr. Feldman's paper was curtly rejected by two of the best-known scholarly journals here and in England before it gravitated to us. The excuse given by the British review was the familiar one of "lack of paper," while the American university publishers of one of the more pretentious quarterlies devoted to "English literary history" returned it to the author with alacrity "upon the advice of our drama editor." Meanwhile, we are the gainers by an article that will be referred to by all honest historians of the Elizabethan stage in the years to come. Mr. Feldman has contributed several notable papers to the *Classical Journal* and, among other poetical ventures, recently published a brief but striking tribute to Rabelais in *Poet Lore*.

ROBERT ARMIN merited the tribute of Professor Baldwin of Illinois who called the philosophical clown "Shakespeare's Jester."¹ The character of Armin as revealed in his scarce scriptures and extolled by John Davies of Hereford in *The Scourge of Folly* (1610) appears to have been marked by fate for the roles of Touchstone, Cleopatra's Clown and King Lear's Fool. All lovers of Shakespeare are sure to love Robin Armin and sure to know him better. Every admirer of Edward de Vere will be delighted to learn that "Shakespeare's Jester" was also the avowed servant of the Earl of Oxford, whom Francis Meres in his *Wit's Treasury* (1598) named first of "The best for comedy among us."

The connexion between Oxford and Armin was discovered in a very rare quarto entitled "QUIPS UPON QUESTIONS, or, A Clownes conceite on occasion offered, bewraying a morralised metamorphoses of changes upon interrogatories: shewing a little wit, with a great deale of will; or in deed, more desirous to please in it, then to profite by it."

"Clapt up by a Clowne of the towne in this, last restraint, having little else to doe, to make a little use of his fickle Muse, and careless of carping.

"By *Clunnycio de Curtanio Snuffe*.

"Like as you list, read on and spare not,

Clownes iudge like Clownes, therefore I care not.

"Or thus,

"Floute me, Ile floute thee: it is my profession, To iest at a lester, in his transgression.

"Imprinted at London for W. Ferbrand, and are to be sold at the signe of the Crowne over against the Mayden head near Yeldhall, 1600."²

Quips Upon Questions was reprinted in 1875 by Frederic Ouvry, with the name of John Singer on

the title-page, because Ouvry had been convinced by the jocos J. P. Collier that Singer, the buffoon of the Lord Admiral's company, was "*Clunnycio de Curtanio Snuffe*."³ Collier believed that the Admiral's men were playing at the Curtain theater in 1600. It is now well known, they were performing in that year at the Rose and the Fortune.⁴ Equally well established is the identity of the Clown of the Curtain with Robert Armin.⁵ For "*Clonnico de Curtanio Snuffe*" appeared on the title-page of the popular treatise, *Foole Upon Foole, or Six Sortes of Sottes*, also published in 1600 by William Ferbrand, and this treatise is unquestionably the work of Armin, the jester of the Lord Chamberlain's company.⁶

When Professor Baldwin credited Armin with the writing of *Quips Upon Questions* he had not seen the book. He said that it "should be carefully examined for further biographic detail."⁷ If he had scrutinised the 24 leaves of the volume he might have urged examination of it not only for facts of the life of Armin but for revelations of Tudor theatrical history. Sir Edmund Chambers surveyed the *Quips* and found a single detail which he thought worthy of inclusion in his biography of the comedian in *The Elizabethan Stage*: "The author serves a master at Hackney."⁸ Unfor-

3. Most of Joseph Knight's article on John Singer in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (XVIII, 312) is concerned with *Quips Upon Questions*. Knight observed, "The ascription of this work to Singer, probable enough from internal evidence, rests upon the unsupported authority of Collier." What internal evidence Knight had in mind remains enigmatic.

4. Joseph Quincy Adams, *Shakespearean Playhouses* (Boston: Houghton, 1917), pp. 156-157.

5. Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 447. E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), II, 300.

6. Alexander B. Grosart, editor, *The Works of Robert Armin, Actor* (London: privately printed, 1880), Part I.

7. Baldwin, *op. cit.*, 447 n.

8. Chambers, *loc. cit.*

1. T. W. Baldwin, "Shakespeare's Jester," *Modern Language Notes*, XXXIX (December 1924).

2. Through the courtesy of Dr. Giles E. Dawson of the Folger Shakespeare Library I was able to study the copy of these *Quips* once owned by John Payne Collier.

unfortunately Sir Edmund left the remark without commentary. Yet it held the clew to several major riddles that have perplexed historians of Shakespearean drama. The passage from which the item was derived occurs in Armin's mock-dedication of the *Quijs* to "Sir Timothy Trunchion alias Bastinado," whose aid the humorist requires against victims of his wit who may be scheming to ambush him. Our Robin wanted the weapon particularly for Tuesday, 25 December 1599.⁹ For "On Tuesday I take my Jorney (to waite on the right Honourable good Lord my Maister whom I serve) to Hackney."¹⁰

Since the Lord Chamberlain's players were in possession of the Globe before September 1599,¹¹ Professor Baldwin surmised that Armin was showing his quality at the Curtain in December in the service of another Lord. William Brydges, Baron Chandos, is known to have employed Armin some time between 21 February 1594, when he succeeded to the title, and 4 August 1600, when the Stationers registered the *Second Part of Tarleton's Jestes* which announced that Robin was exhilarating the Globe.¹² But Professor Baldwin's conjecture that Armin went in motley for Lord Chandos at the Curtain in 1599-1600 seems to contradict our present knowledge of that nobleman's actors. There is no testimony extant that they ever performed in London; all records of their exhibitions deal with provincial tours.¹³ Moreover, if Armin's master when the *Quijs* were composed had been Lord Chandos, the jester would have journeyed to wait on him at Sudeley Castle, far from Hackney.

Sir Edmund Chambers maintained that the Curtain was occupied by the Lord Chamberlain's troupe in 1599.¹⁴ His argument has not been disputed. When Guilpin's *Skialetheia* (S. R.—8 September 1598) reported the playing of Plautus and "the pathetic Spaniard" at the Rose and the Curtain, the two leading companies of London were

the Admiral's and the Chamberlain's. Marston's *Scourge of Villainy* (1598) connected the popularity of *Romeo and Juliet*, a triumph of the Chamberlain's men, with "Curtain plaudities." The fact that the latter were active at the Globe in the autumn of 1599 does not exclude the likelihood of their use of the Curtain. Before they moved to the Globe they had possessed James Burbage's Theater, and strained its resources to a point where they were compelled to use the Curtain as an "easer." When Armin chanzed his *nom de jeu* to "Clonnicco del Mondo Snuffe," in the 1605 edition of *Foole Upon Foole*, he clearly indicated that he played in the Chamberlain's dramas at the Globe the same roles that he capped and belled for them at the Curtain.

The nobleman whom Armin called "the right Honourable good Lord my Maister" could not have been George Carey, Baron Hunsdon, who is generally regarded as the patron of the Shakespeare troupe in 1599-1600. Hunsdon held the office of Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household from April 1597 to December 1602.¹⁵ During those years he lived in the Blackfriars precinct of London, never in the suburb of Hackney. As a resident of Blackfriars, in November 1596, he signed a petition to the Privy Council against the design of James Burbage for the restoration of the theater which had once dazzled there under the direction of John Lyly and the Earl of Oxford.¹⁶ Although Hunsdon was nominally in charge of the royal entertainments, there is nothing to prove that he was an encourager of the stage of Shakespeare. Nashe's dedication of *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem* (1594) to Hunsdon's daughter gives the impression that the house of Carey offered cold comfort to devotees of cakes, ale and comedies. Henry Carey, the first Lord Hunsdon, who had served Elizabeth as Chamberlain from June 1583 until July 1596, was friendlier to mummers. "He lacked most of the literary culture of his class,"¹⁷ but extended protection to the actors who wore his livery at the Cross Keys inn during October 1594 when the Puritan magnates of the city persecuted them.¹⁸ Between 1578 and 1583 old Lord Henry

⁹ The date is determined by the reference to Friday in mock-dedication as 28 December.

¹⁰ *Quijs Upon Questions* (Ouvry's edition), Alj.

¹¹ Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

¹² Armin's prefatory letter to Gilbert Dugdale's *True Discourse on the Poisoning of Thomas Caldwel* (1604) refers to Mary Chandos, Lord William's widow, to remember the actor's "service to your late deceased kindred." In *Foole Upon Foole* Armin told how he and the "old Shandoyes players" had wandered in Worcester-
shire.

¹³ John Tucker Murray, *English Dramatic Companies* (London: Constable and Company, 1910), II, 32.

¹⁴ Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, 403.

¹⁵ E. K. Chambers, "The Elizabethan Lords Chamberlain," *Malone Society Collections* (London, 1911), I, 39. The chronology of the Queen's Chamberlains in the present essay is taken from the same model study, page 39.

¹⁶ Ashley H. Thorndike, *Shakespeare's Theater* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), pp. 333-335.

¹⁷ Sir Sidney Lee, "Henry Carey," *Dictionary of National Biography*, III, 978.

¹⁸ Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 316.

did maintain a household in Hackney, at King's Place. But Robert Armin was then only a goldsmith's apprentice.

There was but one literary nobleman dwelling in Hackney when Armin was master of motley at the Curtain. Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Lord Great Chamberlain of England, transferred his home to King's Place, Hackney, from Stoke Newington in 1596.¹⁹ Seven years before, this courtier, poet and dramatist had fallen in disgrace with fortune and men's tongues as a result of political and extra-marital scandals. His fortune improved by marriage with the maid of honour Elizabeth Trentham, but he never dispelled the shadows on his name. The curious way in which Armin alluded to him in the *Quijs*, evading mention of his master's title, was not unusual. In March 1603 Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, spoke of him in the same circumlocutory way to Sir John Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower. He told Peyton, according to a letter of the Lieutenant,

he had been invyted . . . by a great noble man to hacney, where he was extraordinarily fested, at the which he muche marvayled, for that ther was no great correspondence between them, this noble man having precedence of hym in rancke (where by he twold me I myght knowe him, ther being onely but one of that qualytye dwelling there.²⁰

In the decade 1580-1590 a company of mummers led by the mercurial Duttons had toured the provinces wearing the livery of the brilliant Earl of Oxford. All trace of the troupe disappeared in the next nine years. Then in 1600 the anonymous drama called *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall* was printed—"As it hath been sundry times plaid by the right honourable Earle of Oxenford, Lord Great Chamberlain of England his servants" (so runs the title-page of the play's earliest extant copy, dated 1618). The lost tragedy of *George Scanderbeg* was registered by the Stationers in 1601 with a note that it had belonged to Oxford's men.²¹ Is it possible that Armin joined the Earl's players after leaving Lord Chandos's company and before entering the Lord Chamberlain's? In that case we would have to imagine our "Clonnic"

with the Oxford troupe sharing the Curtain with the Chamberlain's men in 1599. The chronicles of the Elizabethan theater would indicate that the Earl's own actors never pretended to the grandeur of a house like the Curtain. A letter of the Privy Council of March 1602 addressed to the Lord Mayor of London, designates the tavern named "the Boar's Head as the place they have especially used and do best like of."²² Not until they united with the Earl of Worcester's players in the spring of 1602, we are told, did they venture to exhibit their quality on a grand stage, such as the Rose. When they performed at the Rose they were called Worcester's men, and William Kempe, formerly of the Chamberlain's company, was the star comedian. Armin's name is not associated in extant documentation with the Worcester group, only with the Chandos and Chamberlain companies. And contemporary allusions mark none but the Lord Chamberlain's servants as the receivers of Curtain plaudits when Armin flourished there.

How could our man of motley have served at the same time the melancholy Earl in Hackney and the Lord Chamberlain at the Curtain? That is the question.

The best answer that occurs to me is that "Lord Chamberlain" meant the Earl of Oxford (who was Lord Great Chamberlain of England) almost everywhere except perhaps at Court. Moreover, it is evident that acting groups were not invariably known by one patron's title, and that special casts were occasionally assembled from different troupes to fill special engagements. The opposition of the Puritan administration governing the City of London to theatrical affairs generally would also account for these otherwise mystifying changes in company names and switches in professional personnel. One thing is absolutely certain: standardization in the recorded designations of the various Elizabethan acting groups cannot be taken for granted. For example, as Lord Chamberlain of the Royal Household, Lord Hunsdon is assumed to have had the task of satisfying Her Majesty's predilection for drama. But it has yet to be proved that either the first or second Lords Hunsdon organized the splendid cry of players who called themselves the "servants of the Lord Chamberlain." The company emerged to public light in 1594, to eclipse the Queen's own histrions; and Sir Edmund Chambers has declared that the inter-

19. B. M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (London: John Murray, 1928), p. 319.

20. *State Papers Domestic*, 1603, quoted by Norreys Jephson O'Connor, *Gods Peace and the Queens* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934), p. 106.

21. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, II, 102.

22. *Ibid.*, IV, 335.

val of four or five years between the last available record of Lord Hunsdon's actors properly so called (at Maidstone in 1589-1590) and the emergence in 1594 "renders improbable any continuity" between the former band and the famous Chamberlain's group.²³ The two Hunsdons as Chamberlains of the Royal Household ostensibly sponsored the company at Court. So did the aged Puritan, William Brooke, Lord Cobham, when he held the office of Her Majesty's Chamberlain after the first Hunsdon's death, from August 1596 to March 1597. Yet no scholar has depicted Cobham as a patron of the mummers who confused his martyred ancestor Oldcastle with Shakespeare's Falstaff in the mind of London. Both Cobham and the Hunsdon's must have heartily consented to the supervision of the company's personnel and productions by the histrionic Lord Chamberlain of England. Henry Carey's duties of military command on the Scottish border would not permit him much time for the rituals of Thalia and Thespis; his son George was severely ill during the final three years of the Tudor dynasty. The Earl of Oxford was thus the sole "Chamberlain" in the realm capable of directing the Shakespeare troupe.

The ambiguity of the title "Lord Chamberlain" was manifested in legal documents of the time. In a Chancery suit of claim by lease for the manor of Much Horneade the estate was called "the inheritance of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxenford, lord chamberleyn."²⁴ In the correspondence of Robert Cecil, Lord Cranborne, there are several allusions to the "Lord Chamberlain" which appear to signify his brother-in-law, Earl Edward. There is a letter of 1 July 1603 by Mrs. Hicks, perhaps the wife of Cecil's private secretary, pleading for help in collecting money owed by "my Lord Chamberlain."²⁵ The main security for the debt of this Chamberlain was an assignment of property at Castle Hedingham in Essex, the birthplace of Oxford.²⁶ When the mummers of Armin's company uttered the title of Lord Chamberlain they

certainly meant the master in Hackney. *Touchstone* is the chief witness to the truth of this idea, with his *Quips Upon Questions*. "Shakespeare's Jester" was Oxford's servant. So, indeed, was William himself.

Temple University

Philadelphia, Penna.

Progress Report Coming

A review of work accomplished in promoting the Oxford-Shakespeare case during recent months will be the feature of our next issue.

Constructive developments have included the publication of informational articles in widely read newspapers and nationally known works of reference; the issuance of strikingly effective briefs of our evidence in handy brochure form; radio discussions by some of our best speakers; lectures to literary and university audiences; and the formation of a finance committee to secure funds adequate to our growing needs.

It will be a Progress Number—watch for it!

THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP QUARTERLY

—A Continuation of the NEWS-LETTER—

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Official organ of The Shakespeare Fellowship in the U.S.A., the QUARTERLY is the only publication now printed which is devoted chiefly to the perpetuation of documentary evidence that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) was the real creative personality behind the plays and poems of "Mr. William Shakespeare."

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The Editors

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²³ *Ibid.*, II, 193.

²⁴ *Calendar of Proceedings in Chancery in the Reign of Elizabeth*, vol. 1, p. 185.

²⁵ *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury*, XV, 164. The significance of this item and the preceding one was first indicated by Charles Wisner Barrell in "Lord Oxford as Supervising Patron of Shakespeare's Theatrical Company," *Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly* (July 1944), V, 40.

Historical Background of "The Merchant of Venice" Clarified In a Letter to the Drama Editor of New York Times

*New and Significant Facts About "Shakespeare's" Contacts
With Jewish Personalities of Elizabethan London*

IN THE NEW YORK TIMES for Sunday, November 30th Mr. Brooks Atkinson, the Drama Editor, published his review of the new play, *Shylock and His Daughter*, which the gifted Yiddish actor, Mr. Maurice Schwartz, recently dramatized from Mr. Ari Ibn-Zahav's Hebrew novel of the same name. The play, starring Mr. Schwartz in the title-role, opened at the Yiddish Art Theatre in New York in October and seems destined to run for many months. This re-writing of *The Merchant of Venice* is a highly provocative work, maintaining a deep, tragic atmosphere throughout. In seeking to orientate the Ibn-Zahav-Schwartz treatment of *Shylock* to Shakespeare's work, many commentators have recently claimed with considerable conviction that the author of *The Merchant of Venice* really knew nothing of the 16th century Jew and his social problems because there were no Jews living in England in Elizabethan times. In his review, Mr. Atkinson emphasizes the same note. Statements to similar effect have also been published in standard works of reference such as the *World Almanac*, and by several learned editors of the Shakespeare play. To modify this widespread and quite erroneous impression, and at the same time call public attention to the wealth of new documentation of the Shakespearean Age which modern research has brought to light within the past few years, the Secretary of THE FELLOWSHIP has outlined some of the recovered facts in a letter to Mr. Atkinson. A copy of his complete statement is given herewith, following the more important extracts from the Atkinson review of *Shylock and His Daughter*. At the time that this issue of the QUARTERLY was being put into type, it seemed doubtful whether the Drama Editor of the Times would be able to find space for our Secretary's statement. And as the facts by Mr. Barrell seem too noteworthy to be allowed to escape the attention of members of THE FELLOWSHIP, in particular, we have decided to print them here, just as they were written.

Maurice Schwartz and a Good Company Offer a Reformed Shylock

By BROOKS ATKINSON

WHILE the Broadway managers are yielding to the fates with melancholy resignation, Maurice Schwartz keeps his Yiddish Art Theatre intact in Second Avenue. Since 1918 the Yiddish Art Theatre has continued to stand for something worth respecting.

* * *

At the moment, Mr. Schwartz and his associates are acting in "Shylock and His Daughter," a drama he has put together out of a Hebrew novel by Ari Ibn-Zahav. On Second Avenue it is played in Yiddish by an experienced troupe, but the text is available in an English translation by Abraham Regelson. Since Shakespeare's Shylock is a libel on the Jews, written by a man who may never have seen a Jew, Mr. Ibn-Zahav has endeavored to reconstruct the legend of the pound-of-flesh

bond according to the political structure of sixteenth century Venice. The two famous theatrical devices—the bond and the caskets—that Shakespeare used in "The Merchant of Venice" apparently derived from the fourteenth century, if no earlier. Shakespeare was using old plays and fables, not contemporary situations. But that does not alter the fact that he wrote Shylock out of ignorance of the Jews and repeated superstitions and prejudices common to the society in which he lived.

* * *

Mr. Ibn-Zahav's Shylock is the venerable and pious leader of the Venetian ghetto at a time when the Christian world was burning Jews at the stake and persecuting them with the cruelty of religious fanaticism. Mr. Ibn-Zahav has completely altered the motivation for the bond that calls for a pound of flesh. Not Shylock but Antonio proposes it—in fact, insists upon it out of contempt for a Jew who lends money at interest. In order to establish the malice of the Christian world, Mr. Ibn-Zahav

changes the structure of Shakespeare's story completely.

Unfortunately, the new approach to Shylock does not help much. Although Mr. Ibn-Zahav is better grounded in social history than Shakespeare, Shakespeare is a consummate artist. He can write rings around Mr. Ibn-Zahav. By his genius with words and his poet's insight into character, Shakespeare made Shylock a vivid man who lives like a passionate human being and shows pride and valor in adversity.

Writing within the framework of his own times, which were religiously intolerant, Shakespeare could not foresee the significance Shylock would have today. Probably Elizabethan audiences regarded him as a minor, comic character in a romantic play and laughed heartily at his misfortunes. No one today would dare play the part as it must have been acted then. When you think of it, the monstrous device of the bond, like the silly device of the casket, is hard to accept as adult theatre. Nor, with the exception of Portia, are the other characters exactly noble people. Maybe "The Merchant of Venice" belongs with "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" and "Love's Labour's Lost" as ingenious apprentice work with some golden verse but no great treasure as mature drama. It is impossible to motivate the pound-of-flesh bond to the point of making it palatable or credible. That is the one thing that cannot be argued away. It is the chief stumbling block to Mr. Ibn-Zahav's new version. His Shylock may be a finer character, but the horrific bond device traps him in the same mare's nest at the end.

To the Drama Editor:

Your stimulating review of Maurice Schwartz's Yiddish drama, "Shylock's Daughter," in the November 30th *Times* contains a statement or two regarding the creative background of "The Merchant of Venice" that calls for a bit of corrective commentary. You say that "Shakespeare's Shylock (was) written by a man who may never have seen a Jew," and add, "he wrote Shylock out of ignorance of the Jews." The corollary is that there were no Jews in London during the Shakespearean Age. This idea was also emphasized in articles published in the *Times* and other newspapers in advance of the opening of Mr. Schwartz's dramatization of Ibn-Zahav's Hebrew novel. It is an error—and one repeated so frequently and persistently by commentators on "The Merchant of

Venice" that it is high time the historical facts were put before a wide circle of readers. This primarily because the facts regarding the Elizabethan Jews in London are far more interesting than the negative conjectures that have been drilled into generations of befuddled Shakespearean students.

The truth is, there was a considerable colony of Jews living right in the heart of London from the days of Henry VIII onward. Moreover, they practised their religious rites privately, and many of them enjoyed commanding positions in business and financial circles. Several were deep in the confidence of the Elizabethan government. Ostensibly, these Jews were converted Christians. But in a day when outward religious affiliation was so largely motivated by personal and political expediency, the New Christians rendered homage to the Church of England with the same mental reservations that animated thousands of Roman Catholics who paid tithes to the established church—but worshiped privately according to the dictates of conscience. Queen Elizabeth herself approved this course—so long as religious dissenters were careful to avoid giving aid, comfort or encouragement to her enemies. As Spain became the great menace, the Jewish "marranos" living in London under her protection rendered valuable service to the government because of their well-grounded hatred of the Spanish tyranny. All of these statements can be easily verified in Cecil Roth's "History of the Jews in England" (1941) and in Prof. C. J. Sisson's paper on "A Colony of Jews in Shakespeare's London" in "Essays by Members of the English Association." It is surprising to say the least that so many reviewers of the Ari Ibn-Zahav novel and the Schwartz play have shown themselves unfamiliar with the Roth and Sisson research.

Of course there was no "Ghetto" or established pale in Elizabethan England, but most of the New Christians (as Roth calls them) lived in the Street of the Crutched Friars and its adjoining thoroughfares of Seething Lane and Hart Street, just to the north and west of the Tower of London. The district was then one of the good residential parts of the city. In fact, Sir Francis Walsingham, Principal Secretary of State and head of the Secret Service, had his house in Seething Lane and died there in 1590. It would be absurd to believe that this master of espionage did not know all about his Jewish neighbors and their private religious

practices. But there is no record of Walsingham or any of his agents causing them trouble on this account. Walsingham and other Elizabethan dignitaries understood something of Hebrew, and unquestionably gained some of their knowledge of the language from their Semitic associates.

The author of "The Merchant of Venice"—whose perspicacity must be allowed to have equalled Walsingham's—thus had opportunities to study Jewish human nature at first hand in London.

The best known London Jews then passed as Lombards, Genoese or Venetians. Lombard Street was their business center. Roth's account of the Nunez and Anez families is particularly interesting. Of "Doctor Hector" Nunez, he says that throughout the perilous reign of Mary Tudor, Nunez remained "an important figure in the city. Though a qualified and practicing physician, he also engaged in foreign trade on a large scale. His widespread business and personal connections abroad were found extremely useful to the government (of Elizabeth). He enjoyed the confidence both of Burghley (the Lord Treasurer) and of Walsingham, and on one occasion left his dinner-table to bring the latter the first news of the arrival of the Great Armada at Lisbon.

"The most prominent of the Marrano merchants after (Nunez) was Jorge Anez, whose family had been settled in London at least since 1521." The name soon became Anglicized as Ames. Israel Ames, during the 1580's, was one of the confidential stewards of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the poet, dramatist and patron of the group of players sometimes known as the Lord Chamberlain's Company which produced "The Merchant of Venice." Roth says that many of the Anez-Ames family became "utterly assimilated with the general population" of Britain. Jorge's son Francis "was employed by Sir Francis Drake for intelligence work in the Azores; subsequently he held a command in the English garrison at Youghal, in Ireland, of which he was once the Mayor . . . Dunstan Ames, his brother, was purveyor to the Queen . . . and financial agent of Dom Antonio, prior of Crato, the Pretender to the Portuguese throne," whose cause Elizabeth aided. "Antonio was himself of Jewish blood, being the son of a member of the old royal house through an irregular union with the beautiful New Christian, Violante Gomez." Of some of the

descendants of the Elizabethan Jews, Roth goes on to remark that after the defeat of the Spanish, many left London and "made their way to the Levant, where in after-years English travelers were surprised to encounter, openly professing Judaism, persons born in Crutched Friars in London."

The English capital also boasted the famous Spinola family of bankers and money-lenders, headed by Baptista Spinola the Elder. He appears first in the Elizabethan Patent Rolls as "alias Merchant of Genoa." The name Baptista, it hardly need be explained, means one who has been baptized. This New Christian sold his palatial residence in Bishopsgate Street to Sir Thomas Gresham, greatest of Elizabethan merchant princes, whose career is cited in practically every modern edition of the Shakespeare play. Spinola had four sons named Baptista, Pasquale, Benedict and Jacob who at various times represented the family interests in London, Brussels, Paris, Genoa and Venice. They loaned much money to Queen Elizabeth, and on occasion she put herself under personal bond to Baptista, as his correspondence discloses. It is interesting to note that this name, Baptista Spinola, calls to mind that of Shakespeare's "Baptista Minola," the wealthy father of Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew." It cannot be shown that Shakspeare of Stratford knew Baptista Spinola, but the playwright Earl of Oxford had many dealings with the money-lender, finally acquiring some of Spinola's London property. Moreover, when Oxford visited Venice in 1575, he ran out of cash (which frequently happened to him) and had to borrow money under personal bond of the Spinola representative in the city which is the scene of "The Merchant of Venice."

The accuracy of Shakespeare's knowledge of the Venetian law governing bond and mortgage, and his exposition of the peculiarly liberal rights granted non-citizens of the Republic (such as Shylock) to demand enforcement of a bond (such as Antonio's) which would not have been recognized elsewhere in 16th century Europe, long ago led legal experts to believe that the author of the play had studied Venetian law at first hand. The wealth and realism of "The Merchant's" local color has also been dwelt upon by Keats' friend, Charles Armitage Brown, who was convinced that the Bard had spent some time in Venice and other parts of Italy. Harriet Martineau was of the same

opinion. Among the many coincidences that suggest the playwright Lord Chamberlain of England (whose literary nickname is given as "Gentle Master William" by his protegee and fellow-writer, Thomas Nash) as the creator of "The Merchant" is the fact that Oxford's borrowings of Jewish financiers during his Italian travels amounted to 3,000-odd pounds. This sum, given in the Spinola accounting, recalls the 3,000 ducats which Antonio had of Shylock. A few years after this, Oxford also knew the pangs of bankruptcy in person. In regard to the medieval folktale "Of a Jew who would have a pound of the flesh of a Christian for his debt," which is used to give "The Merchant" suspense, the story was first translated into English by Oxford's stage-manager, Anthony Munday. It has been claimed that Shakespeare "must have" read this Munday translation before writing "The Merchant." In any event, the yarn may be accorded about the same seriousness to be given the fable that all Welshmen are thieves. After all, it should be remembered that "The Merchant of Venice" was written and produced as a comedy, and that the character of Shylock symbolizes the Devil of Debt. No record survives of any anti-Jewish feeling in Elizabethan England as a result of the play. On the contrary, Shylock presents the case for the Jew as a human being more powerfully than any other character of the age. And thanks to the researches of Roth, Sissons and the Oxford-Shakespeare scholars, alert readers can now visualize a believable author of "The Merchant" checking over his script with a Marrano money-lender of London and Venice, such as Oxford's banker, Baptista Spinola, between sips of wine and laughter, instead of in the deadly seri-

ous vein in which Messrs. Ibn-Zahav and Schwartz would have us approach the comedy. Personally, I think that these modern efforts to re-write Shakespeare would be more effective if the authors took more pains to post themselves on actual conditions in Shakespeare's age.

Charles Wisner Barrell

Paris Spokesman

One of the real cosmopolitan members of THE FELLOWSHIP is Mr. Burton Rice, better known to the world of magazine and fashion illustrative and photographic art as Dynevor Rhys. Mr. Rice is a Chicagoan by birth, a New Yorker by adoption, knows Great Britain at first hand, and before the Nazis conquered France had maintained headquarters in Paris for over twenty years. Escaping from the latter city late in 1940 with a handbag of personal effects, he made his way back to the United States, and during most of the war years that followed, did special investigations for the Department of Commerce. When the American Branch of THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP was incorporated as a separate educational society in March, 1945, Mr. Rice was one of its incorporators and has since served as a Trustee. He is now at his former working headquarters in Paris, reassembling the large photographic studios he originally developed there. He writes that he has already interested a number of his Paris friends in the Oxford-Shakespeare movement. Further developments can be expected with confidence. Meanwhile, any of Mr. Rice's friends in America can reach him at 15 rue du Cherche-Midi, Paris, 6^e me.

New Proof that "Henry VIII" Was Written Before the Spring of 1606

By CHARLES WISNER BARRELL

IN OUR JULY, 1946 issue, Dr. L. P. Bénét made plain the false reasoning behind the general assumption that *Henry VIII* was written shortly before June, 1613, when a play laid in that reign was given at the Globe.

Additional evidence in support of the Bénét arguments can be found in the internal structure of the drama. Part of this is positive, part negative. And none of it seems to have been taken into

account by accepted authorities on *Henry VIII*, though they apply tests of the same kind to various of the other plays.

The historic Parliament of November, 1605, which was postponed for a few weeks upon discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, issued a vigorous act against the abuse of the name of God in plays.

This was the result of years of agitation by the Puritans. It was approved by the King and well

publicized. Being rigorously enforced by the Master of the Revels, who censored plays for production, this act provides a definite barrier in the creative records of the British drama, and should be given due heed when attempting to fix the dates of composition and stage production of all disputed plays of that period.

For example, the First Quarto of *Othello*, published as late as 1622 by Thomas Walkley from a shortened stage script, contains a number of oaths and other legally offensive exclamations which are either omitted or softened down in the 1623 First Folio version. This is definite proof that the Quarto script had been used for stage purposes prior to the spring of 1606. The fact is corroborated by the now authenticated Revels Records which list *Othello* as shown before James I on November 1, 1604. In addition, Ben Jonson's references to "the Moor" in *The Poetaster*,¹ with other circumstances, make it clear that *Othello* was being acted by Ned Alleyne, and others in the 1590's.

To approximate the date of composition of *Henry VIII*, the same oath test should be equally valid. Using it, what do we find? Just this—that the name of God is used *no less than thirty-two times* in its pages. Several of these uses would probably have passed the censorship, with Wolsey's

Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king . . .

But by far the greater number of these references to the Deity are the old Tudor oaths and asseverations of exactly the same "name of God!" vintage favored by the Virgin Monarch herself.

Thus it becomes abundantly apparent that in *Henry VIII* we have nothing less than an authentic Elizabethan script dating from some period well within the personal purview of the great Queen herself—whose christening it celebrates with charming effectiveness at the final curtain.

* * *

On the negative side, consider this:

When orthodox "authorities" declare that *Henry VIII* was first composed about 1612, they take it for granted that William of Stratford had at least a controlling hand in its writing. Incidentally, it is always pointed out that William Shakspeare owed much to the patronage of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton (though unfortunately for

this argument, no contemporary documentation bears out the conjecture). But the concomitant of such an assumption is that the Stratford citizen sought to honor his "great friend" Wriothesley whenever occasion offered.

If this latter assumption were truly tenable, how comes it that Wriothesley's own grandfather, 1st Earl of Southampton, and an unusually able and well-liked adherent of that monarch, isn't given any part at all—not even passing mention—in the play of *Henry VIII*?

Thomas Wriothesley (1505-1550), retained the confidence and high regard of the King with a consistency matched by practically no other Tudor statesman. He rose from a small secretarial post under Cromwell to the high office of Lord Chancellor of England. And when the dissolution of church properties took place, Henry rewarded him with many and valuable estates. Nor was Wriothesley adversely affected by the fall of his political mentor, Thomas Cromwell. In fact, he grew so great after Cromwell's execution that from 1542 onward, he was the *de facto* governor of England. Wriothesley was an executor of Henry's will, and in accordance with one of the King's last expressed wishes, was made Earl of Southampton in 1547.

It would seemingly have been both a gracious and an easily contrived compliment to his alleged great patron, had the alleged genius of Stratford brought Grandfather Wriothesley to life in the play supposedly written in 1612. As a loyal prop and vigorous spokesman for the Tudor dynasty, no fitter character would seem available.

Instead, we are baffled to find that he doesn't receive the slightest attention. How strange! And especially so—if we accept the orthodox dating of *Henry VIII*—when it is further considered how very appropriate such a compliment would have appeared to the 3rd Earl of Southampton in the years 1612-13. For at that time he still enjoyed the high regard of James I, besides being one of the most admired noblemen in the realm because of his labors to reestablish the Virginia Colony on a permanent basis.

Thus we must concur in the conclusion that Dr. Bénézet reaches on other grounds.

The orthodox assignment of *Henry VIII* to 1612-13 will not stand up under realistic examination of its own content. Instead, it must be assigned to a much earlier Elizabethan period—and one when compliments to the 3rd Earl of Southampton were not in order.

1. See "Creative Calendar," p. 46, Vol. 4, No. 4, NEWS-LETTER.