

REPRINT SHOWS HAND OF BACON IN 1594 REVELS

LAW SPORTS AT GRAY'S INN (1594). By Basil Brown. New York: Published by the Author.

M. BROWN reverses the attitude of those who would take from Shakespeare to enlarge Bacon's fame. He makes the great philosopher a willing aid to the poet's progress. His interpretations are not asserted dogmatically, but he offers plenty of circumstances that gives a plausible color to conjecture. And his book has so much matter of intrinsic interest that lovers of the seventeenth century will be grateful for it, aside from its argument, relating to a complete reprint of the "Gesta Grayorum," which has been reissued only once, in 1823, since its first appearance, in 1688.

The lawyers that frequented Gray's Inn seem to have been a merry lot, bent on revels and celebrations whenever occasion offered. Here is Mr. Brown's outline of their activities: "From 1525 (perhaps earlier) the gentlemen of Gray's Inn had at Christmas time a Lord of Misrule. The Inns of Court men composed their own plays and acted in them. In 1529 one Simon Fish of Gray's Inn acted a part against Cardinal Wolsey which so displeased the great churchman that Fish had to fly the country. In 1566 George Gascoigne's 'Jocasta' was played by the students of Gray's Inn. In 1587-8 the poet Thomas Campion acted in a 'comedy' at Gray's Inn, and in the following month several members of the inn composed 'The Misfortunes of Arthur,' which they performed at Greenwich before the Queen. The authors of this 'Senecan' tragedy were Francis Bacon (who acted in the dumb shows), Christopher Yelverton, Nicholas Trot (who wrote the introduction) and five others. My own opinion is that Gray's Inn may be called the very cradle and nursery of the English drama."

They had rare audiences—Queen Elizabeth herself and lords, knights and right honorables without end. Mr. Brown believes that Shakespeare wrote his "Comedy of Errors" or the Christmas festivities of 1594. "Up to the time of Gesta Grayorum," he writes, "in fact, up to 1598, the Shakespeare plays had appeared anonymously, but on the very date on which the 'Comedy of Errors' was performed at Gray's Inn Shakespeare's name is for the first time recorded among the Lord Chamberlain's servants, i. e., the players."

The great dramatist picked up a good deal of law in one way or another. Bacon may have helped him there. Perhaps he translated for him the old Norman French record of the Hales case, which appears to have given more than a hint for the grave diggers' scene in "Hamlet." But the great William himself had direct experience with the courts. And Mr. Brown notes the curious fact that in the legal documents relating to the Stratford property, "William Shakespeare" at first stands alone. Five years later "Gentleman" was written after the name!

There is a good deal of solemn fooling in the reprinted account of the 1594 Revels. It contains a proclamation of general amnesty with enough synonyms to stock a dictionary. Everybody, including "naturals," was to be forgiven from all manner of "inhibitions, prohibitions, insurrections, corrections, conspiracies, concavities, inaniities, installations, distillations, constillations"—and pages more of the like.

The hand of Bacon is said to be plain in the speeches of the Six Counsellors. The first of these advises war in eloquent terms. But the second is more worthy of this pioneer in modern science and philosophy.

"First, the collecting of a most perfect and general library, wherein whatsoever the wit of the man hath heretofore committed to books of worth, be they ancient or modern, printed or manuscript, European or of the other parts, of one or other language, may be made contributory to your wisdom. Next, a spacious, wonderful garden, wherein whatsoever plant, the sun of divers climates, out of the earth of divers moulds, either wild, or by the culture of man, brought forth, may be, with that care that appertaineth to the good prospering thereof, set and cherished. This garden to be built about with rooms, to stable in all rare beasts, and to cage in all rare birds; with two lakes adjoining, the one of fresh water and the other of salt, for like variety of fishes; and so you may have, in a small compass, a model of universal nature made private. The third, a goodly huge cabinet, wherein whatsoever the hand of man, by exquisite art or engine, hath made rare in stuff, form, or motion, whatsoever singularity, chance, and the shuffle of things hath produced, whatsoever nature hath wrought in things that want life, and may be kept, shall be sorted and included. The fourth, such a Still-house so furnished with mills, instruments, furnaces and vessels as may be a Palace fit for a philosopher's stone."

Faith

By SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN

Forego reason,  
Forego thought:  
Of more than these  
Is Heaven wrought.  
Of tears below,  
And stars above,  
Out of labor,  
Out of love.  
Let the brain  
Explore the sod;  
Let the heart  
Discover God.  
Unto themselves  
The wise suffice,  
But fools of faith  
Are blessed thrice.

BOOKS ON SHAKESPEARE

Without division into acts

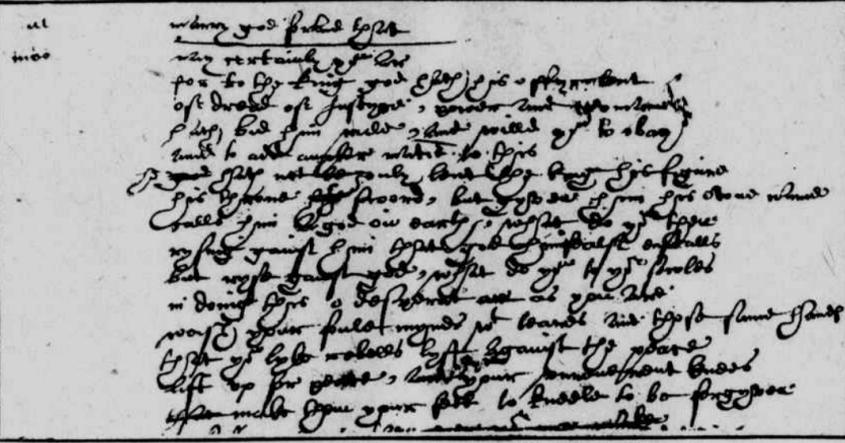
THE TEMPEST. First volume of the new Cambridge edition of Shakespeare. Edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson. The Macmillan Company.

Reviewed by ROBERT J. COLE.

WALT WHITMAN, in his conversations with Traubel, spoke of the inexorable speed of Shakespeare—"everything hell-bent to get along." Undoubtedly the four breaks, often arbitrarily placed, in each play tend to lessen this effect of swift progress. The first thing a reader of the new "Tempest" notes in turning over the text as a whole is the absence of "acts." This is what one of the editors, Mr. Wilson, has to say on the point:

wash your foule mynds wt teares and those same hands that you lyke rebels lyft against the peace, lift up for peace, and your unrevenged knees [that] make them your feet to kneele to be forgiven. It must not be thought, however, that this new text is full of changes. In many cases, even where the editors are convinced in their own minds that a different reading is the right one, they content themselves with suggesting it in the notes. And they cannot justly be accused of trying to "improve" the poet. Their double aim is to restore his text to as near the original as may be; and to clarify it by showing its relation to stage business. However other scholars may question the details of the new edition, no-

adverbs and adjectives form fours, sentences sweat and groan like porters with three thoughts piled on one back, and not one dares mutiny any more than Ariel dares it against Prospero's most delicate bidding. Prospero himself, in his narrative of how he reached the island, throws all grammar to the winds, as does Imogen in her panning haste to find Milford Haven. Shakespeare, in fine, and at the utmost of his quality, sinks all grammar in the heave and swell of speech under emotion—and in the end we are left to question. How did this man learn to make sentences mean so much more than they say? How contrive his voice so that four quite simple words, "Think, we had mothers" or "The rest is silence," chime with overtones and undertones that so deepen all the space and meaning of life between hell and heaven?"



"Shakespearean" Addition to Play of "Sir Thomas More."

"That the divisions in the Folio are 'void of authority,' and that Shakespeare wrote his plays in one unbroken continuity" was admitted by Dr. Johnson in his preface of 1765, and Capell three years later pleaded for the reformation. But they still persist in modern texts, though they are often dramatically absurd. In this edition they are wholly discarded, changes of place alone being marked by a space on the page.

It is contended that in the cases where act divisions occur in Shakespeare's early plays, in haphazard fashion, they indicate revision of other dramatists' work from which he failed to cut them out. Others were perhaps introduced by actors as conveniences.

The other striking feature of this new edition is the number of stage directions inserted by the editors. "It should be remembered," they plead, "that this edition is intended not for the Elizabethan actor, but for the modern reader, and that a play book is a very different thing from a moving, audible pageant. In our opinion, the almost complete absence of stage directions in the printed text is one of the chief obstacles to the appreciation of Shakespeare by his countrymen."

As a matter of fact, he almost always formed a clear cut and definite picture of the surroundings amid which his characters moved, and it is generally possible to reconstruct this scenery from incidental references in the play. In attempting this we shall again only be completing the process already begun by previous editors."

In general the attempt has been to restore old forms, when these are in any way expressive of intention. It is now held that much of the original punctuation, which former editors have discarded as illogical or ungrammatical, throws light on the way in which the poet sought to guide the actor's rendering of the lines. In this and other details the Cambridge edition is a defence of the much abused Elizabethan compositor. The editor contends that he "followed copy" and that if we wish to get back of the critics to the mind of Shakespeare himself we must restore many of the rejected readings.

In the study of texts, the editors of our day have tried to detect the possible printers' errors by an examination of Elizabethan styles of handwriting. For this would show the kind of confusion most likely to arise in setting type from a manuscript. New light has been thrown on the whole matter by the discovery of an insertion in a contemporary play of lines in the style of Shakespeare's known signature. His own hand may have written them. Even if it did not, they serve to show the forms of letters and the method of joining one letter to another. When an editor is doubtful as to a word or phrase in the present text, he writes it in the "Shakespearean" style, and sometimes the obstinate puzzle is cleared at a glance. This is the "translation" of the passage, the two words at the left being intended for "All" and "Moore,"

mary god forbid that  
may certainly you are  
for to the king god hath his office lent  
of dread of Justice, Power and Command  
hath bid him rule, and willd you to obey  
and to add ampler matter to this  
he [god] hath not [le] souly lent the  
king his figure  
his throne [hys] & sword, but given him  
his owne name  
calls him a god on earth, what do you  
then  
rising against him that god himself en-  
stalls  
but howe gainst god, what do you to yo'r  
rowles  
in doing this o' desperat [or] as you are.

Arthur sketches the history of the plays in print and closes on the lyric note—one more tribute of the heart, lest the work of a scholarly editor should seem to be done coldly, from the head alone:

"We trace up this word-play . . . from command to tyranny; until—in 'Antony and Cleopatra,' for example—nouns scurry to do the work of verbs,

body can doubt the editor's high purpose—to present a living poet, not his dead bones. And the methods of modern scholarship are so explained as to give the ordinary reader a clue to many things that have puzzled him in the text of his beloved Shakespeare. He may even be inspired to make his own emendations, where the literary doctors disagree.

The plays lived through many changes of actors and scenery

SHAKESPEARE FROM BETTERTON TO IRVING. Two volumes, illustrated. By George C. Odell. Charles Scribner's Sons.

THE history of the drama as a form of literature and the history of stagecraft are two separate streams. They mingle to some degree and each is modified by the other. Certainly Shakespeare would be read if there were no theatres. And there would be acting without Hamlet or Portia. Yet either of these two conditions is hard to imagine. For the majority of readers there must be a half-conscious imaginary reconstruction of the stage, even when they get their Shakespeare from a book. And however actors or managers may affect to disregard the supreme master they cannot escape his influence.

The author of these treasure packed volumes is a professor of English in Columbia University. He feels keenly enough the relation between book and stage. But in this work he concentrates attention steadily upon the latter. For him the poet's own work is finished and launched like a ship on the sea. What are its adventures there, what topsails are lost in high winds? In what harbors and what ruthless repair docks does she suffer unloading or remodeling? What pirates board her?

Prof. Odell has answered these questions with a minuteness that never becomes tedious, for his own curiosity never fails. He has little need of pictures to hold the reader, yet many a book with nothing but pictures has less to justify its issue. The material of the second volume is perhaps more familiar, since it falls largely within the nineteenth century and has been more or less covered in the memoirs of that period. Nevertheless it acquires fresh interest in this arrangement. And much of it is gathered from little known sources.

The modern period began at about the time of the American Revolution and was dominated by John Philip Kemble, who was not afraid to cut Shakespeare, but who did in general treat him with reverence and who certainly achieved a high degree of theatrical effectiveness.

Following Kemble came the "leaderless age," and then the ages of Macready, of Phelps and Charles Kean and of Irving. Along with these individual figures Odell carries the development of costume, lighting and scenery.

The first volume, naturally, has more of the curious and picturesque in its illustration and text. Here is an example of the development of acting versions in the eighteenth century:

"We have seen how great was the vogue of Tate's King Lear; another play to live on even longer in equally mangled form was Colley Cibber's 'Richard III.' played first by the author at Drury Lane in 1700. This version has really never been driven from the stage; it is probably a more effective acting vehicle than Shakespeare's. It simply strizes together bits of 'Henry VI,' Part III, 'Richard II' and 'Richard III,' interpolating even much of the best part of the first scene from 'Henry IV,' Part II, where Northumberland learns of the death of

Hotspur. Many lines of this are given to King Henry in his first scene, where 'King Henry' also contributes."

The custom of utilizing the back of the stage to prepare for a later scene while action is going on in the space in front of a curtain or drop is still common in vaudeville and not unknown in regular plays. It was an essential of the earlier periods, though the role of the curtain varied, as the author explains:

"It is certain that the Elizabethan stage manager made use of the curtains before the inner stage when the action passed from the propertied scene to the outer, more indefinite platform; but we have no reason to believe that the curtain in Restoration houses was usually dropped between



"As You Like It" at Drury Lane Theatre.

scenes of an act, or what is more astonishing, between the acts themselves. The very elaborate stage directions printed in the masques of Jonson, Shirley and Davenant—directions often written out by the inventors, Jones—call for the use of a curtain at the beginning, but clearly indicate that changes of scene throughout occurred in sight of the audience. Perhaps the glory of the designer was heightened by the clever devices by which he concealed from the noble audience the mechanical trickery involved; at any rate, devices were used—of noise and blinding light—to distract the attention of the spectators while the feat was accomplished. It is extraordinary that neither here nor on the Continent did any one think of the simple expedient of lowering the curtain."

Whatever part the mechanics of the stage may play—and it is not a small one—the actor is the key to the final result. He decides, in large measure, by his powers or limitations, the very choice of drama. This is easily traced in the history of Shakespeare on the stage:

Elizabeth called her false

NOTE UPON THE "DARK LADY" SERIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS. By John R. Strong. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

HELEN's power to launch a thousand ships, according to Marlowe, was in her face. Very likely. When men are in the fighting mood they will fight over anything. It would have been a greater triumph to make them stop. And the world is more interested to-day in the women that have inspired men to creation than in the narrow and mechanical view of Portia, Beatrice and Rosalind that saw in them copies of some Elizabethan girl. Nevertheless, he learned some very definite lessons from a living teacher, call her the "Dark Lady," or any other name.

Mr. Strong is for the Mary Fytton theory. He takes up in detail the arguments derived from the sonnets and from "Love's Labor's Lost." He recalls the known facts of Mary's life: "The young lady came to court in or near 1595 as one among the maids of honor to Queen Elizabeth. She therefore was at the court in 1597, the year of 'Love's Labor's Lost,' then 19 years old." It was in 1600 that her affair with Lord Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke's son, took place. There are some indications that she was both witty and passionate. And whatever were Shakespeare's relations with her, it is not difficult to believe that she left him a sadder man. That he was also a wiser one his plays bear witness.

A contemporary letter of Rowland Whyte is quoted with an account of Mary Fytton's attendance at a Blackfriars wedding. "After supper [the maske came in, as I writ in my last; and delicate it was to see 8 Ladies so prettily and richly attired. Mrs. Fitton leade, and after they had donne all their own Ceremonies, these 8 Ladys Maskers choose 2 Ladys more to dance the Measures. Mrs. Fitton went to the Queen, and wooed her to dance; her Majesty asked what she was; Affection, she said. Affection! said the Queen, Affection is false. Yet her Majesty rose and danced; soe did my lady Marques [of Winchester]." Now whether Elizabeth's answer was intended as a divination of character or simply as repartee, nobody can now determine. It seems more likely, however, that in such a case she would

express the opposite of her thought. Mr. Strong cites many passages in the sonnets to support the idea of their relationship to three persons: Southampton, Lord Herbert (afterward Pembroke) and Mary Fytton. The first was away from London when Lord Herbert—and perhaps Shakespeare himself—were involved in entanglements of one sort or another. If the absent friend and patron of the dramatist heard on his return court gos-



Mary Fytton.

sip that did not please him, he might have turned cold.

The longest section of the book is devoted to minute examination of the authenticity of portraits which have been labelled with Mary's name. They do not fit the adjective in "Dark Lady." Strong's arguments against their authenticity carries great weight. In any case there is no dispute as to the statue of Mary, here reprinted.

Drury Lane, following the celebration at Stratford in September, 1769. According to a note in the second edition of Davies' 'Life of Garrick' the piece opened with a number of comic scenes involving rustic characters at Stratford, and ended with the grand jubilee procession, made up of best known plays, each group preceded by persons properly habited, bearing streamers of various colours, on which were inscribed the names of the several performances." Half way down the procession was 'the Comic Muse seated on a magnificent car, drawn by Satyrs, and attended by the different characters of the ancient Comedy.' At the end of the line was Apollo with his lyre, followed by the Tragic Muse on a triumphal car, surrounded by Calliope, Clio, Erato, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Terpsichore and Urania. At the very last, 'the figure of Shakespeare, from his monument in Westminster Abbey, with emblematical ornaments, and a numerous train of attendants, closed the procession.'"

So our own time has seen the "Calliban" of Percy Mackaye and various other tercentennial fantasies. If the world lives to see a thousand years of Shakespeare no doubt there will be inventions beyond the powers of yesterday or to-day to give new forms to the poet's dream.

Falstaff's original found in Florio

SHAKESPEARE'S LOST YEARS IN LONDON (1586-1592). By Arthur Acheson. Brentano's.

Reviewed by GEORGE KENT

SOME day the "infinite pains" of Shakespearean scholars will be rewarded, and every fact concerning the life and work of the great master will emerge from its shadow and stand illuminated and distinct in the heavy pages of voluminous and at last authoritative biographies. When that comes to pass the Avon bard will be less loved and adored.

The widely accepted and affectionately cherished legend of the playwright is that he was poacher, a libertine and a general scamp, that he joined with a band of strolling players passing through Stratford and came to London to play street gamin, and one day while holding the horse of a nobleman obtained favor, and presto, plays, poems, sonnets of surpassing excellence.

With a positiveness that disarms argument, Mr. Acheson asserts that Shakespeare was a practical craftsman. He proves that the poet never joined any strolling players, but that he came to London determined to make his fortune and so rescue the family name from the mire of poverty. There he apprenticed himself as general factotum to James Burbage, actor, manager and theatre owner.

Lovers of literature delight to brood over the gallant Elizabethan era. They

hear tankards thumping a refrain to marvelous conversation, in which Kit Marlowe, Bacon, Ben Jonson, Sir Walter Raleigh, Greene, Kyd, Nashe and Shakespeare take part. This is not so, again, cries the kill-joy seeker after truth. Certain writers of the time hated and vilified Shakespeare in the meanest fashion. The possession of a university degree and of a family coat of arms meant a great deal in those days, and as Shakespeare had neither he was cordially contemned.

"In the time of Elizabeth," we read, "the stage was recognized as one of the principle vehicles for the reflection of opinion concerning the state of public interest; the players being, in Shakespeare's phrase, 'the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.' Mr. Acheson connects many speeches and characterizations with events and characters of the day. "King John," in particular, he points out, shows political animus. Then again, there was the interest of his patron, who was participant in one of the court struggles of the day, to be guarded.

Probably the most significant chapter of the volume is that entitled "Falstaff's Original," in which the author names a particular contemporary of Shakespeare as the prototype of the carousing comrade of Prince Hal. John Florio shared with Shakespeare the patronage and friendship of the Earl of Southampton. The playwright was the late comer, wherefore Florio regarded him with envy as an intruder. Florio, physically, is the very image of Falstaff. His character and the history of his life disclose traits and incidents which might have suggested passages in the plays where Falstaff appears. Florio's writings reveal the Falstaffian swagger, meanness and cynicism. The author has found traces of Florio in two other characters of Shakespeare, Parolles of "All's Well That Ends Well" and Armado of "Love's Labor Lost." That Florio and his friends were aware of the satire is the contention of this author, who quotes a letter from the wife of the Earl of Southampton to her husband referring jeerfully to Florio as Falstaff.

The figure, however, has too much of the universal to admit of any certainty as to its origin. There is no harm in speculation of this kind. And Acheson has done a service to lovers of the seventeenth century in bringing back some of the half forgotten figures. Florio has a place of his own, apart from the Falstaffian conjecture. His translation of Montaigne commands respect. The passages reprinted from his other works in this volume have a curious interest.

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