THE PLAYS AND POEMS OF WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,

IN TEN VOLUMES;

COLLATED *VERBATIM* WITH THE MOST AUTHENTIC COPIES, AND REVISED:

WITH THE

CORRECTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

VARIOUS COMMENTATORS;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

AN ESSAY ON THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF HIS PLAYS;

AN ESSAY RELATIVE TO SHAKSPEARE AND JONSON;

A DISSERTATION ON THE THREE PARTS OF KING HENRY VI.;

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ENGLISH STAGE;

AND NOTES;

BY EDMOND MALONE.

Της φυσεως γραμματευς ην, του καλαμου αποβρεχων εις νυν.
Vet. Auct. apud Suidam.

——— QUEM TU, DEA, TEMPORE IN OMNI
OMNIBUS ORNATUM VOLUISTI EXCELLERE REBUS.—*Lucret.*

LONDON: PRINTED BY H. BALDWIN,

For J. Rivington and Sons, L. Davis, B. White and Son, T. Longman, B. Law, H. S. Woodfall, C. Dilly, J. Robſon, J. Johnſon, T. Vernor, G. G. J. and J. Robinſon, T. Cadell, J. Murray, R. Baldwin, H. L. Gardner, J. Sewell, J. Nichols, J. Bew, T. Payne, jun. S. Hayes, R. Faulder, W. Lowndes, G. and T. Wilkie, Scatcherd and Whitaker, T. and J. Egerton, C. Stalker, J. Barker, J. Edwards, Ogilvie and Speare, J. Cuthell, J. Lackington, and E. Newbery.

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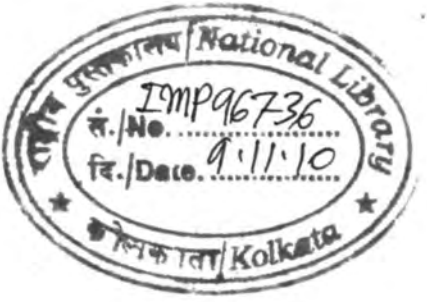
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THE

PLAYS AND POEMS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

PART I.

CONTAINING

PROLEGOMENA.

PREFACE.

IN the following work, the labour of eight years, I have endeavoured, with unceaſing ſolicitude, to give a faithful and correct edition of the plays and poems of Shakſpeare. Whatever imperfection or errours therefore may be found in it, (and what work of ſo great length and difficulty was ever free from errour or imperfection?) will, I truſt, be imputed to any other cauſe than want of zeal for the due execution of the taſk which I ventured to undertake.

The difficulties to be encountered by an editor of the works of Shakſpeare, have been ſo frequently ſtated, and are ſo generally acknowledged, that it may ſeem unneceſſary to conciliate the publick favour by this plea: but as theſe in my opinion have in ſome particulars been over-rated, and in others not ſufficiently inſiſted on, and as the true ſtate of the ancient copies of this poet's writings has never been laid before the publick, I ſhall conſider the ſubject as if it had not been already diſcuſſed by preceding editors.

In the year 1756 Dr. Johnſon publiſhed the following excellent ſcheme of a new edition of Shakſpeare's dramatick pieces, which he completed in 1765:

" When the works of Shakſpeare are, after ſo many editions, again offered to the publick, it will doubtleſs be enquired, why Shakſpeare ſtands in more need of critical aſſiſtance than any other of the Engliſh writers,

and what are the deficiencies of the late attempts, which another editor may hope to ſupply.

" The buſineſs of him that republiſhes an ancient book is, to correct what is corrupt, and to explain what is obſcure. To have a text corrupt in many places, and in many doubtful, is, among the authours that have written ſince the uſe of types, almoſt peculiar to Shakſpeare. Moſt writers, by publiſhing their own works, prevent all various readings, and preclude all conjectural criticiſm. Books indeed are ſometimes publiſhed after the death of him who produced them, but they are better ſecured from corruptions than theſe unfortunate compoſitions. They ſubſiſt in a ſingle copy, written or reviſed by the authour; and the faults of the printed volume can be only faults of one deſcent.

" But of the works of Shakſpeare the condition has been far different: he ſold them, not to be printed, but to be played. They were immediately copied for the actors, and multiplied by tranſcript after tranſcript, vitiated by the blunders of the penman, or changed by the affectation of the player, perhaps enlarged to introduce a jeſt, or mutilated to ſhorten the repreſentation; and printed at laſt without the concurrence of the authour, without the conſent of the proprietor, from compilations made by chance or by ſtealth out of the ſeparate parts written for the theatre: and thus thruſt into the world ſurreptitiouſly and haſtily, they ſuffered another depravation from the ignorance and negligence of the printers, as every man who knows the ſtate of the preſs in that age will readily conceive.

" It is not eaſy for invention to bring together ſo many cauſes concurring to vitiate a text. No other

authour

Engraved by C. Knight from a Drawing of the same size, made by Orins Humphry from the original Picture in the Collection of his Grace the Duke of Chandos.

London. Publish'd as the Act directs. Feb.ry 1st 1786. by J. Rivington & Partners.

authour ever gave up his works to fortune and time with ſo little care; no books could be left in hands ſo likely to injure them, as plays frequently acted, yet continued in manuſcript: no other tranſcribers were likely to be ſo little qualified for their taſk as thoſe who copied for the ſtage, at a time when the lower ranks of the people were univerſally illiterate: no other editions were made from fragments ſo minutely broken, and ſo fortuitouſly re-united; and in no other age was the art of printing in ſuch unſkilful hands.

"With the cauſes of corruption that make the reviſal of Shakſpeare's dramatick pieces neceſſary, may be enumerated the cauſes of obſcurity, which may be partly imputed to his age, and partly to himſelf.

"When a writer outlives his contemporaries, and remains almoſt the only unforgotten name of a diſtant time, he is neceſſarily obſcure. Every age has its modes of ſpeech, and its caſt of thought; which, though eaſily explained when there are many books to be compared with each other, become ſometimes unintelligible, and always difficult, when there are no parallel paſſages that may conduce to their illuſtration. Shakſpeare is the firſt conſiderable authour of ſublime or familiar dialogue in our language. Of the books which he read, and from which he formed his ſtile, ſome perhaps have periſhed, and the reſt are neglected. His imitations are therefore unnoted, his alluſions are undiſcovered and many beauties, both of pleaſantry and greatneſs, are loſt with the objects to which they were united, as the figures vaniſh when the canvas has decayed.

"It is the great excellence of Shakſpeare, that he drew his ſcenes from nature, and from life. He copied

the manners of the world then paſſing before him, and has more alluſions than other poets to the traditions and ſuperſtitions of the vulgar; which muſt therefore be traced before he can be underſtood.

" He wrote at a time when our poetical language was yet unformed, when the meaning of our phraſes was yet in fluctuation, when words were adopted at pleaſure from the neighbouring languages, and while the Saxon was ſtill viſibly mingled in our diction. The reader is therefore embarraſſed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obſoleteneſs and innovation. In that age, as in all others, faſhion produced phraſeology, which ſucceeding faſhion ſwept away before its meaning was generally known, or ſufficiently authoriſed: and in that age, above all others, experiments were made upon our language, which diſtorted its combinations, and diſturbed its uniformity.

" If Shakſpeare has difficulties above other writers, it is to be imputed to the nature of his work, which required the uſe of the common colloquial language, and conſequently admitted many phraſes alluſive, elliptical, and proverbial, ſuch as we ſpeak and hear every hour without obſerving them; and of which, being now familiar, we do not ſuſpect that they can ever grow uncouth, or that, being now obvious, they can ever ſeem remote.

" Theſe are the principal cauſes of the obſcurity of Shakſpeare; to which may be added that fulneſs of idea, which might ſometimes load his words with more ſentiment than they could conveniently convey, and that rapidity of imagination which might hurry him to a ſecond thought before he had fully explained the

the firſt. But my opinion is, that very few of his lines were difficult to his audience, and that he uſed ſuch expreſſions as were then common, though the paucity of contemporary writers makes them now ſeem peculiar.

" Authours are often praiſed for improvement, or blamed for innovation, with very little juſtice, by thoſe who read few other books of the ſame age. Addiſon himſelf has been ſo unſucceſsful in enumerating the words with which Milton has enriched our language, as perhaps not to have named one of which Milton was the authour: and Bentley has yet more unhappily praiſed him as the introducer of thoſe eliſions into Engliſh poetry, which had been uſed from the firſt eſſays of verſification among us, and which Milton was indeed the laſt that practiſed.

" Another impediment, not the leaſt vexatious to the commentator, is the exactneſs with which Shakſpeare followed his authour. Inſtead of dilating his thoughts into generalities, and expreſſing incidents with poetical latitude, he often combines circumſtances unneceſſary to his main deſign, only becauſe he happened to find them together. Such paſſages can be illuſtrated only by him who has read the ſame ſtory in the very book which Shakſpeare conſulted.

" He that undertakes an edition of Shakſpeare, has all theſe difficulties to encounter, and all theſe obſtructions to remove.

" The corruptions of the text will be corrected by a careful collation of the oldeſt copies, by which it is hoped that many reſtorations may yet be made: at leaſt it will be neceſſary to collect and note the variations as

materials for future criticks, for it very often happens that a wrong reading has affinity to the right.

" In this part all the preſent editions are apparently and intentionally defective. The criticks did not ſo much as wiſh to facilitate the labour of thoſe that followed them. The ſame books are ſtill to be compared; the work that has been done, is to be done again, and no ſingle edition will ſupply the reader with a text on which he can rely as the beſt copy of the works of Shakſpeare.

" The edition now propoſed will at leaſt have this advantage over others. It will exhibit all the obſervable varieties of all the copies that can be found; that, if the reader is not ſatisfied with the editor's determination, he may have the means of chooſing better for himſelf.

" Where all the books are evidently vitiated, and collation can give no aſſiſtance, then begins the taſk of critical ſagacity: and ſome changes may well be admitted in a text never ſettled by the authour, and ſo long expoſed to caprice and ignorance. But nothing ſhall be impoſed, as in the Oxford edition, without notice of the alteration; nor ſhall conjecture be wantonly or unneceſſarily indulged.

" It has been long found, that very ſpecious emendations do not equally ſtrike all minds with conviction, nor even the ſame mind at different times; and therefore, though perhaps many alterations may be propoſed as eligible, very few will be obtruded as certain. In a language ſo ungrammatical as the Engliſh, and ſo licentious as that of Shakſpeare, emendatory criticiſm is always hazardous; nor can it be allowed to any man who is not particularly verſed in the writings of that age,

age, and particularly ſtudious of his authour's diction. There is danger leſt peculiarities ſhould be miſtaken for corruptions, and paſſages rejected as unintelligible, which a narrow mind happens not to underſtand.

" All the former criticks have been ſo much employed on the correction of the text, that they have not ſufficiently attended to the elucidation of paſſages obſcured by accident or time. The editor will endeavour to read the books which the authour read, to trace his knowledge to its ſource, and compare his copies with the originals. If in this part of his deſign he hopes to attain any degree of ſuperiority to his predeceſſors, it muſt be conſidered, that he has the advantage of their labours; that part of the work being already done, more care is naturally beſtowed on the other part, and that, to declare the truth, Mr. Rowe and Mr. Pope were very ignorant of the ancient Engliſh literature; Dr. Warburton was detained by more important ſtudies; and Mr. Theobald, if fame be juſt to his memory, conſidered learning only as an inſtrument of gain, and made no further inquiry after his author's meaning, when once he had notes ſufficient to embelliſh his page with the expected decorations.

" With regard to obſolete or peculiar diction, the editor may perhaps claim ſome degree of confidence, having had more motives to conſider the whole extent of our language than any other man from its firſt formation. He hopes, that, by comparing the works of Shakſpeare with thoſe of writers who lived at the ſame time, immediately preceded, or immediately followed him, he ſhall be able to aſcertain his ambiguities, diſ-

entangle his intricacies, and recover the meaning of words now loſt in the darkneſs of antiquity.

" When therefore any obſcurity ariſes from an alluſion to ſome other book, the paſſage will be quoted. When the diction is entangled, it will be cleared by a paraphraſe or interpretation. When the ſenſe is broken by the ſuppreſſion of part of the ſentiment in pleaſantry or paſſion, the connection will be ſupplied. When any forgotten cuſtom is hinted, care will be taken to retrieve and explain it. The meaning aſſigned to doubtful words will be ſupported by the authorities of other writers, or by parallel paſſages of Shakſpeare himſelf.

" The obſervation of faults and beauties is one of the duties of an annotator, which ſome of Shakſpeare's editors have attempted, and ſome have neglected. For this part of his taſk, and for this only, was Mr. Pope eminently and indiſputably qualified: nor has Dr. Warburton followed him with leſs diligence or leſs ſucceſs. But I never obſerved that mankind was much delighted or improved by their aſteriſks, commas, or double commas; of which the only effect is, that they preclude the pleaſure of judging for ourſelves, teach the young and ignorant to decide without principles; defeat curioſity and diſcernment by leaving them leſs to diſcover; and, at laſt, ſhew the opinion of the critick, without the reaſons on which it was founded, and without affording any light by which it may be examined.

" The editor, though he may leſs delight his own vanity, will probably pleaſe his reader more, by ſuppoſing

ſing him equally able with himſelf to judge of beauties and faults, which require no previous acquiſition of remote knowledge. A deſcription of the obvious ſcenes of nature, a repreſentation of general life, a ſentiment of reflection or experience, a deduction of concluſive argument, a forcible eruption of effervescent paſſion, are to be conſidered as proportionate to common apprehenſion, unaſſiſted by critical officiouſneſs; ſince to conceive them, nothing more is requiſite than acquaintance with the general ſtate of the world, and thoſe faculties which he muſt always bring with him who would read Shakſpeare.

"But when the beauty ariſes from ſome adaptation of the ſentiment to cuſtoms worn out of uſe, to opinions not univerſally prevalent, or to any accidental or minute particularity, which cannot be ſupplied by common underſtanding, or common obſervation, it is the duty of a commentator to lend his aſſiſtance.

"The notice of beauties and faults thus limited will make no diſtinct part of the deſign, being reducible to the explanation of obſcure paſſages.

"The editor does not however intend to preclude himſelf from the compariſon of Shakſpeare's ſentiments or expreſſion with thoſe of ancient or modern authours, or from the diſplay of any beauty not obvious to the ſtudents of poetry; for as he hopes to leave his authour better underſtood, he wiſhes likewiſe to procure him more rational approbation.

"The former editors have affected to ſlight their predeceſſors: but in this edition all that is valuable will be adopted from every commentator, that poſterity may conſider it as including all the reſt, and exhibit

exhibit whatever is hitherto known of the great father of the Engliſh drama."

Though Dr. Johnſon has here pointed out with his uſual perſpicuity and vigour the true courſe to be taken by an editor of Shakſpeare, ſome of the poſitions which he has laid down may be controverted, and ſome are indubitably not true. It is not true that the plays of this authour were more incorrectly printed than thoſe of any of his contemporaries: for in the plays of Marlowe, Marſton, Fletcher, Maſſinger, and others, as many errours may be found. It is not true that the art of printing was in no other age in ſo unſkilful hands. Nor is it true, in the latitude in which it is ſtated, that "theſe plays were printed from compilations made by chance or by ſtealth out of the ſeparate parts written for the theatre:" two only of all his dramas, *The Merry Wives of Windſor* and *K. Henry V.* appear to have been thus thruſt into the world, and of the former it is yet a doubt whether it is a firſt ſketch or an imperfect copy. I do not believe that words were then adopted at pleaſure from the neighbouring languages, or that an antiquated diction was then employed by any poet but Spenſer. That the obſcurities of our authour, to whatever cauſe they may be referred, do not ariſe from the paucity of contemporary writers, the preſent edition may furniſh indiſputable evidence. And laſtly, if it be true, that "very few of Shakſpeare's lines were difficult to his audience, and that he uſed ſuch expreſſions as were then common," (a poſition of which I have not the ſmalleſt doubt,) it cannot be true, that "his reader is embarraſſed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obſoleteneſs and innovation."

"When

When Mr. Pope firſt undertook the taſk of reviſing theſe plays, every anomaly of language, and every expreſſion that was not underſtood at that time, were conſidered as errours or corruptions, and the text was altered, or amended, as it was called, at pleaſure. The principal writers of the early part of this century ſeem never to have looked behind them, and to have conſidered their own era and their own phraſeology as the ſtandard of perfection: hence from the time of Pope's edition, for above twenty years, to alter Shakſpeare's text and to reſtore it, were conſidered as ſynonymous terms. During the laſt thirty years our principal employment has been to *reſtore*, in the true ſenſe of the word; to eject the arbitrary and capricious innovations made by our predeceſſors from ignorance of the phraſeology and cuſtoms of the age in which Shakſpeare lived.

As on the one hand our poet's text has been deſcribed as more corrupt than it really is, ſo on the other, the labour required to inveſtigate fugitive alluſions, to explain and juſtify obſolete phraſeology by parallel paſſages from contemporary authours, and to form a genuine text by a faithful collation of the original copies, has not perhaps had that notice to which it is entitled; for undoubtedly it is a laborious and a difficult taſk: and the due execution of this it is, which can alone entitle an editor of Shakſpeare to the favour of the publick.

I have ſaid that the comparative value of the various ancient copies of Shakſpeare's plays has never been preciſely aſcertained. To prove this, it will be neceſſary to go into a long and minute diſcuſſion, for which, however,

however, no apology is neceſſary: for though to explain and illuſtrate the writings of our poet is a principal duty of his editor, to aſcertain his genuine text, to fix what is to be explained, is his firſt and immediate object: and till it be eſtabliſhed which of the ancient copies is entitled to preference, we have no criterion by which the text can be aſcertained.

Fifteen of Shakſpeare's plays were printed in quarto antecedent to the firſt complete collection of his works, which was publiſhed by his fellow-comedians in 1623. Theſe plays are, *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *The Two parts of K. Henry IV.* *K. Richard II.* *K. Richard III.* *The Merchant of Venice*, *K Henry V.* *Much ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, *Troilus and Creſſida*, *King Lear*, and *Othello*.

The players, when they mention theſe copies, repreſent them all as mutilated and imperfect; but this was merely thrown out to give an additional value to their own edition, and is not ſtrictly true of any but two of the whole number; *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, and *K. Henry V.*—With reſpect to the other thirteen copies, though undoubtedly they were all ſurreptitious, that is, ſtolen from the playhouſe and printed without the conſent of the authour or the proprietors, they *in general* are preferable to the exhibition of the ſame plays in the folio; for this plain reaſon, becauſe, inſtead of printing theſe plays from a manuſcript, the editors of the folio, to ſave labour, or from ſome other motive, printed the greater part of them from the very copies which they repreſented as maimed

maimed and imperfect, and frequently from a late inſtead of the earlieſt, edition; in ſome inſtances with additions and alterations of their own. Thus therefore the firſt folio, as far as reſpects the plays above enumerated, labours under the diſadvantage of being at leaſt a ſecond, and in ſome caſes a third, edition of theſe quartos. I do not however mean to ſay, that many valuable corrections of paſſages undoubtedly corrupt in the quartos are not found in the folio copy; or that a ſingle line of theſe plays ſhould be printed by a careful editor without a minute examination, and collation of both copies; but thoſe quartos were in general the baſis on which the folio editors built, and are entitled to our particular attention and examination as *firſt* editions.

It is well known to thoſe who are converſant with the buſineſs of the preſs, that, (unleſs when the authour corrects and reviſes his own works,) as editions of books are multiplied, their errours are multiplied alſo; and that conſequently every ſuch edition is more or leſs correct, as it approaches nearer to or is more diſtant from the firſt. A few inſtances of the gradual progreſs of corruption will fully evince the truth of this aſſertion.

In the original copy of *K. Richard II.* 4to. 1597, Act II. ſc. ii. are theſe lines:

" You promis'd, when you parted with the king,
" To lay aſide *life-harming* heavineſs."

In a ſubſequent quarto, printed in 1608, inſtead of *life-harming* we find HALF-*harming*; which being perceived by the editor of the folio to be nonſenſe, he ſubſtituted, inſtead of it,—SELF-*harming* heavineſs.

In

In the original copy of *K. Henry IV.* P. I. printed in 1598, Act IV. ſc. iv. we find—

" And what with Owen Glendower's abſence thence,
" (Who with them was *a rated ſinew* too,)" &c.

In the fourth quarto printed in 1608, the article being omitted by the negligence of the compoſitor, and the line printed thus,

" Who with them was rated ſinew too,"—

the editor of the next quarto, (which was copied by the folio,) inſtead of examining the firſt edition, amended the errour (leaving the metre ſtill imperfect) by reading—

" Who with them was *rated firmly* too."

So, in the ſame play, Act I. ſc. iii. inſtead of the reading of the earlieſt copy—

" Why, what a *candy* deal of courteſy—"

caudy being printed in the firſt folio inſtead of *candy*, by the accidental inverſion of the letter *n*, the editor of the ſecond folio corrected the errour by ſubſtituting *gowdy*.

So, in the ſame play, Act III. ſc. i. inſtead of the reading of the earlieſt impreſſion,

" The frame and huge foundation of the earth—"

in the ſecond and the ſubſequent quartos, the line by the negligence of the compoſitor was exhibited without the word *huge*:

" The frame and foundation of the earth—"

and the editor of the folio, finding the metre imperfect, ſupplied it by reading,

" The frame and *the* foundation of the earth."

Another

Another line in Act V. ſc. ult. is thus exhibited in the quarto, 1598:

" But that the *earthy* and cold hand of death—"

Earth being printed inſtead of *earthy*, in the next and the ſubſequent quarto copies, the editor of the folio amended the line thus:

But that the *earth* and *the* cold hand of death—.

Again, in the preceding ſcene, we find in the firſt copy,

" I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot."—

inſtead of which in the fifth quarto, 1613, we have

" I was not born *to yield*, thou proud Scot."

This being the copy that was uſed by the editor of the folio, inſtead of examining the moſt ancient impreſſion, he corrected the errour according to his own fancy, and probably while the work was paſſing through the preſs, by reading—

" I was not born *to yield*, thou *haughty* Scot."

In *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet ſays to her nurſe,

" In faith, I am ſorry that thou art not well."

and this line in the firſt folio being corruptly exhibited—

" In faith, I am ſorry that thou art *ſo* well."

the editor of the ſecond folio, to obtain ſome ſenſe, printed—

" In faith, I am ſorry that thou art *ſo ill*."

In the quarto copy of the ſame play, publiſhed in 1599, we find—

" ————O happy dagger,
" This is thy ſheath; there ruſt, and let me die."

In the next quarto, 1609, the laſt line is thus repreſented:

" *'Tis* is thy ſheath," &c.

The editor of the folio, ſeeing that this was manifeſtly wrong, abſurdly corrected the errour thus:

" 'Tis *in* thy ſheath; there ruſt, and let me die."

Again, in the ſame play, quarto 1599, *miſhav'd* being corruptly printed, for *miſbehav'd*,—

" But like a *miſhav'd* and ſullen wench—"

the editor of the firſt folio, to obtain ſomething like ſenſe, reads—

" But like a *miſhap'd* and ſullen wench—"

and inſtead of this, the editor of the ſecond folio, for the ſake of metre, gives us—

" But like a *miſhap'd* and *a* ſullen wench—."

Again, in the firſt ſcene of *K. Richard III.* quarto, 1597, we find this line:

" That *tempers* him to this extremity."

In the next quarto, and all ſubſequent, *tempts* is corruptly printed inſtead of *tempers*. The line then wanting a ſyllable, the editor of the folio printed it thus:

" That *tempts* him to this *harſh* extremity."

Not to weary my reader, I ſhall add but two more inſtances, from *Romeo and Juliet*:

" Away to heaven, reſpective lenity,
" And *fire ey'd* fury be my conduct now!"

ſays

ſays Romeo, when provoked by the appearance of his rival. Inſtead of this, which is the reading of the quarto 1597, the line, in the quarto, 1599, is thus corruptly exhibited:

"And fire *end* fury be my conduct now!"

In the ſubſequent quarto copy *and* was ſubſtituted for *end*; and accordingly in the folio the poet's fine imagery is entirely loſt, and Romeo exclaims,

"And *fire and fury* be my conduct now!"

The other inſtance in the ſame play is not leſs remarkable. In the quarto, 1599, the Friar, addreſſing Romeo, is made to ſay,

"Thou *puts up* thy fortune, and thy love."

The editor of the folio perceiving here a groſs corruption, ſubſtituted theſe words:

"Thou *putteſt up* thy fortune, and thy love;"

not perceiving that *up* was a miſprint for *upon*, and *puts* for *pouts*, (which according to the ancient mode was written inſtead of *powt'ſt*,) as he would have found by looking into another copy without a date, and as he might have conjectured from the correſponding line in the original play printed in 1597, had he ever examined it:

"Thou *frown'ſt upon* thy fate, that ſmiles on thee."

So little known indeed was the value of the early impreſſions of books, (not reviſed or corrected by their authours,) that King Charles the Firſt, though a great admirer of our poet, was contented with the *ſecond*

folio edition of his plays, unconſcious of the numerous miſrepreſentations and interpolations by which every page of that copy is disfigured; and in a volume of the quarto plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, which formerly belonged to that king, and is now in my collection, I did not find a ſingle firſt impreſſion. In like manner Sir William D'Avenant, when he made his alteration of the play of *Macbeth*, appears to have uſed the third folio printed in 1664[1].

The various readings found in the different impreſſions of the quarto copies are frequently mentioned by the late editors: it is obvious from what has been already ſtated, that the firſt edition of each play is alone of any authority[2], and accordingly to no other have I paid any attention. All the variations in the ſubſequent quartos were made by accident or caprice. Where, however, there are two editions printed in the ſame year, or an undated copy, it is neceſſary to examine each of them, becauſe which of them was firſt, can not be aſcertained; and being each printed from a manuſcript, they carry with them a degree of authority to which a re-impreſſion cannot be entitled. Of the tragedy of *King Lear* there are no leſs than three copies, varying from each other, printed for the ſame bookſeller, and in the ſame year.

[1] In that copy *anoint* being corruptly printed inſtead of *aroint*,

"*Anoint* thee, witch, the rump-fed ronyon cries,"

the errour was implicitly adopted by D'Avenant.

[2] Except only in the inſtance of *Romeo and Juliet*, where the firſt copy, printed in 1597, appears to be an imperfect ſketch and therefore cannot be entirely relied on. Yet even this furniſhes many valuable corrections of the more perfect copy of that tragedy in its preſent ſtate, printed in 1599.

Of

Of all the plays of which there are no quarto copies extant, the firſt folio, printed in 1623, is the only authentick edition.

An opinion has been entertained by ſome that the ſecond impreſſion of that book, publiſhed in 1632, has a ſimilar claim to authenticity. "Whoever has any of the folios, (ſays Dr. Johnſon,) has all, excepting thoſe diverſities which mere re-iteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards uſed only the firſt, from which (he afterwards adds,) the ſubſequent folios never differ but by accident or negligence." Mr. Steevens, however, does not ſubſcribe to this opinion. "The edition of 1632, (ſays that gentleman,) is not without value; for though it be in ſome places more incorrectly printed than the preceding one, it has likewiſe the advantage of various readings, which are not merely ſuch as re-iteration of copies will naturally produce."

What Dr. Johnſon has ſtated, is not quite accurate. The ſecond folio does indeed very frequently differ from the firſt by negligence or chance; but much more frequently by the editor's profound ignorance of our poet's phraſeology and metre, in conſequence of which there is ſcarce a page of the book which is not diſfigured by the capricious alterations introduced by the perſon to whom the care of that impreſſion was entruſted. This perſon in fact, whoever he was, and Mr. Pope, were the two great corrupters of our poet's text; and I have no doubt that if the arbitrary alterations introduced by theſe two editors were numbered, in the plays of which no quarto copies are extant, they would greatly exceed all the corruptions

and errours of the preſs in the original and only authentick copy of thoſe plays. Though my judgment on this ſubject has been formed after a very careful examination, I cannot expect that it ſhould be received on my mere aſſertion: and therefore it is neceſſary to ſubſtantiate it by proof. This cannot be effected but by a long, minute, and what I am afraid will appear to many, an uninterreſting diſquiſition: but let it ſtill be remembered that to aſcertain the genuine text of theſe plays is an object of great importance.

On a reviſion of the ſecond folio printed in 1632, it will be found, that the editor of that book was entirely ignorant of our poet's phraſeology and metre, and that various alterations were made by him, in conſequence of that ignorance, which render his edition of no value whatſoever.

I. His ignorance of Shakſpeare's phraſeology is proved by the following among many other inſtances.

He did not know that the double negative was the cuſtomary and authorized language of the age of Queen Elizabeth, and therefore, inſtead of—

" Nor to her bed *no* homage do I owe."

Comedy of Errors, Act III. ſc. ii.

he printed—" Nor to her bed *a* homage do I owe."

So, in *As you like it*, Act II. ſc. iv. inſtead of—" I can *not* go no further", he printed, " I can go no further."

In *Much ado about nothing*, Act III. ſc. i. Hero, ſpeaking of Beatrice, ſays,

" ——there will ſhe hide her,
" *To liſten our propoſe.*"

for

for which the ſecond folio ſubſtitutes—

" ——there will ſhe hide her,
" To liſten *to* our *purpoſe*."

Again, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. ſc. ii.

" Thou doſt make poſſible, things not ſo held."

The plain meaning is, thou doſt make thoſe things poſſible, which are held to be impoſſible. But the editor of the ſecond folio, not underſtanding the line, reads—

" Thou doſt make poſſible things not *to be* ſo held;"

i. e. thou doſt make thoſe things to be eſteemed impoſſible, which are poſſible: the very reverſe of what the poet meant.

In the ſame play is this line:

" I am appointed *him* to murder you."

Here the editor of the ſecond folio, not being converſant with Shakſpeare's irregular language, reads—

" I *appointed him* to murder you."

Again, in *Macbeth*:

" This diamond he greets your wife withal,
" By the name of moſt kind hoſteſs; and *ſhut up*
" In meaſureleſs content."

Not knowing that *ſhut up* meant *concluded*, the editor of the ſecond folio reads—

" ——and ſhut *it* up [i. e. the diamond]
" In meaſureleſs content."

In the ſame play the word *lated*, (" Now ſpurs the *'lated* traveller—") not being underſtood, is changed *to lateſt*, and Colmes-*Inch* to Colmes-*hill*.

Again, *ibidem:* when Macbeth ſays, "Hang thoſe that talk of fear," it is evident that theſe words are not a wiſh or imprecation, but an injunction to hang all the cowards in Scotland. The editor of the ſecond folio, however, conſidering the paſſage in the former light, reads:

"Hang them that *ſtand in* fear!"

From the ſame ignorance,

"And all our yeſterdays have lighted fools
"The way to *duſty* death."

is changed to—

"And all our yeſterdays have lighted fools
"The way to *ſtudy* death."

In *K. Richard II.* Bolingbroke ſays,

"And I muſt find that title in your *tongue*," &c.

i. e. you muſt addreſs me by that title. But this not being underſtood, *town* is in the ſecond folio ſubſtituted for *tongue*.

The double comparative is common in the plays of Shakſpeare. Yet, inſtead of

"——I'll give my reaſons
"*More worthier* than their voices."
Coriolanus, Act III. ſc. i. Firſt Folio.

we have in the ſecond copy,

"More *worthy* than their voices."

So, in *Othello*, Act I. ſc. v.—"opinion, a ſovereign miſtreſs of effects, throws a more *ſafer* voice on you,"—is changed in the ſecond folio, to—"opinion, &c. throws a more *ſafe* voice on you."

Again,

Again, in *Hamlet*, Act III. ſc. ii. inſtead of—" your wiſdom ſhould ſhew itſelf more *richer*, to ſignify this to the doctor;" we find in the copy of 1632, " —your wiſdom ſhould ſhew itſelf more *rich*," &c.

In *The Winter's Tale*, the word *vaſt* not being underſtood,

" —they ſhook hands as over a *vaſt*." Firſt Folio.

we find in the ſecond copy, " —as over a vaſt *ſea*."

In *K. John*, Act V. ſc. v. firſt folio, are theſe lines:

" ————The Engliſh lords
" By his perſuaſion are *again* fallen off."

The editor of the ſecond folio, thinking, I ſuppoſe, that as theſe lords had not *before* deſerted the *French* king, it was improper to ſay that they had *again* fallen off, ſubſtituted " —are *at laſt* fallen off;" not perceiving that the meaning is, that theſe lords had gone back again to their own countrymen, whom they had before deſerted.

In *K. Henry VIII.* Act II. ſc. ii. Norfolk ſpeaking of Wolſey, ſays, " I'll venture one *have* at him." This being miſunderſtood, is changed in the ſecond copy to —" I'll venture one *heave* at him."

Julius Cæſar likewiſe furniſhes various ſpecimens of his ignorance of Shakſpeare's language. The phraſe, to *bear hard*, not being underſtood, inſtead of—

" Caius Ligarius doth *bear* Cæſar *hard*." Firſt Folio.

we find in the ſecond copy,

" Caius Ligarius doth bear Cæſar *hatred*."

and from the ſame cauſe the words *dank*, *bleſt*, and *hurtled*, are diſmiſſed from the text, and more familiar words ſubſtituted in their room [3].

In like manner in the third act of *Coriolanus*, ſc. ii. the ancient verb to *owe*, i. e. to poſſeſs, is diſcarded by this editor, and *own* ſubſtituted in its place.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, we find in the original copy theſe lines:

" —— I ſay again, thy ſpirit
" Is all afraid to govern thee near him,
" But he *alway*, 'tis noble."

Inſtead of reſtoring the true word *away*, which was thus corruptly exhibited, the editor of the ſecond folio, without any regard to the context, altered another part of the line, and abſurdly printed—" But he *alway is* noble."

In the ſame play, Act. I. ſc. iii. Cleopatra ſays to Charmian—" *Quick* and return;" for which the editor of the ſecond folio, not knowing that *quick* was either uſed adverbially, or elliptically for *Be quick*, ſubſtitutes—" *Quickly*, and return."

In *Timon of Athens*, are theſe lines:

" And that unaptneſs made your miniſter
" Thus to excuſe yourſelf."

i. e. and made that unaptneſs your miniſter to excuſe

[3] " To walk unbraced, and ſuck up the humours
" Of the *dank* morning." Firſt Folio.
" Of the *dark* morning." Second Folio.
" We are *bleſt* that Rome is rid of him." Firſt Folio.
" We are *glad* that Rome is rid of him." Second Folio.
" The noiſe of battle *hurtled* in the air." Firſt Folio.
" The noiſe of battle *hurried* in the air." Second Folio.

yourſelf;

yourſelf; or, in other words, availed yourſelf of that unaptneſs as an excuſe for your own conduct. The words being inverted and put out of their natural order, the editor of the ſecond folio ſuppoſed that *unaptneſs*, being placed firſt, muſt be the nominative caſe, and therefore reads—

" And that unaptneſs made *you* miniſter,
" Thus to excuſe yourſelf."

In that play, from the ſame ignorance, inſtead of Timon's exhortation to the thieves, to kill as well as rob,—" Take wealth and *lives* together," we find in the ſecond copy, " Take wealth, and *live* together." And with equal ignorance and licentiouſneſs this editor altered the epitaph on Timon, to render it what he thought metrical, by leaving out various words. In the original edition it appears, as it does in Plutarch, and therefore we may be certain that the variations in the ſecond copy were here, as in other places, all arbitrary and capricious.

Again, in the ſame play, we have—

" *I* defil'd land."

and—

" O, my good lord, the world is but a *word*," &c.

The editor not underſtanding either of theſe paſſages, and ſuppoſing that *I* in the firſt of them was uſed as a perſonal pronoun, (whereas it ſtands according to the uſage of that time for the affirmative particle, *ay*,) reads in the firſt line,

" *I defy* land;"

and exhibits the other line thus:

O my

" O, my good lord, the world is but a *world*," &c.

Our authour and the contemporary writers generally write *wars*, not *war*, &c. The editor of the ſecond folio being unappriſed of this, reads in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. ſc. v. " Cæſar having made uſe of him in the *war* againſt Pompey,"—inſtead of *wars*, the reading of the original copy.

The ſeventh ſcene of the fourth act of this play concludes with theſe words: " Diſpatch.—Enobarbus!" Anthony, who is the ſpeaker, deſires his attendant *Eros* to diſpatch, and then pronounces the name *Enobarbus*, who had recently deſerted him, and whoſe loſs he here laments. But there being no perſon on the ſcene but Eros, and the point being inadvertently omitted after the word *diſpatch*, the editor of the ſecond folio ſuppoſed that Enobarbus muſt have been an errour of the preſs, and therefore reads:

" Diſpatch, *Eros*."

In *Troilus and Creſſida*, Creſſida ſays,

" Things won are done; *joy's ſoul* lies in the doing."

i. e. the *ſoul of joy* lies, &c. So, " *love's* viſible *ſoul*," and " my *ſoul of counſel*;" expreſſions likewiſe uſed by Shakſpeare. Here alſo the editor of the ſecond folio exhibits equal ignorance of his authour; for inſtead of this eminently beautiful expreſſion, he has given us—

" Things won are done; *the ſoul's joy* lies in doing."

In *King Richard III.* Ratcliff, addreſſing the lords at Pomfret, ſays,

" Make

" Make haſte, the hour of death is *expiate*."

for which the editor of the ſecond folio, alike ignorant of the poet's language and metre, has ſubſtituted,

" Make haſte, the hour of death is *now expir'd*."

So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

" The earth hath ſwallow'd all my hopes but ſhe."

The word *The* being accidentally omitted in the firſt folio, the editor of the ſecond ſupplied the defect by reading—

Earth hath *up* ſwallow'd all my hopes but ſhe.

Again, in the ſame play: " I'll lay fourteen of my teeth, and yet, to my *teen* be it ſpoken, I have but four:" not underſtanding the word *teen*, he ſubſtituted *teeth* inſtead of it.

Again, *ibidem:*

" Prick'd from the lazy finger of a *maid*—"

Man being corruptly printed inſtead of *maid* in the firſt folio, 1623, the editor of the ſecond, who never examined a ſingle quarto copy[4], corrected the errour at random, by reading—

" Prick'd from the lazy finger of a *woman*."

Again:

4 That this editor never examined any of the quarto copies, is proved by the following inſtances:

In *Troilus and Creſſida*, we find in the firſt folio,

" ——————— the remainder viands
" We do not throw in unreſpective *ſame*,
" Becauſe we now are full."

Finding this nonſenſe, he printed " in unreſpective *place*." In the quarto he would have found the true word—*ſieve*.

Again:

" Doſt thou love me? I know thou wilt ſay, ay:"

The word *me* being omitted in the firſt folio, the editor of the ſecond capriciouſly ſupplied the metre thus:

" Doſt thou love? *O*, I know thou wilt ſay, ay."

This

Again, in the ſame play, the following lines are thus corruptly exhibited:

" That all the Greeks *begin to* worſhip Ajax;
" Since things in motion *begin to* catch the eye,
" Than what not ſtirs."

the words—" *begin to*," being inadvertently repeated in the ſecond line, by the compoſitor's eye glancing on the line above.

The editor of the ſecond folio, inſtead of examining the quarto, where he would have found the true reading,

" Since things in motion *ſooner* catch the eye,"

thought only of amending the metre, and printed the line thus:

" Since things in motion *'gin* to catch the eye—"

leaving the paſſage nonſenſe, as he found it.

So, in *Titus Andronicus*:

" And let no *comfort* delight mine ear—"

being erroneouſly printed in the firſt folio, inſtead of " And let no *comforter*," &c. the editor of the ſecond folio corrected the errour according to his fancy, by reading—

" And let no *comfort elſe* delight mine ear."

So, in *Love's Labour's Loſt*, Vol. II. p. 369: " Old Mantuan, who underſtands thee not, *loves thee not*." The words in the Italick character being inadvertently omitted in the firſt folio, the editor of the ſecond folio, inſtead of applying to the quarto to cure the defect, printed the paſſage juſt as he found it: and in like manner in the ſame play implicitly followed

the

This expletive, we ſhall preſently find, when I come to ſpeak of our poet's metre, was his conſtant expedient in all difficulties.

In *Meaſure for Meaſure* he printed *ignominy* inſtead of *ignomy*, the reading of the firſt folio, and the common language of the time. In the ſame play, from his ignorance of the conſtable's humour, he corrected his phraſeology, and ſubſtituted *inſtant* for *diſtant*; ("—at that very *diſtant* time:") and in like manner he makes

the errour of the firſt folio, which has been already mentioned,

"O, that your face were ſo full of *O's*—"

though the omiſſion of the word *not*, which is found in the quarto, made the paſſage nonſenſe.

So, in *Much ado about Nothing*,

"And I will break with her. Was't not to this end," &c.

being printed inſtead of—

"And I will break with her *and with her father*,

"*And thou ſhalt have her*. Was't not to this end," &c.

the errour, which aroſe from the compoſitor's eye glancing from one line to the other, was implicitly adopted in the ſecond folio.

Again, in *A Midſummer's-Night's Dream*:

"*Ah me*, for aught that I could ever read,

"Could ever hear," &c.

the words *Ah me* being accidentally omitted in the firſt folio, inſtead of applying to the quarto for the true reading, he ſupplied the defect, according to his own fancy, thus:

"*Hermia*, for aught that I could ever read," &c.

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice* he arbitrarily gives us—

"The ewe bleat for the lamb *when you behold*,"

inſtead of

"*Why he hath made* the ewe bleat for the lamb."

See p. xxxi. Innumerable other inſtances of the ſame kind might be produced.

Dogberry

Dogberry in *Much ado about nothing*, exhort the watch not to be *vigitant*, but *vigilant*.

Among the marks of love, Roſalind in *As you like it* mentions "a beard neglected, which you have not;—but I pardon you for that; for, ſimply, your *having in* beard is a younger brother's revenue." Not underſtanding the meaning of the word *having*, this editor reads—"your having *no* beard," &c.

In *A Midſummer Night's Dream*, Pyramus ſays,

"I *ſee* a voice; now will I to the chink,
"To ſpy an' I can *hear* my Thiſby's face."

Of the humour of this paſſage he had not the leaſt notion, for he has printed, inſtead of it,

"I *hear* a voice; now will I to the chink,
"To ſpy an' I can *ſee* my Thiſby's face."

In *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I. ſc. i. we find in the firſt folio,

"And out of doubt you do more wrong—"

which the editor of the ſecond perceiving to be imperfect, he corrected at random thus:

"And out of doubt you do *to me* more wrong."

Had he conſulted the original quarto, he would have found that the poet wrote—

"And out of doubt you do *me now* more wrong."

So, in the ſame play,—"But *of* mine, then yours," being corruptly printed inſtead of—"But *if* mine, then yours," this editor arbitrarily reads—But *firſt* mine, then yours.

Again,

Again, *ibidem:*

" Or even as well uſe queſtion with the wolf,
" The ewe bleat for the lamb."

the words " *Why he hath made*" being omitted in the firſt folio at the beginning of the ſecond line, the ſecond folio editor ſupplied the defect thus abſurdly:

" Or even as well uſe queſtion with the wolf,
" The ewe bleat for the lamb *when you behold.*"

In *Othello* the word *ſnipe* being miſprinted in the firſt folio,

" If I ſhould time expend with ſuch a *ſnpe.*"

the editor not knowing what to make of it, ſubſtituted *ſwain* inſtead of the corrupted word.

Again, in the ſame play,

" *For* of my heart thoſe charms, thine eyes, are blotted."

being printed in the firſt folio inſtead of—" *Forth* of my heart," &c. which was the common language of the time, the editor of the ſecond folio amended the errour according to his fancy, by reading—

" *For off* my heart thoſe charms, thine eyes, are blotted."

Again, in the ſame play, Act V. ſc. i. not underſtanding the phraſeology of our authour's time,

" Who's there? Whoſe noiſe is this, that *cries on* murder?"

he ſubſtituted—" Whoſe noiſe is this, that cries *out* murder?" and in the firſt act of the ſame play, not perceiving the force of an eminently beautiful epithet, for " deſarts *idle*," he has given us " —deſarts *wild.*"

Again,

Again, in that tragedy we find—

" —what charms,
" What conjuration, and what mighty magick,
" (For ſuch proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
" I won his daughter."

that is, I won his daughter *with*; and ſo the editor of the ſecond folio reads, not knowing that this kind of elliptical expreſſion frequently occurs in this authour's works, as I have ſhewn in a note on the laſt ſcene of *Cymbeline*, and in other places [5].

In like manner he has corrupted the following paſſage in *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*:

" So will I grow, ſo live, ſo die, my lord,
" Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
" Unto his lordſhip, *whoſe unwiſhed* yoke
" My ſoul conſents not to give ſovereignty."

i. e. to give ſovereignty *to*. Here too this editor has unneceſſarily tampered with the text, and having contracted the word *unwiſhed*, he exhibited the line thus:

" Unto his lordſhip, *to* whoſe *unwiſh'd* yoke
" My ſoul conſents not to give ſovereignty."

an interpolation which was adopted in the ſubſequent copies, and which, with all the modern editors, I incautiouſly ſuffered to remain in the preſent edition [6].

The grave-digger in Hamlet obſerves "that your tanner will laſt you nine *year*," and ſuch is the phraſeology which Shakſpeare always attributes to his lower

[5] See Vol. VIII. p. 472, n. 3; Vol. VII. p. 128, n. 8; and Vol. IX. p. 469, n. 3.

[6] See Vol. X. Appendix, p. 517.

characters;

characters; but inſtead of this, in the ſecond folio, we find—" nine *years*."

" Your ſkill ſhall, like a ſtar i'the *darkeſt* night,
" Stick firy off indeed,—"

ſays Hamlet to Laertes. But the editor of the ſecond folio, conceiving, I ſuppoſe, that if a ſtar appeared with extraordinary ſcintillation, the night muſt neceſſarily be luminous, reads—" i' the *brighteſt* night:" and, with equal ſagacity, not acquieſcing in Edgar's notion of " *four-inch'd* bridges," this editor has furniſhed him with a much ſafer paſs, for he reads—" *four-arch'd* bridges."

In *K. Henry VIII.* are theſe lines:

" —— If we did think
" His *contemplation* were above the earth,—"

Not underſtanding this phraſeology, and ſuppoſing that *were* muſt require a noun in the plural number, he reads:

" —— If we did think
" His *contemplations* were above the earth," &c.

Again, in *Troilus and Creſſida*, Act IV. ſc. ii.

" With wings more *momentary-ſwift* than thought."

This compound epithet not being underſtood, he reads:

" With wings more *momentary*, *ſwifter* than thought."

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act I. ſc. ii. Hortenſio, deſcribing Catharine, ſays,

" Her only fault (and that is—*faults* enough)
" Is,—that ſhe is intolerable curſt;—"

meaning, that this one was *a hoſt of faults*. But this not being comprehended by the editor of the ſecond

folio, with a view, doubtleſs, of rendering the paſſage more grammatical, he ſubſtituted " —and that is *fault* enough."

So, in *K. Lear*, we find—" Do you know this noble gentleman?" But this editor ſuppoſing, it ſhould ſeem, that a gentleman could not be noble, or that a noble could not be a gentleman, inſtead of the original text, reads—" Do you know this *nobleman?*"

In *Meaſure for Meaſure*, Act II. ſc. i. Eſcalus, addreſſing the Juſtice, ſays, " I pray you home to dinner with me:" this familiar diction not being underſtood, we find in the ſecond folio, " I pray you *go* home to dinner with me." And in *Othello*, not having ſagacity enough to ſee that *apines* was printed by a mere tranſpoſition of the letters, for *paines*,

" Though I do hate him, as I do hell *apines*,"

inſtead of correcting the word, he evaded the difficulty by omitting it, and exhibited the line in an imperfect ſtate.

The Duke of York, in the third part of *K. Henry VI.* exclaims,

" That face of his the hungry cannibals
" Would not have touch'd, would not have ſtain'd with blood."

Theſe lines being thus careleſsly arranged in the firſt folio,

" That face of his
" The hungry cannibals would not have touch'd,
" Would not have ſtain'd with blood—"

the editor of the ſecond folio, leaving the firſt line imperfect as he found it, completed the laſt line by this abſurd interpolation:

" Would not have ſtain'd *the roſes juſt* with blood."

Theſe

Theſe are but a few of the numerous corruptions and interpolations found in that copy, from the editor's ignorance of Shakſpeare's phraſeology.

II. Let us now examine how far he was acquainted with the metre of theſe plays.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Act III. ſc. ii. we find—

" What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?
" In leads, or oils?"—

Not knowing that *fires* was uſed as a diſſyllable, he added the word *burning* at the end of the line:

" What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling? *burning?*"

So again, in *Julius Cæſar*, Act III. ſc. ii. from the ſame ignorance, the word *all* has been interpolated by this editor:

" And with the brands *fire all* the traitors' houſes."

inſtead of the reading of the original and authentick copy,

" And with the brands *fire* the traitors' houſes."

Again, in *Macbeth*:

" I would, while it was ſmiling in my face,
" Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneleſs gums,
" And daſh'd the brains out, had I ſo *ſworn*
" As you have done to this."

Not perceiving that *ſworn* was uſed as a diſſyllable, he reads—" had I *but* ſo ſworn."

Charms our poet ſometimes uſes as a word of two ſyllables. Thus, in *The Tempeſt*, Act I. ſc. ii.

" Curs'd be I, that did ſo! All the *charms*," &c.

inſtead of which this editor gives us,

" Curs'd be I, that *I* did ſo! All the charms," &c.

Hour is almoſt always uſed by Shakſpeare as a diſſyllable, but of this the editor of the ſecond folio was ignorant; for inſtead of theſe lines in *King Richard II.*

" ———So ſighs, and tears, and groans,
" Shew minutes, times, and *hours:* but my time
" Runs poſting on," &c.

he gives us—

" ———So ſighs, and tears, and groans,
" Shew minutes, times, and hours: *O* but my time[7]," &c.

So again, in *The Comedy of Errors:*

" I'll meet you in that place ſome *hour, ſir,* hence," inſtead of the original reading,

" I'll meet you in that place ſome *hour* hence."

In *Meaſure for Meaſure* we find theſe lines:

" —— Merciful heaven!
" Thou rather, with thy ſharp and ſulphurous bolt,
" Split'ſt the unwedgeable and gnarled oak,
" Than the ſoft mirtle;—But man, proud man," &c.

There can be no doubt that a word was omitted in the laſt line; perhaps ſome epithet to *mirtle.* But the editor of the ſecond folio, reſorting to his uſual expedient, abſurdly reads:

" Than the ſoft mirtle. *O* but man, proud man,—"

So, in *Titus Andronicus,* Act III. ſc. ii. *complaynet* being corruptly printed inſtead of *complainer,*

" Speechleſs *complaynet,* I will learn thy thoughts,—"

this editor, with equal abſurdity, reads:

" Speechleſs *complaint, O* I will learn thy thoughts."

I have again and again had occaſion to mention in the notes on theſe plays, that *omiſſion* is of all the errors of the preſs that which moſt frequently happens. On collating the fourth edition of *King Richard III.* printed in 1612, with the ſecond printed in 1598, I found no leſs than *twenty-ſix* words omitted.

Again,

Again, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. ſc. ii.

" ——————wiſhing clocks more ſwift?
" Hours, minutes? *the* noon, midnight? and all eyes," &c.

inſtead of the original reading,

" Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes,"&c.

Again, in *All's well that ends well*, Act II. ſc. iii.

" Which challenges itſelf as honours born,
" And is not like the *fire*. Honours thrive," &c.

This editor, not knowing that *fire* was uſed as a diſſyllable, reads:

" And is not like the fire. Honours *beſt* thrive," &c.

So, in *K. Henry VI.* P. I.

" Reſcued is Orleans from the *Engliſh*."

Not knowing that *Engliſh* was uſed as a triſyllable, he has completed the line, which he ſuppoſed defective, according to his own fancy, and reads:

" Reſcu'd is Orleans from the Engliſh *wolves*."

The ſame play furniſhes us with various other proofs of his ignorance of our poet's metre. Thus, inſtead of

" Orleans the baſtard, Charles, Burgundy,—"

he has printed (not knowing that *Charles* was uſed as a word of two ſyllables,)

" Orleans the baſtard, Charles, *and* Burgundy."

So, inſtead of the original reading,

" Divineſt creature, Aſtræa's daughter,—"

Aſtræa being uſed as a word of three ſyllables,) he has printed—

" Divineſt creature, *bright* Aſtræa's daughter."

Again, *ibidem:*

" Whereas the contrary bringeth bliſs."

Not knowing that *contrary* was uſed as a word of four ſyllables, he reads:

" Whereas the contrary bringeth *forth* bliſs."

So *ſure* is uſed in the ſame play, as a diſſyllable:

" Gloſter, we'll meet; to thy coſt, be *ſure*."

but this editor, not aware of this, reads:

" Gloſter, we'll meet; to thy *dear* coſt, be ſure."

Again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

" And ſo to *arms*, victorious father,—"

arms being uſed as a diſſyllable. But the ſecond folio reads:

" And ſo to arms, victorious *noble* father."

Again, in *Twelfth-Night*, Act I. ſc. i. we find—

" ——— when liver, brain, and heart,
" Theſe ſovereign thrones, are all ſupply'd, and fill'd,
" (Her ſweet perfections) with one ſelf-king."

for which the editor, not knowing that *perfections* was uſed as a quadriſyllable, has ſubſtituted—

" ——— when liver, brain, and heart,
" Theſe ſovereign thrones, are all ſupply'd, and fill'd,
" (Her ſweet perfections) with one *ſelf-ſame* king."

Again, in *K Henry VI.* P. II.

" Prove it, *Henry*, and thou ſhalt be king,"

for which the editor of the ſecond folio, not knowing *Henry* to be uſed as a triſyllable, gives us,

" *But*

" *But* prove it, Henry, and thou ſhalt be king."

In like manner *dazzled* is uſed by Shakſpeare as a triſyllable in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; Act II. ſc. iv.

" And that hath *dazzled* my reaſon's light."

inſtead of which, we find in the ſecond folio,

" And that hath dazzled *ſo* my reaſon's light."

The words *neither*, *rather*, &c. are frequently uſed by Shakſpeare as words of one ſyllable. So, in *K. Henry VI.* P. III.

" And *neither* by treaſon, nor hoſtility,
" To ſeek to put me down—"

for which the editor of the ſecond folio has given us,

" Neither by treaſon, nor hoſtility," &c.

In *Timon of Athens*, Act III. ſc. v. Alcibiades aſks,

" Is this the balſam, that the uſuring ſenate
" *Pours* into captains' wounds? baniſhment?"

The editor of the ſecond folio, not knowing that *pours* was uſed as a diſſyllable, to complete the ſuppoſed defect in the metre, reads:

" Is this the balſam, that the uſuring ſenate
" Pours into captains' wounds! *ha!* baniſhmen?"

Tickled is often uſed by Shakſpeare and the contemporary poets, as a word of three ſyllables. So, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

" She's *tickled* now; her fume *needs* no ſpurs."

inſtead of which, in the ſecond folio we have—

" She's tickled now; her fume *can need* no ſpurs."

So, in *Titus Andronicus*, Act II. ſc i.

" Better than he have *worn* Vulcan's badge."

This editor, not knowing that *worn* was uſed as a diſſyllable, reads:

" Better than he have *yet* worn Vulcan's badge."

Again, in *Cymbeline*, Act II. ſc. v.

" All faults that name, nay, that hell knows, why hers,
" In part, or all; but rather all: for even to vice," &c.

Theſe lines being thus careleſsly diſtributed in the original copy,—

" All faults that name, nay, that hell knows,
" Why hers, in part, or all; but rather all:" &c.

the editor of the ſecond folio, to ſupply the defect of the firſt line, arbitrarily reads, with equal ignorance of his author's metre and phraſeology,

" All faults that *may be named*, nay, that hell knows,
" Why hers," &c.

In *K. Henry IV.* P. II. Act I. ſc. iii. is this line:

" And being now trimm'd in thine own deſires,—"

inſtead of which the editor of the ſecond folio, to remedy a ſuppoſed defect in the metre, has given us—

" And being now trimm'd *up* in thine own deſires,—."

Again, in *As you like it*, Act II. ſc. i.

" —— he pierceth through
" The body of city, country, court,—"

inſtead of which we find in the ſecond folio, (the editor not knowing that *country* was uſed as a triſyllable,)

" —— he

" —— he pierceth through
" The body of city, *the* country, court."

In like manner, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. ſc. i. he has given us:

" ———— we knew not
" The doctrine of ill-doing, *no* nor dream'd
" That any did:—"

inſtead of

" ———— we knew not
" The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd," &c.

doctrine being uſed as a word of three ſyllables.

" Pay him ſix thouſand," &c. ſays Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*,

" Before a friend of this deſcription
" Should loſe a hair through Baſſanio's fault "

the word *hair* being uſed as a diſſyllable, or *Baſſanio* as a quadriſyllable. Of this the editor of the ſecond folio was wholly ignorant, and therefore reads:

" Should loſe a hair through *my* Baſſanio's fault."

In *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV. ſc. iii. Florizel, addreſſing Perdita, ſays,

" ———— my deſires
" Run not before mine honour; nor my luſts
" *Burn* hotter than my faith."

To complete the laſt hemiſtick, Perdita is made to reply,

" O but, ſir,
" Your reſolution cannot hold," &c.

Here again this editor betrays his ignorance of Shakſpeare's

ſpeare's metre; for not knowing that *burn* was uſed as a diſſyllable, he reads—

"O but, *dear* ſir," &c.

Again, in *King Henry VIII.* Act II. ſc. iii. the Old Lady declares to Anne Boleyn,

"'Tis ſtrange; a three-pence bow'd would *hire* me,
"Old as I am, to queen it."

But inſtead of this, *hire* not being perceived to be uſed as a word of two ſyllables, we find in the ſecond folio,

"'Tis ſtrange; a three-pence bow'd *now* would hire me," &c.

This editor, indeed, was even ignorant of the author's manner of accenting words, for in *The Tempeſt*, where we find,

"—— Spirits, which by mine art
"I have from their *confines* call'd to enact
"My preſent fancies,—"

he exhibits the ſecond line thus:

"I have from *all* their cónfines call'd to enact, "&c.

Again, in *K. Lear*, Act II. ſc. i. inſtead of—

"To have the expence and waſte of *his* revenues,—"

the latter word, being, I ſuppoſe, differently accented after our poet's death, the editor of the ſecond folio has given us,

"To have the expence and waſte of révenues."

Various other inſtances of the ſame kind might be produced, but that I may not weary my readers, I will only

only add, that no perſon who wiſhes to peruſe the plays of Shakſpeare ſhould ever open the Second Folio, or either of the ſubſequent copies, in which all theſe capricious alterations were adopted, with many additional errors and innovations.

It may ſeem ſtrange, that the perſon to whom the care of ſuperviſing the ſecond folio was conſigned, ſhould have been thus ignorant of our poet's language: but it ſhould be remembered, that in the beginning of the reign of Charles the Firſt many words and modes of ſpeech began to be diſuſed, which had been common in the age of Queen Elizabeth. The editor of the ſecond folio was probably a young man, perhaps born in the year 1600. That Sir William D'Avenant, who was born in 1605, did not always perfectly underſtand our author's language, is manifeſt from various alterations which he has made in ſome of his pieces. The ſucceſſive Chronicles of Engliſh hiſtory, which were compiled between the years 1540 and 1630, afford indubitable proofs of the gradual change in our phraſeology during that period. Thus a narrative which Hall exhibits in what now appears to us as very uncouth and ancient diction, is again exhibited by Holinſhed, about forty years afterwards, in ſomewhat a leſs rude form; and in the chronicles of Speed and Baker in 1611 and 1630, aſſumes a ſomewhat more poliſhed air. In the ſecond edition of Gaſcoigne's Poems printed in 1587, the editor thought it neceſſary to explain many of the words by placing more familiar terms in the margin though not much more than twenty years had elapſed from the time of their compoſition: ſo rapid were at that time the changes in our language.

My late friend Mr. Tyrwhitt, a man of ſuch candour, accuracy, and profound learning, that his death muſt be conſidered as an irreparable loſs to literature, was of opinion, that in printing theſe plays the original ſpelling ſhould be adhered to, and that we never could be ſure of a perfectly faithful edition, unleſs the firſt folio copy was made the ſtandard, and actually ſent to the preſs, with ſuch corrections as the editor might think proper. By others it was ſuggeſted, that the notes ſhould not be ſubjoined to the text, but placed at the end of each volume, and that they ſhould be accompanied by a complete Gloſſary. The former ſcheme (that of ſending the firſt folio to the preſs) appeared to me liable to many objections; and I am confident that if the notes were detached from the text, many readers would remain uninformed, rather than undergo the trouble occaſioned by perpetual references from one part of a volume to another.

In the preſent edition I have endeavoured to obtain all the advantages which would have reſulted from Mr. Tyrwhitt's plan, without any of its inconveniences. Having often experienced the fallaciouſneſs of collation by the eye, I determined, after I had adjuſted the text in the beſt manner in my power, to have every proof-ſheet of my work read aloud to me, while I peruſed the firſt folio, for thoſe plays which firſt appeared in that edition; and for all thoſe which had been previouſly printed, the firſt quarto copy, excepting only in the inſtances of *The Merry Wives of Windſor* and *King Henry V.* which, being either ſketches or imperfect copies, could not be wholly relied on; and *King Richard*

Richard III[8]. of the earlieſt edition of which tragedy I was not poſſeſſed. I had at the ſame time before me a table which I had formed of the variations between the quartos and the folio. By this laborious proceſs not a ſingle innovation, made either by the editor of the ſecond folio, or any of the modern editors, could eſcape me. From the Index to all the words and phraſes explained or illuſtrated in the notes, which I have ſubjoined to this work[9], every uſe may be derived which the moſt copious Gloſſary could afford; while thoſe readers who are leſs intent on philological inquiries, by the notes being appended to the text are relieved from the irkſome taſk of ſeeking information in a different volume from that immediately before them.

If it be aſked, what has been the fruit of all this labour, I anſwer, that many innovations, tranſpoſitions, &c. have been detected by this means; many hundred emen-

[8] At the time the tragedy of *King Richard III.* was in the preſs, I was obliged to make uſe of the *ſecond* edition printed in 1598; but have ſince been furniſhed with the edition of 1597, which I have collated *verbatim*, and the moſt material variations are noticed in the Appendix.

[9] If the explication of any word or phraſe ſhould appear unſatisfactory, the reader, by turning to the Gloſſarial Index, may know at once whether any additional information has been obtained on the ſubject. Thus, in *Macbeth*, Vol. IV. p. 392, Dr. Warburton's erroneous interpretation of the word *blood-bolter'd* is inſerted; but the true explication of that provincial term may be found in the APPENDIX. So of the phraſe, "*Will you take eggs for money*," in *The Winter's Tale*; and ſome others.

dations

dations have been made [1], and, I truſt, a genuine text has been formed. Wherever any deviation is made from the

[1] Leſt this aſſertion ſhould be ſuppoſed to be made without evidence, I ſubjoin a liſt of the reſtorations made from the original copy, and ſupported by contemporary uſage, in two plays only; *The Winter's Tale*, and *King John*. The lines in the Italick character are exhibited as they appear in the edition of 1778, (as being much more correctly printed than that of 1785,) thoſe in the common character as they appear in the preſent edition.

THE WINTER'S TALE.

1. " —— *I'll give* you *my commiſſion*,
" *To let him there a month.* P. 293.
" —— I'll give *him* my commiſſion,
" To let him there a month." P. 125.

2. " —— *we know not*
" *The doctrine of ill-doing*, no, *nor dream'd*—" P. 295.
" —— we know not
" The doctrine of ill-doing; nor dream'd—" P. 126.

3. " *As o'er-dy'd blacks, as* winds, *as waters*;—" P. 300.
" As o'er-dy'd blacks, as *wind*, as waters;—" P. 130.

4. " *As ornament oft does.*" P. 302.
" As ornaments oft do." P. 130.

The original copy, with a diſregard of grammar, reads—" As *ornaments* oft *does.*" This inaccuracy has been conſtantly corrected by every editor wherever it occurs; but the correction ſhould always be made in the verb, and not in the noun.

5. " *Have you not—thought (for cogitation*
" *Reſides not in the man that does not think* it)
" *My wife is ſlippery?*" P. 408.
" Have you not—thought (for cogitation
" Reſides not in the man that does not think)
" My wife is ſlippery?" P. 138.

6. " — *wiſh*-

the authentick copies, except in the caſe of mere obvious errors of the preſs[2], the reader is apprized by a note;

6. " ——— *wiſhing clocks more ſwift?*
" *Hours, minutes?* the *noon midnight? and all eyes,—*"
P. 408.
" ——— wiſhing clocks more ſwift?
" Hours, minutes? noon midnight? and all eyes,—"
P. 139.

7. " ——— *Ay, and thou,—who may'ſt ſee*
" *How I am gall'd,*—thou *might'ſt be-ſpice a cup,*—"
P. 309.
" ——— Ay, and thou,—who may'ſt ſee
" How I am galled,—might'ſt be-ſpice a cup,—" P. 140.

8. " ——— *I'll keep my* ſtable *where*
" *I lodge my wife;*—" P. 325.
" ——— I'll keep my *ſtables* where
" I lodge my wife;—" P. 153.

9. " *Reliſh*

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[2] That I may be accurately underſtood, I ſubjoin a few of theſe unnoticed corrections:

In *K. Henry VI.* P. I. Act I. ſc. vi.

" Thy promiſes are like Adonis' *gardens*,
" That one day bloom'd, and fruitful were the next."

The old copy reads—*garden*.

In *K. John*, Act IV. ſc. ii.

" ——— that cloſe aſpect of his
" *Does* ſhew the mood of a much-troubled breaſt."

The old copy reads—*Do*.

Ibidem, Act. I. ſc. i.

" 'Tis too reſpective, and too ſociable," &c.

The old copy,—" 'Tis *two* reſpective," &c.

Again,

note; and every emendation that has been adopted, is aſcribed to its proper author. When it is conſidered that

9. " *Reliſh* as *truth like us.*" P. 317.
" Reliſh *a* truth like us." P. 156.

10. " *And I beſeech you, hear me, who* profeſs—" P. 333.
" And I beſeech you hear me, who *profeſſes*—" P. 162.

11. " *This* ſeſſion *to our great grief,*—" P. 343.
" This *ſeſſions* to our great grief,—" P. 170.

12. " *The bug which you* will *fright me with, I ſeek.*" P. 347.
" The bug which you *would* fright me with, I ſeek." P. 175.

13. " *You*

Again, in the ſame play, we find in the original copy,
" Againſt the *inuoluerable* clouds of heaven."

In *K. Henry V.* Act V. ſc. ii.
" Corrupting in *its* own fertility."
The old copy reads—*it.*

In *Timon of Athens*, Act I. ſc. i.
" *Come*, ſhall we in?"
The old copy has—*Comes.*

Ibidem: " Even on their knees, and *hands*,—"
The old copy has—*hand.*

In *Cymbeline*, Act III. ſc. iv.
" The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
" Woman *its* pretty ſelf."
The old copy has—*it.*

It cannot be expected that the page ſhould be encumbered with the notice of ſuch obvious miſtakes of the preſs as are here enumerated. With the exception of errors ſuch as theſe, whenever any emendation has been adopted, it is mentioned in a note, and aſcribed to its author.

that there are one hundred thouſand lines in theſe plays, and that it often was neceſſary to conſult ſix or ſeven volumes.

13. " *You here ſhall ſwear upon* the *ſword of juſtice,—*" P. 349.
" You here ſhall ſwear upon *this* ſword of juſtice,—" P. 177.

14. " *The* ſeſſion *ſhall proceed.*" P. 349.
" The *ſeſſions.* ſhall proceed." P. 178.

15. " *Which you knew great; and to the* certain *hazard*
" *Of all incertainties—*" P. 350.
" Which you knew great, and to the hazard
" Of all incertainties—" P. 179.

Some word was undoubtedly omitted at the preſs; (probably *fearful* or *doubtful*;) but I thought it better to exhibit the line in an imperfect ſtate, than to adopt the interpolation made by the editor of the ſecond folio, who has introduced perhaps as unfit a word as could have been choſen.

16. " *Through my* dark *ruſt!* and how his piety—" P. 360.
" Thorough my ruſt! and how his piety—" P. 179.

The firſt word of the line is in the old copy by the miſtake of the compoſitor printed *Through*.

17. " *O but,* dear *ſir,—*" P. 375.
" O but, ſir,—" P. 200.

18. " *Your diſcontenting father* I'll *ſtrive to qualify,—*" P. 401.
" Your diſcontenting father ſtrive to qualify,—" P. 224.

19. " *If I thought it were* not *a piece of honeſty to acquaint the king withal,* I would *do it.*" P. 407.
" If I thought it were a piece of honeſty to acquaint the king withal, *I'd not* do it." P. 229.

20. " *Doſt thou think, for that I inſinuate* or toze—" P. 402.
" Doſt thou think, for that I inſinuate *and* toze—" P. 231.

volumes, in order to aſcertain by which of the preceding editors, from the time of the publication of the ſecond

21. " *You might have* ſpoke *a thouſand things,—*" P. 414.
" You might have *ſpoken* a thouſand things,—" P. 235.

22. " *Where we* offend her *now, appear—*" P. 417.
" Where we *offenders* now appear—" P. 237.

23. " *Once more to look on.*"
" Sir, *by his command,—*" P. 420.
" Once more to look on *him.*
" By his command,—" P. 240.

24. " —— *like a weather*-beaten *conduit.*" P. 425.
" —like a weather-*bitten* conduit." P. 246.

25. " ——— *This your ſon-in-law,*
" *And ſon unto the king,* who, *heavens directing,*
" *Is troth-plight to your daughter.*" P. 437.
" ——— This your ſon in-law,
" And ſon unto the king, (*whom* heavens directing,)
" Is troth-plight to your daughter." P. 257.

KING JOHN.

1. " *Which fault lies on the* hazard *of all huſbands.* P. 10.
" Which fault lies on the *hazards* of all huſbands." P. 451.

2. " *'Tis too reſpective, and too ſociable,*
" *For your* converſing." P. 14.
" 'Tis too reſpective, and too ſociable,
" For your *converſion.*" P. 456.

3. " *Thus leaning on* my *elbow,—*" P. 16.
" Thus leaning on *mine* elbow,—" P. 457.

4. " *With them a baſtard of the* king *deceas'd.*" P. 25.
" With them a baſtard of the *king's* deceas'd." P. 464.

5. " *That thou haſt under-wrought* its *lawful king.*" P. 26.
" That thou haſt under-wrought *his* lawful king." P. 465.

6. " *Say*

ſecond folio, each emendation was made, it will eaſily be believed, that this was not effected without much trouble.

Whenever

6. " *Say, ſhall the current of our right* run *on?*" P. 37.
" Say, ſhall the current of our right *roam* on?" P. 476.

7. " *And now he feaſts,* mouthing *the fleſh of men,*—" P. 38.
" And now he feaſts, *mouſing* the fleſh of men,—" P. 477.

8. " *A greater power than* ye—" P. 39.
" A greater power than *we*—" P. 478.

9. " *For grief is proud, and makes his owner* ſtoop." P. 52.
" For grief is proud, and makes his owner *ſtout.*" P. 492.

10. " *O, that a man* would *ſpeak theſe words to me!*" P. 52.
" O, that a man *ſhould* ſpeak theſe words to me!" P. 497.

11. " Is't *not amiſs, when it is truly done?*" P. 64.
" *Is* not amiſs, when it is truly done." P. 504.

12. " *Then, in deſpight of* broad-ey'd *watchful day,*—" P. 72.
" Then, in deſpight of *brooded* watchful day,—" P. 512.

13. " *A whole armado of* collected *ſail.*" P. 74.
" A whole armado of *convicted* ſail." P. 514.

14. " *And bitter ſhame hath ſpoil'd the ſweet* world's *taſte.*" P. 79.
" And bitter ſhame hath ſpoil'd the ſweet *word's* taſte." P. 519.

15. " *Strong reaſons make* ſtrong *actions.*" P. 81.
" Strong reaſons make *ſtrange* actions." P. 522.

16. " Muſt *make a ſtand at what your highneſs will.*" P. 89.
" *Doth* make a ſtand at what your highneſs will." P. 530.

 17. " *Had*

Whenever I mention *the old copy* in my notes, if the play be one originally printed in quarto, I mean the firſt quarto

17. " *Had none, my lord! why, did* not you *provoke me?*" P. 96.
" Had none, my lord! why, did *you not* provoke me?" P. 536.

18. " Mad'ſt *it no conſcience to deſtroy a king.*" P. 97.
" *Made* it no conſcience to deſtroy a king." P. 337.

19. " *Sir, ſir, impatience has* its *privilege.*" P. 102.
" Sir, ſir, impatience has *his* privilege." P. 541.

20. " *Or, when he doom'd this beauty to* the *grave,*—" P. 102.
" Or, when he doom'd this beauty to *a* grave,—" P. 541.

21. " *To the yet-unbegotten* ſins *of* time." P. 102.
" To the yet-unbegotten *ſin* of *times.*" P. 541.

22. " *And breathing to* this *breathleſs excellence,*—" P. 102.
" And breathing to *his* breathleſs excellence,—" P. 542.

23. " *And your* ſupplies, *which you have wiſh'd ſo long,*—" P. 121.
" And your *ſupply,* which you have wiſh'd ſo long,—" P. 561.

24. " *What's that to thee? Why may* I not *demand*—" P. 122.
" What's that to thee? Why may *not I* demand—" P. 562.

25. " *O, my ſweet ſir, news* fitted to the night." P. 123.
" O, my ſweet ſir, news *fitting to the night.*" P. 563.

26. " *Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,*
" *Leaves them*, inviſible his *ſiege is now*
" *Againſt the mind,*—" P. 124.
" Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,
" Leaves them inviſible; *and* his ſiege is now
" Againſt the mind,—" P. 565.

27. " *The*

quarto copy; if the play appeared originally in folio, I mean the firſt folio; and when I mention *the old copies*, I mean the firſt quarto and firſt folio, which, when that expreſſion is uſed, it may be concluded, concur in the ſame reading. In like manner, *the folio* always means the firſt folio, and *the quarto*, the earlieſt quarto, with the exceptions already mentioned. In general, however, the date of each quarto is given, when it is cited.

27. "*The ſalt* of *them* is hot." P. 125.
"The ſalt *in* them is hot." P. 568.

Two other reſtorations in this play I have not ſet down:

"Before we will lay *down* our juſt-borne arms—"
and Act II. ſc. ii.

"Be theſe ſad *ſigns* confirmers of thy word."
Act III. ſc. i.

becauſe I pointed them out on a former occaſion.

It may perhaps be urged that ſome of the variations in theſe liſts, are of no great conſequence; but to preſerve our poet's genuine text is certainly important; for otherwiſe, as Dr. Johnſon has juſtly obſerved, "the hiſtory of our language will be loſt;" and as our poet's words are changed, we are conſtantly in danger of loſing his meaning alſo. Every reader muſt wiſh to peruſe what Shakſpeare wrote, ſupported at once by the authority of the authentick copies, and the uſage of his contemporaries, rather than what the editor of the ſecond folio, or Pope, or Hanmer, or Warburton, have arbitrarily ſubſtituted in its place.

Let me not, however, be miſunderſtood. *All* theſe variations have not been diſcovered by the preſent collation, ſome of them having been pointed out by preceding editors; but ſuch as had been already noticed were merely pointed out: the original readings are now eſtabliſhed and ſupported by the uſage of our poet himſelf and that of his contemporaries, and reſtored to the text, inſtead of being degraded to the bottom of the page.

Where there are two quarto copies printed in the ſame year, they are particularly diſtinguiſhed, and the variations noticed.

The two great duties of an editor are, to exhibit the genuine text of his authour, and to explain his obſcurities. Both of theſe objects have been ſo conſtantly before my eyes, that, I am confident, one of them will not be found to have been neglected for the other. I can with perfect truth ſay, with Dr. Johnſon, that "not a ſingle paſſage in the whole work has appeared to me obſcure, which I have not endeavoured to illuſtrate." I have examined the notes of all the editors, and my own former remarks, with equal rigour; and have endeavoured as much as poſſible to avoid all controverſy, having conſtantly had in view a philanthropick obſervation made by the editor above mentioned: "I know not (ſays that excellent writer,) why our editors ſhould, with ſuch implacable anger, perſecute their predeceſſors. Οἱ νεκροι μὴ δάκνεσιν, the dead, it is true, can make no reſiſtance, they may be attacked with great ſecurity; but ſince they can neither feel nor mend, the ſafety of mauling them ſeems greater than the pleaſure: nor perhaps would it much miſbecome us to remember, amidſt our triumphs over the *nonſenſical* and the *ſenſeleſs*, that we likewiſe are men; that *debemur morti*, and, as Swift obſerved to Burnet, ſhall ſoon be among the dead ourſelves."

I have in general given the true explication of a paſſage, by whomſoever made, without loading the page with the preceding unſucceſsful attempts at elucidation, and by this means have obtained room for much additional illuſtration: for, as on the one hand, I truſt very few ſuperfluous

ſuperfluous or unneceſſary annotations have been admitted, ſo on the other, I believe, that not a ſingle valuable explication of any obſcure paſſage in theſe plays has ever appeared, which will not be found in the following volumes.

The admirers of this poet will, I truſt, not merely pardon the great acceſſion of new notes in the preſent edition, but examine them with ſome degree of pleaſure. An idle notion has been propagated, that Shakſpeare has been *buried under his commentators*; and it has again and again been repeated by the taſteleſs and the dull, "that notes, though often neceſſary, are *neceſſary evils*." There is no perſon, I believe, who has an higher reſpect for the authority of Dr. Johnſon than I have; but he has been miſunderſtood, or miſrepreſented, as if theſe words contained a general caution to *all* the readers of this poet. Dr. Johnſon, in the part of his preface here alluded to, is addreſſing the *young* reader, to whom Shakſpeare is *new*; and him he very judiciouſly counſels to "read every play from the firſt ſcene to the laſt, with utter negligence of all his commentators. —Let him read on, through brightneſs and obſcurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preſerve his comprehenſion of the dialogue, and his intereſt in the fable." But to much the greater and more enlightened part of his readers, (for how few are there comparatively to whom Shakſpeare is new?) he gives a very different advice: Let them to whom the pleaſures of novelty have ceaſed, "attempt exactneſs, and read the commentators."

During the era of conjectural criticiſm and capricious innovation, notes were indeed evils; while

one page was covered with ingenious ſophiſtry in ſupport of ſome idle conjecture, and another was waſted in its overthrow, or in erecting a new fabrick equally unſubſtantial as the former. But this era is now happily paſt away; and conjecture and emendation have given place to rational explanation. We ſhall never, I hope, again be told, that "as the beſt gueſſer was the beſt diviner, ſo he may be ſaid in ſome meaſure to be the beſt editor of Shakſpeare [3]." Let me not, however, be ſuppoſed an enemy to all conjectural emendation; ſometimes undoubtedly we muſt have recourſe to it; but, like the machinery of the ancient drama, let it not be reſorted to except in caſes of difficulty; *niſi dignus vindice nodus*. "I wiſh (ſays Dr. Johnſon,) we all conjectured leſs, and explained more." When our poet's entire library ſhall have been diſcovered, and the fables of all his plays traced to their original ſource, when every temporary alluſion ſhall have been pointed out, and every obſcurity elucidated, then, and not till then, let the accumulation of notes be complained of. I ſcarcely remember ever to have looked into a book of the age of Queen Elizabeth, in which I did not find ſomewhat that tended to throw a light on theſe plays. While our object is, to ſupport and eſtabliſh what the poet wrote, to illuſtrate his phraſeology by comparing it with that of his contemporaries, and to explain his fugitive alluſions to cuſtoms long ſince diſuſed and forgotten, while this object is kept ſteadily in view, if even every line of his plays were accompanied with a comment, every intelligent reader would be indebted to the induſtry of him who produced it. Such uniformly

[3] Newton's Preface to his edition of Milton.

has

has been the object of the notes now preſented to the publick. Let us then hear no more of this barbarous jargon concerning Shakſpeare's having been *elucidated* into *obſcurity*, and buried under the load of his commentators. Dryden is ſaid to have regretted the ſucceſs of his own inſtructions, and to have lamented that at length, in conſequence of his critical prefaces, the town had become too ſkilful to be eaſily ſatisfied. The ſame obſervation may be made with reſpect to many of theſe objectors, to whom the meaning of ſome of our poet's moſt difficult paſſages is now become ſo familiar, that they fancy they originally underſtood them "without a prompter;" and with great gravity exclaim againſt the unneceſſary illuſtrations furniſhed by his Editors: nor ought we much to wonder at this; for our poet himſelf has told us,

"———'tis a common proof,
"That lowlineſs is young ambition's ladder,
"Whereto the climber upward turns his face;
"But when he once attains the upmoſt round,
"He then unto the ladder turns his back;
"Looks in the clouds."—

I have conſtantly made it a rule in reviſing the notes of former editors, to compare ſuch paſſages as they have cited from any authour, with the book from which the extract was taken, if I could procure it; by which ſome inaccuracies have been rectified. The incorrect extract made by Dr. Warburton from Saviolo's treatiſe on *Honour and Honourable Quarrels*, to illuſtrate a paſſage in *As you like it*, fully proves the propriety of ſuch a collation.

At the end of the tenth volume I have added an Appendix, containing corrections, and ſupplemental obſervations,

obſervations, made too late to be annexed to the plays to which they belong. Some object to an Appendix; but, in my opinion, with very little reaſon. No book can be the worſe for ſuch a ſupplement; ſince the reader, if ſuch be his caprice, need not examine it. If the objector means, that he wiſhes that all the information contained in an Appendix, were properly diſpoſed in the preceding volumes, it muſt be acknowledged that ſuch an arrangement would be extremely deſirable: but as well might he require from the elephant the ſprightlineſs and agility of the ſquirrel, or from the ſquirrel the wiſdom and ſtrength of the elephant, as expect, that an editor's lateſt thoughts, ſuggeſted by diſcurſive reading while the ſheets that compoſe his volumes were paſſing through the preſs, ſhould form a part of his original work; that information acquired too late to be employed in its proper place, ſhould yet be found there.

That the very few ſtage-directions which the old copies exhibit, were not taken from our authour's manuſcripts, but furniſhed by the players, is proved by one in *Macbeth*, Act IV. ſc. i. where "*A ſhew of eight kings*" is directed, "*and* Banquo *laſt, with a glaſs in his hand*;" though from the very words which the poet has written for Macbeth, it is manifeſt that the glaſs ought to be borne by the eighth king, and not by Banquo. All the ſtage-directions therefore throughout this work I have conſidered as wholly in my power, and have regulated them in the beſt manner I could. The reader will alſo, I think, be pleaſed to find the place in which every ſcene is ſuppoſed to paſs, preciſely aſcertained: a ſpecies of information, for which, though it often throws light on the dialogue, we look in vain in the ancient

ancient copies, and which has been too much neglected by the modern editors.

The play of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, which is now once more reſtored to our authour, I originally intended to have ſubjoined, with *Titus Andronicus*, to the tenth volume; but, to preſerve an equality of ſize in my volumes, have been obliged to give it a different place. The hand of Shakſpeare being indubitably found in that piece, it will, I doubt not, be conſidered as a valuable acceſſion; and it is of little conſequence where it appears.

It has long been thought that *Titus Andronicus* was not written originally by Shakſpeare; about ſeventy years after his death, Ravenſcroft having mentioned that he had been "told by ſome anciently converſant with the ſtage, that our poet only gave ſome maſter-touches to one or two of the principal parts or characters." The very curious papers lately diſcovered in Dulwich College, from which large extracts are given at the end of the Hiſtory of the Stage, prove, what I long ſince ſuſpected, that this play, and *the Firſt Part of K. Henry VI.* were in poſſeſſion of the ſcene when Shakſpeare began to write for the ſtage; and the ſame manuſcripts ſhew, that it was then very common for a dramatick poet to alter and amend the work of a preceding writer. The queſtion therefore is now deciſively ſettled; and undoubtedly ſome additions were made to both theſe pieces by Shakſpeare. It is obſervable that the ſecond ſcene of the third act of *Titus Andronicus* is not found in the quarto copy printed in 1611. It is therefore highly probable that this ſcene was added by our authour;

authour; and his hand may be traced in the preceding act, as well as in a few other places[4]. The additions which he made to *Pericles* are much more numerous, and therefore more ſtrongly entitle it to a place among the dramatick pieces which he has adorned by his pen.

With reſpect to the other conteſted plays, *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, *The London Prodigal*, *&c.* which have now for near two centuries been falſely aſcribed to our authour, the manuſcripts above mentioned completely clear him from that imputation; and prove, that while his great modeſty made him ſet but little value on his own inimitable productions, he could patiently endure to have the miſerable trath of other writers publickly imputed to him, without taking any meaſure to vindicate his fame. *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, we find from indubitable evidence, though aſcribed in the title-page to "William Shakſpeare," and printed in the year 1600, when his fame was in its meridian, was the joint-production of four other poets; Michael Drayton, Anthony Mundy, Richard Hathwaye, and Robert Wilſon[5].

In the Diſſertation annexed to the three parts of *King Henry the Sixth*, I have diſcuſſed at large the queſtion concerning their authenticity, and have aſſigned my reaſons for thinking that the ſecond and third of thoſe plays were formed by Shakſpeare on two elder dramas

[4] If ever the account-book of Mr. Heminge ſhall be diſcovered, we ſhall probably find in it—"*Paid to William Shakſpeare for* mending *Titus Andronicus*." See Vol. I. Part II. p. 320.

[5] Vol. I. Part II. *Emendations and Additions*, p. 317.

now

now extant. Any diſquiſition therefore concerning theſe controverted pieces is here unneceſſary.

Some years ago I publiſhed a ſhort Eſſay on the economy and uſages of our old theatres. The Hiſtorical Account of the Engliſh Stage, which has been formed on that eſſay, has ſwelled to ſuch a ſize, in conſequence of various reſearches ſince made, and a great acceſſion of very valuable materials, that it is become almoſt a new work. Of theſe the moſt important are the curious papers which have been diſcovered at Dulwich, and the very valuable Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Maſter of the Revels to King James and King Charles the Firſt, which have contributed to throw much light on our dramatick hiſtory, and furniſhed ſome ſingular anecdotes of the poets of thoſe times.

Twelve years have elapſed ſince the Eſſay on the order of time in which the plays of Shakſpeare were written, firſt appeared. A re-examination of theſe plays ſince that time has furniſhed me with ſeveral particulars in confirmation of what I had formerly ſuggeſted on this ſubject. On a careful reviſal of that Eſſay, which, I hope, is improved as well as conſiderably enlarged, I had the ſatisfaction of obſerving that I had found reaſon to attribute but two plays to an era widely diſtant from that to which they had been originally aſcribed; and to make only a minute change in the arrangement of a few others. Some information, however, which has been obtained ſince that Eſſay was printed in its preſent form, inclines me to think that one of the two plays which I allude to, *The Winter's Tale*, was a ſtill later production than I have ſuppoſed; for I have now good reaſon to believe that

that it was firſt exhibited in the year 1613[4]; and that conſequently it muſt have been one of our poet's lateſt works.

Though above a century and a half has elapſed ſince the death of Shakſpeare, it is ſomewhat extraordinary, (as I obſerved on a former occaſion,) that none of his various editors ſhould have attempted to ſeparate his genuine poetical compoſitions from the ſpurious performances with which they have been long intermixed; or have taken the trouble to compare them with the earlieſt and moſt authentick copies. Shortly after his death a very incorrect impreſſion of his poems was iſſued out, which in every ſubſequent edition, previous to the year 1780, was implicitly followed. They have been carefully reviſed, and with many additional illuſtrations are now a ſecond time faithfully printed from the original copies, excepting only *Venus and Adonis*, of which I have not been able to procure the firſt impreſſion. The ſecond edition, printed in 1596, was obligingly tranſmitted to me by the late Reverend Thomas Warton, of whoſe friendly and valuable correſpondence I was deprived by death, when theſe volumes were almoſt ready to be iſſued from the preſs. It is painful to recollect how many of (I had almoſt ſaid) my coadjutors have died ſince the preſent work was begun:—the elegant ſcholar, and ingenious writer, whom I have juſt mentioned; Dr. Johnſon, and Mr. Tyrwhitt: men, from whoſe approbation of my labours I had promiſed myſelf much pleaſure, and whoſe ſtamp could give a value and currency to any work.

[4] See *Emendations and Additions*, Vol. I. Part II. p. 286.

With

With the materials which I have been ſo fortunate as to obtain, relative to our poet, his kindred, and friends, it would not have been difficult to have formed a new Life of Shakſpeare, leſs meagre and imperfect than that left us by Mr. Rowe: but the information which I have procured having been obtained at very different times, it is neceſſarily diſperſed, partly in the copious notes ſubjoined to Rowe's Life, and partly in the Hiſtorical Account of our old actors. At ſome future time I hope to weave the whole into one uniform and connected narrative.

My inquiries having been carried on almoſt to the very moment of publication, ſome circumſtances relative to our poet were obtained too late to be introduced into any part of the preſent work. Of theſe due uſe will be made hereafter.

The prefaces of Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton, I have not retained, becauſe they appeared to me to throw no light on our authour or his works: the room which they would have taken up, will, I truſt, be found occupied by more valuable matter.

As ſome of the preceding editors have juſtly been condemned for innovation, ſo perhaps (for of objections there is no end,) I may be cenſured for too ſtrict an adherence to the ancient copies. I have conſtantly had in view the Roman ſentiment adopted by Dr. Johnſon, that "it is more honourable to ſave a citizen than to deſtroy an enemy," and, like him, "have been more careful to protect than to attack." "I do not wiſh the reader to forget, (ſays the ſame writer,) that the moſt

commodious (and he might have added, the moſt forcible and elegant) is not always the true reading[6]." On this principle I have uniformly proceeded, having reſolved never to deviate from the authentick copies, merely becauſe the phraſeology was harſh or uncommon. Many paſſages, which have heretofore been conſidered as corrupt, and are now ſupported by the uſage of contemporary writers, fully prove the propriety of this caution[7].

[6] *K. Henry IV.* P. II.

[7] See particularly *The Merchant of Venice*, Vol. III. p. 46:

" —— That many may be meant
" By the fool multitude."

with the note there, and in the Appendix, p. 581.

We undoubtedly ſhould not now write——

" But, leſt myſelf be *guilty to* ſelf-wrong,—"

yet we find this phraſe in *The Comedy of Errors*, Vol. II. p. 171, and it is ſupported by our poet's own authority in the Appendix, p. 569. See alſo *The Winter's Tale*, Vol. IV. p. 257:

" —— This your ſon-in-law,
" And ſon unto the king, (*whom* heavens directing,)
" Is troth-plight to your daughter."

Meaſure for Meaſure, Vol. II. p. 96: " — to be ſo *bared*,—."

Coriolanus, Vol. VII. p. 239, n. 5; and Appendix, p. 662:

" *Which* often, thus, correcting thy ſtout heart," &c.

Hamlet, Vol. IX. p. 204:

" That he might not *beteem* the winds of heaven," &c.

As you like it, Vol. III. p. 154, n. 7; and Appendix, p. 587:

" My voice is *ragged*,—."

Cymbeline, Vol. VIII. p. 472, n. 3:

" Whom heavens, in juſtice, (both on her and hers,)
" Have laid moſt heavy hand."

The

The rage for innovation till within theſe laſt thirty years was ſo great, that many words were diſmiſſed from our poet's text, which in his time were current in every mouth. In all the editions ſince that of Mr. Rowe, in the Second Part of *King Henry IV.* the word *channel*[7] has been rejected, and *kennel* ſubſtituted in its room, though the former term was commonly employed in the ſame ſenſe in the time of our authour; and the learned Biſhop of Worceſter has ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to prove that in *Cymbeline* the poet wrote—not *ſhakes*, but *ſhuts*, or *checks*, "all our buds from growing[8]," though the authenticity of the original reading is eſtabliſhed beyond all controverſy by two other paſſages of Shakſpeare. Very ſoon, indeed, after his death, this rage for innovation ſeems to have ſeized his editors; for in the year 1616 an edition of his *Rape of Lucrece* was publiſhed, which was ſaid to be *newly reviſed and corrected*; but in which, in fact, ſeveral arbitrary changes were made, and the ancient diction rejected for one ſomewhat more modern. Even in the firſt complete collection of his plays publiſhed in 1623, ſome changes were undoubtedly made from ignorance of his meaning and phraſeology. They had, I ſuppoſe, been made in the playhouſe copies after his retirement from the theatre. Thus

[7] Act II. ſc. i. "——throw the queen in the *channel*." In that paſſage, as in many others, I have ſilently reſtored the original reading, without any obſervation; but the word, in this ſenſe, being now obſolete, ſhould have been illuſtrated by a note. This defect, however, will be found remedied in *King Henry VI.* P. II. Act II. ſc. ii.

"As if a *channel* ſhould be call'd the ſea."

[8] Hurd's Hor. 4th edit. Vol. I. p. 55.

in *Othello*, Brabantio is made to call to his domeſticks to raiſe " ſome ſpecial officers of *might*," inſtead of " officers of *night*;" and the phraſe " *of all loves*," in the ſame play, not being underſtood, " *for love's ſake*" was ſubſtituted in its room. So, in *Hamlet*, we have *ere ever* for *or ever*, and *rites* inſtead of the more ancient word, *crants*. In *King Lear*, Act I. ſc. i. the ſubſtitution of—" Goes thy heart with this?" inſtead of—" Goes this with thy heart?" without doubt aroſe from the ſame cauſe. In the plays of which we have no quarto copies, we may be ſure that ſimilar innovations were made, though we have now no certain means of detecting them.

After what has been proved concerning the ſophiſtications and corruptions of the Second Folio, we cannot be ſurpriſed that when theſe plays were re-publiſhed by Mr. Rowe in the beginning of this century from a later folio, in which the interpolations of the former were all preſerved, and many new errours added, almoſt every page of his work was diſfigured by accumulated corruptions. In Mr. Pope's edition our authour was not leſs miſrepreſented; for though by examining the oldeſt copies he detected ſome errours, by his numerous fanciful alterations the poet was ſo completely modernized, that I am confident, had he " re-viſited the glimpſes of the moon," he would not have underſtood his own works. From the quartos indeed a few valuable reſtorations were made; but all the advantage that was thus obtained, was outweighed by arbitrary changes, tranſpoſitions, and interpolations.

The readers of Shakſpeare being diſguſted with the liberties taken by Mr. Pope, the ſubſequent edition of Theobald was juſtly preferred; becauſe he profeſſed to adhere

adhere to the ancient copies more ſtrictly than his competitor, and illuſtrated a few paſſages by extracts from the writers of our poet's age. That his work ſhould at this day be conſidered of any value, only ſhews how long impreſſions will remain, when they are once made; for Theobald, though not ſo great an innovator as Pope, was yet a conſiderable innovator; and his edition being printed from that of his immediate predeceſſor, while a few arbitrary changes made by Pope were detected, innumerable ſophiſtications were ſilently adopted. His knowledge of the contemporary authours was ſo ſcanty, that all the illuſtration of that kind diſperſed throughout his volumes, has been exceeded by the reſearches which have ſince been made for the purpoſe of elucidating a ſingle play.

Of Sir Thomas Hanmer it is only neceſſary to ſay, that he adopted almoſt all the innovations of Pope, adding to them whatever caprice dictated.

To him ſucceeded Dr. Warburton, a critick, who (as hath been ſaid of Salmaſius) ſeems to have erected his throne on a heap of ſtones, that he might have them at hand to throw at the heads of all thoſe who paſſed by. His unbounded licence in ſubſtituting his own chimerical conceits in the place of the authour's genuine text, has been ſo fully ſhewn by his reviſers, that I ſuppoſe no critical reader will ever again open his volumes. An hundred ſtrappadoes, according to an Italian comick writer, would not have induced Petrarch, were he living, to ſubſcribe to the meaning which certain commentators after his death had by their gloſſes extorted from his works. It is a curious ſpeculation to conſider how many thouſand would have been requiſite

for this editor to have inflicted on our great dramatick poet for the ſame purpoſe. The defence which has been made for Dr. Warburton on this ſubject, by ſome of his friends, is ſingular. "He well knew," it has been ſaid, "that much the greater part of his notes do not throw any light on the poet of whoſe works he undertook the reviſion, and that he frequently imputed to Shakſpeare a meaning of which he never thought; but the editor's great object was to diſplay his own learning, not to illuſtrate his authour, and this end he attained; for in ſpite of all the clamour againſt him, his work added to his reputation as a ſcholar."—Be it ſo then; but let none of his admirers ever dare to unite his name with that of Shakſpeare; and let us at leaſt be allowed to wonder, that the learned editor ſhould have had ſo little reſpect for the greateſt poet that has appeared ſince the days of Homer, as to uſe a commentary on his works merely as "*a ſtalking-horſe, under the preſentation of which he might ſhoot his wit.*"

At length the taſk of reviſing theſe plays was undertaken by one, whoſe extraordinary powers of mind, as they rendered him the admiration of his contemporaries, will tranſmit his name to poſterity as the brighteſt ornament of the eighteenth century; and will tranſmit it without competition, if we except a great orator, philoſopher, and ſtateſman[9], now living, whoſe talents and virtues are an honour to human nature. In 1765 Dr. Johnſon's edition, which had long been impatiently expected, was given to the publick. His admirable preface, (perhaps the fineſt compoſition in our language,)

9 The Right Honourable Edmund Burke.

his

his happy, and in general juſt, characters of theſe plays, his refutation of the falſe gloſſes of Theobald and Warburton, and his numerous explications of involved and difficult paſſages, are too well known, to be here enlarged upon; and therefore I ſhall only add, that his vigorous and comprehenſive underſtanding threw more light on his authour than all his predeceſſors had done.

In one obſervation, however, concerning our poet, I do not entirely concur with him. "It is not (he remarks) very grateful to conſider how little the ſucceſſion of editors has added to this authour's power of pleaſing. He was read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him."

He certainly was read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated, at the period mentioned; but ſurely not in the ſame degree as at preſent. The ſucceſſion of editors has effected this; it has made him underſtood; it has made him popular; it has ſhewn every one who is capable of reading, how much ſuperior he is not only to Jonſon and Fletcher, whom the bad taſte of the laſt age from the time of the Reſtoration to the end of the century ſet above him, but to all the dramatick poets of antiquity:

"——— *Jam monte potitus,*
"*Ridet anhelantem dura ad veſtigia turbam.*"

Every authour who pleaſes muſt ſurely pleaſe more as he is more underſtood, and there can be no doubt that Shakſpeare is now infinitely better underſtood than he was in the laſt century. To ſay nothing of the people at large, it is clear that Dryden himſelf, though a great

admirer of our poet, and D'Avenant, though he wrote for the ſtage in the year 1627, did not always underſtand him[1]. The very books which are neceſſary to our authour's

[1] "The tongue in general is ſo much refined ſince Shakſpeare's time, that many of his words, and more of his phraſes, are *ſcarce intelligible*." Preface to Dryden's *Troilus and Creſſida*. The various changes made by Dryden in particular paſſages in that play, and by him and D'Avenant in the *Tempeſt*, prove deciſively that they frequently did not underſtand our poet's language.

In his Defence of the Epilogue to the *Conqueſt of Granada*, Dryden arraigns Ben Jonſon for uſing the perſonal, inſtead of the neutral, pronoun, and *unfear'd* for *unafraid*.

"Though heaven ſhould ſpeak with all *his* wrath at once,
"We ſhould ſtand upright, and *unfear'd*."

"*His* (ſays he) is ill ſyntax with *heaven*, and by *unfear'd* he means *unafraid*; words of a quite contrary ſignification.—He perpetually uſes *ports* for *gates*, which is an affected error in him, to introduce Latin by the loſs of the Engliſh idiom."

Now *his* for *its*, however ill the ſyntax may be, was the common language of the time; and to *fear*, in the ſenſe of to *terrify*, is found not only in all the poets, but in every dictionary of that age. With reſpect to *ports*, Shakſpeare who will not be ſuſpected of affecting Latiniſms, frequently employs that word in the ſame ſenſe as Jonſon has done, and as probably the whole kingdom did; for the word is ſtill ſo uſed in Scotland.

D'Avenant's alteration of *Macbeth*, and *Meaſure for Meaſure*, furniſh many proofs of the ſame kind. In *The Law againſt Lovers*, which he formed on *Much ado about nothing* and *Meaſure for Meaſure*, are theſe lines:

"——nor do I think,
"The prince has *true* diſcretion who affects it."

The

authour's illuſtration, were of ſo little account in their time, that what now we can ſcarce procure at any price, was then the furniture of the nurſery or the ſtall[2]. In fifty years after our poet's death, Dryden mentions

The paſſage imitated is in *Meaſure for Meaſure*:

" Nor do I think the man of *ſafe* diſcretion,
" That does affect it."

If our poet's language had been well underſtood, the epithet *ſafe* would not have been rejected. See *Othello*:

" My blood begins my *ſafer* guides to rule;
" And paſſion, having my beſt judgment collied," &c.

So alſo Edgar, in *King Lear*:

" The *ſafer ſenſe* will ne'er accommodate
" His maſter thus."

[2] The price of books at different periods may ſerve in ſome meaſure to aſcertain the taſte and particular ſtudy of the age. At the ſale of Dr. Francis Bernard's library in 1698, the following books were ſold at the annexed prices:

FOLIO.

Gower de Confeſſione Amantis. Now ſold for two guineas.	0.	2.	6.
Caxton's Recueyll of the hiſtories of Troy, 1502.	0.	3.	0.
——— Chronicle of England.	0.	4.	0.
Hall's Chronicle.	0.	6.	4.
Grafton's Chronicle.	0.	6.	10.
Holinſhed's Chronicle, 1587. This book is now frequently ſold for ten guineas.	1.	10.	6.

QUARTO.

Turberville on hawking and hunting.	0.	0.	6.
Copley's Wits, Fits, and Fancies.	0.	0.	4.
Puttenham's Art of Engliſh Poeſie. This book is now uſually ſold for a guinea.	0.	0.	4.

mentions that he was then become "*a little obſolete.*" In the beginning of the preſent century Lord Shafteſbury complains of his "*rude unpoliſhed ſtile, and his* ANTIQUATED *phraſe and wit*;" and not long afterwards Gildon informs us that he had been rejected from ſome modern collections of poetry on account of his *obſolete language*. Whence could theſe repreſentations have proceeded, but becauſe our poet, not being diligently ſtudied, not being compared with the contemporary writers, was not underſtood? If he had been "read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated," in the ſame degree as he is now, the enthuſiaſm of ſome one or other of his admirers in the laſt age would have induced him to make ſome inquiries concerning the hiſtory of his theatrical carreer, and the anecdotes of his private life. But no ſuch perſon was found; no anxiety in the publick fought out any particulars concerning him after the Reſtoration, (if we except the few which were collected by Mr. Aubrey,) though at that time the hiſtory of his life muſt have been known to many; for his ſiſter Joan Hart, who muſt have known much of his early years, did not die till 1646: his favourite daughter, Mrs. Hall, lived till 1649; and his ſecond daughter, Judith, was living at Stratford-upon-Avon in the beginning of the year

Powel's Hiſtory of Wales. - - - 0. 1. 5.
Painter's ſecond tome of the Palace of Pleaſure. 0. 0. 4.

The two volumes of Painter's Palace of Pleaſure are now uſually ſold for three guineas.

OCTAVO.

Metamorphoſis of Ajax, by Sir John Harrington. - - - - - 0. 0. 4.

1662.

1662. His grand-daughter, Lady Barnard, did not die till 1670. Mr. Thomas Combe, to whom Shakſpeare bequeathed his ſword, ſurvived our poet above forty years, having died at Stratford-in 1657. His elder brother William Combe lived till 1667. Sir Richard Biſhop, who was born in 1585, lived at Bridgetown near Stratford till 1672; and his ſon Sir William Biſhop, who was born in 1626, died there in 1700. From all theſe perſons without doubt many circumſtances relative to Shakſpeare might have been obtained; but that was an age as deficient in literary curioſity as in taſte.

It is remarkable that in a century after our poet's death, five editions only of his plays were publiſhed; which probably conſiſted of not more than three thouſand copies. During the ſame period three editions of the plays of Fletcher, and four of thoſe of Jonſon, had appeared. On the other hand, from the year 1716 to the preſent time, that is, in ſeventy-four years, but two editions of the former writer, and one of the latter, have been iſſued from the preſs; while above thirty thouſand copies of Shakſpeare have been diſperſed through England[3]. That nearly as many editions of the

[3] Notwithſtanding our high admiration of Shakſpeare, we are yet without a ſplendid edition of his works, with the illuſtrations which the united efforts of various commentators have contributed; while in other countries the moſt brilliant decorations have been laviſhed on their diſtinguiſhed poets. The editions of Pope and Hanmer, may, with almoſt as much propriety, be called *their* works, as thoſe of Shakſpeare; and therefore can have no claim to be admitted into any elegant library. Nor will the promiſed edition, with engravings, undertaken by Mr. Alderman Boydell, remedy this defect, for it is not to be

the works of Jonſon as of Shakſpeare ſhould have been demanded in the laſt century, will not appear ſurprizing, when we recollect what Dryden has related ſoon after the Reſtoration: that "others were then generally preferred before him[4]." By *others* Jonſon and Fletcher were meant. To attempt to ſhew to the readers of the

be accompanied with notes. At ſome future, and no very diſtant, time, I mean to furniſh the publick with an elegant edition in quarto, (without engravings,) in which the text of the preſent edition ſhall be followed, with the illuſtrations ſubjoined in the ſame page.

4 In the year 1642, whether from ſome capricious viciſſitude in the publick taſte, or from a general inattention to the drama, we find Shirley complaining that few came to ſee our authour's performances:

"———————— You ſee
"What audience we have. *what company*
"*To Shakſpeare comes?* whoſe mirth did once beguile
"Dull hours, and buſkin'd made even ſorrow ſmile;
"So lovely were the wounds, that men would lay
"They could endure the bleeding a whole day;
"*He has but few friends lately.*"
Prologue to *The Siſters.*

"Shakſpeare to thee was dull, whoſe beſt jeſt lies
"I'th' lady's queſtions, and the fool's replies;
"Old-faſhion'd wit, which walk'd from town to town,
"In trunk-hoſe, which our fathers call'd the clown;
"Whoſe wit our nicer times would obſceneneſs call,
"And which made bawdry paſs for comical.
"Nature was all his art; thy vein was free
"As his, but without his ſcurrility."
Verſes on Fletcher, by William Cartwright, 1647.

After the Reſtoration, on the revival of the theatres, the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were eſteemed ſo much ſuperior to thoſe of our authour, that we are told by Dryden, "two

of

the preſent day the abſurdity of ſuch a preference, would be an inſult to their underſtandings. When we

of their pieces were acted, through the year, for one of Shakſpeare's." If his teſtimony needed any corroboration, the following verſes would afford it:

" In our old plays, the humour, love, and paſſion,
" Like doublet, hoſe, and cloak, are out of faſhion;
" That which the world call'd wit in Shakſpeare's age,
" Is laugh'd at, as improper for our ſtage."

Prologue to Shirley's *Love Tricks*, 1667.

" At every ſhop, while *Shakſpeare's* lofty ſtile
" Neglected lies, to mice and worms a ſpoil,
" Gilt on the back, juſt ſmoking from the preſs,
" The apprentice ſhews you D'Urfey's *Hudibras*,
" Crown's *Maſk*, bound up with Settle's choiceſt labours,
" And promiſes ſome new eſſay of Babor's."

SATIRE, publiſhed in 1680.

" —againſt old as well as new to rage,
" Is the peculiar frenzy of this age.
" Shakſpeare muſt down, and you muſt praiſe no more
" Soft Deſdemona, nor the jealous Moor:
" Shakſpeare, whoſe fruitful genius, happy wit,
" Was fram'd and finiſh'd at a lucky hit,
" The pride of nature, and the ſhame of ſchools,
" Born to create, and not to learn from, rules,
" Muſt pleaſe no more: his baſtards now deride
" Their father's nakedneſs they ought to hide."

Prologue by Sir Charles Sedley, to the *Wary Widow*, 1693.

To the honour of Margaret Ducheſs of Newcaſtle be it remembered, that however fantaſtick in other reſpects, ſhe had taſte enough to be fully ſenſible of our poet's merit, and was one of the firſt who after the Reſtoration publiſhed a very high eulogy on him. See her *Sociable Letters*, folio, 1664, p. 244.

endeavour

endeavour to trace any thing like a ground for this prepoſterous taſte, we are told of Fletcher's *eaſe*, and Jonſon's *learning*. Of how little uſe his learning was to him, an ingenious writer of our own time has ſhewn with that vigour and animation for which he was diſtinguiſhed. "Jonſon, in the ſerious drama, is as much an imitator, as Shakſpeare is an original. He was very learned, as Sampſon was very ſtrong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himſelf under it. We ſee nothing of Jonſon, nor indeed of his admired (but alſo murdered) ancients; for what ſhone in the hiſtorian is a cloud on the poet, and *Catiline* might have been a good play, if Salluſt had never written.

"Who knows whether Shakſpeare might not have thought leſs, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Jonſon's learning, as Enceladus under Ætna? His mighty genius, indeed, through the moſt mountainous oppreſſion would have breathed out ſome of his inextinguiſhable fire; yet poſſibly he might not have riſen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatick province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was maſter of two books unknown to many of the profoundly read, though books which the laſt conflagration alone can deſtroy; the book of nature, and that of man[5]."

5 *Conjectures on Original Compoſition*, by Dr. Edward Young.

To

To this and the other encomiums on our great poet which will be found in the following pages, I ſhall not attempt to make any addition. He has juſtly obſerved, that

" To guard a title that was rich before,
" To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
" To throw a perfume on the violet,
" To ſmooth the ice, or add another hue
" Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
" To ſeek the beauteous eye of heaven to garniſh,
" Is waſteful and ridiculous exceſs."

Let me, however, be permitted to remark, that beſide all his other tranſcendent merits, he was the great refiner and poliſher of our language. His compound epithets, his bold metaphors, the energy of his expreſſions, the harmony of his numbers, all theſe render the language of Shakſpeare one of his principal beauties. Unfortunately none of his letters, or other proſe compoſitions, not in a dramatick form, have reached poſterity; but if any of them ever ſhall be diſcovered, they will, I am confident, exhibit the ſame perſpicuity, the ſame cadence, the ſame elegance and vigour, which we find in his plays. " Words and phraſes," ſays Dryden, " muſt of neceſſity receive a change in ſucceeding ages; but it is almoſt a miracle, that much of his language remains ſo pure; and that he who began dramatick poetry amongſt us, untaught by any, and, as Ben Jonſon tells us, without learning, ſhould by the force of his own genius perform ſo much, that in a manner he has left no praiſe for any who come after him."

In

In theſe prefatory obſervations my principal object was, to aſcertain the true ſtate and reſpective value of the ancient copies, and to mark out the courſe which has been purſued in the edition now offered to the publick. It only remains, that I ſhould return my very ſincere acknowledgments to thoſe gentlemen, to whoſe good offices I have been indebted in the progreſs of my work. My thanks are particularly due to Francis Ingram, of Ribbisford in Worceſterſhire, Eſq. for the very valuable Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, and ſeveral other curious papers which formerly belonged to that gentleman; to Penn Aſheton Curzon, Eſq. for the uſe of the very rare copy of *King Richard III.* printed in 1597; to the Maſter, and the Rev. Mr. Smith, librarian, of Dulwich College, for the Manuſcripts relative to one of our ancient theatres, which they obligingly tranſmitted to me; to John Kipling, Eſq. keeper of the rolls in Chancery, who in the moſt liberal manner directed every ſearch to be made in the Chapel of the Rolls that I ſhould require, with a view to illuſtrate the hiſtory of our poet's life; and to Mr. Richard Clarke, Regiſtrar of the dioceſe of Worceſter, who with equal liberality, at my requeſt, made many ſearches in his office for the wills of various perſons. I am alſo in a particular manner indebted to the kindneſs and attention of the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon, who moſt obligingly made every inquiry in that town and the neighbourhood, which I ſuggeſted as likely to throw any light on the Life of Shakſpeare.

I deliver

I deliver my book to the world not without anxiety; conſcious, however, that I have ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to render it not unworthy the attention of the publick. If the reſearches which have been made for the illuſtration of our poet's works, and for the diſſertations which accompany the preſent edition, ſhall afford as much entertainment to others, as I have derived from them, I ſhall conſider the time expended on it as well employed. Of the dangerous ground on which I tread, I am fully ſenſible. "Multa ſunt in his ſtudiis (to uſe the words of a venerable fellow-labourer[6] in the mines of Antiquity) *cineri ſuppoſita doloſo*. Errata poſſint eſſe multa à memoria. Quis enim in memoriæ theſauro omnia ſimul ſic complectatur, ut pro arbitratu ſuo poſſit expromere? Errata poſſint eſſe plura ab imperitia. Quis enim tam peritus, ut in cæco hoc antiquitatis mari, cum tempore colluctatus, ſcopulis non allidatur? Hæc tamen à te, humaniſſime lector, tua humanitas, mea induſtria, patriæ charitas, et SHAKSPEARI dignitas, mihi exorent, ut quid mei ſit judicii, ſine aliorum præjudicio libere proferam; ut eâdem via qua alii in his ſtudiis ſolent, inſiſtam; et ut erratis, ſi ego agnoſcam, tu ignoſcas." Thoſe who are the warmeſt admirers of our great poet, and moſt converſant with his writings, beſt know the difficulty of ſuch a work, and will be moſt ready to pardon its defects; remembering, that in all arduous undertakings it is eaſier to conceive than to accompliſh; that "the will is infinite, and the execution confined; that the deſire is boundleſs, and the act a ſlave to limit."

QUEEN-ANNE-STREET, EAST,
October 25, 1790.

[6] Camden.

Engraved by Tho. Holloway.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D. RICHARD FARMER, D.D.

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DR. JOHNSON'S

PREFACE*.

THAT praiſes are without reaſon laviſhed on the dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by thoſe, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the hereſies of paradox; or thoſe, who, being forced by diſappointment upon conſolatory expedients, are willing to hope from poſterity what the preſent age refuſes, and flatter themſelves that the regard, which is yet denied by envy, will be at laſt beſtowed by time.

Antiquity, like every other quality that attracts the notice of mankind, has undoubtedly votaries that reverence it, not from reaſon, but from prejudice. Some ſeem to admire indiſcriminately whatever has been long preſerved, without conſidering that time has ſometimes co-operated with chance; all perhaps are more willing to honour paſt than preſent excellence; and the mind contemplates genius through the ſhades of age, as the eye ſurveys the ſun through artificial opacity. The great contention of criticiſm is to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients. While an author is yet living, we eſtimate his powers by his worſt performance; and when he is dead, we rate them by his beſt.

To works, however, of which the excellence is not abſolute and definite, but gradual and comparative; to works not raiſed upon principles demonſtrative and ſcientifick, but appealing wholly to obſervation and experience, no other teſt can be applied than length of duration and continuance of eſteem. What mankind have long poſſeſſed they have often examined and compared,

* Firſt printed in 1765.

and if they perſiſt to value the poſſeſſion, it is becauſe frequent compariſons have confirmed opinion in its favour. As among the works of nature no man can properly call a river deep, or a mountain high, without the knowledge of many mountains, and many rivers; ſo in the productions of genius, nothing can be ſtiled excellent till it has been compared with other works of the ſame kind. Demonſtration immediately diſplays its power, and has nothing to hope or fear from the flux of years; but works tentative and experimental muſt be eſtimated by their proportion to the general and collective ability of man, as it is diſcovered in a long ſucceſſion of endeavours. Of the firſt building that was raiſed, it might be with certainty determined that it was round or ſquare; but whether it was ſpacious or lofty muſt have been referred to time. The Pythagorean ſcale of numbers was at once diſcovered to be perfect; but the poems of Homer we yet know not, to tranſcend the common limits of human intelligence, but by remarking, that nation after nation, and century after century, has been able to do little more than tranſpoſe his incidents, new name his characters, and paraphraſe his ſentiments.

The reverence due to writings that have long ſubſiſted ariſes therefore not from any credulous confidence in the ſuperior wiſdom of paſt ages, or gloomy perſuaſion of the degeneracy of mankind, but is the conſequence of acknowledged and indubitable poſitions, that what has been longeſt known has been moſt conſidered, and what is moſt conſidered is beſt underſtood.

The poet, of whoſe works I have undertaken the reviſion, may now begin to aſſume the dignity of an ancient, and claim the privilege of eſtabliſhed fame and preſcriptive veneration. He has long outlived his century, the term commonly fixed as the teſt of literary merit. Whatever advantages he might once derive from perſonal alluſions, local cuſtoms, or temporary opinions, have for many years been loſt; and every topick of merriment, or motive of ſorrow, which the modes of artificial life afforded him, now only obſcure the ſcenes which they once illuminated. The effects of favour and competi-

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tion are at an end; the tradition of his friendſhips and his enmities has periſhed; his works ſupport no opinion with arguments, nor ſupply any faction with invectives; they can neither indulge vanity, nor gratify malignity; but are read without any other reaſon than the deſire of pleaſure, and are therefore praiſed only as pleaſure is obtained; yet thus unaſſiſted by intereſt or paſſion, they have paſt through variations of taſte and changes of manners, and, as they devolved from one generation to another, have received new honours at every tranſmiſſion.

But becauſe human judgment, though it be gradually gaining upon certainty, never becomes infallible; and approbation, though long continued, may yet be only the approbation of prejudice or faſhion; it is proper to inquire, by what peculiarities of excellence Shakſpeare has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen.

Nothing can pleaſe many, and pleaſe long, but juſt repreſentations of general nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied. The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common ſatiety of life ſends us all in queſt; the pleaſures of ſudden wonder are ſoon exhauſted, and the mind can only repoſe on the ſtability of truth.

Shakſpeare is above all writers, at leaſt above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the cuſtoms of particular places, unpractiſed by the reſt of the world; by the peculiarities of ſtudies or profeſſions, which can operate but upon ſmall numbers; or by the accidents of tranſient faſhions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, ſuch as the world will always ſupply, and obſervation will always find. His perſons act and ſpeak by the influence of thoſe general paſſions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole ſyſtem of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets a character is too often an

 individual;

individual; in thoſe of Shakſpeare it is commonly a ſpecies.

It is from this wide extenſion of deſign that ſo much inſtruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakſpeare with practical axioms and domeſtick wiſdom. It was ſaid of Euripides, that every verſe was a precept; and it may be ſaid of Shakſpeare, that from his works may be collected a ſyſtem of civil and œconomical prudence. Yet his real power is not ſhewn in the ſplendor of particular paſſages, but by the progreſs of his fable, and the tenor of his dialogue; and he that tries to recommend him by ſelect quotations, will ſucceed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his houſe to ſale, carried a brick in his pocket as a ſpecimen.

It will not eaſily be imagined how much Shakſpeare excels in accommodating his ſentiments to real life, but by comparing him with other authors. It was obſerved of the ancient ſchools of declamation, that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the ſtudent diſqualified for the world, becauſe he found nothing there which he ſhould ever meet in any other place. The ſame remark may be applied to every ſtage but that of Shakſpeare. The theatre, when it is under any other direction, is peopled by ſuch characters as were never ſeen, converſing in a language which was never heard, upon topicks which will never ariſe in the commerce of mankind. But the dialogue of this author is often ſo evidently determined by the incident which produces it, and is purſued with ſo much eaſe and ſimplicity, that it ſeems ſcarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned by diligent ſelection out of common converſation, and common occurrences.

Upon every other ſtage the univerſal agent is love, by whoſe power all good and evil is diſtributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppoſitions of intereſt, and harraſs them with violence of deſires inconſiſtent with each other; to make them meet in rapture, and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical

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joy and outrageous ſorrow; to diſtreſs them as nothing human ever was diſtreſſed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered, is the buſineſs of a modern dramatiſt. For this, probability is violated, life is miſrepreſented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of many paſſions, and as it has no great influence upon the ſum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he ſaw before him. He knew, that any other paſſion, as it was, regular or exorbitant, was a cauſe of happineſs or calamity.

Characters thus ample and general were not eaſily diſcriminated and preſerved, yet perhaps no poet ever kept his perſonages more diſtinct from each other. I will not ſay with Pope, that every ſpeech may be aſſigned to the proper ſpeaker, becauſe many ſpeeches there are which have nothing characteriſtical; but, perhaps, though ſome may be equally adapted to every perſon, it will be difficult to find any that can be properly transferred from the preſent poſſeſſor to another claimant. The choice is right, when there is reaſon for choice.

Other dramatiſts can only gain attention by hyperbolical or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous romances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf; and he that ſhould form his expectations of human affairs from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. Shakſpeare has no heroes; his ſcenes are occupied only by men, who act and ſpeak as the reader thinks that he ſhould himſelf have ſpoken or acted on the ſame occaſion: even where the agency is ſupernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers diſguiſe the moſt natural paſſions and moſt frequent incidents; ſo that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world: Shakſpeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful; the event which he repreſents will not happen, but if it were poſſible, its effects would probably be ſuch as he has aſſigned; and it may be ſaid, that he has not only ſhewn human nature as it acts in real exigences,

but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be expoſed.

This therefore is the praiſe of Shakſpeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raiſe up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecſtaſies, by reading human ſentiments in human language; by ſcenes from which a hermit may eſtimate the tranſactions of the world, and a confeſſor predict the progreſs of the paſſions.

His adherence to general nature has expoſed him to the cenſure of criticks, who form their judgments upon narrower principles. Dennis and Rhymer think his Romans not ſufficiently Roman; and Voltaire cenſures his kings as not completely royal. Dennis is offended, that Menenius, a ſenator of Rome, ſhould play the buffoon; and Voltaire perhaps thinks decency violated when the Daniſh uſurper is repreſented as a drunkard. But Shakſpeare always makes nature predominate over accident; and if he preſerves the eſſential character, is not very careful of diſtinctions ſuperinduced and adventitious. His ſtory requires Romans or kings, but he thinks only on men. He knew that Rome, like every other city, had men of all diſpoſitions; and wanting a buffoon, he went into the ſenate-houſe for that which the ſenate-houſe would certainly have afforded him. He was inclined to ſhew an uſurper and a murderer not only odious, but deſpicable; he therefore added drunkenneſs to his other qualities, knowing that kings love wine like other men, and that wine exerts its natural power upon kings. Theſe are the petty cavils of petty minds; a poet overlooks the caſual diſtinction of country and condition, as a painter, ſatisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery.

The cenſure which he has incurred by mixing comick, and tragick ſcenes, as it extends to all his works, deſerves more conſideration. Let the fact be firſt ſtated, and then examined.

Shakſpeare's plays are not in the rigorous and critical ſenſe either tragedies or comedies, but compoſitions of a diſtinct kind; exhibiting the real ſtate of ſublunary nature,

ture, which partakes of good and evil, joy and ſorrow, mingled with endleſs variety of proportion and innumerable modes of combination; and expreſſing the courſe of the world, in which the loſs of one is the gain of another; in which, at the ſame time, the reveller is haſting to his wine, and the mourner burying his friend; in which the malignity of one is ſometimes defeated by the frolick of another; and many miſchiefs and many benefits are done and hindered without deſign.

Out of this chaos of mingled purpoſes and caſualties the ancient poets, according to the laws which cuſtom had preſcribed, ſelected ſome the crimes of men, and ſome their abſurdites; ſome the momentous viciſſitudes of life, and ſome the lighter occurrences; ſome the terrors of diſtreſs, and ſome the gayeties of proſperity. Thus roſe the two modes of imitation, known by the names of *tragedy* and *comedy*, compoſitions intended to promote different ends by contrary means, and conſidered as ſo little allied, that I do not recollect among the Greeks or Romans a ſingle writer who attempted both.

Shakſpeare has united the powers of exciting laughter and ſorrow not only in one mind, but in one compoſition. Almoſt all his plays are divided between ſerious and ludicrous characters, and, in the ſucceſſive evolutions of the deſign, ſometimes produce ſerioufneſs and ſorrow, and ſometimes levity and laughter.

That this is a practice contrary to the rules of criticiſm will be readily allowed; but there is always an appeal open from criticiſm to nature. The end of writing is to inſtruct; the end of poetry is to inſtruct by pleaſing. That the mingled drama may convey all the inſtruction of tragedy or comedy cannot be denied, becauſe it includes both in its alternations of exhibition, and approaches nearer than either to the appearance of life, by ſhewing how great machinations and ſlender deſigns may promote or obviate one another, and the high and the low co-operate in the general ſyſtem by unavoidable concatenation.

It is objected, that by this change of ſcenes the paſſions are interrupted in their progreſſion, and that the

principal event, being not advanced by a due gradation of preparatory incidents, wants at laſt the power to move, which conſtitutes the perfection of dramatick poetry. This reaſoning is ſo ſpecious, that it is received as true even by thoſe who in daily experience feel it to be falſe. The interchanges of mingled ſcenes ſeldom fail to produce the intended viciſſitudes of paſſion. Fiction cannot move ſo much, but that the attention may be eaſily transferred; and though it muſt be allowed that pleaſing melancholy be ſometimes interrupted by unwelcome levity, yet let it be conſidered likewiſe, that melancholy is often not pleaſing, and that the diſturbance of one man may be the relief of another; that different auditors have different habitudes; and that, upon the whole, all pleaſure conſiſts in variety.

The players, who in their edition divided our author's works into comedies, hiſtories, and tragedies, ſeem not to have diſtinguiſhed the three kinds, by any very exact or definite ideas.

An action which ended happily to the principal perſons, however ſerious or diſtreſsful through its intermediate incidents, in their opinion conſtituted a comedy. This idea of a comedy continued long amongſt us, and plays were written, which, by changing the cataſtrophe, were tragedies to-day, and comedies to-morrow.

Tragedy was not in thoſe times a poem of more general dignity or elevation than comedy; it required only a calamitous concluſion, with which the common criticiſm of that age was ſatisfied, whatever lighter pleaſure it afforded in its progreſs.

Hiſtory was a ſeries of actions, with no other than chronological ſucceſſion, independent on each other, and without any tendency to introduce or regulate the concluſion. It is not always very nicely diſtinguiſhed from tragedy. There is not much nearer approach to unity of action in the tragedy of *Antony and Cleopatra*, than in the hiſtory of *Richard the Second*. But a hiſtory might be continued through many plays; as it had no plan, it had no limits.

Through

Through all theſe denominations of the drama, Shakſpeare's mode of compoſition is the ſame; an interchange of ſerioufneſs and merriment, by which the mind is ſoftened at one time, and exhilarated at another. But whatever be his purpoſe, whether to gladden or depreſs, or to conduct the ſtory, without vehemence or emotion, through tracts of eaſy and familiar dialogue, he never fails to attain his purpoſe; as he commands us, we laugh or mourn, or ſit ſilent with quiet expectation, in tranquillity without indifference.

When Shakſpeare's plan is underſtood, moſt of the criticiſms of Rhymer and Voltaire vaniſh away. The play of *Hamlet* is opened, without impropriety, by two centinels; Iago bellows at Brabantio's window, without injury to the ſcheme of the play, though in terms which a modern audience would not eaſily endure; the character of Polonius is ſeaſonable and uſeful; and the Gravediggers themſelves may be heard with applauſe.

Shakſpeare engaged in dramatick poetry with the world open before him; the rules of the ancients were yet known to few; the publick judgment was unformed; he had no example of ſuch fame as might force him upon imitation, nor criticks of ſuch authority as might reſtrain his extravagance: he therefore indulged his natural diſpoſition, and his diſpoſition, as Rhymer has remarked, led him to comedy. In tragedy he often writes with great appearance of toil and ſtudy, what is written at laſt with little felicity; but in his comick ſcenes, he ſeems to produce without labour, what no labour can improve. In tragedy he is always ſtruggling after ſome occaſion to be comick, but in comedy he ſeems to repoſe, or to luxuriate, as in a mode of thinking congenial to his nature. In his tragick ſcenes there is always ſomething wanting, but his comedy often ſurpaſſes expectation or deſire. His comedy pleaſes by the thoughts and the language, and his tragedy for the greater part by incident and action. His tragedy ſeems to be ſkill, his comedy to be inſtinct.

The force of his comick ſcenes has ſuffered little diminution from the changes made by a century and a half,

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in manners or in words. As his perſonages act upon principles ariſing from genuine paſſion, very little modified by particular forms, their pleaſures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places; they are natural, and therefore durable; the adventitious peculiarities of perſonal habits, are only ſuperficial dies, bright and pleaſing for a little while, yet ſoon fading to a dim tint, without any remains of former luſtre; but the diſcriminations of true paſſion are the colours of nature; they pervade the whole maſs, and can only periſh with the body that exhibits them. The accidental compoſitions of heterogeneous modes are diſſolved by the chance which combined them; but the uniform ſimplicity of primitive qualities neither admits increaſe, nor ſuffers decay. The ſand heaped by one flood is ſcattered by another, but the rock always continues in its place. The ſtream of time, which is continually waſhing the diſſoluble fabricks of other poets, paſſes without injury by the adamant of Shakſpeare.

If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a ſtile which never becomes obſolete, a certain mode of phraſeology ſo conſonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its reſpective language, as to remain ſettled and unaltered; this ſtyle is probably to be ſought in the common intercourſe of life, among thoſe who ſpeak only to be underſtood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modiſh innovations, and the learned depart from eſtabliſhed forms of ſpeech, in hope of finding or making better; thoſe who wiſh for diſtinction forſake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a converſation above groſſneſs and below refinement, where propriety reſides, and where this poet ſeems to have gathered his comick dialogue. He is therefore more agreeable to the ears of the preſent age than any other author equally remote, and among his other excellencies deſerves to be ſtudied as one of the original maſters of our language.

Theſe obſervations are to be conſidered not as unexceptionably conſtant, but as containing general and predominant truth. Shakſpeare's familiar dialogue is affirmed

firmed to be ſmooth and clear, yet not wholly without ruggedneſs or difficulty; as a country may be eminently fruitful, though it has ſpots unfit for cultivation: his characters are praiſed as natural, though their ſentiments are ſometimes forced, and their actions improbable; as the earth upon the whole is ſpherical, though its ſurface is varied with protuberances and cavities.

Shakſpeare with his excellencies has likewiſe faults, and faults ſufficient to obſcure and overwhelm any other merit. I ſhall ſhew them in the proportion in which they appear to me, without envious malignity or ſuperſtitious veneration. No queſtion can be more innocently diſcuſſed than a dead poet's pretenſions to renown; and little regard is due to that bigotry which ſets candour higher than truth.

His firſt defect is that to which may be imputed moſt of the evil in books or in men. He ſacrifices virtue to convenience, and is ſo much more careful to pleaſe than to inſtruct, that he ſeems to write without any moral purpoſe. From his writings indeed a ſyſtem of ſocial duty may be ſelected, for he that thinks reaſonably muſt think morally; but his precepts and axioms drop caſually from him; he makes no juſt diſtribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to ſhew in the virtuous a diſapprobation of the wicked; he carries his perſons indifferently through right and wrong, and at the cloſe diſmiſſes them without further care, and leaves their examples to operate by chance. This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and juſtice is a virtue independent on time or place.

The plots are often ſo looſely formed, that a very ſlight conſideration may improve them, and ſo careleſsly purſued, that he ſeems not always fully to comprehend his own deſign. He omits opportunities of inſtructing or delighting, which the train of his ſtory ſeems to force upon him, and apparently rejects thoſe exhibitions which would be more affecting, for the ſake of thoſe which are more eaſy.

It

It may be obſerved, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himſelf near the end of his work, and in view of his reward, he ſhortened the labour to ſnatch the profit. He therefore remits his efforts where he ſhould moſt vigorouſly exert them, and his cataſtrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly repreſented.

He had no regard to diſtinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without ſcruple, the cuſtoms, inſtitutions, and opinions of another, at the expence not only of likelihood, but of poſſibility. Theſe faults Pope has endeavoured, with more zeal than judgment, to transfer to his imagined interpolators. We need not wonder to find Hector quoting Ariſtotle, when we ſee the loves of Theſeus and Hippolyta combined with the Gothick mythology of fairies. Shakſpeare, indeed, was not the only violator of chronology, for in the ſame age Sidney, who wanted not the advantages of learning, has, in his *Arcadia*, confounded the paſtoral with the feudal times, the days of innocence, quiet, and ſecurity, with thoſe of turbulence, violence, and adventure.

In his comick ſcenes he is ſeldom very ſucceſsful, when he engages his characters in reciprocations of ſmartneſs and conteſts of ſarcaſm; their jeſts are commonly groſs, and their pleaſantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners. Whether he repreſented the real converſation of his time is not eaſy to determine; the reign of Elizabeth is commonly ſuppoſed to have been a time of ſtatelineſs, formality, and reſerve, yet perhaps the relaxations of that ſeverity were not very elegant. There muſt, however, have been always ſome modes of gaiety preferable to others, and a writer ought to chuſe the beſt.

In tragedy his performance ſeems conſtantly to be worſe, as his labour is more. The effuſions of paſſion, which exigence forces out, are for the moſt part ſtriking and energetick; but whenever he ſolicits his invention, or ſtrains his faculties, the offſpring of his throes

throes is tumour, meanneſs, tedioufneſs, and obſcurity.

In narration he affects a diſproportionate pomp of diction, and a weariſome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few. Narration in dramatick poetry is naturally tedious, as it is unanimated and inactive, and obſtructs the progreſs of the action; it ſhould therefore always be rapid, and enlivened by frequent interruption. Shakſpeare found it an encumbrance, and inſtead of lightening it by brevity, endeavoured to recommend it by dignity and ſplendor.

His declamations or ſet ſpeeches are commonly cold and weak, for his power was the power of nature; when he endeavoured, like other tragick writers, to catch opportunities of amplification, and inſtead of inquiring what the occaſion demanded, to ſhew how much his ſtores of knowledge could ſupply, he ſeldom eſcapes without the pity or reſentment of his reader.

It is incident to him to be now and then entangled with an unwieldy ſentiment, which he cannot well expreſs, and will not reject; he ſtruggles with it a while, and if it continues ſtubborn, compriſes it in words ſuch as occur, and leaves it to be diſentangled and evolved by thoſe who have more leiſure to beſtow upon it.

Not that always where the language is intricate the thought is ſubtle, or the image always great where the line is bulky; the equality of words to things is very often neglected, and trivial ſentiments and vulgar ideas diſappoint the attention, to which they are recommended by ſonorous epithets and ſwelling figures.

But the admirers of this great poet have moſt reaſon to complain when he approaches neareſt to his higheſt excellence, and ſeems fully reſolved to ſink them in dejection, and mollify them with tender emotions by the fall of greatneſs, the danger of innocence, or the croſſes of love. What he does beſt, he ſoon ceaſes to do. He is not long ſoft and pathetick without ſome idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no ſooner begins to move, than he counteracts himſelf; and terror and pity,

as

as they are riſing in the mind, are checked and blaſted by ſudden frigidity.

A quibble is to Shakſpeare, what luminous vapours are to the traveller: he follows it at all adventures; it is ſure to lead him out of his way, and ſure to engulf him in the mire. It has ſome malignant power over his mind, and its faſcinations are irreſiſtible. Whatever be the dignity or profundity of his diſquiſition, whether he be enlarging knowledge or exalting affection, whether he be amuſing attention with incidents, or enchaining it in ſuſpenſe, let but a quibble ſpring up before him, and he leaves his work unfiniſhed. A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aſide from his career, or ſtoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him ſuch delight, that he was content to purchaſe it, by the ſacrifice of reaſon, propriety, and truth. A quibble was to him the fatal Cleopatra for which he loſt the world, and was content to loſe it.

It will be thought ſtrange, that, in enumerating the defects of this writer, I have not yet mentioned his neglect of the unities; his violation of thoſe laws which have been inſtituted and eſtabliſhed by the joint authority of poets and of criticks.

For his other deviations from the art of writing, I reſign him to critical juſtice, without making any other demand in his favour, than that which muſt be indulged to all human excellence; that his virtues be rated with his failings: but, from the cenſure which this irregularity may bring upon him, I ſhall, with due reverence to that learning which I muſt oppoſe, adventure to try how I can defend him.

His hiſtories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not ſubject to any of their laws; nothing more is neceſſary to all the praiſe which they expect, than that the changes of action be ſo prepared as to be underſtood, that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters conſiſtent, natural, and diſtinct. No other unity is intended, and therefore none is to be ſought.

In his other works he has well enough preſerved the unity of action. He has not, indeed, an intrigue regularly

larly perplexed and regularly unravelled; he does not endeavour to hide his deſign only to diſcover it, for this is ſeldom the order of real events, and Shakſpeare is the poet of nature: but his plan has commonly what Ariſtotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end; one event is concatenated with another, and the concluſion follows by eaſy conſequence. There are perhaps ſome incidents that might be ſpared, as in other poets there is much talk that only fills up time upon the ſtage; but the general ſyſtem makes gradual advances, and the end of the play is the end of expectation.

To the unities of time and place he has ſhewn no regard; and perhaps a nearer view of the principles on which they ſtand will diminiſh their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have very generally received, by diſcovering that they have given more trouble to the poet, than pleaſure to the auditor.

The neceſſity of obſerving the unities of time and place ariſes from the ſuppoſed neceſſity of making the drama credible. The critics hold it impoſſible, that an action of months or years can be poſſibly believed to paſs in three hours; or that the ſpectator can ſuppoſe himſelf to ſit in the theatre, while ambaſſadors go and return between diſtant kings, while armies are levied and towns beſieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they ſaw courting his miſtreſs, ſhall lament the untimely fall of his ſon. The mind revolts from evident falſehood, and fiction loſes its force when it departs from the reſemblance of reality.

From the narrow limitation of time neceſſarily ariſes the contraction of place. The ſpectator, who knows that he ſaw the firſt act at Alexandria, cannot ſuppoſe that he ſees the next at Rome, at a diſtance to which not the dragons of Medea could, in ſo ſhort a time, have tranſported him; he knows with certainty that he has not changed his place; and he knows that place cannot change itſelf; that what was a houſe cannot become a plain; that what was Thebes can never be Perſepolis.

Such

Such is the triumphant language with which a critick exults over the miſery of an irregular poet, and exults commonly without reſiſtance or reply. It is time therefore to tell him, by the authority of Shakſpeare, that he aſſumes, as an unqueſtionable principle, a poſition, which, while his breath is forming it into words, his underſtanding pronounces to be falſe. It is falſe, that any repreſentation is miſtaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a ſingle moment, was ever credited.

The objection ariſing from the impoſſibility of paſſing the firſt hour at Alexandria, and the next at Rome, ſuppoſes, that when the play opens the ſpectator really imagines himſelf at Alexandria, and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Antony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the ſtage at one time for the palace of the Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Deluſion, if deluſion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the ſpectator can be once perſuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cæſar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharſalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a ſtate of elevation above the reach of reaſon, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may deſpiſe the circumſcriptions of terreſtrial nature. There is no reaſon why a mind thus wandering in ecſtaſy ſhould count the clock, or why an hour ſhould not be a century in that calenture of the brains that can make the ſtage a field.

The truth is, that the ſpectators are always in their ſenſes, and know, from the firſt act to the laſt, that the ſtage is only a ſtage, and that the players are only players. They come to hear a certain number of lines recited with juſt geſture and elegant modulation. The lines relate to ſome action, and an action muſt be in ſome place; but the different actions that complete a ſtory may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the abſurdity of allowing that ſpace to repreſent firſt Athens, and then Sicily, which was always known

known to be neither Sicily nor Athens, but a modern theatre.

By ſuppoſition, as place is introduced, time may be extended; the time required by the fable elapſes for the moſt part between the acts; for, of ſo much of the action as is repreſented, the real and poetical duration is the ſame. If, in the firſt act, preparations for war againſt Mithridates are repreſented to be made in Rome, the event of the war may, without abſurdity, be repreſented, in the cataſtrophe, as happening in Pontus; we know that there is neither war, nor preparation for war; we know that we are neither in Rome nor Pontus; that neither Mithridates nor Lucullus are before us. The drama exhibits ſucceſſive imitations of ſucceſſive actions, and why may not the ſecond imitation repreſent an action that happened years after the firſt; if it be ſo connected with it, that nothing but time can be ſuppoſed to intervene. Time is, of all modes of exiſtence, moſt obſequious to the imagination; a lapſe of years is as eaſily conceived as a paſſage of hours. In contemplation we eaſily contract the time of real actions, and therefore willingly permit it to be contracted when we only ſee their imitation.

It will be aſked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited. It is credited with all the credit due to a drama. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a juſt picture of a real original; as repreſenting to the auditor what he would himſelf feel, if he were to do or ſuffer what is there feigned to be ſuffered or to be done. The reflection that ſtrikes the heart is not, that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourſelves may be expoſed. If there be any fallacy, it is not that we fancy the players, but that we fancy ourſelves unhappy for a moment; but we rather lament the poſſibility than ſuppoſe the preſence of miſery, as a mother weeps over her babe, when ſhe remembers that death may take it from her. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our conſciouſneſs of fiction; if we thought murders and treaſons real, they would please no more.

Imitations produce pain or pleaſure, not becauſe they are miſtaken for realities, but becauſe they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is recreated by a painted landſcape, the trees are not ſuppoſed capable to give us ſhade, or the fountains coolneſs; but we conſider, how we ſhould be pleaſed with ſuch fountains playing beſide us, and ſuch woods waving over us. We are agitated in reading the hiſtory of *Henry the Fifth*, yet no man takes his book for the field of Agincourt. A dramatick exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increaſe or diminiſh its effect. Familiar comedy is often more powerful on the theatre, than in the page; imperial tragedy is always leſs. The humour of Petruchio may be heightened by grimace; but what voice or what geſture can hope to add dignity or force to the ſoliloquy of Cato?

A play read, affects the mind like a play acted. It is therefore evident, that the action is not ſuppoſed to be real; and it follows, that between the acts a longer or ſhorter time may be allowed to paſs, and that no more account of ſpace or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may paſs in an hour the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakſpeare knew the unities, and rejected them by deſign, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impoſſible to decide, and uſeleſs to enquire. We may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that, when he roſe to notice, he did not want the counſels and admonitions of ſcholars and criticks, and that he at laſt deliberately perſiſted in a practice, which he might have begun by chance. As nothing is eſſential to the fable, but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place ariſe evidently from falſe aſſumptions, and, by circumſcribing the extent of the drama, leſſen its variety, I cannot think it much to be lamented, that they were not known by him, or not obſerved: nor, if ſuch another poet could ariſe, ſhould I very vehemently reproach him, that his firſt act paſſed at Venice, and his next in Cyprus. Such violations of rules merely poſitive, become the comprehenſive

comprehenſive genius of Shakſpeare, and ſuch cenſures are ſuitable to the minute and ſlender criticiſm of Voltaire:

Non uſque adeo permiſcuit imis
Longus ſumma dies, ut non, ſi voce Metelli
Serventur leges, malint a Cæſare tolli.

Yet when I ſpeak thus ſlightly of dramatick rules, I cannot but recollect how much wit and learning may be produced againſt me; before ſuch authorities I am afraid to ſtand, not that I think the preſent queſtion one of thoſe that are to be decided by mere authority, but becauſe it is to be ſuſpected, that theſe precepts have not been ſo eaſily received, but for better reaſons than I have yet been able to find. The reſult of my enquiries, in which it would be ludicrous to boaſt of impartiality, is, that the unities of time and place are not eſſential to a juſt drama, that though they may ſometimes conduce to pleaſure, they are always to be ſacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and inſtruction; and that a play, written with nice obſervation of critical rules, is to be contemplated as an elaborate curioſity, as the product of ſuperfluous and oſtentatious art, by which is ſhewn, rather what is poſſible, than what is neceſſary.

He that, without diminution of any other excellence, ſhall preſerve all the unities unbroken, deſerves the like applauſe with the architect, who ſhall diſplay all the orders of architecture in a citadel, without any deduction from its ſtrength; but the principal beauty of a citadel is to exclude the enemy; and the greateſt graces of a play are to copy nature, and inſtruct life.

Perhaps, what I have here not dogmatically but deliberately written, may recal the principles of the drama to a new examination. I am almoſt frighted at my own temerity; and when I eſtimate the fame and the ſtrength of thoſe that maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to ſink down in reverential ſilence; as Æneas withdrew from the defence of Troy, when he ſaw Neptune ſhaking the wall, and Juno heading the beſiegers.

Thoſe whom my arguments cannot perſuade to give their approbation to the judgment of Shakſpeare, will

eaſily, if they conſider the condition of his life, make ſome allowance for his ignorance.

Every man's performances, to be rightly eſtimated, muſt be compared with the ſtate of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities; and though to a reader a book be not worſe or better for the circumſtances of the author, yet as there is always a ſilent reference of human works to human abilities, and as the enquiry, how far man may extend his deſigns, or how high he may rate his native force, is of far greater dignity than in what rank we ſhall place any particular performance, curioſity is always buſy to diſcover the inſtruments, as well as to ſurvey the workmanſhip, to know how much is to be aſcribed to original powers, and how much to caſual and adventitious help. The palaces of Peru or Mexico were certainly mean and incommodious habitations, if compared to the houſes of European monarchs; yet who could forbear to view them with aſtoniſhment, who remembered that they were built without the uſe of iron?

The Engliſh nation, in the time of Shakſpeare, was yet ſtruggling to emerge from barbarity. The philology of Italy had been tranſplanted hither in the reign of Henry the Eighth; and the learned languages had been ſucceſsfully cultivated by Lilly, Linacre, and More; by Pole, Cheke, and Gardiner; and afterwards by Smith, Clerk, Haddon, and Aſcham. Greek was now taught to boys in the principal ſchools; and thoſe who united elegance with learning, read, with great diligence, the Italian and Spaniſh poets. But literature was yet confined to profeſſed ſcholars, or to men and women of high rank. The publick was groſs and dark; and to be able to read and write, was an accompliſhment ſtill valued for its rarity.

Nations, like individuals, have their infancy. A people newly awakened to literary curioſity, being yet unacquainted with the true ſtate of things, knows not how to judge of that which is propoſed as its reſemblance. Whatever is remote from common appearances is always welcome to vulgar, as to childiſh credulity; and

and of a country unenlightened by learning, the whole people is the vulgar. The ſtudy of thoſe who then aſpired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. *The Death of Arthur* was the favourite volume.

The mind, which has feaſted on the luxurious wonders of fiction, has no taſte of the inſipidity of truth. A play, which imitated only the common occurrences of the world, would, upon the admirers of *Palmerin* and *Guy of Warwick*, have made little impreſſion; he that wrote for ſuch an audience was under the neceſſity of looking round for ſtrange events and fabulous tranſactions, and that incredibility, by which maturer knowledge is offended, was the chief recommendation of writings, to unſkilful curioſity.

Our author's plots are generally borrowed from novels; and it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he choſe the moſt popular, ſuch as were read by many, and related by more; for his audience could not have followed him through the intricacies of the drama, had they not held the thread of the ſtory in their hands.

The ſtories, which we now find only in remoter authors, were in his time acceſſible and familiar. The fable of *As you like it*, which is ſuppoſed to be copied from *Chaucer's Gamelyn*, was a little pamphlet of thoſe times; and old Mr. Cibber remembered the tale of *Hamlet* in plain Engliſh proſe, which the criticks have now to ſeek in *Saxo Grammaticus*.

His Engliſh hiſtories he took from Engliſh chronicles and Engliſh ballads; and as the ancient writers were made known to his countrymen by verſions, they ſupplied him with new ſubjects; he dilated ſome of Plutarch's lives into plays, when they had been tranſlated by North.

His plots, whether hiſtorical or fabulous, are always crouded with incidents, by which the attention of a rude people was more eaſily caught than by ſentiment or argumentation; and ſuch is the power of the marvellous, even over thoſe who deſpiſe it, that every man finds his mind more ſtrongly ſeized by the tragedies of Shakſpeare

than of any other writer; others pleaſe us by particular ſpeeches, but he always makes us anxious for the event, and has perhaps excelled all but Homer in ſecuring the firſt purpoſe of a writer, by exciting reſtleſs and unquenchable curioſity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through.

The ſhows and buſtle with which his plays abound have the ſame original. As knowledge advances, pleaſure paſſes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye. Thoſe to whom our author's labours were exhibited had more ſkill in pomps or proceſſions than in poetical language, and perhaps wanted ſome viſible and diſcriminated events, as comments on the dialogue. He knew how he ſhould moſt pleaſe; and whether his practice is more agreeable to nature, or whether his example has prejudiced the nation, we ſtill find that on our ſtage ſomething muſt be done as well as ſaid, and inactive declamation is very coldly heard, however muſical or elegant, paſſionate or ſublime.

Voltaire expreſſes his wonder, that our author's extravagancies are endured by a nation, which has ſeen the tragedy of *Cato*. Let him be anſwered, that Addiſon ſpeaks the language of poets, and Shakſpeare, of men. We find in *Cato* innumerable beauties which enamour us of its author, but we ſee nothing that acquaints us with human ſentiments or human actions; we place it with the faireſt and the nobleſt progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but *Othello* is the vigorous and vivacious offſpring of obſervation impregnated by genius. *Cato* affords a ſplendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers juſt and noble ſentiments, in diction eaſy, elevated, and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the compoſition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of *Cato*, but we think on *Addiſon*.

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with ſhades, and ſcented with flowers; the compoſition of Shakſpeare is a foreſt, in which oaks extend their

branches, and pines tower in the air, interſperſed ſometimes with weeds and brambles, and ſometimes giving ſhelter to myrtles and to roſes; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endleſs diverſity. Other poets diſplay cabinets of precious rarities, minutely finiſhed, wrought into ſhape, and poliſhed into brightneſs. Shakſpeare opens a mine which contains gold and diamonds in unexhauſtible plenty, though clouded by incruſtations, debaſed by impurities, and mingled with a maſs of meaner minerals.

It has been much diſputed, whether Shakſpeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of ſcholaſtick education, the precepts of critical ſcience, and the examples of ancient authors.

There has always prevailed a tradition, that Shakſpeare wanted learning, that he had no regular education, nor much ſkill in the dead languages. Jonſon, his friend, affirms, that *he had ſmall Latin, and leſs Greek*; who, beſides that he had no imaginable temptation to falſehood, wrote at a time when the character and acquiſitions of Shakſpeare were known to multitudes. His evidence ought therefore to decide the controverſy, unleſs ſome teſtimony of equal force could be oppoſed.

Some have imagined, that they have diſcovered deep learning in many imitations of old writers; but the examples which I have known urged, were drawn from books tranſlated in his time; or were ſuch eaſy coincidences of thought, as will happen to all who conſider the ſame ſubjects; or ſuch remarks on life or axioms of morality as float in converſation, and are tranſmitted through the world in proverbial ſentences.

I have found it remarked, that, in this important ſentence, *Go, before, I'll follow*, we read a tranſlation of, *I prae, ſequar*. I have been told, that when Caliban, after a pleaſing dream, ſays, *I cry'd to ſleep again*, the author imitates Anacreon, who had, like every other man, the ſame wiſh on the ſame occaſion.

There are a few paſſages which may paſs for imitations, but ſo few, that the exception only confirms the

rule; he obtained them from accidental quotations, or by oral communication, and as he uſed what he had, would have uſed more if he had obtained it.

The *Comedy of Errors* is confeſſedly taken from the *Menæchmi* of *Plautus*; from the only play of Plautus which was then in Engliſh. What can be more probable, than that he who copied that, would have copied more; but that thoſe which were not tranſlated were inacceſſible?

Whether he knew the modern languages is uncertain. That his plays have ſome French ſcenes proves but little; he might eaſily procure them to be written, and probably, even though he had known the language in the common degree, he could not have written it without aſſiſtance. In the ſtory of *Romeo* and *Juliet* he is obſerved to have followed the Engliſh tranſlation, where it deviates from the Italian; but this on the other part proves nothing againſt his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himſelf, but what was known to his audience.

It is moſt likely that he had learned Latin ſufficiently to make him acquainted with conſtruction, but that he never advanced to an eaſy peruſal of the Roman authors. Concerning his ſkill in modern languages, I can find no ſufficient ground of determination; but as no imitations of French or Italian authors have been diſcovered, though the Italian poetry was then high in eſteem, I am inclined to believe, that he read little more than Engliſh, and choſe for his fables only ſuch tales as he found tranſlated.

That much knowledge is ſcattered over his works is very juſtly obſerved by Pope, but it is often ſuch knowledge as books did not ſupply. He that will underſtand Shakſpeare, muſt not be content to ſtudy him in the cloſet, he muſt look for his meaning ſometimes among the ſports of the field, and ſometimes among the manufactures of the ſhop.

There is however proof enough that he was a very diligent reader, nor was our language then ſo indigent of books, but that he might very liberally indulge his curioſity

riosity without excurſion into foreign literature. Many of the Roman authors were tranſlated, and ſome of the Greek; the Reformation had filled the kingdom with theological learning; moſt of the topicks of human diſquiſition had found Engliſh writers; and poetry had been cultivated, not only with diligence, but ſucceſs. This was a ſtock of knowledge ſufficient for a mind ſo capable of appropriating and improving it.

But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the Engliſh ſtage in a ſtate of the utmoſt rudeneſs; no eſſays either in tragedy or comedy had appeared, from which it could be diſcovered to what degree of delight either one or other might be carried. Neither character nor dialogue were yet underſtood. Shakſpeare may be truly ſaid to have introduced them both amongſt us, and in ſome of his happier ſcenes to have carried them both to the utmoſt height.

By what gradations of improvement he proceeded, is not eaſily known; for the chronology of his works is yet unſettled. Rowe is of opinion, that *perhaps we are not to look for his beginning, like thoſe of other writers, in his leaſt perfect works; art had ſo little, and nature ſo large a ſhare in what he did, that for ought I know,* ſays he, *the performances of his youth, as they were the moſt vigorous, were the beſt.* But the power of nature is only the power of uſing to any certain purpoſe the materials which diligence procures, or opportunity ſupplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and when images are collected by ſtudy and experience, can only aſſiſt in combining or applying them. Shakſpeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; and as he muſt increaſe his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquiſition, he, like them, grew wiſer as he grew older, could diſplay life better, as he knew it more, and inſtruct with more efficacy, as he was himſelf more amply inſtructed.

There is a vigilance of obſervation and accuracy of diſtinction which books and precepts cannot confer; from this almoſt all original and native excellence proceeds. Shakſpeare muſt have looked upon mankind with per-

perſpicacity, in the higheſt degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diverſify them only by the accidental appendages of preſent manners; the dreſs is a little varied, but the body is the ſame. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in Engliſh, and perhaps not many in other modern languages, which ſhewed life in its native colours.

The conteſt about the original benevolence or malignity of man had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyſe the mind, to trace the paſſions to their ſources, to unfold the ſeminal principles of vice and virtue, or ſound the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All thoſe enquiries, which from that time that human nature became the faſhionable ſtudy, have been made ſometimes with nice diſcernment, but often with idle ſubtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales, with which the infancy of learning was ſatisfied, exhibited only the ſuperficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the cauſes, and were formed for ſuch as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be ſtudied in the cloſet; he that would know the world, was under the neceſſity of gleaning his own remarks, by mingling as he could in its buſineſs and amuſements.

Boyle congratulated himſelf upon his high birth, becauſe it favoured his curioſity, by facilitating his acceſs. Shakſpeare had no ſuch advantage; he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works of genius and learning have been performed in ſtates of life that appear very little favourable to thought or to enquiry; ſo many, that he who conſiders them is inclined to think that he ſees enterprize and perſeverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vaniſh before them. The genius of Shakſpeare was not to be depreſſed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow converſation to which men in want are inevitably condemned;

condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were ſhaken from his mind, *as dew-drops from a lion's mane.*

Though he had ſo many difficulties to encounter, and ſo little aſſiſtance to ſurmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many caſts of native diſpoſitions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice diſtinctions; and to ſhew them in full view by proper combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has been himſelf imitated by all ſucceeding writers; and it may be doubted, whether from all his ſucceſſors more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact ſurveyor of the inanimate world; his deſcriptions have always ſome peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exiſt. It may be obſerved, that the oldeſt poets of many nations preſerve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a ſhort celebrity, ſink into oblivion. The firſt, whoever they be, muſt take their ſentiments and deſcriptions immediately from knowledge; the reſemblance is therefore juſt, their deſcriptions are verified by every eye, and their ſentiments acknowledged by every breaſt. Thoſe whom their fame invites to the ſame ſtudies, copy partly them, and partly nature, till the books of one age gain ſuch authority, as to ſtand in the place of nature to another, and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at laſt capricious and caſual. Shakſpeare, whether life or nature be his ſubject, ſhews plainly, that he has ſeen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or diſtorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his repreſentations to be juſt, and the learned ſee that they are complete.

Perhaps it would not be eaſy to find any author, except Homer, who invented ſo much as Shakſpeare, who ſo much advanced the ſtudies which he cultivated, or effuſed ſo much novelty upon his age or country. The form,

form, the characters, the language, and the ſhows of the Engliſh drama are his. *He ſeems*, ſays Dennis, *to have been the very original of our Engliſh tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of blank verſe, diverſified often by diſſyllable and triſſyllable terminations. For the diverſity diſtinguiſhes it from heroick harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common uſe makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verſe we make when we are writing proſe; we make ſuch verſe in common converſation.*

I know not whether this praiſe is rigorouſly juſt. The diſſyllable termination, which the critick rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found, though, I think, not in *Gorboduc*, which is confeſſedly before our author; yet in *Hieronymo* *, of which the date is not certain, but which there is reaſon to believe at leaſt as old as his earlieſt plays. This however is certain, that he is the firſt who taught either tragedy or comedy to pleaſe, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are ſought becauſe they are ſcarce, and would not have been ſcarce, had they been much eſteemed.

To him we muſt aſcribe the praiſe, unleſs Spenſer may divide it with him, of having firſt diſcovered to how much ſmoothneſs and harmony the Engliſh language could be ſoftened. He has ſpeeches, perhaps ſometimes ſcenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours indeed commonly to ſtrike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpoſe better, than when he tries to ſooth by ſoftneſs.

Yet it muſt be at laſt confeſſed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes ſomething to us; that, if much of his praiſe is paid by perception and judgment, much is likewiſe given by cuſtom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformi-

* It appears from the induction of Ben Jonſon's *Bartholomew Fair* to have been acted before the year 1590. STEVENS.

ties,

ties, and endure in him what we ſhould in another loath or deſpiſe. If we endured without praiſing, reſpect for the father of our drama might excuſe us; but I have ſeen, in the book of ſome modern critick, a collection of anomalies, which ſhew that he has corrupted language by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has ſcenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the concluſion. I am indeed far from thinking, that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were ſuch as would ſatisfy the audience, they ſatisfied the writer. It is ſeldom that authors, though more ſtudious of fame than Shakſpeare, riſe much above the ſtandard of their own age; to add a little to what is beſt will always be ſufficient for preſent praiſe, and thoſe who find themſelves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiaſts, and to ſpare the labour of contending with themſelves.

It does not appear, that Shakſpeare thought his works worthy of poſterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any further proſpect, than of preſent popularity and preſent profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he ſolicited no addition of honour from the reader. He therefore made no ſcruple to repeat the ſame jeſts in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the ſame knot of perplexity, which may be at leaſt forgiven him, by thoſe who recollect, that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a maſk, by a deception, which perhaps never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careleſs was this great poet of future fame, that, though he retired to eaſe and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before he could be diſguſted with fatigue, or diſabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor deſired to reſcue thoſe that had been already publiſhed from the depravations that obſcured them, or ſecure to the reſt a better deſtiny,

deſtiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine ſtate.

Of the plays which bear the name of Shakſpeare in the late editions, the greater part were not publiſhed till about ſeven years after his death, and the few which appeared in his life are apparently thruſt into the world without the care of the author, and therefore probably without his knowledge.

Of all the publiſhers, clandeſtine or profeſſed, the negligence and unſkilfulneſs has by the late reviſers been ſufficiently ſhewn. The faults of all are indeed numerous and groſs, and have not only corrupted many paſſages perhaps beyond recovery, but have brought others into ſuſpicion, which are only obſcured by obſolete phraſeology, or by the writer's unſkilfulneſs and affectation. To alter is more eaſy than to explain, and temerity is a more common quality than diligence. Thoſe who ſaw that they muſt employ conjecture to a certain degree, were willing to indulge it a little further. Had the author publiſhed his own works, we ſhould have ſat quietly down to diſentangle his intricacies, and clear his obſcurities; but now we tear what we cannot looſe, and eject what we happen not to underſtand.

The faults are more than could have happened without the concurrence of many cauſes. The ſtyle of Shakſpeare was in itſelf ungrammatical, perplexed, and obſcure; his works were tranſcribed for the players by thoſe who may be ſuppoſed to have ſeldom underſtood them; they were tranſmitted by copiers equally unſkilful, who ſtill multiplied errors; they were perhaps ſometimes mutilated by the actors, for the ſake of ſhortening the ſpeeches; and were at laſt printed without correction of the preſs.

In this ſtate they remained, not as Dr. Warburton ſuppoſes, becauſe they were unregarded, but becauſe the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our anceſtors were accuſtomed to ſo much negligence of Engliſh printers, that they could very patiently endure it. At laſt an edition was undertaken by Rowe; not

not becauſe a poet was to be publiſhed by a poet, for Rowe ſeems to have thought very little on correction or explanation, but that our author's works might appear like thoſe of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and recommendatory preface. Rowe has been clamorouſly blamed for not performing what he did not undertake, and it is time that juſtice be done him, by confeſſing, that though he ſeems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errors, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his ſucceſſors have received without acknowledgment, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages with cenſures of the ſtupidity by which the faults were committed, with diſplays of the abſurdities which they involved, with oſtentatious expoſitions of the new reading, and ſelf-congratulations on the happineſs of diſcovering it.

As of the other editors, I have preſerved the prefaces, I have likewiſe borrowed the author's life from Rowe, though not written with much elegance or ſpirit; it relates however what is now to be known, and therefore deſerves to paſs through all ſucceeding publications.

The nation had been for many years content enough with Mr. Rowe's performance, when Mr. Pope made them acquainted with the true ſtate of Shakſpeare's text, ſhewed that it was extremely corrupt, and gave reaſon to hope that there were means of reforming it. He collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and reſtored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticiſm, he rejected whatever he diſliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.

I know not why he is commended by Dr. Warburton for diſtinguiſhing the genuine from the ſpurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received, were given by Hemings and Condel, the firſt editors; and thoſe which he rejected, though, according to the licentiouſneſs of the preſs in thoſe times, they were printed during Shakſpeare's life, with

with his name, had been omitted by his friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664, from which they were copied by the later printers.

This is a work which Pope ſeems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to ſuppreſs his contempt of *the dull duty of an editor*. He underſtood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is indeed dull, yet, like other tedious taſks, is very neceſſary; but an emendatory critick would ill diſcharge his duty, without qualities very different from dulneſs. In peruſing a corrupted piece, he muſt have before him all poſſibilities of meaning, with all poſſibilities of expreſſion. Such muſt be his comprehenſion of thought, and ſuch his copiouſneſs of language. Out of many readings poſſible, he muſt be able to ſelect that which beſt ſuits with the ſtate, opinions, and modes of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular caſt of thought, and turn of expreſſion. Such muſt be his knowledge, and ſuch his taſte. Conjectural criticiſm demands more than humanity poſſeſſes, and he that exerciſes it with moſt praiſe, has very frequent need of indulgence. Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.

Confidence is the common conſequence of ſucceſs. They whoſe excellence of any kind has been loudly celebrated, are ready to conclude, that their powers are univerſal. Pope's edition fell below his own expectations, and he was ſo much offended, when he was found to have left any thing for others to do, that he paſſed the latter part of his life in a ſtate of hoſtility with verbal criticiſm.

I have retained all his notes, that no fragment of ſo great a writer may be loſt; his preface, valuable alike for elegance of compoſition and juſtneſs of remark, and containing a general criticiſm on his author, ſo extenſive that little can be added, and ſo exact, that little can be diſputed, every editor has an intereſt to ſuppreſs, but that every reader would demand its inſertion.

Pope

Pope was ſucceeded by Theobald, a man of narrow comprehenſion, and ſmall acquiſitions, with no native and intrinſic ſplendor of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous for minute accuracy, and not negligent in purſuing it. He collated the ancient copies, and rectified many errors. A man ſo anxiouſly ſcrupulous might have been expected to do more, but what little he did was commonly right.

In his reports of copies and editions he is not to be truſted without examination. He ſpeaks ſometimes indefinitely of copies, when he has only one. In his enumeration of editions, he mentions the two firſt folios as of high, and the third folio as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the firſt is equivalent to all others, and that the reſt only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting thoſe diverſities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards uſed only the firſt.

Of his notes I have generally retained thoſe which he retained himſelf in his ſecond edition, except when they were confuted by ſubſequent annotators, or were too minute to merit preſervation. I have ſometimes adopted his reſtoration of a comma, without inſerting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himſelf for his atchievement. The exuberant excreſcence of his diction I have often lopped, his triumphant exultations over Pope and Rowe I have ſometimes ſuppreſſed, and his contemptible oſtentation I have frequently concealed; but I have in ſome places ſhewn him, as he would have ſhewn himſelf, for the reader's diverſion, that the inflated emptineſs of ſome notes may juſtify or excuſe the contraction of the reſt.

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithleſs, thus petulant and oſtentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy, has eſcaped, and eſcaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world ſupport thoſe who ſolicit favour, againſt thoſe who command reverence; and ſo eaſily is he praiſed, whom no man can envy.

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for ſuch ſtudies. He had, what is the firſt requiſite to emendatory criticiſm, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately diſcovered, and that dexterity of intellect which diſpatches its work by the eaſieſt means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with cuſtoms, opinions, and traditions, ſeems to have been large; and he is often learned without ſhew. He ſeldom paſſes what he does not underſtand, without an attempt to find or to make a meaning, and ſometimes haſtily makes what a little more attention would have found. He is ſolicitous to reduce to grammar, what he could not be ſure that his author intended to be grammatical. Shakſpeare regarded more the ſeries of ideas, than of words; and his language, not being deſigned for the reader's deſk, was *all that he deſired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning* to the audience.

Hanmer's care of the metre has been too violently cenſured. He found the meaſure reformed in ſo many paſſages, by the ſilent labours of ſome editors, with the ſilent acquieſcence of the reſt, that he thought himſelf allowed to extend a little further the licence, which had already been carried ſo far without reprehenſion; and of his corrections in general, it muſt be confeſſed, that they are often juſt, and made commonly with the leaſt poſſible violation of the text.

But, by inſerting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page, without any notice of varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predeceſſors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence indeed, both in himſelf and others, was too great; he ſuppoſes all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he ſeems not to ſuſpect a critick of fallibility, and it was but reaſonable that he ſhould claim what he ſo liberally granted.

As he never writes without careful enquiry and diligent conſideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wiſh for more.

Of the laſt editor it is more difficult to ſpeak. Reſpect is due to high place, tenderneſs to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but he cannot be juſtly offended at that liberty of which he has himſelf ſo frequently given an example, nor very ſolicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have conſidered as part of his ſerious employments, and which, I ſuppoſe, ſince the ardor of compoſition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effuſions.

The original and predominant error of his commentary, is acquieſcence in his firſt thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by conſciouſneſs of quick diſcernment; and that confidence which preſumes to do, by ſurveying the ſurface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom. His notes exhibit ſometimes perverſe interpretations, and ſometimes improbable conjectures; he at one time gives the author more profundity of meaning than the ſentence admits, and at another diſcovers abſurdities, where the ſenſe is plain to every other reader. But his emendations are likewiſe often happy and juſt; and his interpretation of obſcure paſſages learned and ſagacious.

Of his notes, I have commonly rejected thoſe, againſt which the general voice of the publick has exclaimed, or which their own incongruity immediately condemns, and which, I ſuppoſe the author himſelf would deſire to be forgotten. Of the reſt, to part I have given the higheſt approbation, by inſerting the offered reading in the text; part I have left to the judgment of the reader, as doubtful, though ſpecious; and part I have cenſured without reſerve, but I am ſure without bitterneſs of malice, and, I hope, without wantonneſs of inſult.

It is no pleaſure to me, in reviſing my volumes, to obſerve how much paper is waſted in confutation. Whoever conſiders the revolutions of learning, and the various queſtions of greater or leſs importance, upon which wit and reaſon have exerciſed their powers, muſt lament the unſucceſsfulneſs of enquiry, and the ſlow advances of truth, when he reflects, that great part of the labour of every writer is only the deſtruction of thoſe that went

before him. The firſt care of the builder of a new ſyſtem, is to demoliſh the fabricks which are ſtanding. The chief deſire of him that comments an author, is to ſhew how much other commentators have corrupted and obſcured him. The opinions prevalent in one age, as truths above the reach of controverſy, are confuted and rejected in another, and riſe again to reception in remoter times. Thus the human mind is kept in motion without progreſs. Thus ſometimes truth and error, and ſometimes contrarieties of error, take each other's place by reciprocal invaſion. The tide of ſeeming knowledge which is poured over one generation, retires and leaves another naked and barren; the ſudden meteors of intelligence, which for a while appear to ſhoot their beams into the regions of obſcurity, on a ſudden withdraw their luſtre, and leave mortals again to grope their way.

Theſe elevations and depreſſions of renown, and the contradictions to which all improvers of knowledge muſt for ever be expoſed, ſince they are not eſcaped by the higheſt and brighteſt of mankind, may ſurely be endured with patience by criticks and annotators, who can rank themſelves but as the ſatellites of their authors. How canſt thou beg for life, ſays Homer's hero to his captive, when thou knoweſt that thou art now to ſuffer only what muſt another day be ſuffered by Achilles?

Dr. Warburton had a name ſufficient to confer celebrity on thoſe who could exalt themſelves into antagoniſts, and his notes have raiſed a clamour too loud to be diſtinct. His chief aſſailants are the authors of *The canons of criticiſm*, and of *The reviſal of Shakſpeare's text*; of whom one ridicules his errors with airy petulance, ſuitable enough to the levity of the controverſy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to juſtice an aſſaſſin or incendiary. The one ſtings like a fly, ſucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more; the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations and gangrene behind him. When I think on one, with his confederates, I remember the danger of Coriolanus, who was afraid that *girls with*

ſpits, and boys with ſtones, ſhould ſlay him in puny battle; when the other croſſes my imagination, I remember the prodigy in *Macbeth*

A falcon tow'ring in his pride of place,
Was by a mouſing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Let me however do them juſtice. One is a wit, and one a ſcholar *. They have both ſhewn acuteneſs ſufficient in the diſcovery of faults, and have both advanced ſome probable interpretations of obſcure paſſages; but when they aſpire to conjecture and emendation, it appears how falſely we all eſtimate our own abilities, and the little which they have been able to perform might have taught them more candour to the endeavours of others.

Before Dr. Warburton's edition, *Critical obſervations on Shakſpeare* had been publiſhed by Mr. Upton †, a man ſkilled in languages, and acquainted with books, but who ſeems to have had no great vigour of genius or nicety of taſte. Many of his explanations are curious and uſeful, but he likewiſe, though he profeſſed to oppoſe the licentious confidence of editors, and adhere to the old copies, is unable to reſtrain the rage of emendation, though his ardour is ill ſeconded by his ſkill. Every cold empirick, when his heart is expanded by a ſucceſsful experiment, ſwells into a theoriſt, and the laborious collator at ſome unlucky moment frolicks in conjecture.

Critical, hiſtorical, and explanatory notes have been likewiſe publiſhed upon Shakſpeare by Dr. Grey, whoſe diligent peruſal of the old Engliſh writers has enabled him to make ſome uſeful obſervations. What he under-

* It is extraordinary that this gentleman ſhould attempt ſo voluminous a work, as *the Reviſal of Shakſpeare's text*, when he tells us in his preface, "he was not ſo fortunate as to be furniſhed with either "of the folio editions, much leſs any of the ancient quartos: and "even Sir Thomas Hanmer's performance was known to him only by "Dr. Warburton's repreſentation." FARMER.

† Republiſhed by him in 1748, after Dr. Warburton's edition, with alterations, &c. STEEVENS.

took he has well enough performed, but as he neither attempts judicial nor emendatory criticiſm, he employs rather his memory than his ſagacity. It were to be wiſhed that all would endeavour to imitate his modeſty, who have not been able to ſurpaſs his knowledge.

I can ſay with great ſincerity of all my predeceſſors, what I hope will hereafter be ſaid of me, that not one has left Shakſpeare without improvement, nor is there one to whom I have not been indebted for aſſiſtance and information. Whatever I have taken from them, it was my intention to refer to its original author, and it is certain, that what I have not given to another, I believed when I wrote it to be my own. In ſome perhaps I have been anticipated; but if I am ever found to encroach upon the remarks of any other commentator, I am willing that the honour, be it more or leſs, ſhould be tranſferred to the firſt claimant, for his right, and his alone, ſtands above diſpute; the ſecond can prove his pretenſions only to himſelf, nor can himſelf always diſtinguiſh invention, with ſufficient certainty, from recollection.

They have all been treated by me with candour, which they have not been careful of obſerving to one another. It is not eaſy to diſcover from what cauſe the acrimony of a ſcholiaſt can naturally proceed. The ſubjects to be diſcuſſed by him are of very ſmall importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the intereſt of ſect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a paſſage, ſeem to be queſtions that might exerciſe the wit, without engaging the paſſions. But whether it be, that *ſmall things make mean men proud*, and vanity catches ſmall occaſions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in thoſe that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentaries a ſpontaneous ſtrain of invective and contempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the moſt furious controvertiſt in politicks againſt thoſe whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightneſs of the matter may conduce to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be inveſtigated

gated is ſo near to inexiſtence, as to eſcape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: that to which all would be indifferent in its original ſtate, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has indeed great temptations to ſupply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a ſpacious ſurface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to ſpirit.

The notes which I have borrowed or written are either illuſtrative, by which difficulties are explained; or judicial, by which faults and beauties are remarked; or emendatory, by which depravations are corrected.

The explanations tranſcribed from others, if I do not ſubjoin any other interpretation, I ſuppoſe commonly to be right, at leaſt I intend by acquieſcence to confeſs, that I have nothing better to propoſe.

After the labours of all the editors, I found many paſſages which appeared to me likely to obſtruct the greater number of readers, and thought it my duty to facilitate their paſſage. It is impoſſible for an expoſitor not to write too little for ſome, and too much for others. He can only judge what is neceſſary by his own experience; and how long ſoever he may deliberate, will at laſt explain many lines which the learned will think impoſſible to be miſtaken, and omit many for which the ignorant will want his help. Theſe are cenſures merely relative, and muſt be quietly endured. I have endeavoured to be neither ſuperfluouſly copious, nor ſcrupulouſly reſerved, and hope that I have made my author's meaning acceſſible to many, who before were frighted from peruſing him, and contributed ſomething to the publick, by diffuſing innocent and rational pleaſure.

The complete explanation of an author not ſyſtematick and conſequential, but deſultory and vagrant, abounding in *critical alluſions and light hints*, is not to be expected from any ſingle ſcholiaſt. All perſonal reflections, when names are ſuppreſſed, muſt be in a few years irrecoverably obliterated; and cuſtoms, too minute to attract the notice of law, ſuch as modes of dreſs, formalities of converſation, rules of viſits, diſpoſition of furniture, and

practices of ceremony, which naturally find places in familiar dialogue, are ſo fugitive and unſubſtantial, that they are not eaſily retained or recovered. What can be known will be collected by chance, from the receſſes of obſcure and obſolete papers, peruſed commonly with ſome other view. Of this knowledge every man has ſome, and none has much; but when an author has engaged the publick attention, thoſe who can add any thing to his illuſtration, communicate their diſcoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.

To time I have been obliged to reſign many paſſages, which, though I did not underſtand them, will perhaps hereafter be explained, having, I hope, illuſtrated ſome, which others have neglected or miſtaken, ſometimes by ſhort remarks, or marginal directions, ſuch as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious than the matter will ſeem to deſerve; but that which is moſt difficult is not always moſt important, and to an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obſcured.

The poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to obſerve. Some plays have more, and ſome fewer judicial obſervations, not in proportion to their difference of merit, but becauſe I gave this part of my deſign to chance and to caprice. The reader, I believe, is ſeldom pleaſed to find his opinion anticipated; it is natural to delight more in what we find or make, than in what we receive. Judgment, like other faculties, is improved by practice, and its advancement is hindered by ſubmiſſion to dictatorial deciſions, as the memory grows torpid by the uſe of a table-book. Some initiation is however neceſſary; of all ſkill, part is infuſed by precept, and part is obtained by habit; I have therefore ſhewn ſo much as may enable the candidate of criticiſm to diſcover the reſt.

To the end of moſt plays I have added ſhort ſtrictures, containing a general cenſure of faults, or praiſe of excellence; in which I know not how much I have concurred with the current opinion; but I have not, by any affectation of ſingularity, deviated from it. Nothing is minutely

minutely and particularly examined, and therefore it is to be ſuppoſed, that in the plays which are condemned there is much to be praiſed, and in theſe which are praiſed much to be condemned.

The part of criticiſm in which the whole ſucceſſion of editors has laboured with the greateſt diligence, which has occaſioned the moſt arrogant oſtentation, and excited the keeneſt acrimony, is the emendation of corrupted paſſages, to which the publick attention having been firſt drawn by the violence of the contention between Pope and Theobald, has been continued by the perſecution, which, with a kind of conſpiracy, has been ſince raiſed againſt all the publiſhers of Shakſpeare.

That many paſſages have paſſed in a ſtate of depravation through all the editions is indubitably certain; of theſe the reſtoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or ſagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is ſafe and eaſy, the conjecturer's perilous and difficult. Yet as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril muſt not be avoided, nor the difficulty refuſed.

Of the readings which this emulation of amendment has hitherto produced, ſome from the labours of every publiſher I have advanced into the text; thoſe are to be conſidered as in my opinion ſufficiently ſupported; ſome I have rejected without mention, as evidently erroneous; ſome I have left in the notes without cenſure or approbation, as reſting in equipoiſe between objection and defence; and ſome, which ſeemed ſpecious but not right, I have inſerted with a ſubſequent animadverſion.

Having claſſed the obſervations of others, I was at laſt to try what I could ſubſtitute for their miſtakes, and how I could ſupply their omiſſions. I collated ſuch copies as I could procure, and wiſhed for more, but have not found the collectors of theſe rarities very communicative. Of the editions which chance or kindneſs put into my hands I have given an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neglecting what I had not the power to do.

By

By examining the old copies, I ſoon found that the later publiſhers, with all their boaſts of diligence, ſuffered many paſſages to ſtand unauthorized, and contented themſelves with Rowe's regulation of the text, even where they knew it to be arbitrary, and with a little conſideration might have found it to be wrong. Some of theſe alterations are only the ejection of a word for one that appeared to him more elegant or more intelligible. Theſe corruptions I have often ſilently rectified; for the hiſtory of our language, and the true force of our words, can only be preſerved, by keeping the text of authors free from adulteration. Others, and thoſe very frequent, ſmoothed the cadence, or regulated the meaſure; on theſe I have not exerciſed the ſame rigour; if only a word was tranſpoſed, or a particle inſerted or omitted, I have ſometimes ſuffered the line to ſtand; for the inconſtancy of the copies is ſuch, as that ſome liberties may be eaſily permitted. But this practice I have not ſuffered to proceed far, having reſtored the primitive diction wherever it could for any reaſon be preferred.

The emendations, which compariſon of copies ſupplied, I have inſerted in the text; ſometimes, where the improvement was ſlight, without notice, and ſometimes with an account of the reaſons of the change.

Conjecture, though it be ſometimes unavoidable, I have not wantonly nor licentiouſly indulged. It has been my ſettled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be diſturbed for the ſake of elegance, perſpicuity, or mere improvement of the ſenſe. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the firſt publiſhers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right, than we who read it only by imagination. But it is evident that they have often made ſtrange miſtakes by ignorance or negligence, and that therefore ſomething may be properly attempted by criticiſm, keeping the middle way between preſumption and timidity.

Such criticiſm I have attempted to practiſe, and where any paſſage appeared inextricably perplexed, have endeavoured

endeavoured to diſcover how it may be recalled to ſenſe, with leaſt violence. But my firſt labour is, always to turn the old text on every ſide, and try if there be any interſtice, through which light can find its way; nor would Huetius himſelf condemn me, as refuſing the trouble of reſearch, for the ambition of alteration. In this modeſt induſtry I have not been unſucceſsful. I have reſcued many lines from the violations of temerity, and ſecured many ſcenes from the inroads of correction. I have adopted the Roman ſentiment, that it is more honourable to ſave a citizen, than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.

I have preſerved the common diſtribution of the plays into acts, though I believe it to be in almoſt all the plays void of authority. Some of thoſe which are divided in the later editions have no diviſion in the firſt folio, and ſome that are divided in the folio have no diviſion in the preceding copies. The ſettled mode of the theatre requires four intervals in the play, but few, if any, of our author's compoſitions can be properly diſtributed in that manner. An act is ſo much of the drama as paſſes without intervention of time, or change of place. A pauſe makes a new act. In every real, and therefore in every imitative action, the intervals may be more or fewer, the reſtriction of five acts being accidental and arbitrary. This Shakſpeare knew, and this he practiſed; his plays were written, and at firſt printed in one unbroken continuity, and ought now to be exhibited with ſhort pauſes, interpoſed as often as the ſcene is changed, or any conſiderable time is required to paſs. This method would at once quell a thouſand abſurdities.

In reſtoring the author's works to their integrity, I have conſidered the punctuation as wholly in my power; for what could be their care of colons and commas, who corrupted words and ſentences. Whatever could be done by adjuſting points, is therefore ſilently performed, in ſome plays, with much diligence, in others with leſs; it is hard to keep a buſy eye ſteadily fixed upon evaneſcent atoms, or a diſcurſive mind upon evaneſcent truth.

The

The ſame liberty has been taken with a few particles, or other words of ſlight effect. I have ſometimes inſerted or omitted them without notice. I have done that ſometimes, which the other editors have done always, and which indeed the ſtate of the text may ſufficiently juſtify.

The greater part of readers, inſtead of blaming us for paſſing trifles, will wonder that on mere trifles ſo much labour is expended, with ſuch importance of debate, and ſuch ſolemnity of diction. To theſe I anſwer with confidence, that they are judging of an art which they do not underſtand; yet cannot much reproach them with their ignorance, nor promiſe that they would become in general, by learning criticiſm, more uſeful, happier, or wiſer.

As I practiſed conjecture more, I learned to truſt it leſs; and after I had printed a few plays, reſolved to inſert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myſelf, for every day encreaſes my doubt of my emendations.

Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it muſt not be conſidered as very reprehenſible, if I have ſuffered it to play ſome freaks in its own dominion. There is no danger in conjecture, if it be propoſed as conjecture; and while the text remains uninjured, thoſe changes may be ſafely offered, which are not conſidered even by him that offers them as neceſſary or ſafe.

If my readings are of little value, they have not been oſtentatiouſly diſplayed or importunately obtruded. I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, firſt by railing at the ſtupidity, negligence, ignorance, and aſinine taſteleſſneſs of the former editors, and ſhewing, from all that goes before and all that follows, the inelegance and abſurdity of the old reading; then by propoſing ſomething, which to ſuperficial readers would ſeem ſpecious, but which the editor rejects with indignation; then by producing the true reading, with a long paraphraſe, and concluding with loud acclamations

tions on the diſcovery, and a ſober wiſh for the advancement and proſperity of genuine criticiſm.

All this may be done, and perhaps done ſometimes without impropriety. But I have always ſuſpected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong; and the emendation wrong, that cannot without ſo much labour appear to be right. The juſtneſs of a happy reſtoration ſtrikes at once, and the moral precept may be well applied to criticiſm, *quod dubitas ne feceris.*

To dread the ſhore which he ſees ſpread with wrecks, is natural to the ſailor. I had before my eye, ſo many critical adventures ended in miſcarriage, that caution was forced upon me. I encountered in every page wit ſtruggling with its own ſophiſtry, and learning confuſed by the multiplicity of its views. I was forced to cenſure thoſe whom I admired, and could not but reflect, while I was diſpoſſeſſing their emendations, how ſoon the ſame fate might happen to my own, and how many of the readings which I have corrected may be by ſome other editor defended and eſtabliſhed.

Criticks I ſaw, that other's names efface,
And fix their own, with labour, in the place;
Their own, like others, ſoon their place reſign'd,
Or diſappear'd, and left the firſt behind. POPE.

That a conjectural critick ſhould often be miſtaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others or himſelf, if it be conſidered, that in his art there is no ſyſtem, no principal and axiomatical truth that regulates ſubordinate poſitions. His chance of error is renewed at every attempt; an oblique view of the paſſage, a ſlight miſapprehenſion of a phraſe, a caſual inattention to the parts connected, is ſufficient to make him not only fail, but fail ridiculouſly; and when he ſucceeds beſt, he produces perhaps but one reading of many probable, and he that ſuggeſts another will always be able to diſpute his claims.

It is an unhappy ſtate, in which danger is hid under pleaſure. The allurements of emendation are ſcarcely reſiſtible.

reſiſtible. Conjecture has all the joy and all the pride of invention, and he that has once ſtarted a happy change, is too much delighted to conſider what objections may riſe againſt it.

Yet conjectural criticiſm has been of great uſe in the learned world; nor is it my intention to depreciate a ſtudy, that has exerciſed ſo many mighty minds, from the revival of learning to our own age, from the biſhop of Aleria to Engliſh Bentley. The criticks on ancient authors have, in the exerciſe of their ſagacity, many aſſiſtances, which the editor of Shakeſpeare is condemned to want. They are employed upon grammatical and ſettled languages, whoſe conſtruction contributes ſo much to perſpicuity, that Homer has fewer paſſages unintelligible than Chaucer. The words have not only a known regimen, but invariable quantities, which direct and confine the choice. There are commonly more manuſcripts than one; and they do not often conſpire in the ſame miſtakes. Yet Scaliger could confeſs to Salmaſius how little ſatisfaction his emendations gave him. *Illudunt nobis conjecturæ noſtræ, quarum nos pudet, poſteaquam in meliores codices incidimus.* And Lipſius could complain, that criticks were making faults, by trying to remove them, *Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur.* And indeed, where mere conjecture is to be uſed, the emendations of Scaliger and Lipſius, notwithſtanding their wonderful ſagacity and erudition, are often vague and diſputable, like mine or Theobald's.

Perhaps I may not be more cenſured for doing wrong, than for doing little; for raiſing in the publick expectations, which at laſt I have not anſwered. The expectation of ignorance is indefinite, and that of knowledge is often tyrannical. It is hard to ſatisfy thoſe who know not what to demand, or thoſe who demand by deſign what they think impoſſible to be done. I have indeed diſappointed no opinion more than my own; yet I have endeavoured to perform my taſk with no ſlight ſolicitude. Not a ſingle paſſage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt, which I have not attempted to reſtore: or obſcure, which I have not endeavoured to illuſtrate. In many I have failed like others; and from many, after all

all my efforts, I have retreated, and confeſſed the repulſe. I have not paſſed over, with affected ſuperiority, what is equally difficult to the reader and to myſelf, but where I could not inſtruct him, have owned my ignorance. I might eaſily have accumulated a maſs of ſeeming learning upon eaſy ſcenes; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence, that, where nothing was neceſſary, nothing has been done, or that, where others have ſaid enough, I have ſaid no more.

Notes are often neceſſary, but they are neceſſary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakſpeare, and who deſires to feel the higheſt pleaſure that the drama can give, read every play, from the firſt ſcene to the laſt, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not ſtoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is ſtrongly engaged, let it diſdain alike to turn aſide to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightneſs and obſcurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preſerve his comprehenſion of the dialogue and his intereſt in the fable. And when the pleaſures of novelty have ceaſed, let him attempt exactneſs, and read the commentators.

Particular paſſages are cleared by notes, but the general effect of the work is weakened. The mind is refrigerated by interruption; the thoughts are diverted from the principal ſubject; the reader is weary, he ſuſpects not why; and at laſt throws away the book which he has too diligently ſtudied.

Parts are not to be examined till the whole has been ſurveyed; there is a kind of intellectual remoteneſs neceſſary for the comprehenſion of any great work in its full deſign and in its true proportions; a cloſe approach ſhews the ſmaller niceties, but the beauty of the whole is diſcerned no longer.

It is not very grateful to conſider how little the ſucceſſion of editors has added to this author's power of pleaſing. He was read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him;

while the reading was yet not rectified, nor his allusions underſtood; yet then did Dryden pronounce, "that "Shakeſpeare was the man, who, of all modern and "perhaps ancient poets, had the largeſt and moſt com-"prehenſive ſoul. All the images of nature were ſtill "preſent to him, and he drew them not laboriouſly, but "luckily: when he deſcribes any thing, you more than "ſee it, you feel it too. Thoſe, who accuſe him to have "wanted learning, give him the greater commenda-"tion: he was naturally learned: he needed not the "ſpectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, "and found her there. I cannot ſay he is every where "alike; were he ſo, I ſhould do him injury to compare "him with the greateſt of mankind. He is many times "flat and inſipid; his comick wit degenerating into "clenches, his ſerious ſwelling into bombaſt. But he is "always great, when ſome great occaſion is preſented "to him: no man can ſay, he ever had a fit ſubject for "his wit, and did not then raiſe himſelf as high above "the reſt of poets,

"*Quantum lenta ſolent inter viburna cupreſſi.*"

It is to be lamented, that ſuch a writer ſhould want a commentary; that his language ſhould become obſolete, or his ſentiments obſcure. But it is vain to carry wiſhes beyond the condition of human things; that which muſt happen to all, has happened to Shakſpeare, by accident and time; and more than has been ſuffered by any other writer ſince the uſe of types, has been ſuffered by him through his own negligence of fame, or perhaps by that ſuperiority of mind, which deſpiſed its own performances, when it compared them with its powers, and judged thoſe works unworthy to be preſerved, which the criticks of following ages were to contend for the fame of reſtoring and explaining.

Among theſe candidates of inferior fame, I am now to ſtand the judgment of the publick; and wiſh that I could confidently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient,

and

and I ſhould feel little ſolicitude about the ſentence, were it to be pronounced only by the ſkilful and the learned.

Of what has been performed in this reviſal *, an account is given in the following pages by Mr. Steevens, who might have ſpoken both of his own diligence and ſagacity, in terms of greater ſelf-approbation, without deviating from modeſty or truth. JOHNSON.

* This paragraph relates to the edition publiſhed in 1773, by George Steevens, Eſq. MALONE.

MR. STEEVENS'S

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

READER

THE want of adherence to the old copies, which has been complained of, in the text of every modern republication of Shakſpeare, is fairly deducible from Mr. Rowe's inattention to one of the firſt duties of an editor†. Mr. Rowe did not print from the earlieſt and moſt correct, but from the moſt remote and inaccurate of the four folios. Between the years 1623 and 1685 (the dates of the firſt and laſt) the errors in every play, at leaſt, were trebled. Several pages in each of theſe ancient editions have been examined, that the aſſertion might come more fully ſupported. It may be added, that as every freſh editor continued to make the text of his predeceſſor the ground-work of his own (never collating but where difficulties occurred) ſome deviations from the originals had been handed down, the number of which are leſſened in the impreſſion before us, as it

* Firſt printed in 1773. MALONE.

† "I muſt not (ſays Mr. Rowe in his dedication to the duke of Somerſet) pretend to have reſtor'd this work to the exactneſs of the author's original manuſcripts: thoſe are loſt, or, at leaſt, are gone beyond any inquiry I could make; ſo that there was nothing left, but to *compare the ſeveral editions*, and give the true reading as well as I could from thence. This I have endeavour'd to do pretty carefully, and render'd very many places intelligible, that were not ſo before. In ſome of the editions, eſpecially the laſt, there were many lines (and in Hamlet one whole ſcene) left out together; theſe are now all ſupply'd. I fear your grace will find ſome faults, but I hope they are moſtly literal, and the errors of the preſs." Would not any one, from this declaration, ſuppoſe that Mr. Rowe (who does not appear to have conſulted a ſingle quarto) had at leaſt *compared* the folios with each other? STEEVENS.

has

has been conſtantly compared with the moſt authentic copies, whether collation was abſolutely neceſſary for the recovery of ſenſe, or not. The perſon who undertook this taſk may have failed by inadvertency, as well as thoſe who preceded him; but the reader may be aſſured, that he, who thought it his duty to free an author from ſuch modern and unneceſſary innovations as had been cenſured in others, has not ventured to introduce any of his own.

It is not pretended that a complete body of various readings is here collected; or that all the diverſities which the copies exhibit, are pointed out; as near two thirds of them are typographical miſtakes, or ſuch a change of inſignificant particles, as would crowd the bottom of the page with an oſtentation of materials, from which at laſt nothing uſeful could be ſelected.

The dialogue might indeed ſometimes be lengthened by other inſertions than have hitherto been made, but without advantage either to its ſpirit or beauty; as in the following inſtance:

Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I ſay.
Kent. I ſay, yea.

Here the quartos add:

Lear. *No, no, they would not.*
Kent. *Yes, they have.*

By the admiſſion of this negation and affirmation, has any new idea been gained?

The labours of preceding editors have not left room for a boaſt, that many valuable readings have been retrieved; though it may be fairly aſſerted, that the text of Shakſpeare is reſtored to the condition in which the author, or rather his firſt publiſhers, appear to have left it, ſuch emendations as were abſolutely neceſſary, alone admitted: for where a particle, indiſpenſably neceſſary to the ſenſe, was wanting, ſuch a ſupply has been ſilently adopted from other editions; but where a ſyllable, or

more, had been added for the ſake of the metre only, which at firſt might have been irregular, ſuch interpolations are here conſtantly retrenched, ſometimes with, and ſometimes without notice. Thoſe ſpeeches, which in the elder editions are printed as proſe, and from their own conſtruction are incapable of being compreſſed into verſe, without the aid of ſupplemental ſyllables, are reſtored to proſe again; and the meaſure is divided afreſh in others, where the maſs of words had been inharmoniouſly ſeparated into lines.

The ſcenery, throughout all the plays, is regulated in conformity to a rule, which the poet, by his general practice ſeems to have propoſed to himſelf. Several of his pieces are come down to us, divided into ſcenes as well as acts. Theſe diviſions were probably his own, as they are made on ſettled principles, which would hardly have been the caſe, had the taſk been executed by the players. A change of ſcene, with Shakſpeare, moſt commonly implies a change of place, but always, an entire evacuation of the ſtage. The cuſtom of diſtinguiſhing every entrance or exit by a freſh ſcene, was adopted, perhaps very idly, from the French theatre.

For the length of many notes, and the accumulation of examples in others, ſome apology may be likewiſe expected. An attempt at brevity is often found to be the ſource of an imperfect explanation. Where a paſſage has been conſtantly miſunderſtood, or where the jeſt or pleaſantry has been ſuffered to remain long in obſcurity, more inſtances have been brought to clear the one, or elucidate the other, than appear at firſt ſight to have been neceſſary. For theſe, it can only be ſaid, that when they prove that phraſeology or ſource of merriment to have been once general, which at preſent ſeems particular, they are not quite impertinently intruded; as they may ſerve to free the author from a ſuſpicion of having employed an affected ſingularity of expreſſion, or indulged himſelf in alluſions to tranſient cuſtoms, which were not of ſufficient notoriety to deſerve ridicule or reprehenſion. When examples in favour of contradictory opinions are aſſembled, though no attempt is made to decide

decide on either part, ſuch neutral collections ſhould always be regarded as materials for future critics, who may hereafter apply them with ſucceſs. Authorities, whether in reſpect of words, or things, are not always producible from the moſt celebrated writers*; yet ſuch circumſtances as fall below the notice of hiſtory, can only be ſought in the jeſt-book, the ſatire, or the play; and the novel, whoſe faſhion did not outlive a week, is ſometimes neceſſary to throw light on thoſe annals which take in the compaſs of an age. Thoſe, therefore, who would wiſh to have the peculiarities of Nym familiarized to their ideas, muſt excuſe the inſertion of ſuch an epigram

* Mr. T. Warton in his excellent *Remarks on the Faery Queen of Spenſer*, offers a ſimilar apology for having introduced illuſtrations from obſolete literature. "I fear (ſays he) I ſhall be cenſured for quoting too many pieces of this ſort. But experience has fatally proved, that the commentator on Spenſer, Jonſon, and the reſt of our elder poets, will in vain give ſpecimens of his claſſical erudition, unleſs, at the ſame time, he brings to his work a mind intimately acquainted with thoſe books, which, though now forgotten, were yet in common uſe and high repute about the time in which his authors reſpectively wrote, and which they conſequently muſt have read. While theſe are unknown, many alluſions and many imitations will either remain obſcure, or loſe half their beauty and propriety: "as the figures vaniſh when the canvas is decayed."

"Pope laughs at Theobald for giving us, in his edition of SHAKSPEARE, a ſample of

——all ſuch READING *as was never read.*

But theſe ſtrange and ridiculous books which Theobald quoted, were unluckily the very books which SHAKSPEARE himſelf had ſtudied; the knowledge of which enabled that uſeful editor to explain ſo many difficult alluſions and obſolete cuſtoms in his poet, which otherwiſe could never have been underſtood. For want of this ſort of literature, Pope tells us that the *dreadful Sagittary* in Troilus and Creſſida, ſignifies Teucer, ſo celebrated for his ſkill in archery. Had he deigned to conſult an old hiſtory, called the *Deſtruction of Troy*, a book which was the delight of SHAKSPEARE and of his age, he would have found that this formidable archer, was no other than an imaginary beaſt, which the Grecian army brought againſt Troy. If SHAKSPEARE is worth reading, he is worth explaining; and the reſearches uſed for ſo valuable and elegant a purpoſe, merit the thanks of genius and candour, not the ſatire of prejudice and ignorance. That labour, which ſo eſſentially contributes to the ſervice of true taſte, deſerves a more honourable repoſitory than *The Temple of Dullneſs*." STEEVENS.

as beſt ſuits the purpoſe, however tedious in itſelf; and ſuch as would be acquainted with the propriety of Falſtaff's alluſion to *ſtewed prunes*, ſhould not be diſguſted at a multitude of inſtances, which, when the point is once known to be eſtabliſhed, may be diminiſhed by any future editor. An author, who *catches* (as Pope expreſſes it) at *the Cynthia of a minute*, and does not furniſh notes to his own works, is ſure to loſe half the praiſe which he might have claimed, had he dealt in alluſions leſs temporary, or cleared up for himſelf thoſe difficulties which lapſe of time muſt inevitably create.

The author of the additional notes has rather been deſirous to ſupport old readings, than to claim the merit of introducing new ones. He deſires to be regarded as one, who found the taſk he undertook more arduous than it ſeemed, while he was yet feeding his vanity with the hopes of introducing himſelf to the world as an editor in form. He, who has diſcovered in himſelf the power to rectify a few miſtakes with eaſe, is naturally led to imagine, that all difficulties muſt yield to the efforts of future labour; and perhaps feels a reluctance to be undeceived at laſt.

Mr. Steevens deſires it may be obſerved, that he has ſtrictly complied with the terms exhibited in his propoſals, having appropriated all ſuch aſſiſtances, as he received, to the uſe of the preſent editor, whoſe judgment has, in every inſtance, determined on their reſpective merits. While he enumerates his obligations to his correſpondents, it is neceſſary that one comprehenſive remark ſhould be made on ſuch communications as are omitted in this edition, though they might have proved of great advantage to a more daring commentator. The majority of theſe were founded on the ſuppoſition, that Shakſpeare was originally an author correct in the utmoſt degree, but maimed and interpolated by the neglect or preſumption of the players. In conſequence of this belief, alterations have been propoſed wherever a verſe could be harmonized, an epithet exchanged for one more appoſite, or a ſentiment rendered leſs perplexed. Had the general current of advice been followed, the notes would

would have been filled with attempts at emendation apparently unneceſſary, though ſometimes elegant, and as frequently with explanations of what none would have thought difficult. A conſtant peruſer of Shakſpeare will ſuppoſe whatever is eaſy to his own apprehenſion, will prove ſo to that of others, and conſequently may paſs over ſome real perplexities in ſilence. On the contrary, if in conſideration of the different abilities of every claſs of readers, he ſhould offer a comment on all harſh inverſions of phraſe, or peculiarities of expreſſion, he will at once excite the diſguſt and diſpleaſure of ſuch as think their own knowledge or ſagacity undervalued. It is difficult to fix a medium between doing too little and too much in the taſk of mere explanation. There are yet many paſſages unexplained and unintelligible, which may be reformed, at hazard of whatever licence, for exhibitions on the ſtage, in which the pleaſure of the audience is chiefly to be conſidered; but muſt remain untouched by the critical editor, whoſe conjectures are limited by narrow bounds, and who gives only what he at leaſt ſuppoſes his author to have written.

If it is not to be expected that each vitiated paſſage in Shakſpeare can be reſtored, till a greater latitude of experiment ſhall be allowed; ſo neither can it be ſuppoſed that the force of all his alluſions will be pointed out, till ſuch books are thoroughly examined, as cannot eaſily at preſent be collected, if at all. Several of the moſt correct liſts of our dramatick pieces exhibit the titles of plays, which are not to be met with in the completeſt collections. It is almoſt unneceſſary to mention any other than Mr. Garrick's, which, curious and extenſive as it is, derives its greateſt value from its acceſſibility

To

There is reaſon to think that about the time of the Reformation, great numbers of plays were printed, though few of that age are now to be found; for part of queen Elizabeth's INJUNCTIONS in 1559, are particularly directed to the ſuppreſſing of "Many pamphlets, PLAYES, and ballads: that no manner of perſon ſhall enterprize to print any ſuch, &c. but under certain reſtrictions." Vid. Sect. V. This obſervation is taken from Dr. Percy's Additions to his Eſſay on

To the other evils of our civil war muſt be added the interruption of polite learning, and the ſuppreſſion of many dramatic and poetical names, which were plunged in obſcurity by tumults and revolutions, and have never ſince attracted curioſity. The utter neglect of ancient Engliſh literature continued ſo long, that many books may be ſuppoſed to be loſt; and that curioſity, which has been now for ſome years increaſing among us, wants materials for its operations. Books and pamphlets,

the Origin of the Engliſh Stage. It appears likewiſe from a page at the concluſion of the ſecond Vol. of the entries belonging to the Stationer's company, that in the 41ſt year of queen Elizabeth, many new reſtraints on bookſellers were laid. Among theſe are the following, "That no plaies be printed excepte they bee allowed by ſuch as have auctoritye." The records of the Stationers however contain the entries of ſome which have never yet been met with by the moſt ſucceſsful collectors; nor are their titles to be found in any regiſters of the ſtage, whether ancient or modern. It ſhould ſeem from the ſame volumes that it was cuſtomary for the Stationers to ſeize the whole impreſſion of any work that had given offence, and burn it publickly at their hall, in obedience to the edicts of the archbiſhop of Canterbury, and the biſhop of London, who ſometimes enjoyed theſe literary executions at their reſpective palaces. Among other works condemned to the flames by theſe diſcerning prelates, were the complete ſatires of biſhop Hall.

Mr. Theobald, at the concluſion of the preface to his firſt edition of Shakſpeare, aſſerts, that excluſive of the dramas of Ben Jonſon, and B. and Fletcher, he had read "above 800 of old Engliſh plays." He omitted this aſſertion, however, on the republication of the ſame work, and, I hope, he did ſo, through a conſciouſneſs of its utter falſhood; for if we except the plays of the authors already mentioned, it would be difficult to diſcover half the number that were written early enough to ſerve the purpoſe for which he pretends to have peruſed this imaginary ſtock of ancient literature.

I might add, that the private collection of Mr. Theobald, which, including the plays of Junſon, Fletcher and Shakſpeare, did not amount to many more than an hundred, remained entire in the hands of the late Mr. Jonſon, till the time of his death. It does not appear that any other collection but the Harleian was at that time formed; nor does Mr. Theobald's edition contain any intrinſic evidences of ſo comprehenſive an examination of our eldeſt dramatic writers, as he aſſumes to himſelf the merit of having made. STEEVENS.

There were about five hundred and fifty plays printed before the Reſtoration, excluſive of thoſe written by Shakſpeare, Jonſon, and Fletcher. MALONE.

printed

printed originally in ſmall numbers, being thus neglected, were ſoon deſtroyed; and though the capital authors were preſerved, they were preſerved to languiſh without regard. How little Shakſpeare himſelf was once read, may be underſtood from Tate*, who, in his dedication to the altered play of *King Lear*, ſpeaks of the original as of an obſcure piece, recommended to his notice by a friend; and the author of the *Tatler*, having occaſion to quote a few lines out of *Macbeth*, was content to receive them from D'Avenant's alteration of that celebrated drama, in which almoſt every original beauty is either aukwardly diſguiſed, or arbitrarily omitted. So little were the defects or peculiarities of the old writers known, even at the beginning of our century, that though the cuſtom of alliteration had prevailed to that degree in the time of Shakſpeare, that it became contemptible and ridiculous, yet it is made one of Waller's praiſes by a writer of his life, that he firſt introduced this practice into Engliſh verſification.

It will be expected that ſome notice ſhould be taken of the laſt editor of Shakſpeare, and that his merits ſhould be eſtimated with thoſe of his predeceſſors. Little, however, can be ſaid of a work, to the completion of which, both a large proportion of the commentary and various readings is as yet wanting. *The Second Part of King Henry VI.* is the only play from that edition, which has been conſulted in the courſe of this work; for as ſeveral paſſages there are arbitrarily omitted, and as no notice is given when other deviations are made from the old copies, it was of little conſequence to examine any further. This circumſtance is mentioned, leſt ſuch accidental coincidences of opinion, as may be diſcovered hereafter, ſhould be interpreted into plagiariſm.

It may occaſionally happen, that ſome of the remarks long ago produced by others, are offered again as recent diſcoveries. It is likewiſe abſolutely impoſſible to pronounce with any degree of certainty, whence all the

* In the year 1707 Mr. N. Tate publiſhed a tragedy called *Injured Love, or the Cruel Husband*, and in the title-page of it calls himſelf, "*Author* of the tragedy called *King Lear*." STEEVENS.

hints

hints, which furniſh matter for a commentary, have been collected, as they lay ſcattered in many books and papers, which were probably never read but once, or the particulars which they contain received only in the courſe of common converſation; nay, what is called plagiariſm, is often no more than the reſult of having thought alike with others on the ſame ſubject.

The diſpute about the learning of Shakſpeare being now finally ſettled, a catalogue is added of thoſe tranſlated authors, whom Mr. Pope has thought proper to call

The claſſics of an age that heard of none.

The reader may not be diſpleaſed to have the Greek and Roman poets, orators, &c. who had been rendered acceſſible to our author, expoſed at one view; eſpecially as the liſt has received the advantage of being corrected and amplified by the Reverend Dr. Farmer, the ſubſtance of whoſe very deciſive pamphlet is interſperſed through the notes which are added in this reviſal of Dr. Johnſon's Shakſpeare.

To thoſe who have advanced the reputation of our Poet, it has been endeavoured, by Dr. Johnſon, in the foregoing preface, impartially to allot their dividend of fame; and it is with great regret that we now add to the catalogue, another, the conſequence of whoſe death will perhaps affect not only the works of Shakſpeare, but of many other writers. Soon after the firſt appearance of this edition, a diſeaſe, rapid in its progreſs, deprived the world of Mr. JACOB TONSON; a man, whoſe zeal for the improvement of Engliſh literature, and whoſe liberality to men of learning, gave him a juſt title to all the honours which men of learning can beſtow. To ſuppoſe that a perſon employed in an extenſive trade, lived in a ſtate of indifference to loſs and gain, would be to conceive a character incredible and romantic; but it may be juſtly ſaid of Mr. TONSON, that he had enlarged his mind beyond ſolicitude about petty loſſes, and refined it from the deſire of unreaſonable profit. He was willing to admit thoſe with whom he contracted, to the juſt advantage

advantage of their own labours; and had never learned to conſider the author as an under-agent to the book-ſeller. The wealth which he inherited or acquired, he enjoyed like a man conſcious of the dignity of a profeſſion ſubſervient to learning. His domeſtic life was elegant, and his charity was liberal. His manners were ſoft, and his converſation delicate; nor is, perhaps, any quality in him more to be cenſured, than that reſerve which confined his acquaintance to a ſmall number, and made his example leſs uſeful, as it was leſs extenſive. He was the laſt commercial name of a family which will be long remembered; and if Horace thought it not improper to convey the Sosii to poſterity; if rhetoric ſuffered no diſhonour from Quintilian's dedication to Trypho; let it not be thought that we diſgrace Shakſpeare, by appending to his works the name of Tonson.

To this prefatory advertiſement I have now ſubjoined * a chapter extracted from the *Guls Hornbook*, (a ſatirical pamphlet writen by Decker in the year 1609) as it affords the reader a more complete idea of the cuſtoms peculiar to our ancient theatres, than any other publication which has hitherto fallen in my way. See this performance, page 27.

"CHAP. VI.

How a Gallant ſhould behave himſelf in a Play-houſe.

The *theatre* is your poet's Royal Exchange, upon which, their muſes (that are now turn'd to merchants) meeting, barter away that light commodity of words for a lighter ware than words, *plaudities* and the *breath* of the great *beaſt*, which (like the threatnings of two cowards) vaniſh all into aire. *Plaiers* and their *factors*, who put away the ſtuffe and make the beſt of it they poſſibly can (as indeed 'tis their parts ſo to doe) your gallant, your courtier, and your captein, had wont to be the foundeſt pay-maſters, and I thinke are ſtill the ſureſt chapmen: and theſe by meanes that their heades are

* This addition to Mr. Steevens's Advertiſement was made in 1778. Malone.

well

well ſtockt, deale upon this comical freight by the groſſe; when your *groundling*, and *gallery commoner* buyes his ſport by the penny, and, like a *bagler*, is glad to utter it againe by retailing.

Sithence then the place is ſo free in entertainment, allowing a ſtoole as well to the farmer's ſonne as to your Templer: that your ſtinkard has the ſelf ſame libertie to be there in his tobacco fumes, which your ſweet courtier hath: and that your carman and tinker claime as ſtrong a voice in their ſuffrage, and fit to give judgment on the plaies' life and death, as well as the proudeſt *Momus* among the tribe of *critick*; it is fit that hee, whom the moſt tailors' bils do make room for, when he comes, ſhould not be baſely (like a vyoll) cas'd up in a corner.

Whether therefore the gatherers of the publique or private play-houſe ſtand to receive the afternoone's rent, let our gallant (having paid it) preſently advance himſelfe up to the throne of the ſtage. I meane not in the lords' roome (which is now but the ſtage's ſuburbs.) No, thoſe boxes by the iniquity of cuſtome, conſpiracy of waiting-women and gentlemen-uſhers, that there ſweat together, and the covetous ſhareis, are contemptibly thruſt into the reare, and much new ſatten is there dambd by being ſmothered to death in darkneſſe. But on the very ruſhes where the comedy is to daunce, yea and under the ſtate of *Cambiſes* himſelfe muſt our feather'd eſtridge, like a piece of ordnance be planted valiantly (becauſe impudently) beating downe the mewes and hiſſes of the oppoſed raſcality.

For do but caſt up a reckoning, what large cummings in are purs'd up by ſitting on the ſtage. Firſt a conſpicuous eminence is gotten, by which meanes the beſt and moſt eſſenciall parts of a gallant (good cloathes, a proportionable legge, white hand, the Perſian locke, and a tollerable beard,) are perfectly revealed.

By ſitting on the ſtage you have a ſign'd pattent to engroſſe the whole commodity or cenſure; may lawfully preſume to be a girder; and ſtand at the helme to ſteere the paſſage of ſcænes, yet no man ſhall once offer to hider you from obtaining the title of an inſolent overweening coxcombe.

By

By ſitting on the ſtage, you may (without trauelling for it) at the very next doore, aſke whoſe play it is: and by that queſt of inquiry, the law warrants you to auoid much miſtaking: if you know not the author, you may raile againſt him; and peradventure ſo behaue yourſelfe, that you may enforce the author to know you.

By ſitting on the ſtage, if you be a knight, you may happily get you a miſtreſſe: if a mere *Fleet-ſtreet* gentleman, a wife: but aſſure yourſelfe by continuall reſidence, you are the firſt and principall man in election to begin the number of *We three*.

By ſpreading your body on the ſtage, and by being a juſtice in examining of plaies, you ſhall put yourſelfe into ſuch a true ſcænical authority, that ſome poet ſhall not dare to preſent his muſe rudely before your eyes, without having firſt unmaſkt her, rifled her, and diſcouered all her bare and moſt myſtical parts before you at a taverne, when you moſt knightly, ſhal for his paines, pay for both their ſuppers.

By ſitting on the ſtage, you may (with ſmall coſt) purchaſe the deere acquaintance of the boyes: haue a good ſtoole for ſixpence: at any time know what particular part any of the infants preſent: get your match lighted, examine the play-ſuits' lace, and perhaps win wagers upon laying 'tis copper, &c. And to conclude, whether you be a foole or a juſtice of peace, a cuckold or a captain, a lord maior's ſonne or a dawcocke, a knaue or an vnder ſhrieſe, of what ſtamp ſoeuer you be, currant or counterfet, the ſtagelike time will bring you to moſt perfect light, and lay you open: neither are you to be hunted from thence though the ſcar-crowes in the yard hoot you, hiſſe at you, ſpit at you, yea throw dirt euen in your teeth: 'tis moſt gentleman-like patience to endure all this, and to laugh at the ſilly animals. But if the rabble, with a full throat, crie away with the foole, you were worſe than a mad-man to tarry by it: for the gentleman and the foole ſhould never ſit on the ſtage together.

Mary, let this obſeruation go hand in hand with the reſt: or rather, like a country-ſerving man, ſome five yards before them. Preſent not your ſelfe on the ſtage (eſpecially

(eſpecially at a new play) untill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got cullor into his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that hees upon point to enter: for then it is time, as though you were one of the *properties*, or that you dropt of the *hangings* to creep from behind the arras, with your *tripos* or three-legged ſtoole in one hand, and a teſton mounted betweene a fore-finger and a thumbe, in the other: for if you ſhould beſtow your perſon upon the vulgar, when the belly of the houſe is but halfe full, your apparell is quite eaten up, the faſhion loſt, and the proportion of your body in more danger to be devoured, then if it were ſerved up in the Counter amongſt the Poultry: avoid that as you would the baſtome. It ſhall crowne you with rich commendation to laugh alowd in the middeſt of the moſt ſerious and ſaddeſt ſcene of the terribleſt tragedy: and to let that clapper (your tongue) be toſt ſo high that all the houſe may ring of it: your lords uſe it; your knights are apes to the lords, and do ſo too: your inne-a-court-man is zany to the knights, and (many very ſcurvily) comes likewiſe limping after it: bee thou a beagle to them all, and never lin ſnuffing till you have ſented them: for by talking and laughing (like a ploughman in a morris) you heape *Pelion* upon *Oſſa*, glory upon glory: as firſt all the eyes in the galleries will leave walking after the players, and onely follow you: the ſimpleſt dolt in the houſe ſnatches up your name, and when he meetes you in the ſtreetes, or that you fall into his hands in the middle of a watch, his word ſhall be taken for you: heele cry, *Hees ſuch a gallant*, and you paſſe. Secondly you publiſh your temperance to the world, in that you ſeeme not to reſort thither to taſte vaine pleaſures with a hungrie appetite; but onely as a gentleman, to ſpend a fooliſh houre or two, becauſe you can doe nothing elſe. Thirdly you mightily diſreliſh the audience, and diſgrace the author: marry, you take up (though it be at the worſt hand) a ſtrong opinion of your owne judgement, and inforce the poet to take pity of your weakeneſſe, and by ſome dedicated ſonnet to bring you into a better paradice, onely to ſtop your mouth.

If

If you can (either for love or money) provide your ſelfe a lodging by the water ſide: for above the conveniencie it brings to ſhun ſhoulder-clapping, and to ſhip away your cockatrice betimes in the morning, it addes a kind of ſtate unto you, to be carried from thence to the ſtaires of your play-houſe: hate a ſculler (remember that) worſe then to be acquainted with one ath' ſcullery. No, your oares are your onely ſea-crabs, boord them, and take heed you never go twice together with one paire: often ſhifting is a great credit to gentlemen: and that dividing of your fare wil make the poore waterſnaks be ready to pul you in peeces to enjoy your cuſtome. No matter whether upon landing you have money or no; you may ſwim in twentie of their boates over the river upon *ticket*: mary, when ſilver comes in, remember to pay trebble their fare, and it will make your flounder-catchers to ſend more thankes after you, when you doe not draw, then when you doe: for they know, it will be their owne another daie.

Before the play begins, fall to cardes; you may win or looſe (as fencers doe in a prize) and beate one another by confederacie, yet ſhare the money when you meete at ſupper: notwithſtanding, to gul the raggamuffins that ſtand a loofe gaping at you, throw the cards (having firſt torne four or five of them) round about the ſtage, juſt upon the third ſound, as though you had loſt: it ſkils not if the four knaves ly on their backs, and outface the audience, there's none ſuch fooles as dare take exceptions at them, becauſe ere the play go off, better knaves than they, will fall into the company.

Now, Sir, if the writer be a fellow that hath either epigram'd you, or hath had a flirt at your miſtris, or hath brought either your feather, or your red beard, or your little legs, &c. on the ſtage, you ſhall diſgrace him worſe then by toſſing him in a blanket, or giving him the baſtinado in a taverne, if in the middle of his play, (bee it paſtorall or comedy, morall or tragedie) you riſe with a ſkrewd and diſcontented face from your ſtoole to be gone: no matter whether the ſcenes be good or no; the better they are, the worſe doe you diſtaſt them: and beeing on your feete, ſneake not away like a coward,

but ſalute all your gentle acquaintance that are ſpred either on the ruſhes or on ſtooles about you, and draw what troope you can from the ſtage after you: the *mimicks* are beholden to you, for allowing them elbow roome: their poet cries perhaps, a pox go with you, but care not you for that; there's no muſick without frets.

Mary, if either the company, or indiſpoſition of the weather binde you to ſit it out, my counſell is then that you turne plaine ape: take up a ruſh and tickle the earneſt eares of your fellow gallants, to make other fooles fall a laughing: mewe at the paſſionate ſpeeches, blare at merrie, finde fault with the muſicke, whewe at the children's action, whiſtle at the ſongs; and above all, curſe the ſharers, that whereas the ſame day you had beſtowed forty ſhillings on an embroidered felt and feather (Scotch-faſhion) for your miſtres in the court, or your punck in the cittie, within two houres after, you encounter with the very ſame block on the ſtage, when the haberdaſher ſwore to you the impreſſion was extant but that morning.

To conclude, hoord up the fineſt play-ſcraps you can get, upon which your leane wit may moſt ſavourly feede, for want of other ſtuffe, when the *Arcadian* and *Euphuis'd* gentlewomen have their tongues ſharpened to ſet upon you: that qualitie (next to your ſhittlecocke) is the only furniture to a courtier that's but a new beginner, and is but in his ABC of complement. The next places that are fil'd after the play-houſes bee emptied, are (or ought to be) tavernes: into a taverne then let us next march, where the braines of one hogſhead muſt be beaten out to make up another."

I ſhould have attempted on the preſent occaſion to enumerate all other pamphlets, &c. from whence particulars relative to the conduct of our early theatres might be collected, but that Dr. Percy, in his firſt volume of the *Reliques of Ancient Engliſh Poetry*, (third edit. p. 128, &c.) has extracted ſuch paſſages from them as tend to the illuſtration of this ſubject; to which he has added more accurate remarks than my experience in theſe matters would have enabled me to ſupply. STEEVENS.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS

FROM

CLASSICK AUTHORS*.

HOMER.

TEN Bookes of the Iliades into Engliſh out of French, by Arthur Hall, Eſquire. Lond. imprinted by Ralph Newberie, 4to †. — 1581

The Shield of Achilles from the 18th Book of Homer, by Geo. Chapman, 4to. Lond. — 1596

Seven Books of the Iliades, by ditto, 4to ‡. Lond. 1596

D°. — — — — — 1598

ℋ Homer Prince of Poets: Tranſlated according to the Greeke in Twelve Bookes of his Iliads: By Geo. Chapman; ſmall folio. Lond. printed for Samuel Macham. *No date.*

[This, I believe, was publiſhed in 1609. There are ſeveral Sonnets at the end, addreſſed to different noblemen; among them one, "to the *Lord Treaſurer*, the Earle of Saliſbury." See alſo the entry below.]

The whole Works of Homer, by do. printed for Nath. Butler; *no date*, but probably printed in 1611

The Crowne of all Homer's Works, Batrachomymachia, &c. ✠[By Geo. Chapman, with his portrait in the

* This Liſt was drawn up by Mr. Steevens. I have made a few inconſiderable additions to it, which are diſtinguiſhed by this mark ℋ. MALONE.

† In the firſt vol. of the books of entries belonging to the Stationers' company is the following:

"Henry Bynneman.] Nov. 1580, lycenſed unto him under the wardens' hands ten bookes of the Iliades of Homer." Again, Samuel Macham.] Nov. 14, 1608. "Seven bookes of Homer's Iliades tranſlated into Engliſh by Geo. Chapman.—[By aſſignment from Mr. Windett.] Again, Nathaniel Butter] April 8, 1611, "A booke called Homer's Iliades in Engliſhe, containing 24 Bookes. Again, Nov. 2, 1614, "Homer's Odiſſes 24 bookes, tranſlated by George Chapman.

‡ Meres, in his *Second Part of Wits Commonwealth*, ſays, that *Chapman* is "of good note for his inchoate Homer."

title-page.] thin folio; printed by John Bill. *no date**.

The ſtrange wonderfull and bloudy Battel between Frogs and Miſe; paraphraſtically done into Engliſh Heroycall Verſe, by W. F. (i. e. William Fowldes,) 4to. — — — 1603

HESIOD.

The Georgicks of Heſiod, by George Chapman, tranſlated elaborately out of the Greek. Printed by H. L. for Miles Partrich, 4to. — 1618

MUSÆUS.

Marloe's Hero and Leander, with the firſt Book of Lucan, 4to. — — — 1600

There muſt have been a former Edition†, *as a ſecond Part was publiſhed by Henry Petowe*, — 1598

Muſæus's Poem of Hero and Leander, imitated by Chriſtopher Marlow, and finiſhed by Geo. Chapman, 8vo. Lond. — — 1606

EURIPIDES.

Jocaſta, a Tragedy, from the Phœniſſa of Euripides, by

* In the firſt volume of the Entries of the Stationers' Company is the following:

"T. Purfoote.] The Battel of the Frogges and Myce, and certain orations of Iſocrates. Jan. 4, 1579.

† This tranſlation, or at leaſt Marlow's part in it, muſt have been publiſhed before 1599, being twice mentioned in Naſh's *Lenten Stuff*, &c. which bears that date. "*Leander* and *Hero*, of whom divine *Muſæus* ſung, and a diviner muſe than him, *Kit Marlow*." Again, "She ſprung after him, and ſo reſigned up her prieſthood, and left worke for *Muſæus* and *Kit Marlow*."

Among the entries at Stationers' hall I find the following made by John Wolfe in 1593, Sept. 8th. "A booke entitled Hero and Leander, being an amorous poem deviſed by Chriſtopher Marlow."

At the ſame time, "Lucan's firſt booke of the famous Cyvill Warr betwixt Pompey and Cæſar. Engliſhed by Chriſtopher Marlow."

Again, in 1597, "A booke in Engliſh called Hero and Leander."

Again, April 1598, "The ſeconde Parte of Hero and Leander by Henry Petowe." Andrew Harris enter'd it.

Again, in 1600, "Hero and Leander by Marlowe."

In 1614 an entire tranſlation of Lucan was publiſhed by Sir Arthur Gorges, and enter'd as ſuch on the ſame books.

Geo.

Geo. Gaſcoigne, and Mr. Francis Kinwelmerſhe, 4to. Lond. — — — 1556

PLATO.

Axiochus, a Dialogue, attributed to Plato, by Edm. Spenſer, 4to — — 1592

DEMOSTHENES.

The Three Orations of Demoſthenes, chiefe Orator among the Grecians, in Favour of the Olynthians, with thoſe his fower againſt Philip of Macedon, &c. by Tho. Wylſon, Doctor of the Civill Lawes, 4to. 1570

ISOCRATES.

Iſocrates's ſage Admonition to Demonicus, by R. Nutthall, 8vo. Lond. 1557, 12mo. and 1585

Iſocrates's Doctrinal of Princes, by Syr Tho. Elliot, Lond. 8vo. — — — 1534

Iſocrates's Orat. intitled Evagoras, by Jer. Wolfe, 8vo. 1581

Three Orations of moral Inſtructions, one to Demonicus, and two to Nicocles, King of Salamis, tranſlated from Iſocrates, by Tho. Forreſt, 4to. 1580

LUCIAN.

Necromantia, a Dialog of the Poete Lucyen between Menippus and Philonides, for his Fanteſye faynd for a mery Paſtyme, in Engliſh Verſe and Latin Proſe.

Toxaris, or the Friendſhip of Lucian, by A. O. Lond. 8vo. — — — 1565

HERODOTUS.

The famous Hyſtory of Herodotus†, in nine Bookes, &c. by B. R. Lond. — — 1584

N. B. *This Piece contains only the two firſt Books, viz.*

* This book was entered in May 1592, at Stationers' hall.

† Among the entries in the books at Stationers'-hall this appears to be one.

"John Denham.] The famous Hiſtorye of Herodotus in Englyſhe, June 13, 1581."

the Clio and Euterpe. The Tranſlator ſays in his Preface, "As theſe ſpeede, ſo the reſt will follow." 4to.

THUCYDIDES.

The Hyſtory writtone by Thucydides, &c. tranſlated out of the Frenche of Claude de Seyſſel, Biſhop of Marſeilles, into the Engliſhe language, by Tho. Nicolls, Citizeine and Goldſmyth of London, fol. 1550*

POLYBIUS.

Hyſtories of the moſt famous and worthy Cronographer, Polybius, by Chriſtopher Watſon, 8vo. 1568

This Work conſiſts of extracts only.

DIODORUS SICULUS†

The Hiſtory of the Succeſſors of Alexander, &c. out of Diodorous Siculus and Plutarch, by Tho. Stocker. Lond. 4to. — — — 1569

APPIAN.

An aunciente Hiſtorie, &c. by Appian‡ of Alexandria, tranſlated out of diverſe Languages, &c. by W. B. 4to. Lond. — — 1578

JOSEPHUS.

Joſephus's Hiſtory, &c. tranſlated into Engliſh, by Tho. Lodge, fol. Lond. 1602—1609, &c.

ÆLIAN.

Ælian's Regiſtre of Hyſtories, by Abraham Fleming, 4to. — — — 1576

* On the Stationers' books in 1607 either this or ſome other tranſlation is entered, called "The Hiſtory of Thucidides the Athenian tranſlated into Engliſh."

† Caxton tells us, that "Skelton had tranſlated *Diodorus Siculus, the Epiſtles of Tulle*, and diverſe other Workes;" but I know not that they were ever printed.

‡ In the firſt volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, Feb. 5, 1577, is the following:

"Henry Binneman.] Appianus Alexandrinus of the Romaine Civill Warres."

HERODIAN.

HERODIAN.

The Hiſtorie of Herodian, &c. tranſl. oute of Greeke into Latin, by Angelus Politianus, and out of Latin into Englyſhe, by Nich. Smyth. Imprinted at London, by William Copland, 4to*.

PLUTARCH.

Plutarch's Lives†, by Sir Tho. North, from the Fr. of Amyot, Biſhop of Auxerre, fol. 1579, 1602, 1603

Plutarch's Morals, by Dr. Philemon Holland 1603‡

Plutarch of the Education of Children, by Sir Tho. Elyott, 4to.

The Preceptes of that excellent Clerke and grave Philoſopher, Plutarche, for the Preſervation of Healthe, 8vo. — — — 1543

ARISTOTLE.

The Ethiques of Ariſtotle, &c. by John Wylkinſon. Printed by Grafton, Printer to K. Edw. VI. 8vo. B. L. — — — 1547 §

The Secrete of Secretes of Ariſtotle, &c. tranſlated out of the Frenche, &c. Lond. 8vo. — 1528

Ariſtotle's Politiques, &c ‖. from the Fr. by J. D. fol. Lond. — — — 1598

Oct. 1591, *Herodian in Engliſh* was entered at Stationers'-hall by —— Adams.

† Thus entered in the books of the Stationers' company.

"April 1579—Vatrouller—Wright, a booke in Engliſhe called Plutarch's Lyves."

‡ On the Stationers' books in the year 1600 is the following entry. "A booke to be tranſlated out of Frenche into Engliſhe, and ſo printed, called the Morall Woorkes of Plutarque." Again in 1602. Again in the ſame year, "The moral worke of Plutarque, being tranſlated out of French into Engliſh."

§ Of the *Ethicks of Ariſtotle* ſome more early tranſlation muſt have appeared; as Sir Tho. Elyot in his *Boke named the Governour*, 1537, ſays, "they are to be learned in Greke; for *the tranſlations that we have*, be but a rude and groſſe ſhadowe of the eloquence and wyſdome of Ariſtotle."

‖ This tranſlation is entered in the books at Stationers'-hall. "Adam Iſlip] Ariſtotle's Politiques with expoſitions; to be tranſlated into Engliſhe by the French copie, 1598."

XENOPHON.

The eight Bookes of Xenophon, containing the Inſtitution, Schole, and Education of Cyrus, the noble King of Perſye, &c. tranſl. out of Gr. into Engl. by Mr. William Bercher. Lond. 12mo. 1567 and 1569

D°. by Dr. Philemon Holland.

Xenophon's Treatiſe of Houſe-hold right, connyngly tranſl. out of the Greke tongue, &c. by Gentian Hervet, &c. 8vo. Lond. 1532. 8vo. 1534. 1544. 8vo. 1573

The Arte of Riding from Xenophon, &c. Lond. 4to. 1584

EPICTETUS*.

The Manuell of Epictetus, tranſl. out of Greeke into French, and now into Engliſh, &c. Alſo the Apothegmes, &c. by James Sandford. Lond. 12mo. 1567

EUNAPIUS SARDIANUS†.

The Lyves of Philoſophers and Orators, from the Greek of Eunapius, 4to. — — 1579

ACHILLES TATIUS.

The moſt delectable and pleaſant Hiſt. of Clitophon and Leucippe, from the Greek of Achilles Statius, &c. by W. B. 4to. — — 1597‡

M. ANTONINUS§

The Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius, Emperour and eloquent Orator, 12mo. Lond. — 1553

Tranſlated

* In the books of the Stationers' company, Feb. 12, 1581, Tho. Eaſte entered Enchiridon in Engliſh.

† Thus entered in the books of the Stationers' company, "Richard Jones.] The *Lives* of divers excellent Orators and Philoſophers written in Greeke by Enapius of the city of Sardis in Lydia, and tranſlated into Engliſhe by ——."

‡ This book was entered in the ſame year by Thomas Creede, on the books of the Stationers' company.

§ This book is only introduced, that an opportunity may be obtained of excluding it from any future catalogue of tranſlated claſſics. It was a fraud of Guevara's, but not undetected; for *Chapman*, in his *Gentleman Uſher*, 1602, ſpeaks of the book as *Guevara's* own. "If there

Tranſlated out of Fr. into Eng. by Sir John Bourchier, Kt. &c. &c.
Other editions of this are in 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1559. 1586, 1588.

DIONYSIUS.

Dionyſius's Deſcription of the Worlde. Englyſhed by Tho. Twine, 8vo. Lond. — 1572

EUCLID.

Euclid's Elements of Geometry, tranſl. into Eng. by Rich. Candiſh, who flouriſhed, A. D. 1556
Euclid's Elements, Pref. by John Dee. Lond. 1570

HIPPOCRATES.

The Aphoriſmes of Hippocrates, redacted into a certaine Order, and tranſlated by Humfrie Llhyd, 8vo. 1585

GALEN.

Galen's Two Books of Elements, tranſlated into Engl. by J. Jones, 4to. Lond. — — 1574
Certaine Workes of Galen, englyſhed by Tho. Gale, 4to. 1586

HELIODORUS.

The Beginning of Æthiopical Hiſtory in Engl. Hexameters, by Abrah. Fraunce, 8vo. Lond. 1591*
Heliodorus's Æthiopic Hiſt. tranſl. by Tho. Underdown, B. L. 4to. Lond. — 1577 and 1587

VIRGIL.

The Boke of Eneydos, &c. by Caxton, fol. Lond. *proſe* 1490
The thirteen Bukes of Eneados in Scottiſh Metir, by Gawain Douglas, 4to. Lond. — 1553

there be not more choice words in that letter, than in any three of *Guevara's Golden Epiſtles*, I am a very aſs." See his article in Bayle. Our countryman Elyott did ſomewhat of the ſame kind. He pretended to tranſlate the Actes and Sentences notable, of the Emperor *Alexander Severus* (from the Greek of Encolpius). See *Fabricius'* and Tanner's Bibliothec. &c.

* A tranſlation of the ſame book is likewiſe entered at Stationers' hall 1602, and again twice in 1604, for different printers.

Certain Bookes of Virgiles Æneis* turned into Engliſh Metir, by the right honourable Lorde, Henry Earle of Surrey, 4to. Lond. — — 1557

The firſt ſeven Bookes of the Eneidos, by Phaer. Lond. 4to. B. L. — — 1558

This Tranſlation is in rhyme of fourteen ſyllables.

The nine firſt Bookes, &c. by Phaer, 4to Lond. 1562

The thirteene Bookes of Encidos, by Phaer and Twyne. 4to. Lond. — 1584, 1596, 1607, &c†.

The firſt foure Bookes of Virgil's Æneis, tranſlated into Engl. heroic Verſe, by Richard Stanyhurſt‡, &c. 12mo. Lond. — — 1583

The Bucolickes of Publius Virgilius Maro, &c. by Abraham Fleming, drawn into plaine and familiar Englyſhe, Verſe for Verſe, 4to. B. L. — 1575

Virgil's Eclogues and Georgicks, tranſlated into blank Verſe, by the ſame Author, Lond. — 1589

The Lamentation of Corydon for the Love of Alexis, Verſe for Verſe, out of Latine.

This is tranſlated into Engliſh Hexameters, and printed at the end of the Counteſſe of Pembroke's Ivychurch, 1591. *By Abraham Fraunce.*

Virgil's Culex paraphraſed, by Spenſer. See his works.

HORACE.

Two Bookes of Horace his Satyres Englyſhed, accordyng to the Preſcription of Saint Hierome, 4to. B. L. Lond. — — — 1566

Horace his Arte of Poetrie, Piſtles‖ and Satyrs Engliſhed, by Tho. Drant, 4to. Lond. — 1567

* This is a tranſlation of the ſecond and fourth books into blank verſe, and is perhaps the oldeſt ſpecimen of that metre in the Engliſh language.

† Among the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, is the following. "Tho. Creede.] Virgil's Æneidos in Engliſhe verſe, 1595." Again, in 1600. Again his Bucolics and Georgics in the ſame year.

‡ The copy which I have ſeen, was in 4to, printed at Leiden, and was entered as ſuch on the books of the Stationers' on the 24th of January, 1582.

‖ There is an entry at Stationers' hall of the Epiſtles of Horace in 1591.

OVID.

OVID.

The fifteene Bookes of Metamorphoſeos. In which ben contaynid the Fables of Ovid, by William Caxton, Weſtm. fol. — — 1480

⌘ The four firſt Books of Ovid, tranſl from the Latin into Engliſh Meetre, by Arthur Golding, Gent. 4to. B. L. Lond. — — 1565

The fifteene Bookes of P. Ovidius Naſo, &c. by Arthur Golding, 4to. Bl. L. Lond. — 1567

D°. — — — 1576

[*Another in* 1575 *according to Ames. A former Edition was in* 1572, *in Rawlinſon's catal.*]

D°. — — 1587. D°. 1612

The pleaſant Fable of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis. 8vo Lond. — — 1565

The Fable of Ovid treating of Narciſſus, tranſl. out of Latin into Eng. Mytre, with a Moral ther unto very pleſante to rede, 4to. Lond. — 1590

The Heroycall Epiſtles, &c. ſet out and tranſlated by Geo. Turbervile, Gent. &c. B. L. 4to. Lond *. 1567 1569, and 1600

The three firſt Bookes of Ovid de Triſtibus, tranſl. into Engliſh, by Tho. Churchyard, 4to. Lond. 1580 †

Ovid his Invective againſt Ibis, tranſlated into Eng. Meeter, &c. 12mo. Lond. — 1569 ‡

And, by Tho. Underwood. 1577

Certaine of Ovid's Elegies by C. Marlow §. 12mo. At Middleburgh. — — *no date.*

All Ovid's Elegies, three Bookes. By C. M. At Middle-

* Among the Stationers' entries I find in 1594, "A booke entitled *Oenone and Paris*, wherein is deſcribed the extremity of love," &c. This may be a tranſlation from Ovid.

† This book was entered at Stationers' hall by Tho. Eaſte, July 1, 1577, and by Thomas Orwin in 1591.

‡ Among the entries in the books of the Stationers' company is the following. Henry Bynneman] July 1, 1577, Ovid's Invective againſt Ibis. Bought of Tho. Eaſte.

§ In the forty-firſt of Q. Eliz. theſe tranſlations from Ovid were commanded by the archbiſhop of Canterbury and the biſhop of London, to be burnt at Stationers' hall.

burgh.

burgh. 12mo. Somewhat larger than the preceding edition.

Ovidius Naſo, his Remedy of love, tranſlated and entituled to the youth of England, 4to. 1600

Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, by Fra. Beaumont, 4to. 1602

He likewiſe tranſlated a Part of the Remedy of Love. *There was another Tranſlation of the whole, by Sir Tho. Overbury, 8vo. without date*.*

PLAUTUS.

Menæchmi, by W. W. Lond †. — 1595

MARTIAL.

Flowers of Epigrams (from Martial particularly) by Tim. Kendall, 8vo ‡. — — 1577

TERENCE.

Terens in Englyſh, or the tranſlacyon out of Latin into Engliſh of the firſt comedy of Tyrens callyd Andria. *Suppoſed to be printed by J. Ruſtell* §.

Andria,

* On the books of the Stationers' company, Dec. 23, 1599, is entered, "Ovidius Naſo his Remedy of Love." Again, in the ſame year, "Ovydes Epiſtles in Engliſhe," and "Ovydes Metamorphoſis in Englyſhe."

† This piece was entered at Stationers' hall June 10th 1594. In 1520, viz. the 11th year of Hen. VIII. it appears from Holinſhed, that a comedy of Plautus was played before the king.

‡ Entered at Stationers' hall Feb. 1576.

§ As the following metrical introduction to this play, relates chiefly to the improvements at that time ſuppoſed to have been made in the Engliſh language, I could not prevail on myſelf to ſuppreſs it.

The Poet.

The famous renown through the worlde is ſprong
Of poetys ornate that usyd to indyte
Of dyvers matters in theyr moder tong
Some toke upon them tranſlacions to wryte
Some to compile bokys for theyr delyte
But in our Engliſh tong for to ſpeke playn
I rede but of few have take any gret payn.

Except

Andria, the firſt Comedy of Terence, by Maurice Kyffin, 4to. — — — 1588

Terence in Engliſh, by Richard Bernard, 4to. Cambridge*. — — 1598

Except maſter Gowre which furſt began
And of moralite wrote ryght craftely
Than maſter Chaucer that excellent man
Which wrote as compendious as elygantly
As in any other tong ever dyd any
Ludgate alſo which adournyd our tong
Whoſe noble famys through the world be ſprong.

By theſe men our tong is amplyfyed ſo
That we therin now tranſlate as well as may
As in eny other tongis other can do.
Yet the Greke tong and Laten dyvers men ſay
Have many wordys can not be Englyſhid this day
So lyke wyſe in Englyſh many wordys do habound
That no Greke nor Laten for them can be found.

And the cauſe that our tong is ſo plenteouſe now
For we kepe our Englyſh contynually
And of other tongis many wordis we borow
Which now for Englyſh we uſe and occupy
Theſe thingis have gyven corage gretly
To dyvers and ſpecyally now of late
To them that this comedy have tranſlate.

Which all diſcrete men now do beſech
And ſpecyally lernyd men to take no dyſdayn
Though this be compylyd in our vulgare ſpech
Yet lernyng thereby ſome men may attayn
For they that in this comedy have take payn
Pray you to correct where faut ſhal be found
And of our matter ſo here is the ground.

In the metrical peroration to this piece, is the following ſtanza:

Wherfore the tranſlatours now require you this
Yf ought be amys ye wold conſyder
The Englyſh almoſt as ſhort as the Latten is
And ſtill to kepe ryme a dyffycult matter
To make the ſentence opynly to appere
Which if it had a long expocyſion
Then were it a comment and no tranſlacyon.

* At Stationers' hall in 1597, "the ſecond comedy of Terence, called *Eunuchus*" was entered by W. Leake; and the firſt and ſecond comedie in 1600.

Flowers

Flowers of Terence, — — 1591

SENECA.

Seneca his Tenne Tragedies tranſlated into Engliſh by different Tranſlators, 4to. Lond. 1581*

Seneca's Forme and Rule of Honeſt Living, by Rob. Whyttington, 8vo. —— 1546

Seven Bookes of Benefyting†, by Arthur Golding, 4to. 1577

LUCAN.

Lucan's Firſt Booke, tranſlated line for line, by Chr. Marlow, 4to. Lond. Printed by P. Short for Walter Burre. — — 1600

LIVY.

Livius (Titus‡) and other Authores Hiſtorie of Annibal and Scippio, tranſlated into Engliſh, by Anthony Cope, Eſquier, B. L. 4to. Lond. — 1545

The Romane Hiſt. &c. by T. Livius of Padua. Alſo the Breviaries of L. Florus, &c. by D. Philemon Holland, fol. Lond. — — 1600

TACITUS.

The End of Nero and Beginning of Galba. Fower Bookes of the Hiſtories of Cornelius Tacitus. The Life of Agricola, by Sir Hen. Saville, 4to. Lond. 1591

Annales of Tacitus, by Richard Grenaway, fol. 1598

* In the firſt volume of the entries of the Stationers' company, Aug. 1579, Rich. Jones, and John Charlewood entered the 4th tragedie of Seneca. And again all the ten in 1581.

† In the firſt volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers' company is the following, "March 26. 1579, *Seneca de Beneficiis* in Engliſhe."

‡ In the firſt volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, anno 1597, is the following note: "Memorandum that Mr Alexander Nevill, Gent. is appointed to tranſlate *Titus Livius* into the Engliſh tongue: expreſſed, the ſame is not to be printed, by any man, but only ſuch as ſhall have his tranſlacion." Again, in 1598, "The hiſtory of Titus Livius" was entered by Adam Iſlip.

SALLUST.

SALLUST*

The Famous Cronycle of the Warre, which the Romyns had againſt Jugurth, &c. compyled in Lat. by the renowned Romayn Salluſt, &c. tranſlated into Engliſhe, by Sir Alex. Barclay Preeſt, &c. Printed by Pynſon, fol.

D°.

Lond. pr. by Joh. Waley, 4to. — 1557

The Conſpiracie of Lucius Cataline, tranſlated into Eng. by Tho. Paynell, 4to. Lond. 1541 and 1557

The two moſt Worthy and Notable Hiſtories, &c. Both written by C. C. Salluſtius, and tranſlated by Tho. Heywood, Lond. ſm. fol. — 1608

SUETONIUS.

Suetonius, tranſlated by D. Phil. Holland, fol. Lond. 1606†

CÆSAR‡.

Ceaſers Commentaries, as touching Britiſh affairs. Without name, printer, place, or date; but by the type it appears to be Raſtell's.

Ames, p. 148.

The eight Bookes of Caius Julius Cæſar, tranſlated by Arthur Golding, Gent. 4to. Lond. 1565 and 1590

Cæſar's Commentaries (de Bello Gallico) five Bookes, by Clement Edmundes, with Obſervations, &c. Fol. 1600

De Bello Civili. by D°. three Bookes. Fol. 1609

D°. by Chapman. — — 1604

JUSTIN.

The Hiſt. of Juſtine, &c. by A. G. [Arthur Golding] Lond. 4to. —— 1564 and 1578

D°. by Dr. Phil. Holland —— 1606

* A tranſlation of Salluſt was entered at Stationers' hall in 1588. Again, in 1607, "The hiſtorie of Salluſt in Engliſhe."

† This tranſlation was entered at Stationers' hall 1604.

‡ In the entries made in the books of the Stationers' company is the following,

"John Charelewood] Sept. 1581, Abſtracte of the hiſtorie of Cæſar and Pompeius."

D°. by G. W. with an Epitomie of the Lives, &c. of the Romaine Emperors, from Aurelius Victor, fol. 1606

Q. CURTIUS.

The Hiſtorie of Quintus Curtius, &c. tranſlated, &c. by John Brende, 4to. Lond. — — 1553

Others Editions were in 1561, 1584, 1570, 1592 *

EUTROPIUS.

Eutropius engliſhed, by Nic. Haward, 8vo. 1564

A. MARCELLINUS.

Ammianus Marcellinus, tranſlated by Dr. P. Holland. Lond. fol. — — — 1609

CICERO.

Cicero's Familiar Epiſtles by J. Webbe, ſm. 8vo. *no date*

Certain ſelect Epiſtles into Engliſh, by Abra. Flemming, 4to. Lond. — — 1576

Thoſe Fyve Queſtions which Marke Tullye Cicero diſputed in his Manor of Tuſculanum, &c. &c. Engliſhed by John Dolman, ſm. 8vo. Lond. 1561

† Marcus Tullius Cicero, three Bookes of Duties, tourned out of Latin into Engliſh, by Nic. Grimalde 1555, 1556, 1558, 1574

Ames ſays 1553; *perhaps by miſtake.*

The thre Bokes of Tullius Offyce, &c. tranſlated, &c. by R. Whyttington, Poet Laureat, 12mo. Lond. 1533, 1534, 1540, and 1553‡

* In the Stationers' books this or ſome other tranſlation of the ſame author was entered by Richard Tottell, Feb. 1582, and again by Tho' Creede, &c. 1599.

† Mattaire ſays [Ann. Typog. B. 5. 290.] "In floruleutâ tituli margunculâ (vulgo vignettee) ſuperiore, inſcribitur 1534." This was a wooden Block uſed by the Printer Tortel, for many Books in ſmall 8vo. and by no means determines their Date. There may however, have been ſome earlier tranſlation than any here enumerated, as in Sir Tho. Elyot's *Boke named the Governour*, 1557, is mentioned "the worke of Cicero, called in Latine *De Officiis*, whereunto yet is no *propre* Engliſh worde," &c.

‡ In the books belonging to Stationers' hall, "Tullies Offices in Latin and Engliſh" is entered Feb. 1582, for R. Tottell. Again, by Tho. Orwin, 1591.

The boke of Tulle of Old Age, tranſlated by Will. Wyrceſtre, alias Botaner. Caxton, 4to. 1481

De Senectute, by Whyttington, 8vo. *no date*

An Epiſtle or letter of exhortation written in Latyne by Marcus Tullius Cicero, to his brother Quintus, the Proconſul or Deputy of Aſia, wherein the office of a magiſtrate is cunningly and wiſely deſcribed; tranſlated into Englyſhe by G. G. ſet forth and authoriſed according to the Queenes Majeſties Injunctions. Prynted at London by Rouland Hall dwelling in Golding Lane, at the ſygne of the three arrows. ſmall. 8vo. — — 1561

The worthie Booke of Old Age, otherwiſe intitled The elder Cato, &c. 12mo *. Lond. 1569

Tullius Cicero on Old Age, by Tho. Newton, 8vo *. Lond. — — — 1569

Tullius Friendſhip, Olde Age, Paradoxe, and Scipio's Dream, by Tho. Newton, 4to. — 1577

Tullius de Amicitia, tranſlated into our maternal Englyſhe Tongue, by the E. of Worceſter. Printed by Caxton, with the Tranſlation of *De Senectute*, fol.

The Paradoxe of M. T. Cicero, &c. by Rob. Whyttington, Poet Laureat. Printed in Southwarke, 12mo. 1540

Webbe tranſlated all the ſixteen Books of Cicero's Epiſtles, but probably they were not printed together in Shakſpeare's Life-time. I ſuppoſe this, from a Paſſage in his Dedication, in which he ſeems to mean Bacon, *by a* Great Lord Chancellor.

BOETHIUS.

Boethius, by Chaucer. Printed by Caxton, fol.

Boethius in Engliſh Verſe, by Tho. Rychard. Imprinted in the exempt Monaſtery of Taviſtock, 4to. 1525

Eng. and Lat. by Geo. Colville, 4to. 1556†

** Theſe are perhaps the ſame as the two foregoing Tranſlations.

† In the Stationers' books Jan. 13th, 1608, Matthew Lownes entered "Anitius Manlius, Torquatus Severinus Boethius, a Chriſtian Conſul of Rome, newly tranſlated out of Latin, together with original notes explaining the obſcureſt places."

APULEIUS.

APULEIUS.

Apuleius's Golden Aſſe, tranſlated into Eng. by Wm. Adlington, 4to. Lond. — 1566 and 1571

FRONTINUS.

Stratagemes, Sleightes, and Policies of Warre, gathered by S. Julius Frontinus. Tranſlated by Richard Moriſine, 8vo. Printed by Tho. Berthelet 1539

PLINY JUNr.

Some ſelect Epiſtles of Pliny the Younger into Eng. by Abr. Flemming, 4to. Lond. — 1576

POMPONIUS MELA.

Pomponius Mela, by A. Golding, 4to. — 1590

PLINY.

Pliny's Nat. Hiſt. by Dr. Phil. Holland, fol.* 1601

SOLINUS.

Julius Solinus Polyhiſtor, by A. Golding, 4to. 1587

VEGETIUS

The four Bookes of Flavius Vegetius, concerning martial Policye, by John Sadler, 4to. 1572

RUTILIUS RUFUS.

A View of Valiaunce, tranſlated from Rutilius Rufus, by Tho. Newton, 8vo. — — 1580

DARES Phryg. and DICTYS Cret.

Dares and Dictys's Trojan War, in Verſe 1555

* There is an entry of this tranſlation in the books at Stationers' hall in 1595. Valentine Simes is the name of the printer who entered it. It is again entered by Clement Knight in 1600.

† On the books of the Stationers' company is this entry. "Adam Iſlip, 1600.] The xxxvii bookes of C. Plinius Secundus his hiſtorie of the worlde. To be tranſlated out of Latin into Englyſhe and ſo printed."

CATO

CATO, and P. SYRUS.

Caton tranſlated into Englyſhe by Mayſter Benet Burgh, &c. mentioned by Caxton.

Cathon [Parvus and Magnus] tranſl. &c. by Caxton 1483†

Preceptes of Cato, with Annotations of Eraſmus, &c. 24mo. Lond. — 1560 and 1562

*Catonis Diſticha, Latin and Engliſh, ſmall 8vo. Lond. 1553

Ames mentions a Diſcourſe of Human Nature, tranſlated from Hippocrates, p. 428; an Extract from Pliny, tranſlated from the French, p. 312; Æſop ‡, &c. by Caxton and others; and there is no doubt, but many Tranſlations at preſent unknown, may be gradually recovered, either by induſtry or accident.

* Probably this was never printed.

† There is an entry of *Caton* at Stationers' hall in 1591 by —— Adams, Eng. and Lat. Again, in the year 1591 by Tho. Orwin. Again, in 1605, "Four bookes of morall ſentences entituled Cato, tranſlated out of Latin into Engliſh by J. M. Maſter of Arts."

‡ "Æſop's Fables in Englyſhe" were entered May 7th 1590, on the books of the Stationers' company. Again, Oct. 1591, Again Eſop's Fables in Meter, Nov. 1598. Some few of them had been paraphraſed by Lydgate, and I believe are ſtill unpubliſhed. See the Brit. Muſ. MSS. Harl. 2251.

It is much to be lamented that *Andrew Maunſell*, a bookſeller in Lothbury, who publiſhed two parts of a catalogue of Engliſh printed books. fol. 1595, did not proceed to his third collection. This, according to his own account of it, would have conſiſted of "Grammar, Logick, and Rhetoricke, Lawe, Hiſtorie, Poetrie, Policie," &c. which, as he tells us, "for the moſt part concerne matters of delight and pleaſure."

MR. POPE'S

PREFACE.

IT is not my deſign to enter into a criticiſm upon this author; though to do it effectually, and not ſuperficially, would be the beſt occaſion that any juſt writer could take, to form the judgment and taſte of our nation. For of all Engliſh poets Shakeſpeare muſt be confeſſed to be the faireſt and fulleſt ſubject for criticiſm, and to afford the moſt numerous, as well as moſt conſpicuous inſtances, both of beauties and faults of all ſorts. But this far exceeds the bounds of a preface, the buſineſs of which is only to give an account of the fate of his works, and the diſadvantages under which they have been tranſmitted to us. We ſhall hereby extenuate many faults which are his, and clear him from the imputation of many which are not: a deſign, which, though it can be no guide to future criticks to do him juſtice in one way, will at leaſt be ſufficient to prevent their doing him an injuſtice in the other.

I cannot however but mention ſome of his principal and characteriſtick excellencies, for which (notwithſtanding his defects) he is juſtly and univerſally elevated above all other dramatick writers. Not that this is the proper place of praiſing him, but becauſe I would not omit any occaſion of doing it.

If ever any author deſerved the name of an *original*, it was Shakſpeare. Homer himſelf drew not his art ſo immediately from the fountains of nature, it proceeded through Ægyptian ſtrainers and channels, and came to him not without ſome tincture of the learning, or ſome caſt of the models, of thoſe before him. The poetry of Shakſpeare was inſpiration indeed: he is not ſo much an imitator, as an inſtrument, of nature; and it is not ſo juſt to ſay that he ſpeaks from her, as that ſhe ſpeaks through him.

His

His *characters* are ſo much nature herſelf, that it is a ſort of injury to call them by ſo diſtant a name as copies of her. Thoſe of other poets have a conſtant reſemblance, which ſhews that they received them from one another, and were but multipliers of the ſame image: each picture, like a mock-rainbow, is but the reflexion of a reflexion. But every ſingle character in Shakſpeare is as much an individual, as thoſe in life itſelf; it is as impoſſible to find any two alike; and ſuch as from their relation or affinity in any reſpect appear moſt to be twins, will, upon compariſon, be found remarkably diſtinct. To this life and variety of character, we muſt add the wonderful preſervation of it; which is ſuch throughout his plays, that had all the ſpeeches been printed without the very names of the perſons, I believe one might have applied them with certainty to every ſpeaker.

The *power* over our *paſſions* was never poſſeſſed in a more eminent degree, or diſplayed in ſo different inſtances. Yet all along, there is ſeen no labour, no pains to raiſe them; no preparation to guide our gueſs to the effect, or be perceived to lead toward it: but the heart ſwells, and the tears burſt out, juſt at the proper places: we are ſurpriſed the moment we weep; and yet upon reflexion find the paſſion ſo juſt, that we ſhould be ſurpriſed if we had not wept, and wept at that very moment.

How aſtoniſhing is it again, that the paſſions directly oppoſite to theſe, laughter and ſpleen, are no leſs at his command! that he is not more a maſter of the *great* than of the *ridiculous* in human nature; of our nobleſt tenderneſſes, than of our vaineſt foibles; of our ſtrongeſt emotions, than of our idleſt ſenſations!

Nor does he only excel in the paſſions: in the coolneſs of reflexion and reaſoning he is full as admirable. His *ſentiments* are not only in general the moſt pertinent and judicious upon every ſubject; but by a talent very peculiar, ſomething between penetration and felicity, he hits upon that particular point on which the bent of each argument turns, or the force of each motive depends. This is perfectly amazing, from a man of no education

or experience in thoſe great and publick ſcenes of life which are uſually the ſubject of his thoughts: ſo that he ſeems to have known the world by intuition, to have looked through human nature at one glance, and to be the only author that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the philoſopher, and even the man of the world, may be *born*, as well as the poet.

It muſt be owned, that with all theſe great excellencies, he has almoſt as great defects; and that as he has certainly written better, ſo he has perhaps written worſe than any other. But I think I can in ſome meaſure account for theſe defects, from ſeveral cauſes and accidents; without which it is hard to imagine that ſo large and ſo enlightened a mind could ever have been ſuſceptible of them. That all theſe contingencies ſhould unite to his diſadvantage ſeems to me almoſt as ſingularly unlucky, as that ſo many various (nay contrary) talents ſhould meet in one man, was happy and extraordinary.

It muſt be allowed that ſtage-poetry, of all other, is more particularly levelled to pleaſe the *populace*, and its ſucceſs more immediately depending upon the *common ſuffrage*. One cannot therefore wonder, if Shakſpeare, having at his firſt appearance no other aim in his writings than to procure a ſubſiſtence, directed his endeavours ſolely to hit the taſte and humour that then prevailed. The audience was generally compoſed of the meaner ſort of people; and therefore the images of life were to be drawn from thoſe of their own rank: accordingly we find, that not our author's only, but almoſt all the old comedies have their ſcene among *tradeſmen* and *mechanicks*: and even their hiſtorical plays ſtrictly follow the common *old ſtories* or *vulgar traditions* of that kind of people. In tragedy, nothing was ſo ſure to *ſurprize* and cauſe *admiration*, as the moſt ſtrange, unexpected, and conſequently moſt unnatural, events and incidents; the moſt exaggerated thoughts; the moſt verboſe and bombaſt expreſſion; the moſt pompous rhymes, and thundering verſification. In comedy, nothing was ſo ſure to *pleaſe*, as mean buffoonry, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly

mannerly jeſts of fools and clowns. Yet even in theſe our author's wit buoys up, and is borne above his ſubject: his genius in thoſe low parts is like ſome prince of a romance in the diſguiſe of a ſhepherd or peaſant; a certain greatneſs and ſpirit now and then break out, which manifeſt his higher extraction and qualities.

It may be added, that not only the common audience had no notion of the rules of writing, but few even of the better ſort piqued themſelves upon any great degree of knowledge or nicety that way; till Ben Jonſon getting poſſeſſion of the ſtage, brought critical learning into vogue: and that this was not done without difficulty, may appear from thoſe frequent leſſons (and indeed almoſt declamations) which he was forced to prefix to his firſt plays, and put into the mouth of his actors, the *grex*, *chorus*, &c. to remove the prejudices, and inform the judgment of his hearers. Till then, our authors had no thoughts of writing on the model of the ancients: their tragedies were only hiſtories in dialogue; and their comedies followed the thread of any novel as they found it, no leſs implicitly than if it had been true hiſtory.

To judge therefore of Shakſpeare by Ariſtotle's rules, is like trying a man by the laws of one country, who acted under thoſe of another. He writ to the *people*; and writ at firſt without patronage from the better ſort, and therefore without aims of pleaſing them: without aſſiſtance or advice from the learned, as without the advantage of education or acquaintance among them: without that knowledge of the beſt models, the ancients, to inſpire him with an emulation of them; in a word, without any views of reputation, and of what poets are pleaſed to call immortality: ſome or all of which have encouraged the vanity, or animated the ambition, of other writers.

Yet it muſt be obſerved, that when his performances had merited the protection of his prince, and when the encouragement of the court had ſucceeded to that of the town; the works of his riper years are manifeſtly raiſed above thoſe of his former. The dates of his plays ſuffi-

ciently evidence that his productions improved, in proportion to the reſpect he had for his auditors. And I make no doubt this obſervation would be found true in every inſtance, were but editions extant from which we might learn the exact time when every piece was compoſed, and whether writ for the town, or the court.

Another cauſe (and no leſs ſtrong than the former) may be deduced from our author's being a *player*, and forming himſelf firſt upon the judgments of that body of men whereof he was a member. They have ever had a ſtandard to themſelves, upon other principles than thoſe of Ariſtotle. As they live by the majority, they know no rule but that of pleaſing the preſent humour, and complying with the wit in faſhion; a conſideration which brings all their judgment to a ſhort point. Players are juſt judges of what is *right*, as taylors are of what is *graceful*. And in this view it will be but fair to allow, that moſt of our author's faults are leſs to be aſcribed to his wrong judgment as a poet, than to his right judgment as a player.

By theſe men it was thought a praiſe to Shakſpeare, that he ſcarce ever *blotted a line*. This they induſtriouſly propagated, as appears from what we are told by Ben Jonſon in his *Diſcoveries*, and from the preface of *Heminge* and *Condell* to the firſt folio edition. But in reality (however it has prevailed) there never was a more groundleſs report, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences. As, the comedy of *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, which he entirely new writ; *The Hiſtory of Henry the Sixth*, which was firſt publiſhed under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaſter*; and that *of Henry the Fifth*, extremely improved; that of *Hamlet* enlarged to almoſt as much again as at firſt, and many others. I believe the common opinion of his want of learning proceeded from no better ground. This too might be thought a praiſe by ſome, and to this his errors have as injudiciouſly been aſcribed by others. For it is certain, were it true, it could concern but a ſmall part of them; the moſt are ſuch as are not properly defects, but ſuperfœtations: and ariſe not from want of learning

learning or reading, but from want of thinking or judging: or rather (to be more juſt to our author) from a compliance to thoſe wants in others. As to a wrong choice of the ſubject, a wrong conduct of the incidents, falſe thoughts, forced expreſſions, &c. if theſe are not to be aſcribed to the foreſaid accidental reaſons, they muſt be charged upon the poet himſelf, and there is no help for it. But I think the two diſadvantages which I have mentioned (to be obliged to pleaſe the loweſt of the people, and to keep the worſt of company) if the conſideration be extended as far as it reaſonably may, will appear ſufficient to miſlead and depreſs the greateſt genius upon earth. Nay, the more modeſty with which ſuch a one is endued, the more he is in danger of ſubmitting and conforming to others, againſt his own better judgment.

But as to his *want of learning*, it may be neceſſary to ſay ſomething more: there is certainly a vaſt difference between *learning* and *languages*. How far he was ignorant of the latter, I cannot determine; but it is plain he had much reading at leaſt, if they will not call it learning. Nor is it any great matter, if a man has knowledge, whether he has it from one language or from another. Nothing is more evident than that he had a taſte of natural philoſophy, mechanicks, ancient and modern hiſtory, poetical learning, and mythology: we find him very knowing in the cuſtoms, rites, and manners of antiquity. In *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæſar*, not only the ſpirit, but manners, of the Romans are exactly drawn; and ſtill a nicer diſtinction is ſhewn between the manners of the Romans in the time of the former, and of the latter. His reading in the ancient hiſtorians is no leſs conſpicuous, in many references to particular paſſages: and the ſpeeches copied from Plutarch in *Coriolanus* * may, I think, as well be made an inſtance of his learning, as thoſe copied from Cicero in *Catiline*, of Ben Jonſon's. The manners of other nations in general, the Egyptians, Venetians, French, &c. are drawn with

* Theſe, as the reader will find in the notes on that play, Shakſpeare drew from Sir Thomas North's Tranſlation, 1579. MALONE.

equal propriety. Whatever object of nature, or branch of ſcience, he either ſpeaks of or deſcribes, it is always with competent, if not extenſive knowledge: his deſcriptions are ſtill exact; all his metaphors appropriated, and remarkably drawn from the true nature and inherent qualities of each ſubject. When he treats of ethick or politick, we may conſtantly obſerve a wonderful juſtneſs of diſtinction, as well as extent of comprehenſion. No one is more a maſter of the poetical ſtory, or has more frequent alluſions to the various parts of it: Mr. Waller (who has been celebrated for this laſt particular) has not ſhewn more learning this way than Shakſpeare. We have tranſlations from *Ovid* publiſhed in his name*, *among thoſe poems which paſs for his, and for ſome of* which we have undoubted authority (being publiſhed by himſelf, and dedicated to his noble patron the earl of Southampton): he appears alſo to have been converſant in *Plautus*, from whom he has taken the plot of one of his plays: he follows the Greek authors, and particularly Dares Phrygius, in another: (although I will not pretend to ſay in what language he read them). The modern Italian writers of *novels* he was manifeſtly acquainted with; and we may conclude him to be no leſs converſant with the ancients of his own country, from the uſe he has made of Chaucer in *Troilus and Creſſida*, and in *The Two Noble Kinſmen*, if that play be his, as there goes a tradition it was (and indeed it has little reſemblance of Fletcher, and more of our author than ſome of thoſe which have been received as genuine).

I am inclined to think this opinion proceeded originally from the zeal of the partizans of our author and Ben Jonſon; as they endeavoured to exalt the one at the expence of the other. It is ever the natute of parties to be in extremes; and nothing is ſo probable, as that becauſe Ben Jonſon had much the more learning, it was ſaid on the one hand that Shakſpeare had none at all; and becauſe Shakſpeare had much the moſt wit and

* They were written by Thomas Heywood. See Vol. X. p. 321, n. 1. MALONE.

fancy,

fancy, it was retorted on the other, that Jonſon wanted both. Becauſe Shakſpeare borrowed nothing, it was ſaid that Ben Jonſon borrowed every thing. Becauſe Jonſon did not write extempore, he was reproached with being a year about every piece; and becauſe Shakſpeare wrote with eaſe and rapidity, they cried, he never once made a blot. Nay, the ſpirit of oppoſition ran ſo high, that whatever thoſe of the one ſide objected to the other, was taken at the rebound, and turned into praiſes; as injudiciouſly, as their antagoniſts before had made them objections.

Poets are always afraid of envy; but ſure they have as much reaſon to be afraid of admiration. They are the Scylla and Charybdis of authors; thoſe who eſcape one, often fall by the other. *Peſſimum genus inimicorum laudantes*, ſays Tacitus; and Virgil deſires to wear a charm againſt thoſe who praiſe a poet without rule or reaſon.

—ſi ultra placitum laudârit, baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat—.

But however this contention might be carried on by the partizans on either ſide, I cannot help thinking theſe two great poets were good friends, and lived on amicable terms, and in offices of ſociety with each other. It is an knowledged fact, that Ben Jonſon was introduced upon the ſtage, and his firſt works encouraged, by Shakſpeare. And after his death, that author writes, *To the memory of his beloved William Shakſpeare*, which ſhews as if the friendſhip had continued through life. I cannot for my own part find any thing *invidious* or *ſparing* in thoſe verſes, but wonder Mr. Dryden was of that opinion. He exalts him not only above all his contemporaries, but above Chaucer and Spenſer, whom he will not allow to be great enough to be ranked with him; and challenges the names of Sophocles, Euripides, and Æſchylus, nay, all Greece and Rome at once, to equal him: and (which is very particular) expreſsly vindicates him from the imputation of wanting *art*, not enduring that all his excellencies ſhould be attributed to *nature*. It is remarkable too, that the praiſe he gives him in his

his *Diſcoveries* ſeems to proceed from a *perſonal kindneſs*; he tells us, that he loved the man, as well as honoured his memory; celebrates the honeſty, openneſs, and frankneſs of his temper; and only diſtinguiſhes, as he reaſonably ought, between the real merit of the author, and the ſilly and derogatory applauſes of the players. Ben Jonſon might indeed be ſparing in his commendations (though certainly he is not ſo in this inſtance) partly from his own nature, and partly from judgment. For men of judgment think they do any man more ſervice in praiſing him juſtly, than laviſhly. I ſay, I would fain believe they were friends, though the violence and ill-breeding of their followers and flatterers were enough to give riſe to the contrary report. I hope that it may be with *parties*, both in wit and ſtate, as with thoſe monſters deſcribed by the poets; and that their *heads* at leaſt may have ſomething human, though their *bodies* and *tails* are wild beaſts and ſerpents.

As I believe that what I have mentioned gave riſe to the opinion of Shakſpeare's want of learning; ſo what has continued it down to us may have been the many blunders and illiteracies of the firſt publiſhers of his works. In theſe editions their ignorance ſhines in almoſt every page; nothing is more common than *Actus tertia. Exit omnes. Enter three Witches ſolus**. Their French is as bad as their Latin, both in conſtruction and ſpelling: their very Welſh is falſe. Nothing is more likely than that thoſe palpable blunders of Hector's quoting Ariſtotle, with others of that groſs kind, ſprung from the ſame root: it not being at all credible that theſe could be the errors of any man who had the leaſt tincture of a ſchool, or the leaſt converſation with ſuch as had. Ben Jonſon (whom they will not think partial to him) allows him at leaſt to have had *ſome* Latin; which is utterly inconſiſtent with miſtakes like theſe. Nay, the conſtant blunders in proper names of perſons and places,

* *Enter three witches ſolus.*] This blunder appears to be of Mr. Pope's own invention. It is not to be found in any one of the four folio copies of Macbeth, and there is no quarto edition of it extant. STEEVENS.

are

are ſuch as muſt have proceeded from a man, who had not ſo much as read any hiſtory in any language: ſo could not be Shakſpeare's.

I ſhall now lay before the reader ſome of thoſe almoſt innumerable errors, which have riſen from one ſource, the ignorance of the players, both as his actors, and as his editors. When the nature and kinds of theſe are enumerated and conſidered, I dare to ſay that not Shakſpeare only, but Ariſtotle or Cicero, had their works undergone the ſame fate, might have appeared to want ſenſe as well as learning.

It is not certain that any one of his plays was publiſhed by himſelf. During the time of his employment in the theatre, ſeveral of his pieces were printed ſeparately in quarto. What makes me think that moſt of theſe were not publiſhed by him, is the exceſſive careleſſneſs of the preſs: every page is ſo ſcandalouſly falſe ſpelled, and almoſt all the learned or unuſual words ſo intolerably mangled, that it is plain there either was no corrector to the preſs at all, or one totally illiterate. If any were ſuperviſed by himſelf, I ſhould fancy *The Two Parts of Henry the Fourth*, and *Midſummer-Night's Dream* might have been ſo: becauſe I find no other printed with any exactneſs; and (contrary to the reſt) there is very little variation in all the ſubſequent editions of them. There are extant two prefaces to the firſt quarto edition of *Troilus and Creſſida* in 1609, and to that of *Othello*; by which it appears, that the firſt was publiſhed without his knowledge or conſent, and even before it was acted, ſo late as ſeven or eight years before he died: and that the latter was not printed till after his death. The whole number of genuine plays, which we have been able to find printed in his life-time, amounts but to eleven. And of ſome of theſe, we meet with two or more editions by different printers, each of which has whole heaps of traſh different from the other: which I ſhould fancy was occaſioned by their being taken from different copies belonging to different play-houſes.

The folio edition (in which all the plays we now receive as his were firſt collected) was publiſhed by two

players, Heminge and Condell, in 1623, ſeven years after his deceaſe. They declare, that all the other editions were ſtolen and ſurreptitious, and affirm theirs to be purged from the errors of the former. This is true as to the literal errors, and no other; for in all reſpects elſe it is far worſe than the quartos.

Firſt, becauſe the additions of trifling and bombaſt paſſages are in this edition far more numerous. For whatever had been added, ſince thoſe quartos, by the actors, or had ſtolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all ſtand charged upon the author. He himſelf complained of this uſage in *Hamlet*, where he wiſhes that *thoſe who play the clowns would ſpeak no more than is ſet down for them*. (Act III. ſc. iv.) But as a proof that he could not eſcape it, in the old editions of *Romeo and Juliet* there is no hint of a great number of the mean conceits and ribaldries now to be found there. In others, the low ſcenes of mobs, plebeians, and clowns, are vaſtly ſhorter than at preſent: and I have ſeen one in particular (which ſeems to have belonged to the play-houſe, by having the parts divided with lines, and the actors names in the margin) where ſeveral of thoſe very paſſages were added in a written hand, which are ſince to be found in the folio.

In the next place, a number of beautiful paſſages, which are extant in the firſt ſingle editions, are omitted in this: as it ſeems, without any other reaſon, than their willingneſs to ſhorten ſome ſcenes: theſe men (as it was ſaid of Procruſtes) either lopping, or ſtretching an author, to make him juſt fit for their ſtage.

This edition is ſaid to be printed from the *original copies*; I believe they meant thoſe which had lain ever ſince the author's days in the play-houſe, and had from time to time been cut, or added to, arbitrarily. It appears that this edition, as well as the quartos, was printed (at leaſt partly) from no better copies than the *prompter's book*, or *piece-meal parts* written out for the uſe of the actors: for in ſome places their very

very * names are through careleſſneſs ſet down inſtead of the *Perſonæ Dramatis*; and in others the notes of direction to the *property-men* for their *moveables*, and to the *players* for their *entries*, are inſerted into the text † through the ignorance of the tranſcribers.

The plays not having been before ſo much as diſtinguiſhed by *Acts* and *Scenes*, they are in this edition divided according as they played them; often when there is no pauſe in the action, or where they thought fit to make a breach in it, for the ſake of muſick, maſques, or monſters.

Sometimes the ſcenes are tranſpoſed and ſhuffled backward and forward; a thing which could no otherwiſe happen, but by their being taken from ſeparate and piece-meal written parts.

Many verſes are omitted entirely, and others tranſpoſed; from whence invincible obſcurities have ariſen, paſt the gueſs of any commentator to clear up, but juſt where the accidental glimpſe of an old edition enlightens us.

Some characters were confounded and mixed, or two put into one, for want of a competent number of actors. Thus in the quarto edition of *Midſummer-Night's Dream*, Act V. Shakſpeare introduces a kind of maſter of the revels called *Philoſtrate*; all whoſe part is given to another character (that of *Egeus*) in the ſubſequent editions: ſo alſo in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. This too makes it probable that the prompter's books were what they called the original copies.

* *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act II. *Enter Prince Leonato, Claudio, and Jack Wilſon*, inſtead of *Balthaſar*. And in Act IV. *Cowley and Kemp conſtantly through a whole ſcene.*
Edit. fol. of 1623, and 1632. POPE.

† Such as,
"*My queen is* murder'd! *Ring the little bell.*"
"—His noſe grew as ſharp as a pen, *and a table of green fields*;" which laſt words are not in the quarto. POPE.
There is no ſuch line in any play of Shakſpeare, as that quoted above by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

From

From liberties of this kind, many ſpeeches alſo were put into the mouths of wrong perſons, where the author now ſeems chargeable with making them ſpeak out of character: or ſometimes perhaps for no better reaſon, than that a governing player, to have the mouthing of ſome favourite ſpeech himſelf, would ſnatch it from the unworthy lips of an underling.

Proſe from verſe they did not know, and they accordingly printed one for the other throughout the volume.

Having been forced to ſay ſo much of the players, I think I ought in juſtice to remark, that the judgment, as well as condition of that claſs of people was then far inferior to what it is in our days. As then the beſt playhouſes were inns and taverns, (the Globe, the Hope, the Red Bull, the Fortune, &c.) ſo the top of the profeſſion were then mere players, not gentlemen of the ſtage: they were led into the buttery by the ſteward *, not placed at the lord's table, or lady's toilette: and conſequently were entirely deprived of thoſe advantages they now enjoy in the familiar converſation of our nobility, and an intimacy (not to ſay dearneſs) with people of the firſt condition.

From what has been ſaid, there can be no queſtion but had Shakſpeare publiſhed his works himſelf (eſpecially in his latter time, and after his retreat from the ſtage) we ſhould not only be certain which are genuine, but ſhould find in thoſe that are, the errors leſſened by ſome thouſands. If I may judge from all the diſtinguiſhing marks of his ſtile, and his manner of thinking and writing, I make no doubt to declare that thoſe wretched

* Mr. Pope probably recollected the following lines in the *Taming of the Shrew*, ſpoken by a Lord, who is giving directions to his ſervant concerning ſome players:

"Go, firrah, take them to the *buttery*,
"And give them friendly welcome, every one."

But he ſeems not to have obſerved that the players here introduced were *ſtrollers*; and there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe that our authour, Heminge, Burbage, Lowin, &c. who were licenſed by K. James, were treated in this manner. MALONE.

plays,

plays, *Pericles*, *Locrine*, *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, *Yorkſhire Tragedy*, *Lord Cromwell*, *The Puritan*, *London Prodigal*, and a thing called *The Double Falſhood*, cannot be admitted as his. And I ſhould conjecture of ſome of the others, (particularly *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Comedy of Errors*, and *Titus Andronicus*,) that only ſome characters, ſingle ſcenes, or perhaps a few particular paſſages, were of his hand. It is very probable what occaſioned ſome plays to be ſuppoſed Shakſpeare's, was only this; that they were pieces produced by unknown authors, or fitted up for the theatre while it was under his adminiſtration; and no owner claiming them, they were adjudged to him, as they give ſtrays to the lord of the manor: a miſtake which (one may alſo obſerve) it was not for the intereſt of the houſe to remove. Yet the players themſelves, Heminge and Condell, afterwards did Shakſpeare the juſtice to reject thoſe eight plays in their edition; though they were then printed in his name*, in every body's hands, and acted with ſome applauſe (as we learned from what Ben Jonſon ſays of *Pericles* in his ode on the *New Inn*). That *Titus Andronicus* is one of this claſs I am the rather induced to believe, by finding the ſame author openly expreſs his contempt of it in the *Induction* to *Bartholomew-Fair*, in the year 1614, when Shakſpeare was yet living. And there is no better authority for theſe latter ſort, than for the former, which were equally publiſhed in his life-time.

If we give into this opinion, how many low and vicious parts and paſſages might no longer reflect upon this great genius, but appear unworthily charged upon him? And even in thoſe which are really his, how many faults may have been unjuſtly laid to his account from arbitrary additions, expunctions, tranſpoſitions of ſcenes and lines, confuſion of characters and perſons, wrong application of ſpeeches, corruptions of innumerable paſſages by the ignorance, and wrong corrections of them again by the impertinence, of his firſt editors? From one or other of

* His name was affixed only to four of them. MALONE.

theſe

theſe conſiderations, I am verily perſuaded, that the greateſt and the groſſeſt part of what are thought his errors would vaniſh, and leave his character in a light very different from that diſadvantageous one, in which it now appears to us.

This is the ſtate in which Shakſpeare's writings lie at preſent; for ſince the above-mentioned folio edition, all the reſt have implicitly followed it, without having recourſe to any of the former, or ever making the compariſon between them. It is impoſſible to repair the injuries already done him; too much time has elapſed, and the materials are too few. In what I have done I have rather given a proof of my willingneſs and deſire, than of my ability, to do him juſtice. I have diſcharged the dull duty of an editor, to my beſt judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks, with a religious abhorrence of all innovation, and without any indulgence to my private ſenſe or conjecture. The method taken in this edition will ſhew itſelf. The various readings are fairly put in the margin, ſo that every one may compare them; and thoſe I have preferred into the text are conſtantly *ex fide codicum*, upon authority. The alterations or additions, which Shakſpeare himſelf made, are taken notice of as they occur. Some ſuſpected paſſages, which are exceſſively bad (and which ſeem interpolations by being ſo inſerted, that one can entirely omit them without any chaſm, or deficience in the context) are degraded to the bottom of the page; with an aſteriſk referring to the places of their inſertion. The ſcenes are marked ſo diſtinctly, that every removal of place is ſpecified; which is more neceſſary in this author than any other, ſince he ſhifts them more frequently; and ſometimes, without attending to this particular, the reader would have met with obſcurities. The more obſolete or unuſual words are explained Some of the moſt ſhining paſſages are diſtinguiſhed by commas in the margin; and where the beauty lay not in particulars, but in the whole, a ſtar is prefixed to the ſcene. This ſeems to me a ſhorter and leſs oſtentatious method of performing the better half of criticiſm (namely, the pointing out

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the author's excellencies) than to fill a whole paper with citations of fine paſſages, with *general applauſes*, or *empty exclamations* at the tail of them. There is alſo ſubjoined a catalogue of thoſe firſt editions, by which the greater part of the various readings and of the corrected paſſages are authorized; moſt of which are ſuch as carry their own evidence along with them. Theſe editions now hold the place of originals, and are the only materials left to repair the deficiencies or reſtore the corrupted ſenſe of the author: I can only wiſh that a greater number of them (if a greater were ever publiſhed) may yet be found, by a ſearch more ſucceſsful than mine, for the better accompliſhment of this end.

I will conclude by ſaying of Shakſpeare, that with all his faults, and with all the irregularity of his *drama*, one may look upon his works, in compariſon of thoſe that are more finiſhed and regular, as upon an ancient majeſtick piece of *Gothick* architecture, compared with a neat modern building: the latter is more elegant and glaring, but the former is more ſtrong and more ſolemn. It muſt be allowed that in one of theſe there are materials enough to make many of the other. It has much the greater variety, and much the nobler apartments; though we are often conducted to them by dark, odd, and uncouth paſſages. Nor does the whole fail to ſtrike us with greater reverence, though many of the parts are childiſh, ill-placed, and unequal to its grandeur.

THE

DEDICATION OF THE PLAYERS.

TO THE

MOST NOBLE AND INCOMPARABLE PAIRE OF BRETHREN,

W I L L I A M

Earle of PEMBROKE, &c. Lord Chamberlaine to the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſtie;

AND

P H I L I P

Earle of MONTGOMERY, &c. Gentleman of his Majeſties Bed-chamber.

Both Knights of the Moſt Noble Order of the Garter, and our ſingular good LORDS.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

WHILST we ſtudie to be thankfull in our particular, for the many favors we have receiv'd from your L. L. we are falne upon the ill fortune, to mingle two the moſt diverſe things that can be, feare, and raſhneſſe; raſhneſſe in the enterprize, and feare of the ſucceſſe. For, when we value the places your H. H. ſuſtaine, wee cannot but know the dignity greater, than to deſcend to the reading of theſe trifles: and, while we name them trifles, we have deprived ourſelves of the defence of our dedication. But ſince your L. L. have been pleaſed to thinke theſe trifles ſomething, heeretofore; and have proſequ'ted both them, and their authour liv-ing, with ſo much favour; we hope that (they out-living him, and he not haying the fate, common with ſome, to be exequutor to his owne writings) you will uſe the ſame indulgence toward them, you have done unto their parent. There is a great difference, whether any booke chooſe his patrones, or finde them: this hath done both. For,

For, ſo much were your L. L. likings of the ſeveral parts, when they were acted, as before they were publiſhed, the volume aſked to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphanes, guardians; without ambition either of ſelfe-profit, or fame: onely to keepe the memory of ſo worthy a friend, and fellow alive, as was our SHAKSPEARE, by humble offer of his playes, to your moſt noble patronage. Wherein, as we have juſtly obſerved no man to come neere your L. L. but with a kind of religious addreſſe, it hath bin the height of our care, who are the preſenters, to make the preſent worthy of your H. H. by the perfection. But, there we muſt alſo crave our abilities to be conſidered, my Lords. We cannot goe beyond our owne powers. Country hands reach forth milke, creame, fruits, or what they have: and many nations (we have heard) that had not gummes and incenſe, obtained their requeſts with a leavened cake*. It was no fault to approach their gods by what meanes they could: and the moſt, though meaneſt, of things are made more precious, when they are dedicated to temples. In that name therefore, we moſt humbly conſecrate to your H. H. theſe remaines of your ſervant SHAKSPEARE; that what delight is in them may be ever your L. L. the reputation his, and the faults ours, if any be committed, by a paire ſo carefull to ſhew their gratitude both to the living, and the dead, as is

Your Lordſhippes moſt bounden,

JOHN HEMINGE,
HENRY CONDELL.

Country hands reach forth milk, &c. *and many nations—that had not gummes and* incenſe, *obtained their requeſts with a leavened cake.*] This ſeems to have been one of the common places of dedication in Shakſpeare's age. We find it in Morley's Dedication of a Book of Songs to Sir Robert Cecil, 1595: "I have preſumed" (ſays he) "to make offer of theſe ſimple compoſitions of mine, imitating (right honourable) in this the cuſtoms of the old world, who wanting *incenſe* to offer up to their gods, made ſhift inſteade thereof to honour them with *milk*." The ſame thought (if I recollect right) is again employed by the players in their dedication of Fletcher's plays, folio, 1647. MALONE.

THE PREFACE OF THE PLAYERS.

TO THE GREAT VARIETY OF READERS

FROM the moſt able, to him that can but ſpell: there you are numbered, we had rather you were weighed. Eſpecially, when the fate of all bookes depends upon your capacities: and not of your heads alone, but of your purſes. Well! it is now publique, and you will ſtand for your priviledges, wee know: to read, and cenſure. Doe ſo, but buy it firſt. That doth beſt commend a booke, the ſtationer ſaies. Then, how odde ſoever your braines be, or your wiſedomes, make your licence the ſame, and ſpare not. Judge your ſixe-pen'orth, your ſhillings worth, your five ſhillings worth at a time, or higher, ſo you riſe to the juſt rates, and welcome. But, whatever you doe, buy. Cenſure will not drive a trade, or make the jacke goe. And though you be a magiſtrate of wit, and ſit on the ſtage at Black-friars, or the Cock-pit, to arraigne plays dailie, know, theſe playes have had their triall already, and ſtood out all appeales; and do now come forth quitted rather by a decree of court, than any purchaſed letters of commendation.

It had bene a thing, we confeſſe, worthie to have been wiſhed, that the author himſelfe had lived to have ſet forth, and overſeen his owne writings; but ſince it hath been ordained otherwiſe, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you doe not envie his friends the office of their care and paine, to have collected and publiſhed them; and ſo to have publiſhed them, as where (before) you were abuſed with divers ſtolne and ſurreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and ſtealthes of injurious impoſtors, that expoſed them, even

* —*as* where—] i. e. whereas. [MALONE.

thoſe

thoſe are now offered to your view cured, and perfect of their limbes; and all the reſt, abſolute in their numbers as he conceived them: who, as he was a happy imitator of nature, was a moſt gentle expreſſer of it. His mind and hand went together; and what he thought, he uttered with that eaſineſſe, that wee have ſcarce received from him a blot in his papers. But it is not our province, who onely gather his workes, and give them you, to praiſe him. It is yours that reade him. And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will finde enough, both to draw, and hold you: for his wit can no more lie hid, then it could be loſt. Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe: and if then you doe not like him, ſurely you are in ſome manifeſt danger, not to underſtand him. And ſo we leave you to other of his friends, who, if you need, can bee your guides: if you neede them not, you can leade yourſelves, and others. And ſuch readers we wiſh him.

JOHN HEMINGE,
HENRIE CONDELL.

SOME

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WRITTEN BY MR. ROWE.

IT ſeems to be a kind of reſpect due to the memory of excellent men, eſpecially of thoſe whom their wit and learning have made famous, to deliver ſome account of themſelves, as well as their works, to poſterity. For this reaſon, how fond do we ſee ſome people of diſcovering any little perſonal ſtory of the great men of antiquity! their families, the common accidents of their lives, and even their ſhape, make, and features, have been the ſubject of critical inquiries. How *trifling ſoever this curioſity* may ſeem to be, it is certainly very natural; and we are hardly ſatisfied with an account of any remarkable perſon, till we have heard him deſcribed even to the very cloaths he wears. As for what relates to men of letters, the knowledge of an author may ſometimes conduce to the better underſtanding his book; and though the works of Mr. Shakſpeare may ſeem to many not to want a comment, yet I fancy ſome little account of the man himſelf may not be thought improper to go along with them.

He was the ſon of Mr John Shakſpeare, and was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickſhire, in April 1564. His family, as appears by the regiſter and publick writings relating to that town, were of good figure and faſhion there, and are mentioned as gentlemen. His father, who was a conſiderable dealer in wool [1], had ſo large a family, ten children in all, that though he was his

[1] *His father, who was a conſiderable dealer in wool,*—] It appears that he had been officer and bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon; and that he enjoyed ſome hereditary lands and tenements, the reward of his grandfather's faithful and approved ſervices to King Henry VII. See the Extract from the Herald's Office. THEOBALD.

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his eldeſt ſon, he could give him no better education than his own employment. He had bred him, it is true,

The chief magiſtrate of the Body Corporate of Stratford, now diſtinguiſhed by the title of Mayor, was in the early charters called the High Bailiff. This office Mr. John Shakſpeare filled in 1569, as appears from the following extracts from the books of the corporation, with which I have been favoured by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon.

"Jan. 10, in the 6th year of the reign of our ſovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, John Shakſpeare paſſed his Chamberlain's accounts.

"At the Hall holden the eleventh day of September, in the eleventh year of the reign of our ſovereign lady Elizabeth, 1569, were preſent Mr. John Shakſpeare, High Bailiff." [Then follow the names of the Aldermen and Burgeſſes.]

"At the Hall holden Nov. 19th, in the 21ſt year of the reign of our ſovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, it is ordained, that every Alderman ſhall be taxed to pay weekly 4d. ſaving *John Shakſpeare* and Robert Bruce, who ſhall not be taxed to pay any thing; and every burgeſs to pay 2d."

"At the Hall holden on the 6th day of September, in the 28th year of our ſovereign lady Queen Elizabeth.

"At this hall William Smith and Richard Courte are choſen to be Aldermen in the places of John Wheler, and John Shakſpere, for that Mr. Wheler doth deſire to be put out of the company, and Mr. Shakſpere doth not come to the halls, when they be warned, nor hath not done of long time."

From theſe extracts it may be collected, (as is obſerved by the gentleman above-mentioned, to whoſe obliging attention to my inquiries I am indebted for many particulars relative to our poet's family,) that Mr. John Shakſpeare in the former part of his life was in good circumſtances, ſuch perſons being generally choſen into the corporation; and from his being excuſed [in 1579] to pay 4d. weekly, and at a ſubſequent period (1586) put out of the corporation, that he was then reduced in his circumſtances.

It appears from a note to W. Dethick's Grant of Arms to him in 1596, now in the College of Arms, *Vincent*, Vol. 157, p. 24, that he was a juſtice of the peace, and poſſeſſed of lands and tenements to the amount of 500l.

Our poet's mother was the daughter and heir of Robert Arden of Wellingcote, in the county of Warwick, who, in the Mſ. above referred to, is called "a gentleman of worſhip." The family of *Arden* is a very ancient one; Robert Arden of Bromwich, eſq. being in the liſt of the gentry of this county, returned by the commiſſioners in the twelfth year of King Henry VI. A.D. 1433. Edward Arden was Sheriff of the county in 1568.—The woodland part of this county was anciently called *Arderne*; afterwards ſoftened to *Arden*. Hence the name. MALONE.

for ſome time at a free-ſchool [2], where, it is probable, he acquired what Latin he was maſter of: but the narrowneſs of his circumſtances, and the want of his aſſiſtance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language. It is without controverſy, that in his works we ſcarce find any traces of any thing that looks like an imitation of the ancients. The delicacy of his taſte, and the natural bent of his own great genius, (equal, if not ſuperior, to ſome of the beſt of theirs,) would certainly have led him to read and ſtudy them with ſo much pleaſure, that ſome of their fine images would naturally have inſinuated themſelves into, and been mixed with his own writings; ſo that his not copying at leaſt ſomething from them, may be an argument of his never having read them. Whether his ignorance of the ancients were a diſadvantage to him or no, may admit of a diſpute: for though the knowledge of them might have made him more correct, yet it is not improbable but that *the regularity and deference for them, which would have* attended that correctneſs, might have reſtrained ſome of that fire, impetuoſity, and even beautiful extravagance, which we admire in Shakſpeare: and I believe we are better pleaſed with thoſe thoughts, altogether new and uncommon, which his own imagination ſupplied him ſo abundantly with, than if he had given us the moſt beautiful paſſages out of the Greek and Latin poets, and that in the moſt agreeable manner that it was poſſible for a maſter of the Engliſh language to deliver them.

Upon his leaving ſchool, he ſeems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father propoſed to him *; and in order to ſettle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young [3]. His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway,

[2] *He had bred him, it is true, at a free-ſchool,*] The free-ſchool, I preſume, founded at Stratford. THEOBALD.

* — *into that way of living which his father propoſed to him*;] I believe, that on leaving ſchool Shakſpeare was placed in the office of ſome country attorney, or the ſeneſchal of ſome manor court. See the *Eſſay on the order of his plays*, Article, *Hamlet*. MALONE.

[3] — *he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young.*] It is certain

way[4], ſaid to have been a ſubſtantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In this kind of ſettlement he continued for ſome time, till an extravagance that he was guilty of forced him both out of his country, and that way of living which he had taken up; and though it ſeemed at firſt to be a blemiſh upon his good manners, and a miſfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occaſion of exerting one of the greateſt *geniuſes* that ever was known in dramatick poetry. He had by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company; and amongſt them, ſome that made a frequent practice of deer-ſtealing, engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was proſecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, ſomewhat too ſeverely; and in order to revenge that ill uſage, he made a ballad upon him[5]. And though this, probably the

tain he did ſo; for by the monument in Stratford church erected to the memory of his daughter, Suſanna, the wife of John Hall, gentleman, it appears, that ſhe died on the 2d of July, 1649, aged 66: ſo that ſhe was born in 1583, when her father could not be full 19 years old. THEOBALD.

Suſanna, who was our poet's eldeſt child, was baptized, May 26, 1583. Shakſpeare therefore, having been born in April 1564, was nineteen the month preceding her birth. Mr. Theobald was miſtaken in ſuppoſing that a *monument* was erected to her in the church of Stratford. There is no memorial there in honour of either our poet's wife or daughter, except flat tomb-ſtones, by which, however, the time of their reſpective deaths is aſcertained.—His daughter, Suſanna, died, not on the *ſecond*, but the *eleventh* of July, 1649. Theobald was led into this error by Dugdale. MALONE.

4 *His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway,*] She was eight years older than her huſband, and died in 1623, at the age of 67 years. THEOBALD.

The following is the inſcription on her tomb-ſtone in the church of Stratford:

"Here lyeth interred the body of ANNE, wife of William Shakeſpeare, who departed this life the 6th day of Auguſt, 1623, being of the age of 67 yeares."

After this inſcription follow ſix Latin verſes, not worth preſerving. MALONE.

5 — *in order to revenge that ill uſage, he made a ballad upon him.*] Mr. William Oldys, (Norroy King at Arms, and well known from the ſhare he had in compiling the *Biographia Britannica*) among the collections which he left for a *Life of Shakſpeare*, obſerves, that —"there

the firſt eſſay of his poetry, be loſt, yet it is ſaid to have been ſo very bitter, that it redoubled the proſecution againſt

—"there was a very aged gentleman living in the neighbourhood of Stratford, (where he died fifty years ſince) who had not only heard, from ſeveral old people in that town, of Shakſpeare's tranſgreſſion, but could remember the firſt ſtanza of that bitter ballad, which, repeating to one of his acquaintance, he preſerved it in writing; and here it is neither better nor worſe, but faithfully tranſcribed from the copy which his relation very courteouſly communicated to me."

"A parliemente member, a juſtice of peace,
"At home a poor ſcare-crowe, at London an aſſe,
"If lowſie is Lucy, as ſome volke miſcalle it,
"Then Lucy is lowſie whatever befall it:
"He thinks himſelf greate,
"Yet an aſſe in his ſtate
"We allowe by his ears but with aſſes to mate.
"If Lucy is lowſie, as ſome volke miſcalle it,
"Sing lowſie Lucy, whatever befall it."

Contemptible as this performance muſt now appear, at the time when it was written it might have had ſufficient power to irritate a vain, weak, and vindictive magiſtrate; eſpecially as it was affixed to ſeveral of his park-gates, and conſequently publiſhed among his neighbours.—It may be remarked likewiſe, that the jingle on which it turns, occurs in the firſt ſcene of the *Merry Wives of Windſor*.

I may add, that the veracity of the late Mr. Oldys has never yet been impeached; and it is not very probable that a ballad ſhould be forged, from which an undiſcovered wag could derive no triumph from antiquarian credulity. STEEVENS.

According to Mr. Capell, this ballad came originally from Mr. Thomas Jones, who lived at Tarbick, a village in Worceſterſhire, about 18 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, and died in 1703, aged upwards of ninety. "He remembered to have heard from ſeveral old people at Stratford the ſtory of Shakſpeare's robbing Sir Thomas Lucy's park; and their account of it agreed with Mr. Rowe's, with this addition, that the ballad written againſt Sir Thomas Lucy by Shakſpeare was ſtuck upon his park-gate, which exaſperated the knight to apply to a lawyer at Warwick to proceed againſt him. Mr. Jones (it is added) put down in writing the firſt ſtanza of this ballad, which was all he remembered of it." In a note on the tranſcript with which Mr. Capell was furniſhed, it is ſaid, that "the people of thoſe parts pronounce *lowſie* like Lucy." They do ſo at this day in Scotland. Mr. Wilkes, grandſon of the gentleman to whom Mr. Jones repeated the ſtanza, appears to have been the perſon who gave a copy of it to Mr. Oldys, and Mr. Capell.

In a Manuſcript *Hiſtory of the Stage*, full of forgeries and falſhoods of various kinds, written (I ſuſpect by William Chetwood the prompter)

againſt him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his buſineſs and family in Warwickſhire, for ſome time, and ſhelter himſelf in London.

It is at this time, and upon this accident, that he is ſaid to have made his firſt acquaintance in the playhouſe. He was received into the company then in being, at firſt in a very mean rank[6]; but his admirable wit, and the natural turn of it to the ſtage, ſoon diſtinguiſhed him, if not as an extraordinary actor, yet as an excellent writer. His name is printed, as the cuſtom was in thoſe times, amongſt thoſe of the other players, before ſome old plays, but without any particular account of what ſort of parts he uſed to play; and though I have inquired, I could never meet with any further account of him this way, than that the top of his performance was the Ghoſt in his own *Hamlet*[7]. I ſhould have been much more pleaſed,

ter) ſome time between April 1727 and October 1730, is the following paſſage, to which the reader will give juſt as much credit as he thinks fit:

"Here we ſhall obſerve, that the learned Mr. Joſhua Barnes, late Greek Profeſſor of the Univerſity of Cambridge, baiting about forty years ago at an inn in Stratford, and hearing an old woman ſinging part of the above-ſaid ſong, ſuch was his reſpect for Mr. Shakſpeare's genius, that he gave her a new gown for the two following ſtanzas in it; and, could ſhe have ſaid it all, he would (as he often ſaid in company, when any diſcourſe has caſually aroſe about him) have given her ten guineas:

"Sir Thomas was too covetous,
"To covet ſo much deer,
"When horns enough upon his head
"Moſt plainly did appear.

"Had not his worſhip one deer left?
"What then? He had a wife
"Took pains enough to find him horns
"Should laſt him during life." MALONE.

6 *He was received into the company—at firſt in a very mean rank*;] There is a ſtage tradition, that his firſt office in the theatre was that of *Call-boy*, or prompter's attendant; whoſe employment it is to give the performers notice to be ready to enter, as often as the buſineſs of the play requires their appearance on the ſtage. MALONE.

7 —*than that the top of his performance was the Ghoſt in his own Hamlet.*] See ſuch notices as I have been able to collect on this ſubject, in the Liſt of old Engliſh actors, *poſt*. MALONE.

to have learned from certain authority, which was the firſt play he wrote[8]; it would be without doubt a pleaſure to any man, curious in things of this kind, to ſee and know what was the firſt eſſay of a fancy like Shakſpeare's. Perhaps we are not to look for his beginnings, like thoſe of other authors, among their leaſt perfect writings; art had ſo little, and nature ſo large a ſhare in what he did, that, for aught I know, the performances of his youth, as they were the moſt vigorous, and had the moſt fire and ſtrength of imagination in them, were the beſt[9]. I would not be thought by this to mean, that his fancy was ſo looſe and extravagant, as to be independent on the rule and government of judgment; but that what he thought, was commonly ſo great, ſo juſtly and rightly conceived in itſelf, that it wanted little or no correction, and was immediately approved by an impartial judgment at the firſt ſight. But though the order of time in which the ſeveral pieces were written be generally uncertain, yet there are paſſages in ſome few of them which ſeem to fix their dates. So the *Chorus* at the end of the fourth act of *Henry the Fifth*, by a compliment very handſomely turned to the earl of Eſſex, ſhews the play to have been written when that lord was general for the queen in Ireland: and his elogy upon queen Elizabeth, and her ſucceſſor king James, in the latter end of his *Henry the Eighth*, is a proof of that play's being written after the acceſſion of the latter of thoſe two princes to the crown of England. Whatever the particular times of his writing were, the people of his age, who began to grow wonderfully fond of diverſions of this kind, could not but be highly pleaſed to ſee a genius

[8] — *to have learned from certain authority, which was the firſt play he wrote.*] The higheſt date of any I can yet find, is *Romeo and Juliet* in 1597, when the author was 33 years old; and *Richard the Second, and Third*, in the next year, viz. the 34th of his age. POPE.

Richard II. and III. were both printed in 1597.—On the order of time in which Shakſpeare's plays were written, ſee the Eſſay in this volume. MALONE.

[9] — *for aught I know, the performances of his youth—were the beſt.*] See this notion controverted in *An Attempt to aſcertain the order of Shakſpeare's plays*. MALONE.

ariſe

ariſe amongſt them of ſo pleaſurable, ſo rich a vein, and ſo plentifully capable of furniſhing their favourite entertainments. Beſides the advantages of his wit, he was in himſelf a good-natured man, of great ſweetneſs in his manners, and a moſt agreeable companion; ſo that it is no wonder, if, with ſo many good qualities, he made himſelf acquainted with the beſt converſations of thoſe times. Queen Elizabeth had ſeveral of his plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her favour: it is that maiden princeſs plainly, whom he intends by

— a fair veſtal, throned by the weſt. *M. N. D.*

and that whole paſſage is a compliment very properly brought in, and very handſomely applied to her. She was ſo well pleaſed with that admirable character of Falſtaff, in The Two Parts of *Henry the Fourth*, that ſhe commanded him to continue it for one play more *, and to ſhew him in love. This is ſaid to be the occaſion of his writing *The Merry Wives of Windſor*. How well ſhe was obeyed, the play itſelf is an admirable proof. Upon this occaſion it may not be improper to obſerve, that this part of Falſtaff is ſaid to have been written originally under the name of *Oldcaſtle* [1]: ſome of that family being then remaining, the queen was pleaſed to command him to alter it; upon which he made uſe of Falſtaff. The preſent offence was indeed avoided; but I do not know whether the author may not have been ſomewhat to blame in his ſecond choice, ſince it is certain that Sir John Falſtaff, who was a knight of the garter, and a lieutenant-general, was a name of diſtin-

* *—ſhe commanded him to continue it for one play more,*] This anecdote was firſt given to the publick by Dennis, in the *Epiſtle Dedicatory* to his comedy entitled *The Comical Gallant*, 4to. 1702, altered from *The Merry Wives of Windſor*. MALONE.

[1] *— this part of* Falſtaff *is ſaid to have been originally under the name of* Oldcaſtle;] See the Epilogue to *Henry the Fourth*. POPE.

In a note ſubjoined to that epilogue, and more fully in Vol. V. p. 119, n. 1. the reader will find this notion overturned, and the origin of this *vulgar error* pointed out. Mr. Rowe was evidently deceived by a paſſage in Fuller's *Worthies*, miſunderſtood. MALONE.

guiſhed

guiſhed merit in the wars in France in Henry the Fifth's and Henry the Sixth's times. What grace ſoever the queen conferred upon him, it was not to her only he owed the fortune which the reputation of his wit made. He had the honour to meet with many great and uncommon marks of favour and friendſhip from the earl of Southampton[z], famous in the hiſtories of that time for his friendſhip to the unfortunate earl of Eſſex. It was to that noble lord that he dedicated his poem of *Venus and Adonis**. There is one inſtance ſo ſingular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakſpeare's, that if I had not been aſſured that the ſtory was handed down by Sir William D'Avenant, who was probably very well acquainted with his affairs, I ſhould not have ventured to have inſerted; that my lord Southampton at one time gave him a thouſand pounds, to enable him to go through with a purchaſe which he heard he had a mind to. A bounty very great, and very rare at any time, and almoſt equal to that profuſe generoſity the preſent age has ſhewn to French dancers and Italian ſingers.

What particular habitude or friendſhips he contracted with private men, I have not been able to learn, more than that every one, who had a true taſte of merit, and could diſtinguiſh men, had generally a juſt value and eſteem for him. His exceeding candour and good-nature muſt certainly have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of the moſt delicate knowledge and polite learning to admire him.

His acquaintance with Ben Jonſon began with a remarkable piece of humanity and good-nature; Mr. Jonſon, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players, in order to have it acted; and the perſons into whoſe hands

[z] —*from the earl of* Southampton,] Of this amiable nobleman ſuch memoirs as I have been able to collect, may be found in the tenth volume, prefixed to the poem of *Venus and Adonis*. MALONE.

* —*he dedicated his poem of* Venus and Adonis.] To this nobleman alſo he dedicated his *Rape of Lucrece*, printed in quarto in 1594. MALONE.

it

it was put, after having turned it careleſly and ſupercilioufly over, were juſt upon returning it to him with an ill-natured anſwer, that it would be of no ſervice to their company; when Shakſpeare luckily caſt his eye upon it, and found ſomething ſo well in it, as to engage him firſt to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonſon and his writings to the publick [3]. Jonſon was certainly

[3] — *to recommend* Mr. Jonſon *and his writings to the publick.*] In Mr. Rowe's firſt edition, after theſe words was inſerted the following paſſage:

"After this, they were *profeſſed friends*; though I do not know whether the other ever made him an equal return of gentleneſs and ſincerity. Ben was naturally proud and inſolent, and in the days of his reputation did ſo far take upon him the ſupremacy in wit, that he could not but look with an evil eye upon any one that ſeemed to ſtand in competition with him. And if at times he has affected to commend him, it has always been with ſome reſerve; inſinuating his uncorrectneſs, a careleſs *manner of writing*, and want of judgment. The praiſe of ſeldom altering or blotting out what he writ, which was given him by the players, who were the firſt publiſhers of his works after his death, was what Jonſon could not bear: he thought it impoſſible, perhaps, for another man to ſtrike out the greateſt thoughts in the fineſt expreſſion, and to reach thoſe excellencies of poetry with the eaſe of a firſt imagination, which himſelf with infinite *labour* and ſtudy could but hardly attain to."

I have preſerved this paſſage becauſe I believe it ſtrictly true, except that in the laſt line, inſtead of *but hardly*, I would read—*never*.

Dryden, we are told by Pope, concurred with Mr. Rowe in thinking Jonſon's poſthumous verſes on our author *ſparing* and *invidious*.—See alſo Mr. Steevens's note on thoſe verſes.

Before Shakſpeare's death Ben's *envious diſpoſition is mentioned* by one of his own friends; it muſt therefore have been even then notorious, though the writer denies the truth of the charge:

"To my well accompliſh'd friend, Mr. Ben. Jonſon.
"Thou art ſound in body; but ſome ſay, thy ſoule
"*Envy doth ulcer*; yet corrupted hearts
"Such cenſurers muſt have."

Scourge of Folly, by J. Davies, printed about 1611.

The following lines by one of Jonſon's admirers will ſufficiently ſupport Mr. Rowe in what he has ſaid relative to the ſlowneſs of that writer in his compoſitions:

"Scorn then their cenſures who gave out, thy wit
"As long upon a comedy did ſit
"As elephants bring forth, and that thy blots
"And mendings took more time than FORTUNE-PLOTS;

"That

tainly a very good ſcholar, and in that had the advantage of Shakſpeare; though at the ſame time I believe it muſt be

"That ſuch thy drought was, and ſo great thy thirſt,
"That all thy plays were drawn at the *Mermaid* firſt;
"That the king's yearly butt wrote, and his wine
"Hath more right than thou to thy *Catiline*."

The writer does not deny the charge, but vindicates his friend by ſaying that, however ſlow,

"He that writes well, writes quick.—"
Verſes on B. Jonſon, *by* Jaſper Mayne.

So alſo another of his Panegyriſts:

"Admit his muſe was ſlow, 'tis judgment's fate
"To move like greateſt princes, ſtill in ſtate."

In *The Return from Parnaſſus*, 1606, Jonſon is ſaid to be "ſo *ſlow an enditer*, that he were better betake himſelf to his old trade of bricklaying." The ſame piece furniſhes us with the earlieſt intimation of the quarrel between him and Shakſpeare. "Why here's our fellow Shakſpeare put them [the univerſity poets] all down, ay, and Ben Jonſon too. O, that Ben Jonſon is a peſtilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakſpeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit." Fuller, who was a diligent inquirer, and lived near enough the time to be well informed, confirms this account, aſſerting in his *Worthies*, 1662, that "many were the wit-combats" between Jonſon and our poet.

It is a ſingular circumſtance that old Ben ſhould for near two centuries have ſtalked on the ſtilts of an artificial reputation; and that even at this day, of the very few who read his works, ſcarcely one in ten yet ventures to confeſs how little entertainment they afford. Such was the impreſſion made on the publick by the extravagant praiſes of thoſe who knew more of books than of the drama, that Dryden in his *Eſſay on Dramatick Poeſie*, written about 1667, does not venture to go further in his elogium on Shakſpeare, than by ſaying, "he was at leaſt *Jonſon's equal*, if not his ſuperior;" and in the preface to his *Mock Aſtrologer* 1671, he hardly dares to aſſert, what, in my opinion, cannot be denied, that "all Jonſon's pieces, except three or four, are but *crambe bis cocta*; the ſame humours a little varied and written worſe."

Ben however did not truſt to the praiſes of others. One of his admirers honeſtly confeſſes,

"——————— he
"Of whom I write this, has prevented me,
"And boldly ſaid ſo much in his own praiſe,
"No other pen need any trophy raiſe."

In vain, however, did he endeavour to bully the town into approbation by telling his auditors, "By G— 'tis good, and if you like't, you may;" and by pouring out againſt thoſe who preferred our poet to him,

be allowed, that what nature gave the latter, was more than a balance for what books had given the former; and the judgment of a great man upon this occaſion was, I think, very juſt and proper. In a converſation between Sir John Suckling, Sir William D'Avenant, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales of Eton, and Ben Jonſon, Sir John Suckling, who was a profeſſed admirer of Shakſpeare,

him, a torrent of illiberal abuſe; which, as Mr. Walpole juſtly obſerves, ſome of his contemporaries were willing to think wit, becauſe they were afraid of it: for, notwithſtanding all his arrogant boaſts, notwithſtanding all the clamour of his partizans both in his own life-time and for ſixty years after his death, the truth is, that his pieces, when firſt performed, were ſo far from being applauded by the people, that they were ſcarcely endured; and many of them were actually *damned*.

" —the fine pluſh and velvets of the age
" Did oft for ſixpence *damn thee* from the ſtage,"—

ſays one of his eulogiſts in *Jonſonus Virbius*, 4to. 1638. Jonſon himſelf owns that *Sejanus* was damned. "It is a poem," ſays he, in his dedication to lord Aubigny, "that, if I well remember, in your lordſhip's ſight ſuffered no leſs violence from our people here, than the ſubject of it did from the rage of the people of Rome." His friend E. B. (probably Edmund Bolton,) ſpeaking of the ſame performance, ſays,

" But when I view'd the people's beaſtly rage,
" Bent to confound thy grave and learned toil,
" That coſt thee ſo much ſweat and ſo much oil,
" My indignation I could hardly aſſuage"

Again, in his dedication of *Catiline* to the earl of Pembroke, the authour ſays, "Poſterity may pay your benefit the honour and thanks, when it ſhall know that you dare in theſe jig-given times to countenance a legitimate poem. I muſt call it ſo, *againſt all noiſe of opinion*, from whoſe crude and ayrie reports I appeal to that great and ſingular facultie of judgment in your lordſhip."

See alſo the Epilogue to *Every man in his humour*, by lord Buckhurſt, quoted below in *the Account of our old Engliſh Theatres, ad finem*. To his teſtimony and that of Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, (there alſo mentioned,) may be added that of Leonard Digges in his Verſes on Shakſpeare, and of Sir Robert Howard, who ſays in the preface to his Plays, folio, 1665, (not thirty years after Ben's death,) "When I conſider how ſevere the former age has been to ſome of the *beſt* of Mr. Jonſon's never-to-be-equall'd comedies, I cannot but wonder, why any poet ſhould ſpeak of former times." The truth is, that however extravagant the elogiums were that a few ſcholars gave him in their cloſets, he was not only not admired in his own time by the generality, but not even underſtood. His friend Beaumont aſſures him in a copy of verſes, that "his ſenſe is ſo deep that he will not be underſtood for three ages to come." MALONE.

had undertaken his defence againſt Ben Jonſon with ſome warmth; Mr. Hales, who had ſat ſtill for ſome time, told them [4], *That if Mr. Shakſpeare had not read the ancients, he had likewiſe not ſtolen any thing from them; and that if he would produce any one topick finely treated by any one of them, he would undertake to ſhew ſomething upon the ſame ſubject at leaſt as well written by Shakſpeare* [5].

The

4 Mr. Hales, *who had ſat ſtill for ſome time, told* them,] In Mr. Rowe's firſt edition this paſſage runs thus:

"Mr. Hales, who had ſat ſtill for ſome time, *hearing Ben frequently reproach him with the want of learning and ignorance of the ancients*, told *him at laſt*, That if Mr. Shakſpeare," &c. By the alteration, the ſubſequent part of the ſentence—"*if he* would produce," &c. is rendered ungrammatical. MALONE.

5 — *he would undertake to ſhew ſomething upon the ſame ſubject at leaſt as well written by Shakſpeare.*] I had long endeavoured in vain to find out on what authority this relation was founded; and have very lately diſcovered that Mr. Rowe probably derived his information from Dryden; for in Gildon's *Letters and Eſſays*, publiſhed in 1694, fifteen years before this Life appeared, the ſame ſtory is told; and Dryden, to whom an Eſſay in vindication of Shakſpeare is addreſſed, is appealed to by the writer as his authority. As Gildon tells the ſtory with ſome ſlight variations from the account given by Mr. Rowe, and the book in which it is found is now extremely ſcarce, I ſhall ſubjoin the paſſage in his own words:

"But to give the world ſome ſatisfaction that Shakſpeare has had as great veneration paid his excellence by men of unqueſtioned parts, as this I now expreſs for him, I ſhall give ſome account of what I have heard *from your mouth*, ſir, about the noble triumph he gained over all the ancients, by the judgment of the ableſt criticks of that time.

"The matter of fact, if my memory fail me not, was this. Mr. Hales of Eton affirmed, that he would ſhew all the poets of antiquity out-done by Shakſpeare, in all the topicks and common-places made uſe of in poetry. The enemies of Shakſpeare would by no means yield him ſo much excellence; ſo that it came to a reſolution of a trial of ſkill upon that ſubject. The place agreed on for the diſpute was Mr. Hales's chamber at Eton. A great many books were ſent down by the enemies of this poet; and on the appointed day my lord Falkland, Sir John Suckling, and all the perſons of quality that had wit and learning, and intereſted themſelves in the quarrel, met there; and upon a thorough diſquiſition of the point, the judges choſen by agreement out of this learned and ingenious aſſembly, unanimouſly gave the preference to Shakſpeare, and the Greek and Roman poets were adjudged to vail at leaſt their glory in that, to the *Engliſh Hero*."

This elogium on our authour is likewiſe recorded at an earlier period by Tate, probably from the ſame authority, in the preface to the

The latter part of his life was ſpent, as all men of good ſenſe will wiſh theirs may be, in eaſe, retirement, and the converſation of his friends. He had the good fortune to gather an eſtate equal to his occaſion[5], and, in

Loyal General, a quarto, 1680: "Our learned Hales was wont to aſſert, that, ſince the time of Orpheus, and the oldeſt poets, no common-place has been touched upon, where our author has not performed as well."

Dryden himſelf alſo certainly alludes to this ſtory, which he appears to have related both to Gildon and Rowe, in the following paſſage of his *Eſſay of Dramatick Poeſy*, 1667; and he as well as Gildon goes ſomewhat further than Rowe in his panegyrick. After giving that fine character of our poet which Dr. Johnſon has quoted in his preface, he adds, "The conſideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eton ſay, *that there was no ſubject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it* MUCH BETTER *done by Shakſpeare*; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher and Jonſon, never equalled them to him in their eſteem: And in the laſt king's court [that of Charles I.] when Ben's reputation was at higheſt, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers ſet our Shakſpeare far above him."

Let *ever-memorable* Hales, if all his other merits be forgotten, be ever mentioned with honour, for his good taſte and admiration of our poet. "He was," ſays Lord Clarendon, "one of the leaſt men in the kingdom; and one of the greateſt ſcholars in Europe." See a long character of him in Clarendon's Life, Vol. I. p. 52. MALONE.

[5] *He had the good fortune to gather an eſtate equal to his occaſion,*] Gildon, without authority, I believe, ſays, that our authour left behind him an eſtate of 300l. per ann. This was equal to at leaſt 1000l. per ann. at this day; the relative value of money, the mode of living in that age, the luxury and taxes of the preſent time, and various other circumſtances, being conſidered. But I doubt whether all his property amounted to much more than 200l. per ann. which yet was a conſiderable fortune in thoſe times. He appears from his grand-daughter's will to have poſſeſſed in Biſhopton, and Stratford Welcombe, four yard land and a half. *A yard land* is a denomination well known in Warwickſhire, and contains from 30 to 60 acres. The average therefore being 45, four yard land and a half may be eſtimated at about two hundred acres. As ſixteen years purchaſe was the common rate at which land was ſold at that time, that is, one half leſs than at this day, we may ſuppoſe that theſe lands were let at ſeven ſhillings per acre, and produced 70l. per annum. If we rate the *New-Place* with the appurtenances, and our poet's other houſes in Stratford, at 60l. a year, and his houſe &c. in the Blackfriars, (for which he pay'd 140l.) at 20l. a year, we have a rent-roll of 150l. per annum. Of his perſonal property it is not now poſſible to form any accurate eſti-

in that, to his wish; and is said to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford[6]. His pleasureable

mate: but if we rate it at five hundred pounds, money then bearing an interest of ten per cent, Shakspeare's total income was 200l. per ann. In *the Merry Wives of Windsor*, which was written soon after the year 1600, *Three hundred pounds a year* is described as an estate of such magnitude as to cover all the faults of its possessor:

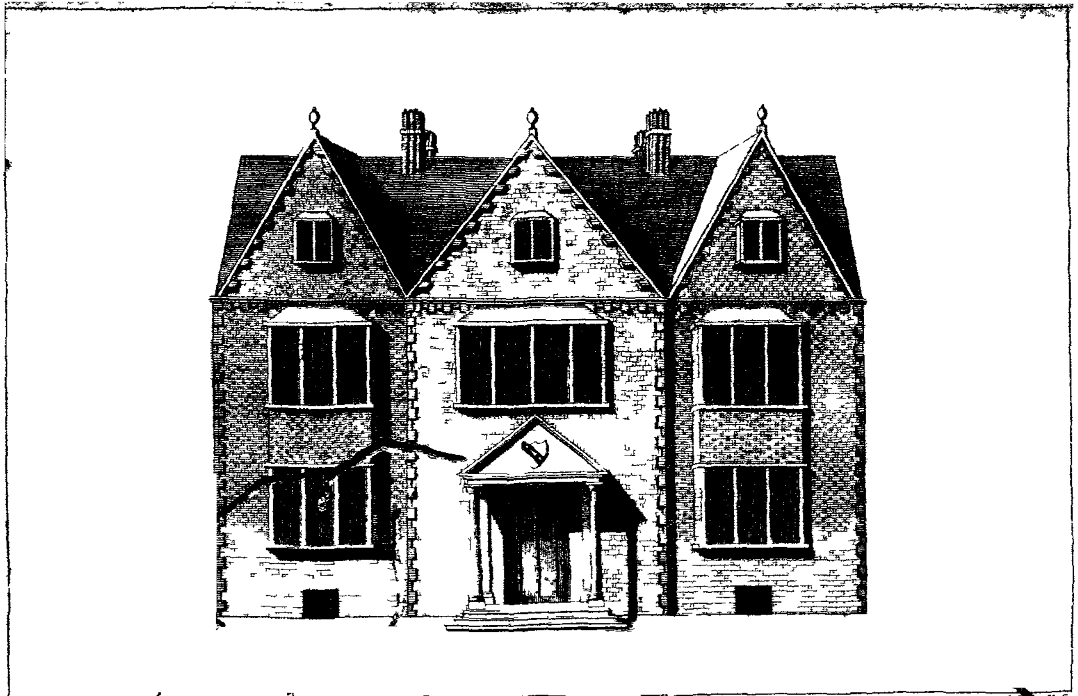
"O, what a world of vile ill favour'd faults

"Look handsome in three hundred pounds a year!" MALONE.

[6] — *to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford.*] In 1614 the greater part of the town of Stratford was consumed by fire, but our Shakspeare's house, among some others, escaped the flames. This house was first built by Sir Hugh Clopton, a younger brother of an antient family in the neighbourhood. Sir Hugh was Sheriff of London in the reign of Richard III. and Lord Mayor in the reign of King Henry VII. By his will he bequeathed to his elder brother's son his manor of Clopton, &c. and his house, by the name of the Great House in Stratford. Good part of the estate is yet [in 1733] in the possession of Edward Clopton, esq. and Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. lineally descended from the elder brother of the first Sir Hugh.

The estate had now been sold out of the Clopton family for above a century, at the time when Shakspeare became the purchaser: who *having repaired and modelled it to his own mind*, changed *the name to New Place*, which the mansion house since erected upon the same spot, at this day retains. The house, and lands which attended it, continued in Shakspeare's descendants to the time of the Restoration; when they were repurchased by the Clopton family, and the mansion now belongs to Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. To the favour of this worthy gentleman I owe the knowledge of one particular in honour of our poet's once dwelling house, of which I presume Mr. Rowe never was apprized. When the Civil War raged in England, and King Charles the First's Queen was driven by the necessity of her affairs to make a recess in Warwickshire, she kept her court for three weeks in New-Place. We may reasonably suppose it then the best private house in the town; and her Majesty preferred it to the College, which was in the possession of the Combe family, who did not so strongly favour the king's party. THEOBALD.

From Mr. Theobald's words the reader may be led to suppose that Henrietta Maria was obliged to take refuge from the rebels in Stratford-upon-Avon: but that was not the case. She marched from Newark, June 16, 1643, and entered Stratford-upon-Avon triumphantly, about the 22d of the same month, at the head of three thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, with 150 waggons and a train of artillery. Here she was met by Prince Rupert, accompanied by a large body of troops. After sojourning about three weeks at our poet's house, which was then possessed by his grand-daughter Mrs. Nash, and her husband, the Queen went (July 13) to the plain of Keinton under



J Jordan del. — [illegible] sc.

NEW PLACE,

[illegible]

able wit and good-nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendſhip, of the gentlemen of

under Edge-hill, to meet the king, and proceeded from thence with him to Oxford, where ſays a contemporary hiſtorian, "her coming (July 15) was rather like a triumph than a war."

Of the college above-mentioned the following was the origin. John de Stratford, Biſhop of Winchester, in the fifth year of King Edward III. founded a Chantry conſiſting of five prieſts, one of whom was Warden, in a certain chapel adjoining to the church of Stratford on the ſouth ſide; and afterwards (in the ſeventh year of Henry VIII.) Ralph Collingwode inſtituted four chorifters, to be daily aſſiſtant in the celebration of divine ſervice there. This chantry, ſays Dugdale, ſoon after its foundation, was known by the name of *The College* of Stratford-upon-Avon.

In the 26th year of Edward III. "a houſe of ſquare ſtone" was built by Ralph de Stratford, biſhop of London, for the habitation of the five prieſts. This houſe, or another on the ſame ſpot, is the houſe of which Mr. Theobald ſpeaks. It ſtill bears the name of "The College," and at preſent belongs to the Rev. Mr. Fullerton.

After the ſuppreſſion of religious houſes, the ſite of the college was granted by Edward VI. to John earl of Warwick and his heirs; who being attainted in the 1ſt year of Queen Mary, it reverted to the crown.

Sir John Clopton, knight, (the father of Edward Clopton, eſq. and Sir Hugh Clopton,) who died at Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1719, purchaſed the eſtate of New-Place, &c. ſome time after the year 1685, from Sir Reginald Forſter, Baronet, who married Mary, the daughter of Edward Naſh, eſq. couſin-german to Thomas Naſh, eſq. who married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. Edward Naſh bought it, after the death of her ſecond huſband, Sir John Barnard, knight. By her will, which will be found in a ſubſequent page, ſhe directed her truſtee, Henry Smith, to ſell the New-Place, &c. (after the death of her huſband,) and to make the firſt offer of it to her couſin Edward Naſh, who purchaſed it accordingly. His ſon Thomas Naſh, whom for the ſake of diſtinction I ſhall call the younger, having died without iſſue, in Auguſt 1652, Edward Naſh by his will, made on the 16th of March, 1678-9, deviſed the principal part of his property to his daughter Mary, and her huſband Reginald Forſter, eſq. afterwards Sir Reginald Forſter; but in conſequence of the teſtator's only referring to a deed of ſettlement executed three days before, without reciting the ſubſtance of it, no particular mention of New-Place is made in his will. After Sir John Clopton had bought it from Sir Reginald Forſter, he gave it by deed to his younger ſon, Sir Hugh, who pulled down our poet's houſe, and built one more elegant on the ſame ſpot.

In May 1742, when Mr. Garrick, Mr. Macklin, and Mr. Delane, viſited Stratford, they were hoſpitably entertained under Shakſpeare's mulberry-tree, by Sir Hugh Clopton. He was a barriſter at law, was

 knighted

of the neighbourhood. Amongſt them, it is a ſtory almoſt ſtill remembered in that country that he had a particular

knighted by George the Firſt, and died in the 80th year of his age, in Dec. 1751. His nephew Edward Clopton, the ſon of his elder brother Edward, lived till June 1753.

The only remaining perſon of the Clopton family now living (1788), as I am informed by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, is Mrs. Partheriche, daughter and heireſs of the ſecond Edward Clopton above-mentioned. "She reſides," he adds, "at the family manſion at Clopton near Stratford, is now a widow, and never had any iſſue."

The New-Place was ſold by Henry Talbot, eſq. ſon-in-law and executor of Sir Hugh Clopton, in or ſoon after the year 1758, to the Rev. Mr. Gaſtrell, a man of large fortune, who reſided in it but a few years; in conſequence of a diſagreement with the inhabitants of Stratford. Every houſe in that town that is let or valued at more than 40s. a year, is aſſeſſed by the overſeers, according to its worth and the ability of the occupier, to pay a monthly rate toward the maintenance of the poor. As Mr. Gaſtrell reſided part of the year at Lichfield, he thought he was aſſeſſed too highly; but being very properly compelled by the magiſtrates of Stratford to pay the whole of what was levied on him, on the principle that his houſe was occupied by his ſervants in his abſence, he peeviſhly declared, that *that* houſe ſhould never be aſſeſſed again; and ſoon afterwards pulled it down, ſold the materials, and left the town. Wiſhing, as it ſhould ſeem, to be "damn'd to everlaſting fame," he had ſome time before cut down Shakſpeare's celebrated mulberry tree, to ſave himſelf the trouble of ſhewing it to thoſe whoſe admiration of our great poet led them to viſit the poetick ground on which it ſtood.

That Shakſpeare planted this tree, is as well authenticated as any thing of that nature can be. The Rev. Mr. Davenport informs me, that Mr. Hugh Taylor, (the father of his clerk,) who is now eighty-five years old, and an alderman of Warwick, where he at preſent reſides, ſays, he lived when a boy at the next houſe to New-Place; that his family had inhabited the houſe for almoſt three hundred years; that it was tranſmitted from father to ſon during the laſt and the preſent century, that this tree (of the fruit of which he had often eaten in his younger days, ſome of its branches hanging over his father's garden,) was planted by Shakſpeare; and that till this was planted, there was no mulberry-tree in that neighbourhood. Mr. Taylor adds, that he was frequently, when a boy, at New-Place, and that this tradition was preſerved in the Clopton family, as well as in his own.

There were ſcarce any trees of this ſpecies in England till the year 1609, when by order of King James many hundred thouſand young mulberry-trees were imported from France, and ſent into the different counties, with a view to the feeding of ſilkworms, and the encouragement of the ſilk manufacture. See Camdeni *Annales ab anno* 1603

ad

ticular intimacy with Mr. Combe[7], an old gentleman noted thereabouts for his wealth and uſury: it happened, that in a pleaſant converſation amongſt their common friends, Mr. Combe told Shakſpeare in a laughing man-

ad annum 162[illegible], publiſhed by Smith, quarto, 1691, p. 7; and Howes's *Abridgment of Stowe's Chronicle*, edit. 1618, *p.* 503, where we have a more particular account of this tranſaction than in the larger work. A very few mulberry-trees had been planted before; for we are told, that in the preceeding year "a gentleman of Picardy, Monſieur Foreſt, kept greate ſtore of Engliſh ſilkworms at Greenwich, the which the king with great pleaſure came often to ſee them worke; and of their ſilke he cauſed *a piece of taffata* to be made."

Shakſpeare was perhaps the only inhabitant of Stratford, whoſe buſineſs called him annually to London; and probably on his return from theace in the ſpring of the year 1609, he planted this tree.

As a ſimilar enthuſiaſm to that which with ſuch diligence has ſought after Virgil's tomb, may lead my countrymen to viſit the ſpot where our great bard ſpent ſeveral years of his life, and died; it may gratify them to be told that the ground on which *The New-Place* once ſtood, is now a Garden belonging to Mr. Charles Hunt, an eminent attorney, and town-clerk of Stratford. Every Engliſhman will, I am ſure, concur with me in wiſhing that it may enjoy perpetual verdure and fertility.

> In this retreat our SHAKSPEARE's godlike mind
> With matchleſs ſkill ſurvey'd all human kind.
> Here may each ſweet that bleſt Arabia knows,
> *Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the roſe,*
> To lateſt time, their balmy odours fling,
> And Nature here diſplay eternal ſpring! MALONE.

[7] —*that he had a particular intimacy with* Mr. Combe,] This Mr. John Combe I take to be the ſame, who by Dugdale, in his *Antiquities of Warwickſhire*, is ſaid to have died in the year 1614, and for whom at the upper end of the quire of the guild of the holy croſs at Stratford, a fair monument is erected, having a ſtatue thereon cut in alabaſter, and in a gown, with this epitaph. "Here lyeth interred the body of John Combe, Eſq. who departing this life the 10th day of July, 1614, bequeathed by his laſt will and teſtament theſe ſums enſuing, annually to be paid for ever; viz. xx.s. for two ſermons to be preach'd in this church, and vi.l. iii.s. iv.d. to buy ten gownes for ten poore people within the borough of Stratford; and 100l. to be lent to fifteen poore tradeſmen of the ſame borough, from three years to three years, changing the parties every third year, at the rate of fifty ſhillings per *annum*, the which increaſe he appointed to be diſtributed towards the relief of the almes-poor there." The donation has all the air of a rich and ſagacious uſurer. THEOBALD.

ner, that he fancied he intended to write his epitaph, if he happened to out-live him; and ſince he could not know what might be ſaid of him when he was dead, he deſired it might be done immediately; upon which Shakſpeare gave him theſe four verſes:

Ten in the hundred *lies here ingrav'd*[8],
'Tis a hundred to ten his ſoul is not ſav'd:
If any man aſk, Who lies in this tomb?
Oh! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe[9].

[8] *Ten in the hundred lies here ingrav'd.*] In *The more the merrier, containing three ſcore and odd heedleſs epigrams, ſhot, (like the fooles bolts) among you, light where they will:* By H. P. Gent. &c. 1608. I find the following couplet, which is almoſt the ſame as the two beginning lines of this *Epitaph on John a Combe*.

FENERATORIS EPITAPHIUM.

" Ten in the hundred lies under this ſtone,
" And a hundred to ten to the devil he's gone."

STEEVENS.

So, in Camden's *Remains*, 1614:

" Here lyes ten in the hundred,
" In the ground faſt ramm'd;
" 'Tis an hundred to ten
" But his ſoule is damn'd." MALONE.

[9] *Oh! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my* John-a-Combe.] The Rev. Francis Peck, in his *Memoirs of the Life and Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton*, 4to. 1740, p. 223, has introduced another epitaph imputed (on what authority is unknown) to Shakſpeare. It is on *Tom-a-Combe*, alias *Thin beard*, brother to this *John*, who is mentioned by Mr. Rowe.

" Thin in beard, and thick in purſe;
" Never man beloved worſe;
" He went to the grave with many a curſe:
" The devil and he had both one nurſe." STEEVENS.

I ſuſpect that theſe lines were ſent to Mr. Peck by ſome perſon that meant to impoſe upon him. It appears from Mr. John Combe's will, that his brother Thomas was dead in 1014. John deviſed the greater part of his real and perſonal eſtate to his *nephew* Thomas Combe, with whom Shakſpeare was certainly on good terms, having bequeathed him his ſword.

Since I wrote the above, I find from the Regiſter of Stratford that Mr. Thomas Combe (the brother of John) was buried there, Jan. 22, 1609-10. MALONE.

By

But the ſharpneſs of the ſatire is ſaid to have ſtung the man ſo ſeverely, that he never forgave it[t].

He

[t] *— the ſharpneſs of the ſatire is ſaid to have ſtung the man ſo ſeverely, that he never forgave it.*] I take this opportunity to avow my diſbelief that Shakſpeare was the author of Mr. Combe's Epitaph, or that it was written by any other perſon at the requeſt of that gentleman. If Betterton the player did really viſit Warwickſhire for the ſake of collecting anecdotes relative to our author, perhaps he was too eaſily ſatisfied with ſuch as fell in his way, without making any rigid ſearch into their authenticity. It appears alſo from a following copy of this inſcription, that it was not aſcribed to Shakſpeare ſo early as two years after his death. Mr. Reed of Staple-Inn obligingly pointed it out to me in the *Remains*, &c. of Richard Brathwaite, 1618; and as his edition of our epitaph varies in ſome meaſure from the latter one publiſhed by Mr. Rowe, I ſhall not heſitate to tranſcribe it:

" Upon one *John Combe* of *Stratford* upon *Avon*, a notable Uſurer, faſtened upon a Tombe that he had cauſed to be built in his Life-Time.

" Ten in the hundred muſt lie in his grave,
" But a *hundred to ten whether God will him have*:
" Who then muſt be interr'd in this tombe?
" Oh (quoth the divill) my *John a Combe*."

Here it may be obſerved that, ſtrictly ſpeaking, this is no jocular epitaph, but a malevolent prediction; and Brathwaite's copy is ſurely more to be depended on (being procured in or before the year 1618) than that delivered to Betterton or Rowe, almoſt a century afterwards. It has been already remarked, that two of the lines ſaid to have been produced on this occaſion, were printed as an epigram in 1608, by H. P. Gent. and are likewiſe found in Camden's *Remains*, 1614. I may add, that a uſurer's ſolicitude to know what would be reported of him when he was dead, is not a very probable circumſtance; neither was Shakſpeare of a diſpoſition to compoſe an invective, at once ſo bitter and uncharitable, during *a pleaſant converſation among the common friends* of himſelf and a gentleman, with whoſe family he lived in ſuch friendſhip, that at his death he bequeathed his ſword to Mr. Thomas Combe as a legacy. A miſer's monument indeed, conſtructed during his life-time, might be regarded as a challenge to ſatire; and we cannot wonder that anonymous lampoons ſhould have been affixed to the marble deſigned to convey the character of ſuch a being to poſterity.—I hope I may be excuſed for this attempt to vindicate *Shakſpeare* from the imputation of having poiſoned the hour of confidence and feſtivity, by producing the ſevereſt of all cenſures on one of his company. I am unwilling, in ſhort, to think he could ſo wantonly and ſo publickly have expreſſed his doubts concerning the ſalvation of one of his fellow-creatures. STEEVENS.

Since the above obſervations firſt appeared, (in a note to the edition of our author's Poems which I publiſhed in 1780,) I have obtained

an additional proof of what has been advanced, in vindication of Shakſpeare on this ſubject. It occurred to me that the will of John Combe might poſſibly throw ſome light on this matter, and an examination of it ſome years ago furniſhed me with ſuch evidence as renders the ſtory recorded in Brathwaite's *Remains* very doubtful; and ſtill more ſtrongly proves that, whoever was the authour of this epitaph, it is highly improbable that it ſhould have been written by Shakſpeare.

The very firſt direction given by Mr. Combe in his Will is, concerning a tomb to be erected to him *after his death*. "My will is, that a convenient tomb of the value of three ore pounds ſhall by my executors hereafter named, out of my goods and chattels firſt rayſed, within one year after my deceaſe, be made over me." So much for Brathwaite's account of his having erected his own tomb in his life-time. That he had any quarrel with our authour, or that Shakſpeare had by any act *ſtung him ſo ſeverely that Mr. Combe never forgave him*, appears equally void of foundation; for by his will he bequeaths "to Mr. William Shakſpere Five Pounds." It is probable that they lived in intimacy, and that Mr. Combe had made ſome purchaſe from our poet; for he deviſes to his brother George, "the cloſe or grounds known by the name of Parſon's Cloſe, *alias*, *Shakſpere's Cloſe*." It muſt be owned that Mr. Combe's will is dated Jan. 28, 1612-13, about eighteen months before his death; and therefore the evidence now produced is not abſolutely deciſive, as he might have erected a tomb, and a rupture might have happened between him and Shakſpeare, after the making of this will: but it is very improbable that any ſuch rupture ſhould have taken place; for if the ſuppoſed cauſe of offence had happened ſubſequently to the execution of the inſtrument, it is to be preſumed that he would have revoked the legacy to Shakſpeare: and the ſame argument may be urged with reſpect to the direction concerning his tomb.

Mr. Combe by his will bequeaths to Mr. Francis Collins the elder, of the borough of Warwick, (who appears as a legatee and ſubſcribing witneſs to Shakſpeare's will, and therefore may be preſumed a common friend,) ten pounds; to his godſon John Collins, (the ſon of Francis,) ten pounds; to Mrs. Suſanna Collins (probably godmother to our poet's eldeſt daughter) ſix pounds, thirteen ſhillings, and four-pence; to Mr. Henry Walker, (father to Shakſpeare's godſon,) twenty ſhillings; to the poor of Stratford twenty pounds; and to his ſervants, in various legacies, one hundred and ten pounds. He was buried at Stratford, July 12, 1614, and his will was proved, Nov. 10, 1615.

Our author, at the time of making *his* will, had it not in his power to ſhew any teſtimony of his regard for Mr. Combe, that gentleman being then dead; but that he continued a friendly correſpondence with his family to the laſt, appears evidently (as Mr. Steevens has obſerved) from his leaving his ſword to Mr. Thomas Combe, the nephew, reſiduary legatee, and one of the executors of John.

On the whole we may conclude, that the lines preſerved by Rowe, and inſerted with ſome variation in Brathwaite's *Remains*, which the latter has mentioned to have been affixed to Mr. Combe's tomb in his life-time, were not written till after Shakſpeare's death; for the executors,

He died in the 53d year of his age[z], and was buried on the north ſide of the chancel, in the great church at Stratford,

cutors, who did not prove the will till Nov. 1615, could not well have erected "a fair monument" of conſiderable expence for thoſe times, till the middle or perhaps the end of the year 1616, in the April of which year our poet died. Between that time and the year 1618, when Braithwaite's book appeared, ſome one of thoſe perſons (we may preſume) who had ſuffered by Mr. Combe's ſeverity, gave vent to his feelings in the ſatirical compoſition preſerved by Rowe; part of which, we have ſeen, was borrowed from epitaphs that had already been printed.—That Mr. Combe was a money-lender, may be inferred from a clauſe in his will, in which he mentions his "good and juſt debtors;" to every one of whom he remits "twenty ſhillings for every twenty pounds, and ſo after this rate for a greater or leſſer debt," on their paying in to his executors what they owe.

Mr. Combe married Mrs. Roſe Clopton, Auguſt 27, 1560; and therefore was probably, when he died, eighty years old. His property, from the deſcription of it, appears to have been conſiderable.

In juſtice to this gentleman it ſhould be remembered, that in the language of Shakſpeare's age an *uſurer* did not mean one who took exorbitant, but any, intereſt or uſance for money; which many then conſidered as criminal. The opprobrious term by which ſuch a perſon was diſtinguiſhed, *Ten in the hundred*, proves this; for *ten* per cent. was the ordinary intereſt of money. See Shakſpeare's will.—Sir Philip Sidney directs by his will, made in 1586, that Sir Francis Walſingham ſhall put four thouſand pounds which the teſtator bequeathed to his daughter, "to the beſt behoofe either by purchaſe of land or leaſe, or ſome other *good and godly* uſe, but in no caſe to let it out for any *uſury* at all." MALONE.

[z] *He died in the 53d year of his age,*] He died on his birth-day, April 23, 1616, and had exactly completed his fifty-ſecond year. From Du Cange's Perpetual Almanack, Gloſs. in v. *Annus*, (making allowance for the different ſtyle which then prevailed in England from that on which Du Cange's calculation was formed,) it appears, that the 23d of April in that year was a Tueſday.

No account has been tranſmitted to us of the malady which at ſo early a period of life deprived England of its brighteſt ornament. The private note-book of his ſon-in-law Dr. Hall, containing a ſhort ſtate of the caſes of his patients, was a few years ago put into my hands by my friend, the late Dr. Wright; and as Dr. Hall married our poet's daughter in the year 1607, and undoubtedly attended Shakſpeare in his laſt illneſs, being then forty years old, I had hopes this book might have enabled me to gratify the publick curioſity on this ſubject. But unluckily the earlieſt caſe recorded by Hall, is dated in 1617. He had probably filled ſome other book with memorandums of his practice in preceeding years; which by ſome contingency may hereafter be found, and inform poſterity of the particular circumſtances

Stratford, where a monument, is placed in the wall[3]. On his grave-ſtone underneath is[4],

Good friend, for Jeſus' ſake forbear
To dig the duſt inclojed here.
Bleſt be the man that ſpares theſe ſtones,
And curſt be he that moves my bones[5].

He

ſtances that attended the death of our great poet.—From the 34th page of this book, which contains an account of a diſorder under which his daughter Elizabeth laboured, (about the year 1624,) and of the method of cure, it appears, that ſhe was his only daughter; [Elizabeth Hall, filia mea *unica*, tortura oris defatigata.] In the beginning of April in that year ſhe viſited London, and returned to Stratford on the 22d; an enterpriſe at that time "of great pith and moment."

While we lament that our incomparable poet was ſnatched from the world at a time when his faculties were in their full vigour, and before he was "declined into the vale of years," let us be thankful that "this ſweeteſt child of Fancy" did not periſh while he yet lay in the cradle. He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1564; and I have this moment learned from the Regiſter of that town that the plague broke out there on the 30th of the following June, and raged with ſuch violence between that day and the laſt day of December, that two hundred and thirty eight perſons were in that period carried to the grave, of which number probably 216 died of that malignant diſtemper; and one only of the whole number reſided, not in Stratford, but in the neighbouring town of Welcombe. From the 237 inhabitants of Stratford, whoſe names appear in the Regiſter, twenty-one are to be ſubducted, who, it may be preſumed, would have died in ſix months, in the ordinary courſe of nature; for in the five preceding years, reckoning, according to the ſtyle of that time, from March 25, 1559, to March 25, 1564, two hundred and twenty one perſons were buried at Stratford, of whom 210 were townſmen: that is, of theſe latter 42 died each year, at an average. Suppoſing one in thirty-five to have died annually, the total number of the inhabitants of Stratford at that period was 1470, and conſequently the plague in the laſt ſix months of the year 1564 carried off more than a ſeventh part of them. Fortunately for mankind it did not reach the houſe in which the infant Shakſpeare lay; for not one of that name appears in the dead liſt.—May we ſuppoſe, that, like Horace, he lay ſecure and fearleſs in the midſt of contagion and death, protected by the Muſes to whom his future life was to be devoted, and covered over

——— ſacra
Lauroque, collataque myrto,
Non ſine Diis animoſus infans. MALONE.

5 — *where a monument is placed in the wall.*] He is repreſented under an arch, in a ſitting poſture, a cuſhion ſpread before him, with a pen

a pen in his right-hand, and his left reſted on a ſcroll of paper. The following Latin diſtich is engraved under the cuſhion.

Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet. THEOBALD.

The firſt ſyllable in *Socratem* is here made ſhort, which cannot be allowed. Perhaps we ſhould read *Sophoclem.* Shakſpeare is then appoſitely compared with a dramatick author among the ancients: but ſtill it ſhould be remembered that the elogium is leſſened while the metre is reformed; and it is well known that ſome of our early writers of Latin poetry were uncommonly negligent in their proſody, eſpecially in proper names. The thought of this diſtich, as Mr. Tollet obſerves, might have been taken from the Faery Queene of Spenſer, b. ii. c. 9. ſt. 48, and c. 10 ſt. 3.

To this Latin inſcription on Shakſpeare ſhould be added the lines which are found underneath it on his monument:

Stay, paſſenger, why doſt thou go ſo faſt?
Read, if thou canſt, whom envious death hath plac'd
Within this monument; Shakſpeare, with whom
Quick nature dy'd; whoſe name doth deck the tomb
Far more than coſt; ſince all that he hath writ
Leaves living art but page to ſerve his wit.
Obiit An°. Dñi. 1616.
æt. 53, die 23 Apri. STEEVENS.

It appears from the Verſes of Leonard Digges that our authour's monument was erected before the year 1623. It has been engraved by Vertue, and done in Mezzotinto by Miller.

A writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine,* Vol. XXIX. p. 267, ſays, there is as ſtrong a reſemblance between the buſt at Stratford, and the portrait of our authour prefixed to the firſt folio edition of his plays, "as can well be between a ſtatue and a picture." To me (and I have viewed it ſeveral times with a good deal of attention) it appeared in a very different light. When I went laſt to Stratford, I carried with me the only genuine prints of Shakſpeare that were then extant, and I could not trace any reſemblance between them and this figure. There is a pertneſs in the countenance of the latter totally differing from that placid compoſure and thoughtful gravity, ſo perceptible in his original portrait and his beſt prints. Our poet's monument having been erected by his ſon-in-law Dr. Hall, the ſtatuary probably had the aſſiſtance of ſome picture, and failed only from want of ſkill to copy it.

Mr. Granger obſerves, (*Biog. Hiſt.* Vol. I. p. 259,) that "*it has been ſaid* there never was an original portrait of Shakſpeare, but that Sir Thomas Clarges after his death cauſed a portrait to be drawn for him from a perſon who nearly reſembled him." This entertaining writer was a great collector of anecdotes, but not always very ſcrupulous in inquiring into the authenticity of the information which he procured; for this improbable tale, I find, on examination, ſtands only

only on the aſſertion of an anonymous writer in *the Gentleman's Magazine* for Auguſt 1759, who boldly "affirmed it as an abſolute fact;" but being afterwards publickly called upon to produce his authority, never produced any. There is the ſtrongeſt reaſon therefore to preſume it a forgery.

"Mr. Walpole" (adds Mr. Granger) "informs me, that the only original picture of Shakſpeare is that which belonged to Mr. Keck, from whom it paſſed to Mr. Nicoll, whoſe only daughter married the Marquis of Caernarvon" [now duke of Chandos].

From this picture, his Grace, at my requeſt, very obligingly permitted a drawing to be made by that excellent artiſt Mr. Ozias Humphry; and from that drawing the print prefixed to the preſent edition has been engraved.

In the manuſcript notes of the late Mr. Oldys, this portrait is ſaid to have been "painted by old Cornelius Janſen." "Others," he adds, "ſay, that it was done by Richard Burbage the player;" and in another place he aſcribes it to "John Taylor, the player." This Taylor, it is ſaid in *the Critical Review* for 1770, left it by *will* to Sir William D'Avenant. But unluckily there was no player of the chriſtian and ſurname of John Taylor, contemporary with Shakſpeare. The player who performed in Shakſpeare's company, was Joſeph Taylor. There was however a *painter* of the name of *John Taylor*, to whom in his early youth it is barely poſſible that we may have been indebted for the only original portrait of our authour; for in the Picture-Gallery at Oxford are two portraits of Taylor the Water-poet, and on each of them "*John Taylor* pinx. 1655." There appears ſome reſemblance of *manner* between theſe portraits and the picture of Shakſpeare in the duke of Chandos's collection. That picture (I expreſs the opinion of Sir Joſhua Reynolds) has not the leaſt air of Cornelius Janſen's performances.

That this picture was once in the poſſeſſion of Sir Wm. D'Avenant is highly probable; but it is much more likely to have been *purchaſed* by him from ſome of the players after the theatres were ſhut up by authority, and the veterans of the ſtage were reduced to great diſtreſs, than to have been bequeathed to him by the perſon who painted it; in whoſe cuſtody it is improbable that it ſhould have remained. Sir William D'Avenant appears to have died inſolvent. There is no Will of his in the Prerogative-Office; but adminiſtration of his effects was granted to John Otway, his *principal creditor*, in May 1668. After his death, Betterton the actor bought it, probably at a publick ſale of his effects. While it was in Betterton's poſſeſſion, it was engraved by Vandergucht, for Mr. Rowe's edition of Shakſpeare, in 1709. Betterton made no will, and died very indigent. He had a large collection of portraits of actors in crayons, which were bought at the ſale of his goods by Bullfinch the Printſeller, who ſold them to one Mr. Sykes. The portrait of Shakſpeare was purchaſed by Mrs. Barry the actreſs, who ſold it afterwards for 40 guineas to Mr. Robert Keck. In 1719, while it was in Mr. Keck's poſſeſſion, an engraving was made from

from it by Vertue: a large half-ſheet. Mr. Nicoll of Colney-Hatch, Middleſex, marrying the heireſs of the Keck family, this picture devolved to him; and while in his poſſeſſion, it was, in 1747, engraved by Houbraken for Birch's *Illuſtrious Heads*. By the marriage of the duke of Chandos with the daughter of Mr. Nicoll, it became his Grace's property.

Sir Godfrey Kneller painted a picture of our authour, which he preſented to Dryden, but from what picture he copied, I am unable to aſcertain, as I have never ſeen Kneller's picture. The poet repayed him by an elegant copy of *Verſes*.—See his Poems, Vol. II. p. 231, edit. 1743:

"Shakſpeare, thy gift, I place before my ſight,
"With awe I aſk his bleſſing as I write;
"With reverence look on his majeſtick face,
"Proud to be leſs, but of his godlike race.
"His ſoul inſpires me, while thy praiſe I write,
"And I like Teucer under Ajax fight:
"Bids thee, through me, be bold; with dauntleſs breaſt
"Contemn the bad, and emulate the beſt:
"Like his, thy criticks in the attempt are loſt,
"When moſt they rail, know then, they envy moſt."

It appears from a circumſtance mentioned by Dryden, that theſe verſes were written after the year 1683: probably after Rymer's book had appeared in 1693. Dryden having made no will, and his wife Lady Elizabeth renouncing, adminiſtration was granted on the 10th of June 1700, to his ſon Charles, who was drowned in the Thames near Windſor in 1704. His younger brother Eraſmus ſucceeded to the title of Baronet, and died without iſſue in 1711; but I know not what became of his effects, or where this picture is now to be found.

About the year 1725 a mezzotinto of Shakſpeare was ſcraped by Simon, ſaid to be done from an original picture painted by Zouſt or Soeſt, then in the poſſeſſion of T. Wright, painter, in Covent-Garden. The earlieſt known picture painted by Zouſt in England, was done in 1637; ſo that if he ever painted a picture of Shakſpeare, it muſt have been a copy. It could not however have been made from D'Avenant's picture, (unleſs the painter took very great liberties) for the whole air, dreſs, diſpoſition of the hair, &c. are different. I have lately ſeen a picture in the poſſeſſion of —— Douglas, Eſq. at Teddington near Twickenham, which is, I believe, the very picture from which Simon's Mezzotinto was made. It is on canvas, (about 24 inches by 20,) and ſomewhat ſmaller than the life.

The earlieſt print of our poet that appeared, is that in the title-page of the firſt folio edition of his works, 1623, engraved by Martin Droeſhout. On this print the following lines, addreſſed TO THE READER, were written by Ben Jonſon:

"This figure that thou here ſeeſt put,
"It was for gentle Shakſpeare cut;

"Wherein

There was formerly a family of the ſurname of *James* at Stratford. *Anne*, the wife of *Richard James*, was buried there on the ſame day with our poet's widow; and Margaret, the daughter of *John James*, died there in April 1616.

A monumental inſcription "of a better leer," and ſaid to be written by our authour, is preſerved in a collection of Epitaphs, at the end of the Viſitation of Salop, taken by Sir William Dugdale in the year 1664, now remaining in the College of Arms, C. 35, fol. 20; a tranſcript of which Sir Iſaac Heard, Garter, Principal King at Arms, has obligingly tranſmitted to me.

Among the monuments in Tongue Church in the county of Salop, is one erected in remembrance of Sir Thomas Stanley, knight, who died, as I imagine, about the year 1600. In the Viſitation-book it is thus deſcribed by Sir William Dugdale:

"On the north ſide of the chancell ſtands a very ſtately tombe, ſupported with Corinthian columnes. It hath two figures of men in armour, thereon lying, the one below the arches and columnes, and the other above them, and this epitaph upon it.

"Thomas Stanley, Knight, ſecond ſon of Edward Earle of Derby, Lord Stanley and Strange, deſcended from the famielie of the Stanleys, married Margaret Vernon, one of the daughters and co-heires of Sir George Vernon of Nether-Haddon, in the county of Derby, Knight, by whome he had iſſue two ſons, Henry and Edward. Henry died an infant; Edward ſurvived, to whom thoſe lordſhips deſcended; and married the lady Lucis Percie, ſecond daughter of the Earle of Northumberland: by her he had iſſue ſeaven daughters. She and her foure daughters, Arabella, Marie, Alice, and Priſcilla, are interred under a monument in the church of Waltham in the county of Eſſex. Thomas, her ſon, died in his infancy, and is buried in the pariſh church of Winwich in the county of Lancaſter. The other three, Petronilla, Frances, and Veneſia, are yet living.

Theſe following verſes were made by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, the late famous tragedian.

"*Written upon the eaſt end of this tombe.*

"Aſke who lyes here, but do not weepe;
"He is not dead, he doth but ſleepe.
"This ſtony regiſter is for his bones,
"His fame is more perpetual than theſe ſtones:
"And his own goodneſs, with himſelf being gone,
"Shall live, when earthly monument is none.

"*Written upon the weſt end thereof.*

"Not monumental ſtone preſerves our fame,
"Nor ſkye-aſpiring pyramids our name.
"The memory of him for whom this ſtands,
"Shall out-live marble, and defacers' hands.
"When all to time's conſumption ſhall be given,
"Stanley, for whom this ſtands, ſhall ſtand in heaven.'

The

He had three daughters[3], of which two lived to be married; Judith, the elder, to one Mr. Thomas Quiney[4], was

The laſt line of this epitaph, though the worſt, bears very ſtrong marks of the hand of Shakſpeare. The beginning of the firſt line, "Aſk who lyes here," reminds us of that which we have been juſt examining: "*If any man aſk, who lies in this tomb*," &c.—Sir William Dugdale was born in Warwickſhire, was bred at the free-ſchool of Coventry, and in the year 1625 purchaſed the manor of Blythe in that county, where he then ſettled and afterwards ſpent a great part of his life: ſo that his teſtimony reſpecting this epitaph is ſufficient to aſcertain its authenticity. MALONE.

3 *He had three daughters*,] In this circumſtance Mr. Rowe muſt have been miſinformed. In the Regiſter of Stratford, no mention is made of any daughter of our author's but Suſanna and Judith. He had indeed three *children*; the two already mentioned, and a ſon, named Hamnet, of whom Mr. Rowe takes no notice. He was a twin child, born at the ſame time with Judith. Hence probably the miſtake. He died in the twelfth year of his age, in 1596. MALONE.

4 —Judith, *the* elder, *to one Mr. Thomas Quiney*,] This alſo is a miſtake. Judith was Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter. She died at Stratford-upon-Avon a few days after ſhe had completed her ſeventy-ſeventh year, and was buried there, Feb. 9, 1662-63. She was married to Mr. Quincy, who was four years younger than herſelf, on the 10th of February, 1615-16, and not as Mr. Weſt ſuppoſed, in the year 1616-17. He was led into the miſtake by the figures 1616 ſtanding nearly oppoſite to the entry concerning her marriage; but thoſe figures relate to the firſt entry in the ſubſequent month of April. The Regiſter appears thus:

February.——
3. Francis Buſhill to Iſabel Whood.
1616. 5. Rich. Sandells to Joan Ballamy.
10. Tho. Queeny to Judith Shakſpere.
Aprill.——
14. Will. Borowes to Margaret Davies.

and all the following entries in that and a part of the enſuing page are of 1616; the year then beginning on the 25th of March. Whether the above 10 relates to the month of February or April, Judith was certainly married before her father's death: if it relates to February, ſhe was married on February 10, 1615-16; if to April, on the 10th of April 1616. From Shakſpeare's will it appears, that this match was a ſtolen one; for he ſpeaks of ſuch future "*huſband as ſhe ſhall* be married to." It is ſtrange that the ceremony ſhould have been publickly celebrated in the church of Stratford without his knowledge; and the improbability of ſuch a circumſtance might lead us to ſuppoſe that ſhe was married on the 10th of *April*, about a *fortnight* after the execution of her father's will. But the entry of the

 baptiſm

by whom she had three sons, who all died without children; and Susanna, who was his favourite, to Dr. John Hall, a physician of good reputation in that country[5]. She left one child only, a daughter, who was

baptism of her first child, (Nov. 23, 1626,) as well as the entry of the marriage, ascertain it to have taken place in February

Mr West, without intending it, has impeached the character of this lady; for her first child, according to his representation, must be supposed to have been born some months before her marriage, since among the Baptisms I find this entry of the christening of her eldest son. "1616. Nov 23 Shakspere, filius Thomas Quiney, Gent." and according to Mr West she was not married till the following February. This *Shakspeare Quiney* died in his infancy at Stratford, and was buried May 8th, 1617. Judith's second son, *Richard*, was baptized on February 9th, 1617-18. He died a Stratford in Feb. 1638-9, in the 21st year of his age, and was buried there on the 26th of that month. Her third son, *Thomas*, was baptized August 29, 1619, and was buried also at Stratford January 28, 1638-9. There had been a plague in the town in the preceding summer, that carried off about fifty persons. MALONE.

5 *Dr.* John Hall, *a physician of good reputation in that country*] Susanna's husband, Dr. John Hall, died in Nov. 1635, and is interred in the chancel of the church of Stratford near his wife. He was buried on the 26th of November, as appears from the Register of burials at Stratford:

"Novembr 26, 1635, Johannes Hall, medicus peritissimus"

The following is a transcript of his will, extracted from the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

"The last Will and Testament nuncupative of John Hall of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwick, Gent made and declared the five and twentieth of November, 1635. *Imprimis*, I give unto my wife my house in London. *Item*, I give unto my daughter Nash my house in Acton. *Item*, I give unto my daughter Nash my meadow *Item*, I give my goods and money unto my wife and my daughter Nash, to be equally divided betwixt them *Item*, concerning my study of books, I leave them, said he, to you, my son Nash, to dispose of them as you see good. As for my manuscripts, I would have given them to Mr Boles, if he had been here, but forasmuch as he is not here present, you may, son Nash, burn them, or do with them what you please. Witnesses hereunto,

Thomas Nash.
Simon Trapp."

The testator not having appointed any executor, administration was granted to his widow, Nov 23, 1636

Some at least of Dr. Hall's manuscripts escaped the flames, one of them being yet extant. See p 123, n. 2.

I could

I could not, after a very careful ſearch, find the will of Suſanna Hall in the Prerogative office, nor is it preſerved in the Archives of the dioceſe of Worceſter, the Regiſtrar of which dioceſe at my requeſt very obligingly examined the indexes of all the wills proved in his office between the years 1649 and 1670; but in vain. The town of Stratford-upon-Avon is in that dioceſe.

The inſcriptions on the tomb-ſtones of our poet's favourite daughter and her huſband are as follows:

"Here lyeth the body of John Hall, Gent. he marr. Suſanna, y daughter and co-heire of Will. Shakſpeare, Gent. he deceaſed Nov. 25, A°. 1635, aged 60."

"Hallius hic ſitus eſt, medica celeberrimus arte,
"Expectans regni gaudia læta Dei.
"Dignus erat meritis qui Neſtora vinceret annis;
"In tenuis omnes ſed rapit æqua dies.
"Ne tumulo quid deſit, adeſt fidiſſima conjux,
"Et vitæ comitem nunc quoque mortis habet."

Theſe verſes ſhould ſeem, from the laſt two lines, not to have been inſcribed on Dr. Hall's tomb-ſtone till 1649. Perhaps indeed the laſt diſtich only was then added.

"Here lyeth the body of Suſanna, wife to John Hall, Gent. ye daughter of William Shakſpeare, Gent. She deceaſed the 11th of July, A°. 1649, aged 66."

"Witty above her ſexe, but that's not all,
"Wiſe to ſalvation was good Miſtriſs Hall.
"Something of Shakſpeare was in that, but this
"Wholy of him with whom ſhe's now in bliſſe.

"Then, paſſenger, haſt ne're a teare,
"To weepe with her that wept with all:
"That wept, yet ſet her ſelfe to chere
"Them up with comforts cordiall.

"Her love ſhall live, her mercy ſpread,
"When thou haſt ne're a teare to ſhed."

The foregoing Engliſh verſes, which are preſerved by Dugdale, are not now remaining, half of the tomb-ſtone having been cut away, and another half ſtone joined to it; with the following inſcription on it,—"Here lyeth the body of Richard Watts of Ryhon-Clifford, in the pariſh of old Stratford, Gent. who departed this life the 23d of May, Anno Dom. 1707, and in the 46th year of his age." This Mr. Watts, as I am informed by the Rev. Mr Davenport, was owner of, and lived at the eſtate of Ryhon-Clifford, which was once the property of Dr. Hall.

Mrs. Hall was buried on the 16th of July, 1649, as appears from the Regiſter of Stratford. MALONE.

was married firſt to Thomas Naſhe[6], eſq. and afterwards

[6] *She left one child only, a daughter, who was married firſt to Thomas Naſhe, Eſq.*] Elizabeth, our poet's grand-daughter, who appears to have been a favourite, Shakſpeare having left her by his will a memorial of his affection, though ſhe at that time was but eight years old, was born in February 1607 8, as appears by an entry in the Regiſter of Stratford, which Mr. Weſt omitted in the tranſcript with which he furniſhed Mr. Steevens. I learn from the ſame regiſter that ſhe was married in 1626. "MARRIAGES. April 22, 1626, Mr. Thomas Naſh to Miſtriſs Elizabeth Hall." I ſhould be remembered that every unmarried lady was called *Miſtreſs* till the time of George I. Hence our authour's *Miſtreſs* Anne Page. Nor in ſpeaking of an unmarried lady could her chriſtian name be omitted, as it often is at preſent; for then no diſtinction would have remained between her and her mother. Some married ladies indeed were diſtinguiſhed from their daughters by the title of *Madam*.

Mr. Naſh died in 1647, as appears by the inſcription on his tomb-ſtone in the chancel of the church of Stratford.

"Here reſteth y^e^ body of Thomas Naſhe, Eſq. He mar Elizabeth the daugh. and heire of John Hall, Gent. He died April 4th, A^o^ 1647, aged 53."

"Fata *manent* omnes; hunc *non virtute carentem*,
"Ut neque divitiis, abſtulit atra dies.
"Abſtulit, *at referet* lux ultima. Siſte, viator;
"Si peritura geras, per male parta peris."

The letters printed in Italicks are now obliterated.

By his laſt will, which is in the Prerogative-office, dated Auguſt 25, 1642, he bequeathed to his well beloved wife, Elizabeth Naſh, and her aſſigns, for her life, (in lieu of jointure and thirds,) one meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, ſituate in the Chapel-Street in Stratford, then in the tenure and occupation of Joan Norman, widow; one meadow, known by the name of the Square Meadow, with the appurtenances, in the pariſh of old Stratford, lying near unto the great ſtone-bridge of Stratford; one other meadow with the appurtenances, known by the name of the Waſh Meadow, one little meadow with the appurtenances, adjoining to the ſaid Waſh Meadow; and alſo all the tythes of the manor or lordſhip of Shottery. He deviſes to his kinſman Edward Naſh, the ſon of his uncle George Naſh of London, his heirs and aſſigns, (*inter alia*) the meſſuage or tenement, then in his own occupation, called *The New-Place*, ſituate in the Chapel-Street, in Stratford; together with all and ſingular houſes, outhouſes, barns, ſtables, orchards, gardens, eaſements, profits, or commodities, to the ſame belonging; and alſo four-yard land of arable land, meadow, and paſture, with the appurtenances, lying and being in the common fields of Old Stratford, with all the eaſements, profits, commons, commodities, and hereditaments, to the ſame four-yard lands belonging; then in the tenure, uſe, and occupation of

wards to Sir John Bernard of Abington[7], but died likewise without iſſue

This

of him the ſaid Thomas Naſh; and one other meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, ſituate in the pariſh of ——, in London, and called or known by the name of *the Wardrobe*, and then in the tenure, uſe and occupation of —— Dickes. And from and after the death of his ſaid wife, he bequeaths the meadows above named, and deviſed to her for life, to his ſaid couſin, Edward Naſh, his heirs and aſſigns for ever. After various other bequeſts, he directs that one hundred pounds, at the leaſt, be laid out in mourning gowns, cloaks, and apparel, to be diſtributed among his kindred and friends, in ſuch manner as his executrix ſhall think fit. He appoints his wife Elizabeth Naſh his reſiduary legatee, and ſole executrix, and ordains Edmund Rawlins, William Smith, and John Eaſton, overſeers of his will, to which the witneſſes are John Such, Michael Johnſon, and Samuel Rawlins.

By a nuncupative codicil dated on the day of his death, April 4th, 1647, he bequeaths (*inter alia*) "to his mother Mrs. Hall fifty pounds; to Elizabeth Hathaway fifty pounds; to Thomas Hathaway fifty pounds; to Judith Hathaway ten pounds; to his uncle Naſh and his aunt, his couſin Sadler and his wife, his couſin Richard Quiney and his wife, his couſin Thomas Quiney and his wife, twenty ſhillings each, to buy them rings." The meadows which by his will he had deviſed to his wife for life, he by this codicil deviſes to her, her heirs and aſſigns, for ever, to the end that they may not be ſevered from her own land; and he "appoints and declares that the inheritance of his land given to his couſin Edward Naſh ſhould be by him ſettled after his deceaſe, upon his ſon Thomas Naſh, and his heirs, and for want of ſuch heirs then to remain and deſcend to his own right heirs."

It is obſervable that in this will the teſtator makes no mention of any child, and there is no entry of any iſſue of his marriage in the Regiſter of Stratford; I have no doubt therefore that he died without iſſue, and that a pedigree with which Mr. Whalley furniſhed Mr. Steevens a few years ago, is inaccurate. The origin of the miſtake in that pedigree will be pointed out in its proper place.

As by Shakſpeare's will his daughter Suſanna had an eſtate for life in *the New Place*, &c. and his grand-daughter Elizabeth an eſtate tail in remainder they probably on the marriage of Elizabeth to Mr. Naſh, by a fine and recovery cut off the entail; and by a deed to lead the uſes gave him the entire dominion over that eſtate; which he appears to have miſuſed by deviſing it from Shakſpeare's family to his own.

Mr. Naſh's will and codicil were proved June 5, 1647, and adminiſtration was then granted to his widow. MALONE.

[7] —*Sir John Barnard of Abington*,] Sir John Barnard of Abington, a ſmall village about a mile from the town of Northampton, was created a knight by King Charles II. Nov. 25, 1661. In 1671 he ſold the manor and advowſon of the church of Abington, which his anceſtors had poſſeſſed for more than two hundred years, to William

Thurſby, Eſq. Sir John Barnard was the eldeſt ſon of Baldwin Barnard, eſq. by Eleanor, daughter and co heir of John Fulwood of Ford-Hall in the county of Warwick, eſq. and was born in 1605. He firſt married Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir Clement Edmonds of Preſton, in Northamptonſhire, by whom he had four ſons and four daughters. She dying in 1642, he married ſecondly our poet's grand-daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Naſh, on the 5th of June 1649, at Billeſley in Warwickſhire, about three miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. If any of Shakſpeare's manuſcripts remained in his grand-daughter's cuſtody at the time of her ſecond marriage, (and ſome *letters* at leaſt ſhe ſurely muſt have had,) they probably were then removed to the houſe of her new huſband at Abington, Sir Hugh Clopton, who was born two years after her death, mentioned to Mr. Macklin, in the year 1742, an old tradition that ſhe had carried away with her from Stratford many of her grandfather's papers. On the death of Sir John Barnard they muſt have fallen into the hands of Mr. Edward Bagley, Lady Barnard's executor; and if any deſcendant of that gentleman be now living, in his cuſtody they probably remain. MALONE.

[8] — *but died likewiſe without iſſue.*] Confiding in a pedigree tranſmitted by Mr. Whalley ſome years ago to Mr. Steevens, I once ſuppoſed that Mr. Rowe was inaccurate in ſaying that our poet's grand-daughter died without iſſue. But he was certainly right; and this lady was undoubtedly the laſt lineal deſcendant of Shakſpeare. There is no entry, as I have already obſerved, in the Regiſter of Stratford, of any iſſue of hers by Mr. Naſh; nor does he in his will mention any child, deviſing the greater part of his property between his wife and his kinſman, Edward Naſh. That Lady Barnard had no iſſue by her ſecond huſband, is proved by the Regiſter of Abington, in which there is no entry of the baptiſm of any child of that marriage, though there are regular entries of the time when the ſeveral children of Sir John Barnard by his firſt wife were baptized. Lady Barnard died at Abington, and was buried there on the 17th of February 1669-70; but her huſband did not ſhew his reſpect for her memory by a monument, or even an inſcription of any kind. He ſeems not to have been ſenſible of the honourable alliance he had made. Shakſpeare's grand-daughter would not, at this day, go to her grave without a memorial. By her laſt will, which I ſubjoin, ſhe directs her truſtee to ſell her eſtate of *New-Place*, &c. to the beſt bidder, and to offer it firſt to her couſin Mr. Edward Naſh. How ſhe *then* came to have any property in New-Place, which her firſt huſband had deviſed to this very Edward Naſh, does not appear; but I ſuppoſe that after the death of Mr. Thomas Naſh ſhe exchanged the patrimonial lands which he bequeathed to her, with Edward Naſh and his ſon, and took New-Place, &c. inſtead of them.

Sir John Barnard died at Abington, and was buried there on March 5th, 1673-4. On his tomb-ſtone in the chancel of the church is the following inſcription:

Hic jacent exuviæ generoſiſſimi viri Johannis Bernard, *militis; patre, avo, abavo, tritavo, aliiſque progenitoribus per ducentos et amplius annos hujus oppidi de Alingdon dominis, inſignis: qui fata*

This is what I could learn of any note, either relating to

ceſſit undeſeptuageſſimo ætatis ſuæ anno, quinto nonas Martii, annoque a partu B. Virginis, MDCLXXIII.

Sir John Barnard having made no will, adminiſtration of his effects was granted on the 7th of November 16-4, to Henry Gilbert of Locko in the county of Derby, who had married his daughter Elizabeth by his firſt wife, and to his two other ſurviving daughters; Mary Higgs, widow of Thomas Higgs of Coleſborne, eſq. and Eleanor Cotton, the wife of Samuel Cotton, eſq. All Sir John Barnard's other children except the three above-mentioned died without iſſue. I know not whether any deſcendant of theſe be now living: but if that ſhould be the caſe, among their papers may poſſibly be found ſome fragment or other relative to Shakſpeare; for by his grand daughter's order, the adminiſtrators of her huſband were entitled to keep poſſeſſion of her houſe, &c. in Stratford, for ſix months after her death.

The following is a copy of the will of this laſt deſcendant of our poet, extracted from the Regiſtry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

In the Name of God, Amen. I Dame Elizabeth Barnard, wife of Sir John Barnard of Abington in the county of Northampton, knight, being in perfect memory, (bleſſed be God!) and mindful of mortality, do make this my laſt will and teſtament in manner and form following.

Whereas by my certain deed or writing under my hand and ſeal, dated on or about the eighteenth day of April 1653, according to a power therein mentioned, I the ſaid Elizabeth have limited and diſpoſed of all that my meſſuage with the appurtenances in Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick, called the New Place, and all that four-yard land and an half in Stratford-Welcombe and Biſhopton in the county of Warwick, (after the deceaſe of the ſaid Sir John Barnard, and me the ſaid Elizabeth,) unto Henry Smith of Stratford aforeſaid, Gent, and Job Dighton of the Middle Temple, London, Eſq. ſince deceaſed, and their heirs; upon truſt that they, and the ſurvivor, and the heirs of ſuch ſurvivor, ſhould bargain and ſell the ſame for the beſt value they can get, and the money thereby to be raiſed to be employed and diſpoſed of to ſuch perſon and perſons, and in ſuch manner as I the ſaid Elizabeth ſhould by any writing or note under my hand, truly teſtified, declare and nominate; as thereby may more fully appear. Now my will is, and I do hereby ſignify and declare my mind and meaning to be, that the ſaid Henry Smith, my ſurviving truſtee, or his heirs, ſhall with all convenient ſpeed after the deceaſe of the ſaid Sir John Barnard my huſband, make ſale of the inheritance of all and ſingular the premiſes, and that my loving couſin Edward Naſh, Eſq. ſhall have the firſt offer or refuſal thereof, according to my promiſe formerly made to him: and the monies to be raiſed by ſuch ſale I do give, diſpoſe of, and appoint the ſame to be paid and diſtributed, as is herein after expreſſed; that is to ſay, to my couſin Thomas Welles of Carleton, in the county of Bedford, Gent. the

ſum

to himſelf or family: the character of the man is beſt ſeen in his writings. But ſince Ben Jonſon has made a ſort

ſum of fifty pounds, to be paid him within one year next after ſuch ſale: and if the ſaid Thomas Wells ſhall happen to die before ſuch time as his ſaid legacy ſhall become due to him, then my deſire is, that my kinſman Edward Bagley, citizen of London, ſhall have the ſole benefit thereof.

Item, I do give and appoint unto Judith Hathaway, one of the daughters of my kinſman Thomas Hathaway, late of Stratford aforeſaid, the annual ſum of five pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid unto her yearly and every year, from and after the deceaſe of the ſurvivor of the ſaid Sir John Barnard and me the ſaid Elizabeth, for and during the natural life of her the ſaid Judith, at the two moſt uſual feaſts or days of payment in the year, *videlicet*, the feaſt of the Annunciation of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary, and Saint Michael the archangel, by equal portions, the firſt payment thereof to begin at ſuch of the ſaid feaſts as ſhall next happen, after the deceaſe of the ſurvivor of the ſaid Sir John Barnard and me the ſaid Elizabeth, if the ſaid premiſes can be ſo ſoon ſold; or otherwiſe ſo ſoon as the ſame can be ſold: and if the ſaid Judith ſhall happen to marry, and ſhall be minded to releaſe the ſaid annual ſum of five pounds, and ſhall accordingly releaſe and quit all her intereſt and right in and to the ſame after ſhall become due to her, then and in ſuch caſe, I do give and appoint to her the ſum of forty pounds in lieu thereof, to be paid unto her at the time of the executing of ſuch releaſe as aforeſaid.

Item, I give and appoint unto Joan the wife of Edward Kent, and one other of the daughters of the ſaid Thomas Hathaway, the ſum of fifty pounds, to be likewiſe paid unto her within one year next after the deceaſe of the ſurvivor of the ſaid Sir John Barnard and me the ſaid Elizabeth, if the ſaid premiſes can be ſoon ſold, or otherwiſe ſo ſoon as the ſame can be ſold, and if the ſaid Joan ſhall happen to die before the ſaid fifty pounds ſhall be paid to her, then I do give and appoint the ſame unto Edward Kent the younger, her ſon, to be paid unto him when he ſhall attain the age of one-and-twenty years.

Item, I do alſo give and appoint unto him the ſaid Edward Kent, ſon of the ſaid Joan, the ſum of thirty pounds, towards putting him out as an apprentice, and to be paid and diſpoſed of to that uſe when he ſhall be fit for it.

Item, I do give or appoint and diſpoſe of unto Roſe, Elizabeth, and Suſanna, three other of the daughters of my ſaid kinſman Thomas Hathaway, the ſum of forty pounds apiece, to be paid unto every of them at ſuch time and in ſuch manner as the ſaid fifty pounds before appointed to the ſaid Joan Kent, their ſiſter, ſhall become payable.

Item, All the reſt of the monies that ſhall be raiſed by ſuch ſale as aforeſaid, I give and diſpoſe of unto my ſaid kinſman Edward Bagley, except five pounds only, which I give and appoint to my ſaid truſtee Henry Smith for his pains; and if the ſaid Edward Naſh ſhall refuſe the

ſort of an eſſay towards it in his *Diſcoveries*, I will give it in his words:

I remember

the purchaſe of the ſaid meſſuage and four-yard land and a half with the appurtenances, then my will and deſire is, that the ſaid Henry Smith or his heirs ſhall ſell the inheritance of the ſaid premiſes and every part thereof unto the ſaid Edward Bagley, and that he ſhall purchaſe the ſame; upon this condition, nevertheleſs, that he the ſaid Edward Bagley, his heirs, executors, or adminiſtrators, ſhall juſtly and faithfully perform my will and true meaning, in making due payment of all the ſeveral ſums of money or legacies before mentioned, in ſuch manner as aforeſaid. And I do hereby declare my will and meaning to be that the executors or adminiſtrators of my ſaid huſband Sir John Barnard ſhall have and enjoy the uſe and benefit of my ſaid houſe in Stratford, called the New-Place, with the orchards, gardens, and all other the appurtenances thereto belonging, for and during the ſpace of ſix months next after the deceaſe of him the ſaid Sir John Barnard.

Item, I give and deviſe unto my kinſman Thomas Hart, the ſon of Thomas Hart, late of Stratford-upon-Avon aforeſaid, all that my other meſſuage or inn ſituate in Stratford-upon-Avon aforeſaid, commonly called the Maidenhead, with the appurtenances, and the next houſe thereunto adjoining, with the barn belonging to the ſame, now or late in the occupation of Michael Johnſon or his aſſigns, with all and ſingular the appurtenances; to hold to him the ſaid Thomas Hart the ſon, and the heirs of his body; and for default of ſuch iſſue, I give and deviſe the ſame to George Hart, brother of the ſaid Thomas Hart, and to the heirs of his body; and for default of ſuch iſſue to the right heirs of me the ſaid Elizabeth Barnard for ever.

Item, I do make, ordain and appoint my ſaid loving kinſman Edward Bagley ſole executor of this my laſt will and teſtament, hereby revoking all former wills; deſiring him to ſee a juſt performance hereof, according to my true intent and meaning. In witneſs whereof I the ſaid Elizabeth Barnard have hereunto ſet my hand and ſeal, the nine-and-twentieth day of January, Anno Domini, one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-nine.

ELIZABETH BARNARD.

Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, and declared, to be the laſt will and teſtament of the ſaid Elizabeth Barnard, *in the preſence of*

John Howes, Rector de Abington.
Francis Wickes.

Probatum fuit teſtamentum ſupraſcriptum apud ædes Exonienſes ſituat. in le Strand, in comitatu Middx. quarto die menſis Martij, 1669, *coram venerabili viro Domino Egidio Sweete, milite et legum doctore, ſurrogato, &c. juramento* Edwardi Bagley, *unici executor. nominat. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat.*

MALONE.

I remember

" I remember the players have often mentioned it as " an honour to Shakſpeare, that in writing (whatſoever " he penned) he never blotted out a line [9]. My anſwer " hath

[9] — *that in writing (whatſoever he penned) he never blotted out a line.*] This is not true. They only ſay in their preface to his plays, that " his mind and hand went together, and what he thought, he uttered with that eaſineſs, that we have *ſcarce* received from him a blot in his papers." On this Mr. Pope obſerves, that " there never was a more groundleſs *report*, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences. As, the comedy of *the Merry Wives of Windſor*, which he entirely new writ; *The Hiſtory of Henry the Sixth*, which was firſt publiſhed under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaſter*; and that of *Henry V.* extremely improved; that of *Hamlet* enlarged to almoſt as much again as at firſt, and many others."

Surely this is a very ſtrange kind of argument. In the firſt place this was not a *report*, (unleſs by that word we are to underſtand *relation*,) but a poſitive aſſertion, grounded on the beſt evidence that the nature of the ſubject admitted; namely, occular proof. The players ſay, in ſubſtance, that Shakſpeare had ſuch a happineſs of expreſſion, that, as they collect from his papers, he had *ſeldom* occaſion to alter the firſt words he had ſet down; in conſequence of which they found *ſcarce* a blot in his writings. And how is this refuted by Mr. Pope? By telling us, that a great many of his plays were *enlarged* by their authour. Allowing this to be true, which is by no means certain, if he had written twenty plays, each conſiſting of one thouſand lines, and afterwards added to each of them a thouſand more, would it therefore follow, that he had not written the firſt thouſand with facility and correctneſs, or that thoſe muſt have been neceſſarily *expunged*, becauſe new matter was added to them? Certainly not.—But the truth is, it is by no means clear that our authour did enlarge all the plays mentioned by Mr. Pope, if even that would prove the point intended to be eſtabliſhed. Mr. Pope was evidently deceived by the quarto copies. From the play of *Henry V.* being more perfect in the folio edition than in the quarto, nothing follows but that the quarto impreſſion of that piece was printed from a mutilated and imperfect copy, ſtolen from the theatre, or taken down by ear during the repreſentation. What have been called the *quarto* copies of the Second and Third Parts of *King Henry VI.* were in fact two old plays written before the time of Shakſpeare, and entitled *The Firſt Part of the Contention of the two houſes of Yorke and Lancaſter, &c.* and *The true tragedy of Richard Duke of Yorke, &c.* on which he conſtructed two new plays; juſt as on the old plays of *K. John*, and *the Taming of a Shrew*, he formed two other plays with nearly the ſame titles. See the *Diſſertation* in Vol. VI. p. 381.

The tragedy of *Hamlet* in the firſt edition, (*now extant*,) that of 1604, is ſaid to be " enlarged to almoſt as much again as it was, according

" hath been, *Would he had blotted a thouſand!* which " they thought a malevolent ſpeech. I had not told " poſterity this, but for their ignorance, who choſe that " circumſtance to commend their friend by, wherein he " moſt faulted: and to juſtify mine own candour, for I " loved the man, and do honour his memory, on this " ſide idolatry, as much as any. He was, indeed, ho- " neſt, and of an open and free nature, had an excellent " fancy, brave notions, and gentle expreſſions; wherein " he flowed with that facility, that ſometimes it was " neceſſary he ſhould be ſtopped: *Sufflaminandus erat*, " as Auguſtus ſaid of Haterius. His wit was in his own " power; would the rule of it had been ſo too. Many " times he fell into thoſe things which could not eſcape " laughter; as when he ſaid in the perſon of Cæſar, one " ſpeaking to him,

" *Cæſar thou doſt me wrong.*

" He replied:

" *Cæſar did never wrong, but with juſt cauſe.*

cording to the true and perfect copy." What is to be collected from this, but that there was a former *imperfect* edition (I believe, in the year 1602)? that the one we are now ſpeaking of was enlarged to as much again as it was *in the ſame mutilated impreſſion*, and that this is the genuine and perfect copy, the other imperfect and ſpurious?

The *Merry Wives of Windſor*, indeed, and *Romeo and Juliet*, and perhaps *Love's Labour's Loſt*, our authour appears to have altered and amplified; and to *K. Richard II.* what is called the parliament-ſcene, ſeems to have been added; (though this laſt is by no means certain;) but neither will theſe augmentations and new-modellings diſprove what has been aſſerted by Shakſpeare's fellow-comedians concerning the facility of his writing, and the exquiſite felicity of his firſt expreſſions.

The haſty ſketch of the *Merry Wives of Windſor*, which he is ſaid to have compoſed in a fortnight, he might have written without a blot; and three or four years afterwards, when he choſe to dilate his plan, he might have compoſed the additional ſcenes without a blot likewiſe. In a word, ſuppoſing even that Nature had not endowed him with that rich vein which he unqueſtionably poſſeſſed, he who in little more than twenty years produces thirty-four or thirty-five pieces for the ſtage, has certainly not much time for expunging. MALONE.

" And

" and ſuch like, which were ridiculous. But he redeem-
" ed his vices with his virtues: there was ever more in
" him to be praiſed than to be pardoned."

As for the paſſage which he mentions out of Shakſpeare, there is ſomewhat like it in *Julius Cæſar*, but without the abſurdity; nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have ſeen, as quoted by Mr. Jonſon[1].

Beſides his plays in this edition[2], there are two or three aſcribed to him by Mr. Langbaine, which I have never ſeen, and know nothing of. He writ likewiſe

[1] — *nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have ſeen, as quoted by Mr. Jonſon.*] See Mr. Tyrwhitt's note, Vol. VII. p. 358, n. 1. MALONE.

[2] *Beſides his plays in this edition, there are two or three aſcribed to him by Mr. Langbaine,*] *The Birth of Merlin*, 1662, written by W. Rowley; the old play of *King John* in two parts, 1591, on which Shakſpeare formed his *King John*, and *the Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, written by George Peele.

The editor of the folio 1664, ſubjoined to the 36 dramas publiſhed in 1623, ſeven plays, four of which had appeared in Shakſpeare's life-time with his name in the title-page, viz. *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*, 1609, *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, 1600, *The London Prodigal*, 1605, and *The Yorkſhire Tragedy*, 1608, the three others which they inſerted, *Locrine*, 1595, *Lord Cromwell*, 1602, and *The Puritan*, 1607, having been printed with the initials W. S in the title-page, the editor choſe to interpret thoſe letters to mean William Shakſpeare, and aſcribed them alſo to our poet. I publiſhed an edition of theſe ſeven pieces ſome years ago, freed in ſome meaſure from the groſs errors with which they had been exhibited in ancient copies, that the publick might ſee what they contained; and do not heſitate to declare my firm perſuaſion that of *Locrine*, *Lord Cromwell*, *Sir John Old aſtle*, *the London Prodigal*, and *the Puritan*, Shakſpeare did not write a ſingle line.

How little the booksellers of former times ſcrupled to affix the names of celebrated writers to the productions of others, even in the life-time of ſuch celebrated authours, may be collected from Heywood's Tranſlations from Ovid, which in 1612, while Shakſpeare was yet living, were aſcribed to him. See Vol. X. p. 321, n. 1. With the dead they would certainly make ſtill more free. "This book" (ſays Anthony Wood, ſpeaking of a work to which the name of Sir Philip Sydney was prefixed) "*coming out ſo late*, it is to be inquired whether Sir Philip Sydney's name is not ſet to it for ſale-ſake, being a uſual thing in theſe days to ſet a great name to a book or books, by ſharking booksellers, or ſniveling writers, to get bread." *Athen. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 208. MALONE.

Venus and Adonis, and *Tarquin and Lucrece*, in ſtanzas, which have been printed in a late collection of poems *. As to the character given of him by Ben Jonſon, there is a good deal true in it: but I believe it may be as well expreſſed by what Horace ſays of the firſt Romans, who wrote tragedy upon the Greek models, (or indeed tranſlated them,) in his epiſtle to Auguſtus:

——— *naturâ ſublimis & acer:*
Nam ſpirat tragicum ſatis, et feliciter audet,
Sed turpem putat in chartis metuit que lituram.

As I have not propoſed to myſelf to enter into a large and complete criticiſm upon Shakſpeare's works, ſo I will only take the liberty, with all due ſubmiſſion to the judgment of others, to obſerve ſome of thoſe things I have been pleaſed with in looking him over.

His plays are properly to be diſtinguiſhed only into comedies and tragedies. Thoſe which are called hiſtories, and even ſome of his comedies, are really tragedies, with a run of mixture of comedy amongſt them [3]. That way

* —*in a late collection of poems.*] In the fourth volume of *State Poems*, printed in 1707. Mr. Rowe did not go beyond *A late Collection of Poems*, and does not ſeem to have known that Shakſpeare alſo wrote 154 Sonnets, and a poem entitled *A Lover's Complaint*.

MALONE.

3 — *are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of comedy amongſt them.*] Heywood, our authour's contemporary, has ſtated the beſt defence that can be made for his intermixing lighter with the more ſerious ſcenes of his dramas.

"It may likewiſe be objected, why amongſt ſad and grave hiſtories I have here and there inſerted fabulous jeſts and tales ſavouring of lightneſs. I anſwer, I have therein imitated our *hiſtorical, and comical poets*, that write to the ſtage, who, leſt the auditory ſhould be dulled with ſerious courſes, which are merely weighty and material, in every act preſent ſome Zany, with his mimick action to breed in the leſs capable mirth and laughter; *for they that write to all, muſt ſtrive to pleaſe all*. And as ſuch faſhion themſelves to a multitude diverſely addicted, ſo I to an univerſality of readers diverſely diſpoſed."

Pref. to *Hiſtory of Women*, 1624. MALONE.

The criticks who renounce tragi-comedy as barbarous, I fear, ſpeak more from notions which they have formed in their cloſets, than any well-built theory deduced from experience of what pleaſes or diſpleaſes, which ought to be the foundation of all rules.

Even

way of tragi-comedy was the common miſtake of that age, and is indeed become ſo agreeable to the Engliſh taſte, that though the ſeverer criticks among us cannot bear it, yet the generality of our audiences ſeem to be better pleaſed with it than with an exact tragedy. *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Taming of a Shrew*, are all pure comedy; the reſt, however they are called, have ſomething of both kinds. It is not very eaſy to determine which way of writing he was moſt excellent in. There is certainly a great deal of entertainment in his comical humours; and though they did not then ſtrike at all ranks of people, as the

Even ſuppoſing there is no affectation in this refinement, and that thoſe criticks have really tried and purified their minds till there is no droſs remaining, ſtill this can never be the caſe of a popular audience, to which a dramatick repreſentation is referred.

Dryden in one of his prefaces condemns his own conduct in the *Spaniſh Friar*; but, ſays he, I did not write it to pleaſe myſelf, it was given to the publick. Here is an involuntary confeſſion that tragi-comedy is more pleaſing to the audience; I would aſk then, upon what ground it is condemned?

This ideal excellence of uniformity reſts upon a ſuppoſition that we are either more refined, or a higher order of beings than we really are: there is no proviſion made for what may be called the animal part of our minds.

Though we ſhould acknowledge this paſſion for variety and contrarieties to be the vice of our nature, it is ſtill a propenſity which we all feel, and which he who undertakes to divert us muſt find proviſion for.

We are obliged, it is true, in our purſuit after ſcience, or excellence in any art, to keep our minds ſteadily fixed for a long continuance; it is a taſk we impoſe on ourſelves: but I do not wiſh to taſk myſelf in my amuſements.

If the great object of the theatre is amuſement, a dramatick work muſt poſſeſs every means to produce that effect; if it gives inſtruction, by the by, ſo much its merit is the greater; but that is not its principal object. The ground on which it ſtands, and which gives it a claim to the protection and encouragement of civiliſed ſociety, is not becauſe it enforces moral precepts, or gives inſtruction of any kind; but from the general advantage that it produces, by habituating the mind to find its amuſement in intellectual pleaſures; weaning it from ſenſuality, and by degrees filing off, ſmoothing, and poliſhing, its rugged corners. SIR J. REYNOLDS.

Satire

ſatire of the preſent age has taken the liberty to do, yet there is a pleaſing and a well-diſtinguiſhed variety in thoſe characters which he thought fit to meddle with. Falſtaff is allowed by every body to be a maſter-piece; the character is always well ſuſtained, though drawn out into the length of three plays; and even the account of his death, given by his old landlady Mrs. Quickly, in the firſt act of *Henry the Fifth*, though it be extremely natural, is yet as diverting as any part of his life. If there be any fault in the draught he has made of this lewd old fellow, it is, that though he has made him a thief, lying, cowardly, vain-glorious, and in ſhort every way vicious, yet he has given him ſo much wit as to make him almoſt too agreeable; and I do not know whether ſome people have not, in remembrance of the diverſion he had formerly afforded them, been ſorry to ſee his friend Hal uſe him ſo ſcurvily, when he comes to the crown in the end of *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*. Amongſt other extravagancies, in *The Merry Wives of Windſor* he has made him a deer-ſtealer, that he might at the ſame time remember his Warwickſhire proſecutor, under the name of Juſtice Shallow; he has given him very near the ſame coat of arms which Dugdale, in his *Antiquities* of that county, deſcribes for a family there[4], and makes the Welſh parſon deſcant very pleaſantly upon them. That whole play is admirable; the humours are various and well oppoſed; the main deſign, which is to cure Ford of his unreaſonable jealouſy, is extremely well conducted. In *Twelfth-Night* there is ſomething ſingularly ridiculous and pleaſant in the fantaſtical ſteward Malvolio. The paraſite and the vain-glorious in Parolles, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, is as good as any thing of that kind in *Plautus* or *Terence*.

4 — *the ſame coat of arms which* Dugdale, *in his Antiquities of that county, deſcribes for a family there,*] There are two coats, I obſerve, in Dugdale, where three ſilver fiſhes are borne in the name of *Lucy*; and another coat to the monument of Thomas Lucy, ſon of Sir William Lucy, in which are quartered in four ſeveral diviſions, twelve little fiſhes, three in each diviſion, probably *luces*. This very coat, indeed, ſeems alluded to in Shallow's giving the *dozen* white *luces*, and in Slender's ſaying *he may quarter*. THEOBALD.

Petruchio, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, is an uncommon piece of humour. The converſation of Benedick and Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and of Roſalind, in *As you like it*, have much wit and ſprightlineſs all along. His clowns, without which character there was hardly any play writ in that time, are all very entertaining: and, I believe, Therſites in *Troilus and Creſſida*, and Apemantus in *Timon*, will be allowed to be maſter-pieces of ill-nature, and ſatirical ſnarling. To theſe I might add, that incomparable character of Shylock the Jew, in *The Merchant of Venice*; but though we have ſeen that play received and acted as a comedy[5], and the part of the Jew performed by an excellent comedian, yet I cannot but think it was deſigned tragically by the author. There appears in it ſuch a deadly ſpirit of revenge, ſuch a ſavage fierceneſs and fellneſs, and ſuch a bloody deſignation of cruelty and miſchief, as cannot agree either with the ſtile or characters of comedy. The play itſelf, take it altogether, ſeems to me to be one of the moſt finiſhed of any of Shakſpeare's. The tale indeed, in that part relating to the caſkets, and the extravagant and unuſual kind of bond given by Antonio, is too much removed from the rules of probability; but taking the fact for granted, we muſt allow it to be very beautifully written. There is ſomething in the friendſhip of Antonio to Baſſanio very great, generous, and tender. The whole fourth act (ſuppoſing, as I ſaid, the fact to be probable) is extremely fine. But there are two paſſages that deſerve a particular notice. The firſt is, what Portia ſays in praiſe of mercy, and the other on the power of muſick. The melancholy of Jaques,

[5] — *but though we have ſeen that play received and acted as a comedy*,—] In 1701 Lord Lanſdown produced his alteration of *The Merchant of Venice*, at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, under the title of *The Jew of Venice*, and expreſsly calls it a *comedy*. Shylock was performed by Mr. Dogget. REED.

And ſuch was the bad taſte of our anceſtors that this piece continued to be a ſtock-play from 1701 to Feb. 14, 1741, when *the Merchant of Venice* was exhibited *for the firſt time* at the theatre in Drury-Lane, and Mr. Macklin made his firſt appearance in the character of Shylock. MALONE.

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in *As you like it*, is as ſingular and odd as it is diverting. And if, what Horace ſays,

Difficile eſt proprie communia dicere,

it will be a hard taſk for any one to go beyond him in the deſcription of the ſeveral degrees and ages of man's life, though the thought be old, and common enough.

——— All the world's a ſtage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being ſeven ages. At firſt, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurſe's arms:
Then, the whining ſchool-boy with his ſatchel,
And ſhining morning face, creeping like ſnail
Unwillingly to ſchool. And then, the lover
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
Made to his miſtreſs' eye-brow. Then, a ſoldier;
Full of ſtrange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, ſudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Ev'n in the cannon's mouth. And then, the juſtice;
In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,
With eyes ſevere, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wiſe ſaws and modern inſtances;
And ſo he plays his part. The ſixth age ſhifts
Into the lean and ſlipper'd pantaloon;
With ſpectacles on noſe, and pouch on ſide;
His youthful hoſe, well ſav'd, a world too wide
For his ſhrunk ſhank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again tow'rd childiſh treble, pipes
And whiſtles in his ſound: Laſt ſcene of all,
That ends this ſtrange eventful hiſtory,
Is ſecond childiſhneſs, and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, ſans eyes, ſans taſte, ſans every thing.

His images are indeed every where ſo lively, that the thing he would repreſent ſtands full before you, and you poſſeſs every part of it. I will venture to point out

one more, which is, I think, as ſtrong and as uncommon as any thing I ever ſaw; it is an image of Patience. Speaking of a maid in love, he ſays,

— She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
Feed on her damaſk cheek: ſhe pin'd in thought,
And ſate like Patience *on a monument,*
Smiling at Grief.

What an image is here given! and what a taſk would it have been for the greateſt maſters of Greece and Rome to have expreſſed the paſſions deſigned by this ſketch of ſtatuary! The ſtile of his comedy is, in general, natural to the characters, and eaſy in itſelf; and the wit moſt commonly ſprightly and pleaſing, except in thoſe places where he runs into doggerel rhimes, as in *The Comedy of Errors*, and ſome other plays. As for his jingling ſometimes, and playing upon words, it was the common vice of the age he lived in: and if we find it in the pulpit, made uſe of as an ornament to the ſermons of ſome of the graveſt divines of thoſe times, perhaps it may not be thought too light for the ſtage.

But certainly the greatneſs of this author's genius does no where ſo much appear, as where he gives his imagination an entire looſe, and raiſes his fancy to a flight above mankind, and the limits of the viſible world. Such are his attempts in *The Tempeſt*, *Midſummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*. Of theſe, *The Tempeſt*, however it comes to be placed the firſt by the publiſhers of his works, can never have been the firſt written by him: it ſeems to me as perfect in its kind, as almoſt any thing we have of his. One may obſerve, that the unities are kept here, with an exactneſs uncommon to the liberties of his writing; though that was what, I ſuppoſe, he valued himſelf leaſt upon, ſince his excellencies were all of another kind. I am very ſenſible that he does, in this play, depart too much from that likeneſs to truth which ought to be obſerved in theſe ſort of writings; yet

he

does it ſo very finely, that one is eaſily drawn in to have more faith for his ſake, than reaſon does well allow of. His magick has ſomething in it very ſolemn, and very poetical: and that extravagant character of Caliban is mighty well ſuſtained, ſhews a wonderful invention in the author, who could ſtrike out ſuch a particular wild image, and is certainly one of the fineſt and moſt uncommon groteſques that ever was ſeen. The obſervation, which I have been informed three very great men concurred in making[6] upon this part, was extremely juſt; that *Shakſpeare had not only found out a new character in his* Caliban, *but had alſo deviſed and adapted a new manner of language for that character.*

It is the ſame magick that raiſes the Fairies in *Midſummer Night's Dream*, the Witches in *Macbeth*, and the Ghoſt in *Hamlet*, with thoughts and language ſo proper to the parts they ſuſtain, and ſo peculiar to the talent of this writer. But of the two laſt of theſe plays I ſhall have occaſion to take notice, among the tragedies of Mr. Shakſpeare. If one undertook to examine the greateſt part of theſe by thoſe rules which are eſtabliſhed by Ariſtotle, and taken from the model of the Grecian ſtage, it would be no very hard taſk to find a great many faults; but as Shakſpeare lived under a kind of mere light of nature, and had never been made acquainted with the regularity of thoſe written precepts, ſo it would be hard to judge him by a law he knew nothing of. We are to conſider him as a man that lived in a ſtate of almoſt univerſal licence and ignorance: there was no eſtabliſhed judge, but every one took the liberty to write according to the dictates of his own fancy. When one conſiders, that there is not one play before him of a re-

[6] — *which, I have been informed, three very great men concurred in making*—] Lord Falkland, Lord C. J. Vaughan, and Mr. Selden. ROWE.

Dryden was of the ſame opinion. "His perſon" (ſays he, ſpeaking of Caliban,) "is monſtrous, as he is the product of unnatural luſt, and *his language is as hobgoblin as His perſon's* in all things he is diſtinguiſhed from other mortals." Preface to *Troilus and Creſſida*. MALONE.

putation good enough to entitle it to an appearance on the preſent ſtage, it cannot but be a matter of great wonder that he ſhould advance dramatick poetry ſo far as he did. The fable is what is generally placed the firſt, among thoſe that are reckoned the conſtituent parts of a tragick or heroick poem; not, perhaps, as it is the moſt difficult or beautiful, but as it is the firſt properly to be thought of in the contrivance and courſe of the whole; and with the fable ought to be conſidered the fit diſpoſition, order, and conduct of its ſeveral parts. As it is not in this province of the drama that the ſtrength and maſtery of Shakſpeare lay, ſo I ſhall not undertake the tedious and ill-natured trouble to point out the ſeveral faults he was guilty of in it. His tales were ſeldom invented, but rather taken either from the true hiſtory, or novels and romances: and he commonly made uſe of them in that order, with thoſe incidents, and that extent of time in which he found them in the authors from whence he borrowed them. So *the Winter's Tale*, which is taken from an old book, called *the Delectable Hiſtory of Doraſtus and Fawnia*, contains the ſpace of ſixteen or ſeventeen years, and the ſcene is ſometimes laid in Bohemia, and ſometimes in Sicily, according to the original order of the ſtory. Almoſt all his hiſtorical plays comprehend a great length of time, and very different and diſtinct places: and in his *Antony and Cleopatra*, the ſcene travels over the greateſt part of the Roman empire. But in recompence for his careleſſneſs in this point, when he comes to another part of the drama, *the manners of his characters, in acting or ſpeaking what is proper for them, and fit to be ſhewn by the poet*, he may be generally juſtified, and in very many places greatly commended: For thoſe plays which he has taken from the Engliſh or Roman hiſtory, let any man compare them, and he will find the character as exact in the poet as the hiſtorian. He ſeems indeed ſo far from propoſing to himſelf any one action for a ſubject, that the title very often tells you, it is *The Life of King John, King Richard*, &c. What can be more agreeable to the idea our hiſtorians give of

Henry the Sixth, than the picture Shakſpeare has drawn of him! His manners are every where exactly the ſame with the ſtory; one finds him ſtill deſcribed with ſimplicity, paſſive ſanctity, want of courage, weakneſs of mind, and eaſy ſubmiſſion to the governance of an imperious wife, or prevailing faction: though at the ſame time the poet does juſtice to his good qualities, and moves the pity of his audience for him, by ſhewing him pious, diſintereſted, a contemner of the things of this world, and wholly reſigned to the ſevereſt diſpenſations of God's providence. There is a ſhort ſcene in the *Second Part of Henry the Sixth*, which I cannot but think admirable in its kind. Cardinal Beaufort, who had murdered the Duke of Glouceſter, is ſhewn in the laſt agonies on his death-bed, with the good king praying over him. There is ſo much terror in one, ſo much tenderneſs and moving piety in the other, as muſt touch any one who is capable either of fear or pity. In his *Henry the Eighth*, that prince is drawn with that greatneſs of mind, and all thoſe good qualities which are attributed to him in any account of his reign. If his faults are not ſhewn in an equal degree, and the ſhades in this picture do not bear a juſt proportion to the lights, it is not that the artiſt wanted either colours or ſkill in the diſpoſition of them; but the truth, I believe, might be, that he forbore doing it out of regard to queen Elizabeth, ſince it could have been no very great reſpect to the memory of his miſtreſs, to have expoſed ſome certain parts of her father's life upon the ſtage. He has dealt much more freely with the miniſter of that great king; and certainly nothing was ever more juſtly written, than the character of Cardinal Wolſey. He has ſhewn him inſolent in his proſperity; and yet, by a wonderful addreſs, he makes his fall and ruin the ſubject of general compaſſion. The whole man, with his vices and virtues, is finely and exactly deſcribed in the ſecond ſcene of the fourth act. The diſtreſſes likewiſe of Queen Catharine, in this play, are very movingly touched; and though the art of the poet has ſcreened

King Henry from any groſs imputation of injuſtice, yet one is inclined to wiſh, the Queen had met with a fortune more worthy of her birth and virtue. Nor are the manners, proper to the perſons repreſented, leſs juſtly obſerved, in thoſe characters taken from the Roman hiſtory; and of this, the fierceneſs and impatience of Coriolanus, his courage and diſdain of the common people, the virtue and philoſophical temper of Brutus, and the irregular greatneſs of mind in M. Antony, are beautiful proofs. For the two laſt eſpecially, you find them exactly as they are deſcribed by Plutarch, from whom certainly Shakſpeare copied them. He has indeed followed his original pretty cloſe, and taken in ſeveral little incidents that might have been ſpared in a play. But, as I hinted before, his deſign ſeems moſt commonly rather to deſcribe thoſe great men in the ſeveral fortunes and accidents of their lives, than to take any ſingle great action, and form his work ſimply upon that. However, there are ſome of his pieces, where the fable is founded upon one action only. Such are more eſpicially, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. The deſign in *Romeo and Juliet* is plainly the puniſhment of their two families, for the unreaſonable feuds and animoſities that had been ſo long kept up between them, and occaſioned the effuſion of ſo much blood. In the management of this ſtory, he has ſhewn ſomething wonderfully tender and paſſionate in the love-part, and very pitiful in the diſtreſs. *Hamlet* is founded on much the ſame tale with the *Electra of Sophocles*. In each of them a young prince is engaged to revenge the death of his father, their mothers are equally guilty, are both concerned in the murder of their huſbands*, and are afterwards married to the murderers. There is in the firſt part of the Greek tragedy ſomething very moving in the grief of Electra; but, as Mr. Dacier has obſerved, there

* — *are both concerned in the murder of their huſbands,*] It does not appear that Hamlet's mother was concerned in the death of her huſband. MALONE.

is ſomething very unnatural and ſhocking in the manners he has given that Princeſs and Oreſtes in the latter part. Oreſtes imbrues his hands in the blood of his own mother; and that barbarous action is performed, though not immediately upon the ſtage, yet ſo near, that the audience hear Clytemneſtra crying out to Ægyſthus for help, and to her ſon for mercy: while Electra her daughter, and a Princeſs, (both of them characters that ought to have appeared with more decency,) ſtands upon the ſtage, and encourages her brother in the parricide. What horror does this not raiſe! Clytemneſtra was a wicked woman, and had deſerved to die; nay, in the truth of the ſtory, ſhe was killed by her own ſon; but to repreſent an action of this kind on the ſtage, is certainly an offence againſt thoſe rules of manners proper to the perſons, that ought to be obſerved there. On the contrary, let us only look a little on the conduct of Shakſpeare. Hamlet is repreſented with the ſame piety towards his father, and reſolution to revenge his death, as Oreſtes; he has the ſame abhorrence for his mother's guilt, which, to provoke him the more, is heightened by inceſt: but it is with wonderful art and juſtneſs of judgment, that the poet reſtrains him from doing violence to his mother. To prevent any thing of that kind, he makes his father's Ghoſt forbid that part of his vengeance:

But howſoever thou purſu'ſt this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy ſoul contrive
Againſt thy mother aught; leave her to heav'n,
And to thoſe thorns that in her boſom lodge,
To prick and ſting her.

This is to diſtinguiſh rightly between *horror* and *terror*. The latter is a proper paſſion of tragedy, but the former ought always to be carefully avoided. And certainly no dramatick writer ever ſucceeded better in raiſing *terror* in the minds of an audience than Shakſpeare has done. The whole tragedy of *Macbeth*, but more eſpecially the ſcene where the King is murdered, in the ſecond act, as well

well as this play, is a noble proof of that manly ſpirit with which he writ; and both ſhew how powerful he was, in giving the ſtrongeſt motions to our ſouls that they are capable of. I cannot leave *Hamlet*, without taking notice of the advantage with which we have ſeen this maſter-piece of Shakſpeare diſtinguiſh itſelf upon the ſtage, by Mr. Betterton's fine performance of that part. A man, who, though he had no other good qualities, as he has a great many, muſt have made his way into the eſteem of all men of letters, by this only excellency. No man is better acquainted with Shakſpeare's manner of expreſſion, and indeed he has ſtudied him ſo well, and is ſo much a maſter of him, that whatever part of his he performs, he does it as if it had been written on purpoſe for him, and that the author had exactly conceived it as he plays it. I muſt own a particular obligation to him, for the moſt conſiderable part of the paſſages relating to this life, which I have here tranſmitted to the publick; his veneration for the memory of Shakſpeare having engaged him to make a journey into Warwickſhire, on purpoſe to gather up what remains he could, of a name for which he had ſo great a veneration[7].

[7] — *of a name for which he had ſo great a veneration.*] Mr. Betterton was born in 1635, and had many opportunities of collecting information relative to Shakſpeare, but unfortunately the age in which he lived was not an age of curioſity. Had either he or Dryden or Sir William D'Avenant taken the trouble to viſit our poet's youngeſt daughter, who lived till 1662, or his grand-daughter, who did not die till 1670, many particulars might have been preſerved which are now irrecoverably loſt. Shakſpeare's ſiſter, Joan Hart, who was only five years younger than him, died at Stratford in Nov. 1646, at the age of ſeventy ſix; and from her undoubtedly his two daughters, and his grand daughter Lady Barnard, had learned ſeveral circumſtances of his early hiſtory antecedent to the year 1600. MALONE.

This *Account of the Life of Shakſpeare* is printed from Mr. Rowe's ſecond edition, in which it had been abridged and altered by himſelf after its appearance in 1709. STEEVENS.

To the foregoing Accounts of SHAKSPEARE'S LIFE, *I have only one Paſſage to add, which Mr. Pope related, as communicated to him by Mr. Rowe.*

IN the time of Elizabeth, coaches being yet uncommon, and hired coaches not at all in uſe, thoſe who were too proud, too tender, or too idle to walk, went on horſeback to any diſtant buſineſs or diverſion. Many came on horſeback to the play [1], and when Shakſpeare fled to London from the terror of a criminal proſecution, his firſt expedient was to wait at the door of the play-houſe, and hold the horſes of thoſe that had no ſervants, that they might be ready again after the performance. In this office he became ſo conſpicuous for his care and readineſs, that in a ſhort time every man as he alighted called for Will. Shakſpeare, and ſcarcely any other waiter was truſted with a horſe while Will. Shakſpeare could be had. This was the firſt dawn of better fortune. Shakſpeare, finding more horſes put into his hand than he could hold, hired boys to wait under his inſpection, who, when Will. Shakſpeare was ſummoned, were immediately to preſent themſelves, *I am Shakſpeare's boy, Sir.* In time Shakſpeare found higher employment; but as long as the practice of riding to the play-houſe continued, the waiters that held the horſes retained the appellation of, *Shakſpeare's boys* [2]. JOHNSON.

Mr.

[1] *Many came on horſeback to the play,*] Plays were at this time performed in the afternoon. "The poll cie of plaies is very neceſſary, howſoever ſome ſhallow-brained cenſurers (not the deepeſt ſearchers into the ſecrets of government) mightily oppugne them. For whereas *the afternoon* being the idleſt time of the day wherein men that are their own maſters (as gentlemen of the court, the innes of the court, and a number of captains and ſoldiers about London) do wholly beſtow themſelves upon pleaſure, and that pleaſure they divide (how vertuouſly it ſkills not) either in gaming, following of harlots, drinking, or ſeeing a play, is it not better (ſince of four extreames all the world cannot keepe them backe) they will chooſe one) that they ſhould betake them to the leaſt, which is plaies?" Naſh's *Pierce Pennileſſe his Supplication to the Devil*, 1592. STEEVENS.

[2] — *the waiters that held the horſes retained the appellation of* Shakſpeare's boys] I cannot diſmiſs this anecdote without obſerving that it ſeems

Mr. Rowe has told us that he derived the principal anecdotes in his account of Shakſpeare, from Betterton the

ſeems to want every mark of probability. Though Shakſpeare quitted Stratford on account of a juvenile irregularity, we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe that he had forfeited the protection of his father who was engaged in a lucrative buſineſs, or the love of his wife who had already brought him two children, and was herſelf the daughter of a ſubſtantial yeoman. It is unlikely therefore, when he was beyond the reach of his proſecutor, that he ſhould conceal his plan of life, or place of reſidence, from thoſe who, if he found himſelf diſtreſſed, could not fail to afford him ſuch ſupplies as would have ſet him above the neceſſity of *holding horſes* for ſubſiſtence. Mr. Malone has remarked in his *Attempt to aſcertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakſpeare were written*, that he might have found an eaſy introduction to the ſtage; for Thomas Green, a celebrated comedian of that period, was his townſman, and perhaps his relation. The genius of our author prompted him to write poetry; his connection with a player might have given his productions a dramatick turn; or his own ſagacity might have taught him that fame was not incompatible with profit, and that the theatre was an avenue to both. That it was once the cuſtom to ride on horſeback to the play, I am likewiſe yet to learn. The moſt popular of the theatres were on the Bank-ſide; and we are told by the ſatirical pamphleteers of the time, that the uſual mode of conveyance to theſe places of amuſement, was by water: but not a ſingle writer ſo much as hints at the cuſtom of riding to them, or at the practice of having horſes held during the hours of exhibition. Some alluſion to this uſage (if it had exiſted) muſt, I think, have been diſcovered in the courſe of our reſearches after contemporary faſhions. Let it be remembered too, that we receive this tale on no higher authority than that of Cibber's Lives of the Poets, Vol. I. p. 130. "Sir William Davenant told it to Mr. Betterton, who communicated it to Mr. Rowe," who (according to Dr. Johnſon) related it to Mr. Pope. Mr. Rowe (if this intelligence be authentick) ſeems to have concurred with me in opinion, as he forebore to introduce a circumſtance ſo incredible into his life of Shakſpeare. As to the book which furniſhes the anecdote, not the ſmalleſt part of it was the compoſition of Mr. Cibber, being entirely written by a Mr. Shields, amanuenſis to Dr. Johnſon, when his Dictionary was preparing for the preſs. T. Cibber was in the King's Bench, and accepted of ten guineas from the booksellers for leave to prefix his name to the work; and it was purpoſely ſo prefixed as to leave the reader in doubt whether himſelf or his father was the perſon deſigned. STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens in one particular is certainly miſtaken. To the theatre in Blackfriars I have no doubt that many gentlemen rode in the time of Queen Elizabeth and K. James I. From the Strand, Holborn,

the player, whoſe zeal had induced him to viſit Stratford for the ſake of procuring all poſſible intelligence concerning a poet to whoſe works he might juſtly think himſelf under the ſtrongeſt obligations. Notwithſtanding this aſſertion, in the manuſcript papers of the late Mr. Oldys it is ſaid, that one Boman (according to Chetwood, p. 143, "an actor more than half an age on the London theatres") was unwilling to allow that his aſſociate and contemporary Betterton had ever undertaken ſuch a journey*. Be this matter as it will, the following particulars, which I ſhall give in the words of Oldys, are, for aught we know to the contrary, as well authenticated as any of the anecdotes delivered down to us by Rowe.

Holborn, Biſhopſgate-ſtreet, &c. where many of the nobility lived, they could indeed go no other way than on foot, or on horſeback, or in coaches; and coaches till after the death of Elizabeth were extremely rare. Many of the gentry therefore certainly went to that play-houſe on horſeback. See the proofs, in the Eſſay above referred to.

This however will not eſtabliſh the tradition relative to our authour's firſt employment at the play-houſe, which ſtands on a very ſlender foundation. MALONE.

* —*it is ſaid that one* Boman—*was unwilling to believe that his aſſociate and contemporary* Betterton *had ever undertaken ſuch a journey.*] This aſſertion of Mr. Oldys is altogether unworthy of credit. Why any doubt ſhould be entertained concerning Mr. Betterton's having viſited Stratford, after Rowe's poſitive aſſertion that he did ſo, it is not eaſy to conceive. Mr. Rowe *did not go there himſelf; and how* could he have collected the few circumſtances relative to Shakſpeare and his family, which he has told, if he had not obtained information from ſome friend who examined the Regiſter of the pariſh of Stratford, and made perſonal inquiries on the ſubject?

"Boman," we are told, "was unwilling to *believe*," &c. But the fact diſputed did not require any exerciſe of his *belief*. Mr. Boman was married to the daughter of Sir Francis Watſon, Bart. the gentleman with whom Betterton *joined in an adventure to the* Eaſt Indies, whoſe name the writer of Betterton's Life in *Biographia Britannica* has ſo ſtudiouſly concealed. By that unfortunate ſcheme Betterton loſt above 2000l. Dr. Ratcliffe 6000l. and Sir Francis Watſon his whole fortune. On his death ſoon after the year 1692, Betterton *generouſly took his daughter under his protection, and educated* her in his houſe. Here Boman married her; from which period he continued to live in the moſt friendly correſpondence with Mr. Betterton, and muſt have *known* whether he went to Stratford or not.

MALONE.

Mr.