Mr. Oldys had covered ſeveral quires of paper with laborious collections for a regular life of our author. From theſe I have made the following extracts, which (however trivial) contain the only circumſtances that wear the leaſt appearance of novelty or information; the ſong in p. 106, excepted.

"If tradition may be truſted, Shakſpeare often baited at the Crown Inn or Tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London. The landlady was a woman of great beauty and ſprightly wit; and her huſband, Mr. John Davenant, (afterwards mayor of that city) a grave melancholy man; who, as well as his wife, uſed much to delight in Shakſpeare's pleaſant company. Their ſon young Will Davenant (afterwards Sir William) was then a little ſchool-boy in the town, of about ſeven or eight years old[3], and ſo fond alſo of Shakſpeare, that whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from ſchool to ſee him. One day an old townſman obſerving the boy running homeward almoſt out of breath, aſked him whither he was poſting in that heat and hurry. He anſwered, to ſee his *god*-father Shakſpeare. There's a good boy, ſaid the other, but have a care that you don't take *God's* name in vain. This ſtory Mr. Pope told me at the Earl of Oxford's table, upon occaſion of ſome diſcourſe which aroſe about Shakſpeare's monument then newly erected in Weſtminſter Abbey[4]; and he quoted Mr.

[3] — *of about ſeven or eight years old,*] He was born at Oxford in February, 1605-6. MALONE.

[4] — Shakſpeare's *monument then newly erected in Weſtminſter Abbey*;] "This monument," ſays Mr. Granger, "was erected in 1741, by the direction of the Earl of Burlington, Dr. Mead, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Martin. Mr. Fleetwood and Mr Rich gave each of them a benefit towards it, from one of Shakſpeare's own plays. It was executed by H. Scheemaker, after a deſign of Kent.

"On the monument is inſcribed—*amor publicus poſuit*. Dr. Mead objected to *amor publicus*, as not occurring in old claſſical inſcriptions; but Mr. Pope and the other gentlemen concerned inſiſting that it ſhould ſtand, Dr. Mead yielded the point, ſaying,

Omnia vincit *amor*, et nos cedamus *amori*.

"This

Mr. Betterton the player for his authority. I anſwered that I thought ſuch a ſtory might have enriched the variety of thoſe choice fruits of obſervation he has preſented us in his preface to the edition he had publiſhed of our poet's works. He replied—" There might be in the garden of mankind ſuch plants as would ſeem to pride themſelves more in a regular production of their own

" This anecdote was communicated by Mr. Lort, late Greek Profeſſor of Cambridge, who had it from Dr. Mead himſelf."

It was recorded at the time in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Feb. 1741, by a writer who objects to every part of the inſcription, and ſays it ought to have been, " G. S. centum viginti et quatuor poſt *obitum annis populus plaudens* [aut *favens*] poſuit."

The monument was opened Jan. 29, 1741. Scheemaker is ſaid to have got 300l. for his work. The performers at each houſe, much to their honour, performed *gratis*; and the dean and chapter of Weſtminſter took nothing for the ground. The money received by the performance at Drury-Lane, amounted to above 200l. the receipts at Covent-Garden to about 100l. Theſe particulars I learn from Oldys's Mſ. notes on Langbaine.

The ſcroll on the monument, as I learn from a letter to my father, dated June 27, 1741, remained for [redacted] time after the monument was ſet up, without any inſcription on it. This was a challenge to the wits of the time; which one of them accepted by writing a copy of verſes, the ſubject of which was a converſation ſuppoſed to paſs between Dr. Mead and Sir Thomas Hanmer, relative to the filling up of the ſcroll. I know not whether they are in print, and I do not chooſe to quote them all. The introductory lines, however, run thus:

" To learned Mead thus Hanmer ſpoke:
" Doctor, this empty ſcroll's a joke.
" Something it doubtleſs ſhould contain,
" Extremely ſhort, extremely plain;
" But wondrous deep, and wondrous pat,
" And fit for Shakſpeare to point at;" &c. MALONE.

At Drury-Lane was acted *Julius Cæſar*, 28th April 1738, when a prologue written by Benjamin Martin, Eſq. was ſpoken by Mr. Quin, and an Epilogue by *James Noel, Eſq. ſpoken by Mrs. Porter.* Both theſe are printed in *the General Dictionary*. At Covent-Garden was acted *Hamlet*, 10th April 1739, when a prologue written by Mr. Theobald, and printed in the *London Magazine* of that year, was ſpoken by Ryan. In the newſpaper of the day it was obſerved that this laſt repreſentation was far from being numerouſly attended. REED.

native

native fruits, than in having the repute of bearing a richer kind by grafting; and this was the reaſon he omitted it[5]."

The ſame ſtory, without the names of the perſons, is printed among the jeſts of John Taylor the Water poet, in his works, folio, 1630, page 184, N° 39: and, with ſome variations, may be found in one of Hearne's pocket books[6].

" One

[5] — *and this was the reaſon he omitted it.*] Mr. Oldys might have added, that *he* was the perſon who ſuggeſted to Mr. Pope the ſingular courſe which he purſued in his edition of Shakſpeare. " Remember" (ſays Oldys in a Mſ. note to his copy of Langbaine, Article, *Shakſpeare,*) " what I obſerved to my Lord Oxford for Mr. Pope's uſe, out of Cowley's preface." The obſervation here alluded to, I believe, is one made by Cowley in his preface, p. 53. edit. 1710, 8vo. " This has been the caſe with Shakſpeare, Fletcher, Jonſon, and many others, part of whoſe poems I ſhould take the boldneſs to *prune and lop away,* if the care of *replanting them in print* did belong to me; neither would I make any ſcruple to cut off from ſome the unneceſſary young ſuckers, and from others the old withered branches; for a great wit is no more tied to live in a vaſt volume, than in a gigantick body; on the contrary it is commonly more vig[illegible] the leſs ſpace it animates, and as Statius ſays of little Tydeus,

——— totos infuſa per artus,
Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus."

Pope adopted this very unwarrantable idea; ſtriking out from the text of his authour whatever he did not like: and Cowley himſelf has ſuffered a ſort of poetical puniſhment for having ſuggeſted it, the learned biſhop of Worceſter [Dr. Hurd] having *pruned* and *lopped away* his beautiful luxuriances, as Pope, on Cowley's ſuggeſtion, did thoſe of Shakſpeare. MALONE.

[6] *The ſame ſtory—may be found in one of Hearne's pocket books.*] Antony Wood is the firſt and original author of the anecdote that Shakſpeare, in his journies from Warwickſhire to London, uſed to bait at the Crown-inn on the weſt ſide of the corn market in Oxford. He ſays, that Davenant the poet was born in that houſe in 1606 " His father (he adds) John Davenant, was a ſufficient vintner, kept " the tavern now known by the ſign of the *Crown,* and was mayor of " the ſaid city in 1621. His mother was a very beautiful woman, of " a good wit and converſation, in which ſhe was imitated by none " of her children but by this *William* [the poet]. The father, who " was a very grave and diſcreet citizen, (yet an admirer and lover of " plays and play-makers, eſpecially *Shakſpeare,* who frequented his " houſe

" One of Shakſpeare's younger brothers[7], who lived to a good old age, even ſome years, as I compute, after the

" houſe in his journies between Warwickſhire and London) was of a " melancholick diſpoſition, and was ſeldom or never ſeen to laugh, " in which he was imitated by none of his children but by Robert his " eldeſt ſon, afterwards fellow of St. John's college, and a venerable " Doctor of Divinity." *Wood's Ath. Oxon.* Vol. II. p. 292. edit. 1692. I will not ſuppoſe that Shakſpeare could have been the father of a Doctor of Divinity who never laughed: but it was always a conſtant tradition in Oxford that Shakſpeare was the father of Davenant the poet. And I have ſeen this circumſtance expreſsly mentioned in ſome of Wood's papers. Wood was well qualified to know theſe particulars; for he was a townſman of Oxford, where he was born in 1632. Wood ſays, that Davenant went to ſchool in Oxford. *Ubi ſupra.*

As to the *Crown-Inn*, it ſtill remains as an inn, and is an old decayed houſe, but probably was once a principal inn in Oxford. It is directly in the road from Stratford to London. In a large upper room, which ſeems to have been a ſort of *Hall* for entertaining a large company, or for accommodating (as was the cuſtom) different parties at once, there was a bow-window, with three pieces of excellent painted glaſs. About eight years ago, I remember viſiting this room, and propoſing to purchaſe of the landlord the painted glaſs, which would have been a curioſity as coming from Shakſpeare's inn. But going thither ſoon after, I found it was removed; the inn keeper having communicated my intended bargain to the owner of the houſe, who began to ſuſpect that he was poſſeſſed of a curioſity too valuable to be parted with, or to remain in ſuch a place: and I never could hear of it afterwards. If I remember right, the painted glaſs conſiſted of three armorial ſhields beautifully ſtained. I have ſaid ſo much on this ſubject, becauſe I think that Shakſpeare's old hoſtelry at Oxford deſerves no leſs reſpect than Chaucer's Tabarde in Southwark. T. WARTON.

[7] *One of Shakſpeare's younger brothers*, &c.] Mr. Oldys ſeems to have ſtudied the art of " marring a plain tale in the telling of it;" for he has in this ſtory introduced circumſtances which tend to diminiſh, inſtead of adding to, its credibility. *Male dum recitas, incipit eſſe tuum.* From Shakſpeare's not taking notice of any of his brothers or ſiſters in his will, except Joan Hart, I think it highly probable they were all dead in 1616, except her, at leaſt all thoſe of the whole blood; though in the Regiſter there is no entry of the burial of either his brother Gilbert, or Edmund, antecedent to the death of Shakſpeare, or at any ſubſequent period.

The truth is, that this account of our poet's having performed the part of an old man in one of his own comedies, came originally from

the reſtoration of *King Charles II.* would in his younger days come to London to viſit his brother *Will*, as he called him, and be a ſpectator of him as an actor in ſome of his own plays. This cuſtom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and his dramatick entertainments grew the greateſt ſupport of our principal, if not of all our theatres, he continued it ſeems ſo long after his brother's death, as even to the latter end of his own life. The curioſity at this time of the moſt noted actors, [exciting them] to learn ſomething from him of his brother, &c. they juſtly held him in the higheſt veneration. And it may be well believed, as there was beſides a kinſman and deſcendant of the family, who was then a celebrated actor among them, [*Charles Hart*[8]. See Shakſpeare's Will.] this opportunity made them greedily inquiſitive

Mr. Thomas Jones of Tarbick, in Worceſterſhire, who has been already mentioned, (ſee p. 106, n. 5.) and who related it from the information, not of one of Shakſpeare's *brothers*, but of a *relation* of our poet, who lived to a good old age, and who had ſeen him act in his youth. Mr. Jones's informer might have been Mr. Richard Quiney, who lived in London, and died at Stratford in 1656, at the age of 69; or Mr. Thomas Quiney, our poet's ſon-in-law, who lived, I believe, till 1663, and was twenty-ſeven years old when his father-in-law died; or ſome one of the family of Hathaway. Mr. Thomas Hathaway, I believe Shakſpeare's brother-in-law, died at Stratford in 1654-5, at the age of 85.

There was a Thomas Jones an inhabitant of Stratford, who between the years 1581 and 1590 had four ſons, Henry, James, Edmund, and Iſaac: ſome one of theſe, it is probable, ſettled at Tarbick, and was the father of Thomas Jones, the relater of this anecdote, who was born about the year 1613.

If any of Shakſpeare's brothers lived till after the Reſtoration, and viſited the players, why were we not informed to what player he related it, and from what player Mr. Oldys had his account? The fact, I believe, is, he had it not from a player, but from the above-mentioned Mr. Jones, who likewiſe communicated the ſtanza of the ballad on Sir Thomas Lucy, which has been printed in a former page. MALONE.

[8] — *Charles Hart.*] Mr. Charles Hart the player was born, I believe, about the year 1630, and died in 1685. If he was a grandſon of Shakſpeare's ſiſter, he was probably the ſon of Michael Hart, her youngeſt ſon, of whoſe marriage or death there is no account in the parish Regiſter of Stratford, and therefore I ſuſpect he ſettled in London. MALONE.

into

into every little circumſtance, more eſpecially in his dramatick character, which his brother could relate of him. But he, it ſeems, was ſo ſtricken in years, and poſſibly his memory ſo weakened with infirmities, (which might make him the eaſier paſs for a man of weak intellects,) that he could give them but little light into their inquiries; and all that could be recollected from him of his brother *Will* in that ſtation was, the faint, general, and almoſt loſt ideas he had of having once ſeen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein being to perſonate a decrepit old man, he wore a long beard, and appeared ſo weak and drooping and unable to walk, that he was forced to be ſupported and carried by another perſon to a table, at which he was ſeated among ſome company, who were eating, and one of them ſung a ſong." See the character of *Adam* in *As you like it*, Act II. ſc. ult.

"Verſes by Ben Jonſon and Shakſpeare, occaſioned by the motto to the Globe Theatre—*Totus mundus agit hiſtrionem.*

Jonſon.

If, but *ſtage actors*, all the world diſplays,
Where ſhall we find *ſpectators* of their plays?

Shakſpeare.

Little, or much, of what we ſee, we do;
We are all both *actors* and *ſpectators* too.

Poetical Characteriſticks, 8vo. MS. Vol. I. ſome time in the Harleian Library; which volume was returned to its owner."

"Old Mr. Boman the player reported from Sir William Biſhop, that ſome part of Sir John Falſtaff's character was drawn from a townſman of Stratford, who either faithleſsly broke a contract, or ſpitefully refuſed to part with ſome land, for a valuable

conſideration, adjoining to Shakſpeare's, in or near that town."

To theſe anecdotes I can only add the following.

At the concluſion of the advertiſement prefixed to Lintot's edition of Shakſpeare's poems, it is ſaid, "That moſt learned prince and great patron of learning, King James the Firſt, was pleaſed with his own hand to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakſpeare; which letter, though now loſt, remained long in the hands of Sir William D'Avenant[9], as a credible perſon now living can teſtify."

Mr. Oldys, in a MS. note to his copy of Fuller's *Worthies*, obſerves, that "the ſtory came from the duke of Buckingham, who had it from Sir William D'Avenant."

It appears from *Roſcius Anglicanus*, (commonly called Downes the prompter's book) 1708, that Shakſpeare took the pains to inſtruct Joſeph Taylor in the character of *Hamlet*, and John Lowine in that of *K. Henry VIII.*

STEEVENS.

Extract from the Rev. Dr. Farmer's *Eſſay on the Learning of Shakſpeare*, ſmall 8vo. 1767.

In 1751, was reprinted "A compendious or briefe examination of certayne ordinary complaints of divers of our Countrymen in theſe our days: which although they are in ſome parte unjuſt and friuolous, yet are they all by way of dialogue thoroughly debated and diſcuſſed by *William Shakſpeare*, Gentleman." 8vo.

This extraordinary piece was originally publiſhed in 4to, 1581, and dedicated by the author, "To the moſt

9 —*which letter, though now loſt, remained long in the hands of Sir* William D'Avenant.] Dr. Farmer with great probability ſuppoſes that this letter was written by King James in return for the compliment paid to him in *Macbeth*. The relater of this anecdote was *Sheffield* Duke of Buckingham. MALONE.

vertuous

vertuous and learned Lady, his moſt deare and ſoveraigne Princeſſe, *Elizabeth*; being inforced by her majeſties late and ſingular clemency in pardoning certayne his unduetifull miſdemeanour." And by the modern editors, to the late king; as "a treatiſe compoſed by the moſt extenſive and fertile genius that ever any age or nation produced."

Here we join iſſue with the writers of that excellent, though very unequal work, *Biographia Britannica*: if, ſay they, this piece could be written by our poet, it would be abſolutely deciſive in the diſpute about his learning; for many quotations appear in it from the Greek and Latin claſſicks.

The concurring circumſtances of the *name*, and the *miſdemeanor*, which is ſuppoſed to be the old ſtory of *deer-ſtealing*, ſeem fairly to challenge our poet for the author: but they heſitate.—His claim may appear to be confuted by the date 1581, when *Shakſpeare* was only *ſeventeen*, and the *long* experience, which the writer talks of.—But I will not keep the reader in ſuſpenſe: the book was *not* written by *Shakſpeare*.

Strype, in his *Annals*, calls the author SOME *learned man*, and this gave me the firſt ſuſpicion. I knew very well, that honeſt *John* (to uſe the language of Sir *Thomas Bodley*) did not waſte his time with ſuch *baggage books* as *plays* and *poems*; yet I muſt ſuppoſe, that he had *heard* of the name of *Shakſpeare*. After a while I met with the original edition. Here in the title-page, and at the end of the dedication, appear only the initials, W. S. gent. and preſently I was informed by *Anthony Wood*, that the book in queſtion was written, not by *William Shakſpeare*, but by *William Stafford*, gentleman[1]: which at once accounted for the *miſdemeanour* in

[1] —*that the book in queſtion was written, not by* William Shakſpeare, *but by* William Stafford, *gentleman:*] *Faſti*, 2d. Edit. V. i. 208.—It will be ſeen on turning to the former edition, that the latter part of the paragraph belongs to another *Stafford*.—I have ſince obſerved, that *Wood* is not the firſt, who hath given us the true author of the pamphlet. FARMER.

the dedication. For *Stafford* had been concerned at that time, and was indeed afterward, as *Camden* and the other annaliſts inform us, with ſome of the conſpirators againſt *Elizabeth*; which he properly calls his *undueti-full* behaviour.

I hope by this time, that any one open to conviction may be nearly ſatisfied; and I will promiſe to give on this head very little more trouble.

The juſtly celebrated Mr. Warton hath favoured us, in his *Life of Dr. Bathurſt*, with ſome *hearſay* particulars concerning Shakſpeare from the papers of Aubrey, which had been in the hands of Wood; and I ought not to ſuppreſs them, as the *laſt* ſeems to make againſt my doctrine. They came originally, I find, on conſulting the MS. from one Mr. Beeſton: and I am ſure Mr. Warton, whom I have the honour to call my friend, and an aſſociate in the queſtion, will be in no pain about their credit.

"William Shakſpeare's father was a butcher;—while he was a boy he exerciſed his father's trade, but when he killed a calf, he would do it in a high ſtyle, and make a ſpeech. This William being inclined *naturally* to poetry and acting, came to London, I gueſs, about *eighteen*, and was an actor in one of the playhouſes, and did act *exceedingly well*. He began *early* to make eſſays in dramatique poetry.—The humour of the *Conſtable* in the *Midſummer-Night's Dream* he happen'd to take at Crendon[a] in Bucks.—I think, I have been told, that he left near three hundred pounds to a *ſiſter*. *He underſtood Latin pretty well*, FOR *he had been in his younger years a ſchoolmaſter in the country*."

[a] *The humour of the Conſtable in the* Midſummer-Night's Dream *he happen'd to take at Crendon*—] This place is not met with in *Speed*'s *Villare*, or in *Adam*'s *Index*; nor in the *firſt* and the *laſt* performance of this ſort, *Speed*'s *Tables*, and *Whatley*'s *Gazetteer*: perhaps, however, it may be meant under the name of *Crandon*;—but the inquiry is of no importance.—It ſhould, I think, be written *Credendon*; though better antiquaries than *Aubrey* have acquieſced in the vulgar corruption. FARMER.

I will

I will be ſhort in my animadverſions; and take them in their order.

The account of the *trade* of the family is not only contrary to all other tradition, but, as it may ſeem, to the inſtrument from the Herald's-office, ſo frequently reprinted.—Shakſpeare moſt certainly went to London, and commenced actor through neceſſity, not natural inclination.—Nor have we any reaſon to ſuppoſe, that he did act *exceedingly well*. Rowe tells us from the information of Betterton, who was inquiſitive into this point, and had very early opportunities of enquiry from Sir W. D'Avenant, that he was no *extraordinary actor*; and that the top of his performance was the Ghoſt in his own *Hamlet*. Yet this *chef d' oeuvre* did not pleaſe: I will give you an original ſtroke at it. Dr. Lodge, who was for ever peſtering the town with pamphlets, publiſhed in the year 1596, *Wits Miſerie, and the Worlds Madneſſe, diſcovering the Devils incarnat of this Age*, 4to. One of theſe devils is *Hate-virtue*, or *Sorrow for another man's good ſucceſſe*, who, ſays the doctor, is "*a foule lubber*, and looks as pale as the viſard of the *Ghoſt*, which cried ſo miſerably at the theatre, like an oiſter-wife, *Hamlet, revenge*[3]." Thus you ſee Mr. Holt's ſuppoſed

[3] —*like an oiſter-wife*, Hamlet, revenge.] To this obſervation of Dr. Farmer it may be added, that the play of *Hamlet* was better known by this ſcene, than by any other. In *Decker's Saturomaſtix*, 1602, the following paſſage occurs.

Aſinius.

"Would I were hang'd if I can call you any names but captain, and *Tucca*."

Tucca.

"No, fye; my name's *Hamlet Revenge*: thou haſt been at Paris-Garden, haſt thou not?"

Again, in *Weſtward Hoe*, by Decker and Webſter, 1607:

"Let theſe huſbands play *mad Hamlet, and cry, revenge!*"

STEEVENS.

Dr. Farmer's obſervation may be further confirmed by the following paſſage in an anonymous play, called *A Warning for faire Women*, 1599. We alſo learn from it the uſual dreſs of the ſtage ghoſts of that time.

poſed *proof*, in the appendix to the late edition, that *Hamlet* was written after 1597, or perhaps 1602, will by no means hold good; whatever might be the caſe of the particular paſſage on which it is founded.

Nor does it appear, that Shakſpeare did begin *early* to make *eſſays in dramatique poetry*: the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, which hath ſo often been aſcribed to him on the credit of Kirkman and Winſtanley[4], was written by George Peele; and Shakſpeare is not met with, even as an *aſſiſtant*, till at leaſt ſeven years afterward[5].—Naſh in his epiſtle to the gentlemen ſtudents of both univerſities, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, 4to. *black letter*, recommends his friend, Peele, "as the chiefe ſupporter of pleaſance now living, the *Atlas* of poetrie, and *primus verborum artifex*: whoſe firſt increaſe, *the Arraignment of Paris*, might plead to their opinions his pregnant dexteritie of wit and manifold varietie of inuention[6]."

In

"——A filthie whining ghoſt,
"Lapt in ſome foule ſheet, or a *leather pilch*,
"Comes ſcreaming like a pigge half ſtickt,
"And cries *vindicta—revenge, revenge.*"

The leathern pilch, I ſuppoſe, was a theatrical ſubſtitute for armour. MALONE.

4 —*on the credit of Kirkman and Winſtanley*,] Theſe people, who were the *Gurls* of the laſt age, aſcribe likewiſe to our author thoſe miſerable performances, *Mucedorus*, and *the Merry Devil of Edmonton*. FARMER.

5 —*Shakſpeare is not met with, even as an* aſſiſtant, *till at leaſt ſeven years afterward.*—] Mr. Pope aſſerts "The troubleſome Raigne of King *John*," in two parts, 1611, to have been written by Shakſpeare and Rowley:—which edition is a mere copy of another in *black letter*, 1591. But I find his aſſertion is ſomewhat to be doubted: for the old edition hath no name of *author* at all; and that of 1611, the initials only, *W. Sh.* in the title-page. FARMER.

See the *Eſſay on the Order of Shakſpeare's plays*, Article, *King John*. MALONE.

6 —*his pregnant dexteritie of wit and manifold varietie of inuention.*] Peele ſeems to have been taken into the patronage of the Earl of Northumberland about 1593, to whom he dedicates in that year, "*The Honour of the Garter*, a poem gratulatorie—the *Firſtling* conſecrated to his noble name."—"He was eſteemed, ſays Anthony Wood,

In the next place, unfortunately, there is neither ſuch a character as a *Conſtable* in the *Midſummer Night's Dream:* nor was the *three hundred pounds* legacy to a ſiſter, but a daughter.

And to cloſe the whole, it is not poſſible, according to Aubrey himſelf, that Shakſpeare could have been ſome *years a ſchoolmaſter in the country:* on which circumſtance only the ſuppoſition of his learning is profeſſedly founded. He was not ſurely *very* young, when he was employed to *kill calves*, and he commenced player about *eighteen!*—The truth is, that he left his father, for a wife, a year ſooner; and had at leaſt two children born at Stratford before he retired from thence to London. It is therefore ſufficiently clear, that poor Anthony had too much reaſon for his character of Aubrey: we find it in his own account of his life, publiſhed by Hearne, which I would earneſtly recommend to any hypochondriack:

"A pretender to antiquities, roving, magotie-headed, and ſometimes little better than craſed: and being ex-

Wood, a moſt noted poet, 1579; but when or where he died, I cannot tell, for *ſo it is*, and always *hath been*, that moſt POETS die *poor*, and conſequently obſcurely, and a hard matter it is to trace them to their graves. *Clarait* 1599." *Ath. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 300.

We had lately in a periodical pamphlet, called, *The Theatrical Review*, a very *curious* letter under the name of George Peele, to one Maſter Henrie Marle; relative to a diſpute between Shakſpeare and Alleyn, which was compromiſed by Ben Jonſon.—"I never longed for thy companye more than laſt night; we were all verrie merie at the Globe, when Ned Alleyn did not ſcruple to affyrme pleaſauntly to thy friende Will, that he had ſtolen hys ſpeeche about the excellencie of acting in Hamlet hys tragedye, from converſaytions manifold, whych had paſſed between them, and opinions gyven by Alleyn touchyng that ſubjecte. Shakſpeare did not take this talk in good ſorte; but Jonſon did put an ende to the ſtryfe wyth wittyelie ſaying, thys affaire needeth no contentione: you ſtole it from Ned no doubte: do not marvel: haue you not ſeene hym acte tymes out of number?"—This is pretended to be printed from the original MS. dated 1600; which agrees well enough with Wood's *Clarait:* but unluckily, Peele was dead at leaſt two years before. "As Anacreon died by the *pot*, ſays Meres, ſo George Peele by the *pox*." *Wit's Treaſury*, 1598. p. 286.

FARMER.

ceedingly

ceedingly credulous, would ſtuff his many letters ſent to A. W. with *follaries* and miſinformations." p. 577.

FARMER.

The late Mr. Thomas Oſborne, bookſeller, (whoſe exploits are celebrated by the author of the Dunciad) being ignorant in what form or language our *Paradiſe Loſt* was written, employed one of his garretteers to render it from a French tranſlation into Engliſh proſe. Leſt, hereafter, the compoſitions of Shakſpeare ſhould be brought back into their native tongue from the verſion of Monſieur le Comte de Catuelan, le Tourneur, &c. it may be neceſſary to obſerve, that all the following particulars, extracted from the preface of theſe gentlemen, are as little founded in truth as their deſcription of the Jubilee at Stratford, which they have been taught to repreſent as an affair of general approbation and national concern.

They ſay, that Shakſpeare came to London without a plan, and finding himſelf at the door of a theatre, inſtinctively ſtopped there, and offered himſelf to be a holder of horſes:—that he was remarkable for his excellent performance of the Ghoſt in Hamlet:—that he borrowed nothing from preceding writers:—that all on a ſudden he left the ſtage, and returned without eclat into his native county:—that his monument at Stratford is of copper:—that the courtiers of James I. paid ſeveral compliments to him which are ſtill preſerved:—that he relieved a widow, who, together with her numerous family, was involved in a ruinous lawſuit:—that his editors have reſtored many paſſages in his plays, by the aſſiſtance of the manuſcripts he left behind him, &c. &c.

Let me not however forget the juſtice due to theſe ingenious Frenchmen, whoſe ſkill and fidelity in the execution of their very difficult undertaking, is only exceeded by ſuch a diſplay of candour as would ſerve to cover the imperfections of much leſs elegant and judicious writers. STEEVENS.

Baptiſms,

Baptiſms, Marriages, and Burials of the Shakſpeare family; trranſcribed from the Regiſter-books of the Pariſh of Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickſhire [1].

JONE [2], daughter of John Shakſpere, was baptized Sept. 15, 1558.

Margaret, daughter of John Shakſpere, was buried April 30, 1563.

WILLIAM, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized April 26, 1564 [3].

Johanna, daughter of Richard Hathaway, otherwiſe Gardiner, of Shottery [4], was baptized May 9, 1566.

Gilbert, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized Oct. 13, 1566.

Jone [5], daughter of John Shakſpere, was baptized April 15, 1569.

Anne,

[1] An inaccurate and very imperfect liſt of the baptiſms, &c. of *Shakſpeare's family was tranſmitted by Mr. Weſt about ten years ago* to Mr. Steevens. The liſt now printed I have extracted with great care from the Regiſters of Stratford; and I truſt, it will be found correct. MALONE.

[2] This lady Mr. Weſt ſuppoſed to have married the anceſtor of the Harts of Stratford; but he was certainly miſtaken. She died probably in her infancy. The wife of Mr. Hart was undoubtedly the *ſecond* Jone, mentioned below. Her ſon Michael was born in the latter end of the year 1608, at which time ſhe was above thirty-nine years old. The elder Jone would then have been near fifty. MALONE.

[3] He was born three days before, April 23, 1564. MALONE.

[4] This Richard Hathaway of Shottery was probably the father of *Anne Hathaway*, our poet's wife. There is no entry of her baptiſm, the Regiſter not commencing till 1558, two years after ſhe was born. Thomas, the ſon of this Richard Hathaway, was baptized at Stratford, April 12, 1569; John, another ſon, Feb. 3, 1574; and William, another ſon, Nov. 30, 1578. MALONE.

[5] It was common in the age of Queen Elizabeth to give the ſame chriſtian name to two children ſucceſſively. (Thus, Mr. Sadler, who was godfather to Shakſpeare's ſon, had two ſons, who were baptized by the name of *John*. See note 6.) This was undoubtedly done in the preſent inſtance. The former Jone having probably died, (though I can find no entry of her burial in the Regiſter, not indeed

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakſpere, was baptized Sept. 28, 1571.

Richard, ſon of Mr. John Shakſpere, was baptized March 11, 1573. [1573-4.]

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakſpere, was buried April 4, 1579.

Edmund, ſon of Mr. John Shakſpere, was baptized May 3, 1580.

Suſanna, daughter of WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, was baptized May 26, 1583.

Elizabeth, daughter of Anthony Shakſpere, of Hampton *, was baptized Feb. 10, 1583. [1583-4.]

John Shakſpere and Margery Roberts were married Nov. 25, 1584.

Hamnet [6] and Judith, ſon and daughter of WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, were baptized February 2, 1584. [1584-5.]

Margery,

of many of the other children of John Shakſpeare) the name of Jone, a very favourite one in thoſe days, was transferred to another new-born child. This latter Jone married Mr. William Hart, a hatter in Stratford, ſome time, as I conjecture, in the year 1599, when ſhe was thirty years old; for her eldeſt ſon William was baptized there, Auguſt 28, 1600. There is no entry of her marriage in the Regiſter.

MALONE.

* There was alſo a Mr. *Henry* Shakſpeare ſettled at Hampton-Lucy, as appears from the Regiſter of that pariſh:

1582——Lettice, daughter of Henry Shakſpeare, was baptized.

1585——James, ſon of Henry Shakſpeare, was baptized.

1589——James, ſon of Henry Shakſpeare, was buried.

There was a *Thomas* Shakſpeare ſettled at Warwick; for in the Rolls-Chapel I found the inrolment of a deed made in the 44th year of Queen Elizabeth, conveying "to Thomas Shakſpeare of Warwick, yeoman, Sachbroke, *alias* Biſhop-Sachbroke, in Com. Warw."

MALONE.

[6] Mr. Weſt imagined that our poet's only ſon was chriſtened by the name of *Samuel*, but he was miſtaken. Mr. Hamnet Sadler, who was related, if I miſtake not, to the Shakſpeare family, appears to have been ſponſor for his ſon; and his wife, Mrs. Judith Sadler, to have been godmother to Judith, the other twin-child. The name *Hamnet* is written very diſtinctly both in the entry of the baptiſm and burial of this child. *Hamnet* and *Hamlet* ſeem to have been conſidered as the ſame name, and to have been uſed indiſcriminately both in ſpeaking

Margery, wife of John Shakſpere, was buried Oct. 29, 1587.

Thomas[7], ſon of Richard Queeny, was baptized Feb. 26, 1588. [1588-9.]

Urſula[8], daughter of John Shakſpere, was baptized March 11, 1588. [1588-9.]

Thomas,

ing and writing. Thus, this Mr. Hamnet Sadler, who is a witneſs to Shakſpeare's Will, writes his chriſtian name *Hamnet*; but the ſcrivener who drew up the will, writes it *Hamlet*. There is the ſame variation in the Regiſter of Stratford, where the name is ſpelt in three or four different ways. Thus, among the baptiſms we find, in 1591, "May 26, John, filius *Hamletti* Sadler;" and in 1583, "Sept. 13, Margaret, daughter to *Hamlet* Sadler." But in 1588, Sept. 2c, we find "John, ſon to *Hamnet* Sadler;" in 1596, April 4, we have "Judith, filia *Hamnett* Sadler;" in 1597-8, "Feb. 3, Wilhelmus, filius *Hambnet* Sadler;" and in 1599, "April 23, Francis, filius *Hamnet* Sadler." This Mr. Sadler died in 1624, and the entry of his burial ſtands thus: "1624, Oct. 26, *Hamlet* Sadler." So alſo in that of his wife: "1613, March 23, Judith, uxor *Hamlet* Sadler."

The name of Hamlet occurs in ſeveral other entries in the Regiſter. Oct. 4, 1576, "*Hamlet*, ſon to Humphry Holdar," was buried; and Sept. 28, 1564, "Catharina, uxor *Hamoleti* Haſſal." Mr. *Hamlet* Smith, formerly of the borough of Stratford, is one of the benefactor's annually commemorated there.

Our poet's only ſon, Hamnet, died in 1596, in the twelfth year of his age. MALONE.

7 This gentleman married our poet's youngeſt daughter. He had three ſiſters, Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary, and five brothers; Adrian born in 1586, Richard born in 1587, William born in 1593, John in 1597, and George, born April 9, 1600. George was Curate of the *pariſh of Stratford*, and died of a conſumption. He was buried there April 11, 1624. In Doctor Hall's pocket-book is the following entry relative to him. "38. Mr. Quiney, tuſſi gravi cum magna phlegmatis copia, et cibi vomitu, feb. lenta debilitatus," &c. The caſe concludes thus. "*Anno ſeq.* (no year is mentioned in the caſe, but the preceding caſe is dated 1624,) in hoc malum incidebat. Multa fruſtra tentata;—placide cum Domino dormit. Fuit boni indolis, et pro juveni omnifariam doctus." MALONE.

8 This Urſula, and her brothers, Humphrey, and Philip, appear to have been the children of John Shakſpeare by Mary, his third wife, though no ſuch marriage is entered in the Regiſter. I have not been able to learn her ſurname, or in what church ſhe was married. She died in Sept. 1608.

It

Thomas Greene, *alias* Shakſpere [9], was buried March 6, 1589. [1589-90.]

Humphrey, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized May 24, 1590.

Philip, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized Sept. 21, 1591.

Thomas [1], ſon of Mr. Anthony Naſh, was baptized June 20, 1593.

Hamnet, ſon of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, was buried Aug. 11, 1596.

It has been ſuggeſted to me that the John Shakſpeare here mentioned was an elder brother of our poet, (not his father,) born, like Margaret Shakſpeare, before the commencement of the Regiſter; but had this been the caſe, he probably would have been called John *the younger*, old Mr. Shakſpeare being alive in 1589. I am therefore of opinion that our poet's father was meant, and that he was thrice married. MALONE.

9 A great many names occur in this Regiſter, with an *alias*, the meaning of which it is not very eaſy to aſcertain. I ſhould have ſuppoſed that the perſons thus deſcribed were illegitimate, and that this Thomas Greene was the ſon of one of our poet's kinſmen, by a daughter of Thomas Greene, eſq. a gentleman who reſided in Stratford; but that in the regiſter we frequently find the word *baſtard* expreſsly added to the names of the children baptized. Perhaps this latter form was only uſed in the caſe of ſervants, labourers, &c. and the illegitimate offſpring of the higher orders was more delicately denoted by an *alias*.

The Rev. Mr. Davenport obſerves to me that there are two families at preſent in Stratford, (and probably ſeveral more,) that are diſtinguiſhed by an *alias*. "The real name of one of theſe families is *Roberts*, but they generally go by the name of *Burford*. The anceſtor of the family came originally from Burford in Oxfordſhire, and was frequently called from this circumſtance by the name of Burford. This name has prevailed, and they are always now called by it; but they write their name, Roberts, *alias* Burford, and are ſo entered in the Regiſter.

"The real name of the other family is Smith, but they are more known by the name of *Buck*. The anceſtor of this family, from ſome circumſtance or other, obtained the nickname of Buck, and they now write themſelves, Smith, *alias* Buck." MALONE.

1 This gentleman married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. His father, Mr. Anthony Naſh, lived at Welcombe, (where he had an eſtate,) as appears by the following entry of the baptiſm of another of his ſons, "1598, Oct. 15, John, ſon to Mr. Anthony Naſh, of *Welcombe*." MALONE.

William,

William, ſon of William Hart, was baptized Aug. 28, 1600.

Mr. John Shakſpeare was buried Sept. 8, 1601.

Mr. Richard Quiney[2], Bailiff of Stratford, was buried May 31, 1602.

Mary, daughter of William Hart, was baptized June 5, 1603.

Thomas, ſon of William Hart, hatter, was baptized July 24, 1605.

John Hall, gentleman, and Suſanna Shakſpere were married June 5, 1607.

Mary, daughter of William Hart, was buried Dec. 17, 1607.

Elizabeth, daughter of John Hall, gentleman, was baptized Feb. 21, 1607. [1607-8.]

Mary Shakſpere, widow, was buried Sept. 9, 1608.

Michael, ſon of William Hart, was baptized Sept. 23, 1608.

Gilbert Shakſpere, adoleſcens*, was buried Feb. 3, 1611. [1611-12.]

Richard Shakſpere was buried Feb. 4, 1612. [1612-13.]

Thomas Queeny and Judith Shakſpere[3] were married Feb. 10, 1615. [1615-16.]

William

[2] This was the father of Mr. Thomas Quincy, who married Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter. MALONE.

* This was probably a ſon of Gilbert Shakſpeare, our poet's brother. When the elder Gilbert died, the Regiſter does not inform us; but he certainly died before his ſon. MALONE.

[3] This lady, who was our poet's youngeſt daughter, appears to have married without her father's knowledge, for he mentions her in his will as unmarried. Mr. Weſt, as I have already obſerved, was miſtaken in ſuppoſing ſhe was married in Feb. 1616, that is, in 1616-17. She was certainly married before her father's death. See a former note in p. 151, in which the entry is given exactly as it ſtands in the Regiſter.

As Shakſpeare the poet married his wife from Shottery, Mr. Weſt conjectured he might have become poſſeſſed of a remarkable *houſe*, and jointly with his wife conveyed it as part of their daughter Judith's portion to Thomas Queeny. "It is certain," Mr. Weſt adds, "that one Queeny, an elderly gentleman, ſold it to —— Harvey, eſq. of Stockton, near Southam, Warwickſhire, father of John Harvey Thurſby,

William Hart, hatter[4], was buried April 17, 1616.

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE[5], gentleman, was buried April 25[6], 1616.

Shakſpere, ſon of Thomas Quiney, gentleman, was baptized Nov. 23, 1616.

Shakſpere, ſon of Thomas Quiney, gentleman, was buried May 8, 1617.

Richard, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was baptized Feb. 9, 1617. [1617-18.]

Thomas, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was baptized Aug. 29, 1619.

Anthony Naſh, Eſq[7]. was buried Nov. 18, 1622.

Mrs. Shakſpeare[8] was buried Aug. 8, 1623.

Mr. Thomas Naſh was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Hall, April 22, 1626.

Thomas*, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized April 13, 1614.

Thurſby, eſq. of Abington, near Northampton; and that the aforeſaid Harvey ſold it again to Samuel Tyler, eſq. whoſe ſiſters, as his heirs, now enjoy it."

But how could Shakſpeare have conveyed this houſe, if he ever owned it, to Mr. Queeny, as a marriage portion with his daughter, concerning whom there is the following clauſe in his will, executed one month before his death: "Provided that if ſuch huſband as ſhe *ſhall* at the end of the ſaid three years be *married* unto," &c. MALONE.

4 This William Hart was our poet's brother-in law. He died, it appears, a few days before Shakſpeare. MALONE.

5 He died, as appears from his monument, April 23d. MALONE.

6 No one hath protracted the life of *Shakſpeare* beyond 1616, except Mr. Hume; who is pleaſed to add a year to it, contrary to all manner of evidence. FARMER.

7 Father of Mr. Thomas Naſh, the huſband of Elizabeth Hall. MALONE.

8 This lady, who was the poet's widow, and whoſe maiden name was Anne Hathaway, died, as appears from her tomb-ſtone (ſee p. 105, n. 4.) at the age of 67, and conſequently was near eight years older than her huſband. I have not been able to aſcertain when or where they were married, but ſuſpect the ceremony was performed at Hampton-Lucy, or Billeſley, in Auguſt 1582. The regiſter of the latter pariſh is loſt. MALONE.

* It appears from Lady Barnard's Will that this Thomas Hart was alive in 1669. The Regiſter does not aſcertain the time of his death, nor that of his father. MALONE.

Dr.

Dr. John Hall[9], ["medicus peritiſſimus,"] was buried Nov. 26, 1635.

George, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized Sept. 18, 1636.

Thomas, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was buried Jan. 28, 1638. [1638-9.]

Richard, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was buried Feb. 26, 1638. [1638-9.]

William Hart[1] was buried March 29, 1639.

Mary, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized June 18, 1641.

Joan Hart, widow, was buried Nov. 4, 1646.

Thomas Naſh, Eſq. was buried April 5, 1647.

Mrs. Suſanna Hall, widow, was buried July 16, 1649.

Mr.

[9] It has been ſuppoſed that the family of Miller of Hide-Hall in the county of Herts, were deſcended from Dr. Hall's daughter Elizabeth; and to prove this fact, the following pedigree was tranſmitted ſome years ago by Mr. Whalley to Mr. Steevens:

John Hall = Suſanna, daughter and co-heireſs of William Shakſpeare.

Elizabeth Hall = Thomas Naſh, Eſq.

A daughter = Sir Reginald Foſter, of Warwickſhire.

Franklyn Miller of Hide-Hall, Co. Hertford. = Jane Foreſter.

Nicholas Miller = Mary ———.

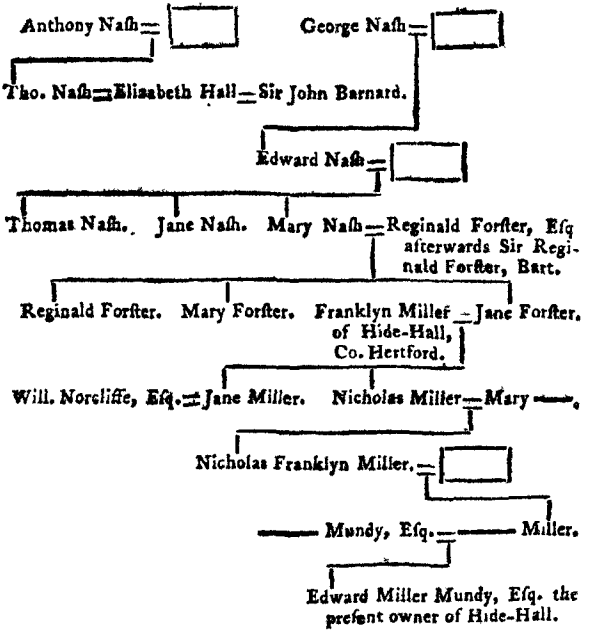
Nicholas Franklyn Miller of Hide-Hall, the only ſurviving branch of the family of Miller.

But this pedigree is founded on a miſtake, and there is undoubtedly no lineal deſcendant of Shakſpeare now living. The miſtake was,

Mr. Richard Queeny[2], Gent. of London, was buried May 23, 1656.

Mr.

the ſuppoſing that Sir Reginald Forſter married a daughter of Mr. Thomas Naſh and Elizabeth Hall, who had no iſſue, either by that gentleman or her ſecond huſband, Sir John Barnard. Sir Reginald Forſter married the daughter of Edward Naſh, Eſq. of East Greenwich in the county of Kent, couſin-german to Mr. Thomas Naſh; and the pedigree ought to have been formed thus:



That I am right in this ſtatement, appears from the will of Edward Naſh, (ſee p. 134, n. 7.) and from the following inſcription on a monument in the church of Stratford, erected ſome time after the year 1733, by Jane Norcliffe, the wife of William Norcliffe, Eſq. and only daughter of Franklyn Miller, by Jane Forſter:

George Hart, ſon of Thomas Hart, was married by Francis Smyth, Juſtice of peace, to Heſter Ludiate, daughter of Thomas Ludiate, Jan. 9, 1657. [1657-8.]

Elizabeth, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Jan. 9, 1658. [1658-9.]

Jane, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Dec. 21, 1661.

Judith, wife of Thomas Quiney, Gent. was buried Feb. 9, 1661. [1661-62.]

Suſanna, daughter of George Hart, was baptized March 18, 1663. [1663-4.]

Shakſpeare, ſon of George Hart, was baptized Nov. 18, 1666.

Mary, daughter of George Hart, was baptized March 31, 1671.

P. M. S.

"Beneath lye interred the body's of Sir Reginald Forſter, Baronet, and dame *Mary* his wife, daughter of *Edward* Naſh of Eaſt Greenwich, in the county of Kent," &c. For this inſcription I am indebted to the kindneſs of the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Reginald Forſter, Eſq. who lived at Greenwich, was created a baronet, May 4, 1661. His ſon Reginald, who married Miſs Naſh, ſucceeded to the title on the death of his father, ſome time after the year 1679. Their only ſon, Reginald, was buried at Stratford, Aug. 10, 1685.

Mrs. Elizabeth Naſh was married to her ſecond huſband, Sir John Barnard, at Billeſley, about three miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, June 5, 1649, and was buried at Abington in the county of Northampton, Feb. 17, 1669-70; and with her the family of our poet became extinct. MALONE.

[1] The eldeſt ſon of Joan Hart, our poet's ſiſter. I have not found any entry in the Regiſter of the deaths of his brothers Thomas and Michael Hart. The latter, I ſuſpect, ſettled in London, and was perhaps the father of Charles Hart, the celebrated tragedian, who, I believe, was born about the year 1630. MALONE.

[2] This gentleman was born in 1587, and was brother to Thomas Quiney, who married Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter. It does not appear when Thomas Quiney died. There is a defect in the Regiſter during the years 1642, 1643, and 1644; and another *lacuna* from March 17, to Nov. 18, 1663. Our poet's ſon-in-law probably died in the latter of thoſe periods; for his wife, who died in Feb. 1661-2, in the Regiſter of Burials for that year is deſcribed thus: "Judith, *uxor* Thomas Quiney." Had her huſband been then dead, ſhe would have been denominated *vidua*. MALONE.

Thomas, ſon of George Hart, was baptized March 3, 1673. [1673-4.]

George, ſon of George Hart, was baptized Aug. 20, 1676.

Margaret Hart[3], widow, was buried Nov. 28, 1682.

Daniel Smith and Suſanna Hart were married April 16, 1688.

Shakſpeare Hart was married to Anne Prew, April 10, 1694.

William Shakſpeare, ſon of Shakſpeare Hart, was baptized Sept. 14, 1695.

Heſter, wife of George Hart, was buried April 29, 1696.

Anne, daughter of Shakſpeare and Anne Hart, was baptized Aug. 9, 1700.

George, ſon of George and Mary Hart, was baptized Nov. 29, 1700.

George Hart[4] was buried May 3, 1702.

Heſter, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Feb. 10, 1702. [1702-3.]

Catharine, daughter of Shakſpeare and Anne Hart, was baptized July 19, 1703.

Mary, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Oct. 7, 1705.

Mary, wife of George Hart, was buried Oct. 7, 1705.

George Hart was married to Sarah Mountford, Feb. 20, 1728. [1728-9.]

Thomas[5], ſon of George Hart, Jun. was baptized May 9, 1729.

Sarah, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Sept. 29, 1733.

Anne, daughter of Shakſpeare Hart, was buried March 29, 1738.

[3] Probably the wife of Thomas Hart, who muſt have been married in or before the year 1633. The marriage ceremony was not performed at Stratford, there being no entry of it in the Regiſter. MALONE.

[4] He was born in 1636. MALONE.

[5] This Thomas Hart, who is the fifth in deſcent from Joan Hart, our poet's ſiſter, is now (1788) living at Stratford, in the houſe in which Shakſpeare was born. MALONE.

Anne,

Anne, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Sept. 29, 1740.

William Shakſpeare, ſon of William Shakſpeare Hart, was baptized Jan. 8, 1743. [1743-4.]

William Shakſpeare, ſon of William Shakſpeare Hart, was buried March 8, 1744. [1744-5.]

William, ſon of George Hart, was buried April 28, 1745.

George Hart[6] was buried Aug. 29, 1745.

Thomas, ſon of William Shakſpeare Hart, was buried March 12, 1746. [1746-7.]

Shakſpeare Hart[7] was buried July 7, 1747.

Catharine, daughter of William Shakſpeare Hart, was baptized May 10, 1748.

William Shakſpeare Hart[8] was buried Feb. 28, 1749. [1749-50.]

The widow Hart[9] was buried July 10, 1753.

John, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 18, 1755.

Anne, daughter of Shakſpeare and Anne Hart, was buried Feb. 5, 1760.

Frances, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 8, 1760.

Thomas, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 10, 1764.

Anne, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized Jan. 16, 1767.

Sarah, daughter of George Hart, was buried Sept. 10, 1768.

Frances, daughter of Thomas Hart, was buried Oct. 31, 1774.

George Hart[t] was buried July 8, 1778.

[6] He was born in 1676, and was great grandſon to Joan Hart. MALONE.

[7] He was born in 1666, and was alſo great grandſon to Joan Hart. MALONE.

[8] He was born in 1695. MALONE.

[9] This abſurd mode of entry ſeems to have been adopted for the purpoſe of concealment rather than information; for by the omiſſion of the chriſtian name, it is impoſſible to aſcertain from the Regiſter, who was meant. The perſon here deſcribed was, I believe, Anne, the widow of Shakſpeare Hart, who died in 1747. MALONE.

[t] He was born in 1700. MALONE.

SHAKSPEARE'S COAT OF ARMS.

The following inſtrument[1] is copied from the original in the College of Heralds; It is marked G. 13. p. 349.

TO all and ſinguler noble and gentlemen of all eſtats and degrees, bearing arms, to whom theſe preſents ſhall come, William Dethick, Garter, Principall King of Arms of England, and William Camden, alias Clarencieulx, King of Arms for the ſouth, eaſt, and weſt parts of this realme, ſendethe greeting. Know ye, that in all nations and kingdoms the record and remembraunce of the valeant facts and vertuous diſpoſitions of worthie men have been made knowne and divulged by certeyne ſhields of arms and tokens of chevalrie; the grant and teſtemonie whereof apperteyneth unto us, by vertu of our offices from the Quenes moſt Exc. Majeſtie, and her Highenes moſt noble and victorious progenitors: wherefore being ſolicited, and by credible report informed, that John Shakſpeare, now of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the counte of Warwick, gent. whoſe parent, great grandfather, and late anteceſſor, for his faithefull and approved ſervice to the late moſt prudent prince, king Henry VII. of famous memorie, was advaunced and rewarded with lands and tenements, geven to him in thoſe parts of Warwickſhere, where they have continewed by ſome deſcents in good reputacion and

[1] In the Herald's Office are the firſt draughts of John Shakſpeare's grant or confirmation of arms, by William Dethick, Garter, Principal King at Arms, 1596. See Vincent's Preſs, Vol. 157, N° 23, and 24. STEEVENS.

In a Manuſcript in the College of Heralds, marked W. z. p. 276, is the following note; "As for the *ſpeare in bend*, it is a patible difference, and the perſon to whom it was granted hath borne magiſtracy, and was juſtice of peace at Stratford-upon-Avon. He married the daughter and heire of *Ardern*, and was able to maintain that eſtate." MALONE.

credit;

credit; and for that the ſaid John Shakſpeare having maryed the daughter and one of the heyrs of Robert Arden of Wellingcote, in the ſaid countie, and alſo produced this his auncient cote of arms, heretofore aſſigned to him whileſt he was her Majeſties officer and bayleſe of that towne [2]; In conſideration of the premiſſes, and for the encouragement of his poſteritie, unto whom ſuche blazon of arms and achevements of inheritance from theyre ſaid mother, by the auncyent cuſtome and lawes of arms, maye lawfully deſcend; We the ſaid Garter and Clarencieulx have aſſigned, graunted, and by theſe preſents exemplefied unto the ſaid John Shakſpeare, and to his poſteritie, that ſhield and cote of arms, *viz. In a field of gould upon a bend ſables a ſpeare of the firſt, the poynt upward, hedded argent*; and for his creſt or cogniſance, *A falcon with his wyngs diſplayed, ſtanding on a wrethe of his coullors, ſupporting a ſpeare armed hedded, or ſteeled ſylver*, fyxed uppon a helmet with mantell and taſſells, as more playnely maye appeare depected on this margent; and we have likewiſe uppon on other eſcucheon impaled the ſame with the auncyent arms of the ſaid Arden [3] of Wellingcote; ſignifieng therby, that it maye and ſhalbe lawfull for the ſaid John Shakſpeare, gent. to beare and uſe the ſame ſhield

[2] — *his auncient cote of arms, heretofore aſſigned to him whileſt he was her Majeſties officer and bayleſe of that towne*;] This grant of arms was made by —— Cook, Clarencieux, in 1569, but is not now extant in the Herald's-Office. MALONE.

[3] — *and we have likewiſe—impaled the ſame with the auncyent arms of the ſaid Arden*—] It is ſaid by the modern editor of *Arden of Feverſham* (firſt publiſhed in 1592 and republiſhed in 1770) that Shakſpeare *deſcended by the female line* from the gentleman whoſe unfortunate end is the ſubject of this tragedy. But the aſſertion appears to want ſupport, the true name of the perſon who was murdered at Feverſham being *Ardern* and not *Arden*. *Ardern* might be called *Arden* in the play for the ſake of better ſound, or might be corrupted in the chronicle of Holinſhed: yet it is unlikely that the true ſpelling ſhould be overlooked among the Heralds, whoſe intereſt it is to recommend by oſtentatious accuracy the trifles in which they deal. STEEVENS.

Ardern was the original name, but in Shakſpeare's time it had been ſoftened to *Arden*. See p. 103, n. 1. MALONE.

of arms, ſingle or impaled, as aforſaid, during his naturall lyffe; and that it ſhalbe lawfull for his children, yſſue, and poſteryte, (lawfully begotten,) to beare, uſe, and quarter, and ſhow forth the ſame, with theyr e dewe differences, in all lawfull warlyke facts and civile uſe or exerciſes, according to the lawes of arms, and cuſtome that to gentlemen belongethe, without let or interuption of any perſon or perſons, for uſe or bearing the ſame. In wyttneſſe and teſtemonye whereof we have ſubſcrebed our names, and faſtened the ſeals of our offices, geven at the Office of Arms, London, the day of in the xlii yere of the reigne of our moſt gratious Sovraigne lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God, quene of Ingland, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. 1599.

SHAKSPEARE'S

SHAKSPEARE'S WILL,

From the ORIGINAL

In the Office of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

Vicesimo quinto die Martii[1], *Anno Regni Domini noſtri Jacobi nunc Regis Angliæ, &c. decimo quarto, et Scotiæ quadrageſimo nono. Anno Domini* 1616.

IN the name of God, Amen. I William Shakſpeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick. gent. in perfect health and memory, (God be praiſed!) do make and ordain this my laſt will and teſtament in manner and form following; that is to ſay:

Firſt, I commend my ſoul into the hands of God my creator, hoping, and aſſuredly believing, through the only merits of Jeſus Chriſt my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlaſting; and my body to the earth whereof it is made.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds of lawful Engliſh money, to be paid unto her in manner and form following; that is to ſay, one hundred pounds in diſcharge of her marriage portion within one year after my deceaſe, with conſideration after the rate of two ſhillings in the pound for ſo long time as the ſame ſhall be unpaid unto her after my deceaſe; and the fifty pounds reſidue thereof, upon her ſurrendering of, or giving of ſuch ſufficient ſecurity as the overſeers of this my will ſhall like of, to ſurrender or grant, all her eſtate and right that ſhall deſcend or come unto her after my deceaſe, or that ſhe now hath, of, in, or to, one copyhold tenement, with the appurtenances, lying and being in Stratford-upon-Avon aforeſaid, in the ſaid county of Warwick, being parcel or holden of the manor of Rowington, unto my daughter Suſanna Hall, and her heirs for ever.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my ſaid daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds more, if ſhe, or any iſſue of her body, be living at the end of three years

[1] Our poet's will appears to have been drawn up in February, though not executed till the following month; for *Februarij* was firſt written, and afterwards ſtruck out, and *Martii* written over it. MALONE.

next enſuing the day of the date of this my will, during which time my executors to pay her conſideration from my deceaſe according to the rate aforeſaid: and if ſhe die within the ſaid term without iſſue of her body, then my will is, and I do give and bequeath one hundred pounds thereof to my niece[2] Elizabeth Hall, and the fifty pounds to be ſet forth by my execu ors during the life of my ſiſter Joan Hart, and the uſe and profit thereof coming, ſhall be paid to my ſaid ſiſter Joan, and after her deceaſe the ſaid fifty pounds ſhall remain amongſt the children of my ſaid ſiſter, equally to be divided amongſt them; but if my ſaid daughter Judith be living at the end of the ſaid three years, or any iſſue of her body, then my will is, and ſo I deviſe and bequeath the ſaid hundred and fifty pounds to be ſet out by my executors and overſeers for the beſt benefit of her and her iſſue, and the ſtock not to be paid unto her ſo long as ſhe ſhall be married and covert baron; but my will is, that ſhe ſhall have the conſideration yearly paid unto her during her life, and after her deceaſe the ſaid ſtock and conſideration to be paid to her children, if ſhe have any, and if not, to her executors or aſſigns, ſhe living the ſaid term after my deceaſe: provided that if ſuch huſband as ſhe ſhall at the end of the ſaid three years be married unto, or at any [time] after, do ſufficiently aſſure unto her, and the iſſue of her body, lands anſwerable to the portion by this my will given unto her, and to be adjudged ſo by my executors and overſeers, then my will is, that the ſaid hundred and fifty pounds ſhall be paid to ſuch huſband as ſhall make ſuch aſſurance, to his own uſe.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my ſaid ſiſter Joan twenty pounds, and all my wearing apparel, to be paid and delivered within one year after my deceaſe; and I do will and deviſe unto her the houſe, with the appurtenances, in Stratford, wherein ſhe dwelleth, for her natural life, under the yearly rent of twelve-pence.

Item, I give and bequeath unto her three ſons, William

[2] —*to my* niece—] Elizabeth Hall was our poet's grand-daughter. So, in *Othello*, Act I. ſc. i. Iago ſays to Brabantio, "You'll have your *nephews* neigh to you;" meaning his grand-children. See the note there. MALONE.

Hart,

Hart, ——Hart[3], and Michael Hart, five pounds apiece, to be paid within one year after my deceaſe.

Item, I give and bequeath unto the ſaid Elizabeth Hall all my plate, (except my broad ſilver and gilt bowl[4],) that I now have at the date of this my will.

Item, I give and bequeath unto the poor of Stratford aforeſaid ten pounds; to Mr. Thomas Combe[5] my ſword; to Thomas Ruſſel, eſq. five pounds; and to Francis Collins[6] of the borough of Warwick, in the county of Warwick, gent. thirteen pounds ſix ſhillings and eight-pence, to be paid within one year after my deceaſe.

Item, I give and bequeath to Hamlet [*Hamnet*] Sadler[7]

3 —*Hart*,] It is ſingular that neither Shakſpeare nor any of his family ſhould have recollected the chriſtian name of his nephew, who was born at Stratford but eleven years before the making of his will. His chriſtian name was *Thomas*; and he was baptized in that town, July 24, 1605. MALONE.

4 —*except my broad ſilver and gilt* bowl,] This bowl, as we afterwards find, our poet bequeathed to his daughter Judith Inſtead of *bowl*, Mr. Theobald, and all the ſubſequent editors, have here printed *boxes*. MALONE.

5 —*Mr. Thomas Combe*,] This gentleman was baptized at Stratford, Feb. 9, 1588-9, ſo that he was twenty-ſeven years old at the time of Shakſpeare's death. He died at Stratford in July 1657, aged 68; and his elder brother William died at the ſame place, Jan. 30, 1666-7, aged 80. Mr. Thomas Combe by his will made July 20, 1656, directed his executors to convert all his perſonal property into money, and to lay it out in the purchaſe of lands, to be ſettled on William Combe, the eldeſt ſon of John Combe of Arlcburch in the county of Worceſter, Gent. and his heirs male; remainder to his two brothers ſucceſſively. Where therefore our poet's ſword has wandered, I have not been able to diſcover. I have taken the trouble to aſcertain the ages of Shakſpeare's friends and relations, and the time of their deaths, becauſe we are thus enabled to judge how far the traditions concerning him, which were communicated to Mr. Rowe in the beginning of this century, are worthy of credit. MALONE.

6 —*to Francis Collins*—] This gentleman, who was the ſon of Mr. Walter Collins, was baptized at Stratford, Dec. 24, 1582. I know not when he died. MALONE.

7 —*to Hamnet Sadler*—] This gentleman was godfather to Shakſpeare's only ſon, who was called after him. Mr. Sadler, I believe, was born about the year 1550, and died at Stratford-upon-Avon, in October 1624. His wife, Judith Sadler, who was godmother to Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter, was buried there, March 23, 1613-14. Our poet probably was godfather to their ſon *William*, who was baptized at Stratford, Feb. 5, 1597-8. MALONE.

twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence, to buy him a ring; to William Reynolds, gent. twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence, to buy him a ring; to my godſon William Walker[8], twenty ſhillings in gold; to Anthony Naſh[9], gent. twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence; and to Mr. John Naſh[1], twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence; and to my fellows, John Hemynge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell[2], twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence apiece, to buy them rings.

Item, I give, will, bequeath, and deviſe, into my daughter Suſanna Hall, for better enabling of her to perform this my will, and towards the performance thereof, all that capital meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, in Stratford aforeſaid, called The New Place, wherein I now dwell, and two meſſuages or tenements, with the appurtenances, ſituate, lying, and being in Henley-ſtreet, within the borough of Stratford aforeſaid; and all my barns, ſtables, orchards, gardens, lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatſoever, ſituate, lying, and being, or to be had, received, perceived *, or taken, within the towns, hamlets, villages, fields, and grounds of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Biſhopton, and Welcombe [3], or in any of them, in the ſaid county

[8] —*to my godſon William Walker*,] William, the ſon of Henry Walker, was baptized at Stratford, Oct. 16, 1608. I mention this circumſtance, becauſe it aſcertains that our authour was at his native town in the autumn of that year. Mr. William Walker was buried at Stratford, March 1, 1679-80. MALONE.

[9] —*to Anthony Naſh*,] He was father of Mr. Thomas Naſh, who married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. He lived, I believe, at Welcombe, where his eſtate lay; and was buried at Stratford, Nov. 18, 1622. MALONE.

[1] —*to Mr. John Naſh*,] This gentleman died at Stratford, and was buried there, Nov. 10, 1623. MALONE.

[2] —*to my fellows, John Hemynge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell*,] Theſe our poet's *fellows* did not very long ſurvive him. Burbage died in March 1619; Cundell in December, 1627; and Hemynge in October, 1630. See their wills in the *Account of our old Actors* in the Second Part of this volume. MALONE.

* —*received, perceived*,] Inſtead of theſe words, we have hitherto had in all the printed copies of this will, *reſerved, preſerved*. MALONE.

[3] —*old Stratford, Biſhopton, and Welcombe*,] The lands of Old Stratford, Biſhopton, and Welcombe, here deviſed, were in Shakſpeare's time a continuation of one large field, all in the pariſh of Stratford.

county of Warwick; and alſo all that meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, wherein one John Robinſon dwelleth, ſituate, lying, and being, in the Black-friars in London near the Wardrobe[3]; and all other my lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatſoever; to have and to hold all and ſingular the ſaid premiſes, with their appurtenances, unto the ſaid Suſanna Hall, for and during the term of her natural life; and after her deceaſe to the firſt ſon of her body lawfully iſſuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the ſaid firſt ſon lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, to the ſecond ſon of her body lawfully iſſuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the ſaid ſecond ſon lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch heirs, to the third ſon of the body of the ſaid Suſanna lawfully iſſuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the ſaid third ſon lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, the ſame ſo to be and remain to the fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh ſons of her body, lawfully iſſuing one after another, and to the heirs males of the bodies of the ſaid fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh ſons lawfully iſſuing, in ſuch manner as it is before limited to be and remain to the firſt, ſecond, and third

ford. Biſhopton is two miles from Stratford, and Welcombe one. For *Biſhopton*, Mr. Theobald erroneouſly printed *Buſhaxton*, and the error has been continued in all the ſubſequent editions. The word in Shakſpeare's original will is ſpelt *Buſhopton*, the vulgar pronunciation of Biſhopton.

I ſearched the Indexes in the Rolls chapel from the year 1589 to 1616, with the hope of finding an enrolment of the purchaſe-deed of the eſtate here deviſed by our poet, and of aſcertaining its extent and value; but it was not enrolled during that period, nor could I find any inquiſition taken after his death, by which its value might have been aſcertained. I ſuppoſe it was conveyed by the former owner to Shakſpeare, not by bargain and ſale, but by a deed of feoffment, which it was not neceſſary to enroll. MALONE.

4 — *that meſſuage or tenement—in the Blackfriars in London near* the Wardrobe;] This was the houſe which was mortgaged to Henry Walker. See p. 192.

By *the Wardrobe* is meant the King's Great Wardrobe, a royal houſe, near Puddle Wharf, purchaſed by King Edward the Third from Sir John Beauchamp, who built it. King Richard III. was lodged in this houſe in the ſecond year of his reign. See Stowe's *Survey*, p. 693, edit. 1618. After the fire of London this office was kept in the Savoy; but it is now aboliſhed. MALONE.

ſons of her body, and to their heirs males; and for default of ſuch iſſue, the ſaid premiſes to be and remain to my ſaid niece Hall, and the heirs males of her body lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, to my daughter Judith, and the heirs males of her body lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, to the right heirs of me the ſaid William Shakſpeare for ever.

Item. I give unto my wife my ſecond beſt bed, with the furniture [5].

Item, I give and bequeath to my ſaid daughter Judith my broad ſilver gilt bowl. All the reſt of my goods, chattels, leaſes, plate, jewels, and houſhold-ſtuff whatſoever, after my debts and legacies paid, and my funeral expences diſcharged, I give, deviſe, and bequeath to my ſon-in-law, John Hall, gent. and my daughter Suſanna his wife, whom I ordain and make executors of this my laſt will and teſtament. And I do entreat and appoint the ſaid Thomas Ruſſel, eſq. and Francis Collins, gent. to be overſeers hereof. And do revoke all former wills, and publiſh this to be my laſt will and teſtament. In witneſs whereof I have hereunto put my hand, the day and year firſt above-written.

By me [6] William Shakſpeare.

Witneſs to the publiſhing hereof,

Fra. Collyns [7],
Julius Shaw [8],
John Robinſon [9],
Hamnet Sadler [1],
Robert Whattcott.

Probatum fuit teſtamentum ſupraſcriptum apud Londan, coram Magiſtro William Byrde, Legum Doctore, &c. viceſimo ſecundo die menſis Junii, Anno Domini 1616; *juramento Johannis Hall unius ex. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat. reſervata poteſtate, &c. Suſannæ Hall alt. ex. &c. eam cum venerit, &c. petitur. &c.*

5 — *my ſecond beſt bed, with the furniture.*] Thus Shakſpeare's original will. Mr. Theobald and the other modern editors have been more bountiful to Mrs. Shakſpeare, having printed inſtead of theſe words, "— my *brown* beſt bed, with the furniture." MALONE.

It appears, in the original will of Shakſpeare, (now in the Prerogative-Office Doctors' Commons,) that he had forgot his wife; the legacy

legacy to her being expreſſed by an interlineation, as well as thoſe to Heminge, Burbage, and Condell.

The will is written on three ſheets of paper, the two laſt of which are undoubtedly ſubſcribed with Shakſpeare's own hand. The firſt indeed has his name in the margin, but it differs ſomewhat in ſpelling as well as manner, from the two ſignatures that follow. The reader will find a fac-ſimile of all the three, as well as thoſe of the witneſſes, oppoſite p. 190. STEEVENS.

The name at the top of the margin of the firſt ſheet was probably written by the ſcrivener who drew the will. This was the conſtant practice in Shakſpeare's time. MALONE.

6 *By me William Shakſpeare.*] This was the mode of our poet's time. Thus the Regiſter of Stratford is ſigned at the bottom of each page, in the year 1616, "*Per me* Richard Watts, Miniſter." Theſe concluding words have hitherto been inaccurately exhibited thus: "— *the day and year firſt above-written by me,* William Shakſpeare." Neither the day, nor year, nor any preceding part of this will, was written by our poet. "*By me,*" &c. only means—*The above is the will of me* William Shakſpeare. MALONE.

7 — *Fra. Collins.*] See p. 187, n. 6. MALONE.

8 — *Julius Shaw*—] was born in Sept. 1571. He married Anne Boyes, May 5, 1594; and died at Stratford in June 1629. MALONE.

9 — *John Robinſon.*] John, ſon of Thomas Robinſon, was baptized at Stratford, Nov. 30, 1589. I know not when he died. MALONE.

1 — *Hamnet Sadler.*] See p. 187, n. 7. MALONE.

MORTGAGE

MORTGAGE

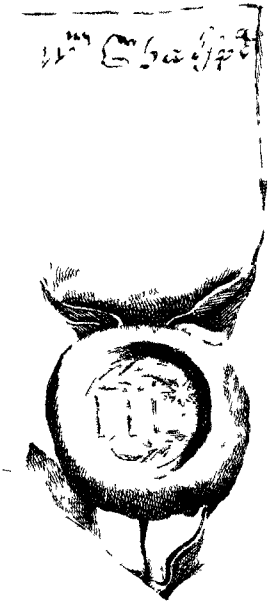
MADE BY SHAKSPEARE,

A. D. 1612-13.

THE following is a tranſcript of a deed executed by our authour three years before his death. The original deed, which was found in the year 1768, among the title-deeds of the Rev. Mr. Fethe ſtonhaugh, of Oxted in the county of Surry, is now in the poſſeſſion of Mrs. Garrick, by whom it was obligingly tranſmitted to me through the hands of the Hon. Mr. Horace Walpole. Much has lately been ſaid in various publications, relative to the proper mode of ſpelling Shakſpeare's name. It is hoped we ſhall hear no more idle babble upon this ſubject. He ſpelt his name himſelf as I have juſt now written it, without the middle *e*. Let this therefore for ever decide the queſtion.

It ſhould be remembered that to all ancient deeds were appended labels of parchment, which were inſerted at the bottom of the deed; on the upper part of which labels thus riſing above the reſt of the parchment, the executing parties wrote their names. Shakſpeare, not finding room for the whole of his name on the label, attempted to write the remaining letters at top, but having allowed himſelf only room enough to write the letter *a*, he gave the matter up. His hand-writing, of which a *fac-ſimile* is annexed, is much neater than many others, which I have ſeen, of that age. He neglected, however, to ſcrape the parchment, in conſequence of which the letters appear imperfectly formed.

He purchaſed the eſtate here mortgaged, from Henry Walker, for 140l. as appears from the enrolment of the deed of bargain and ſale now in the Rolls-Chapel, dated the preceding day, March 10, 1612-13. The deed here printed ſhews that he paid down only eighty pounds of the purchaſe-money, and mortgaged the premiſes for the remainder. This deed and the purchaſe-deed were probably



Shakspeare

probably both executed on the ſame day, (March 10,) like our modern conveyance of Leaſe and Releaſe.

MALONE.

THIS INDENTURE made the eleaventh day of March, in the yeares of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lorde James, by the grace of God, king of England, Scotland, Fraunce, and Ireland, defender of the faith &c. that is to ſay, of England, Fraunce and Ireland the tenth, and of Scotland the ſix-and-fortith; Between William Shakeſpeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the Countie of Warwick, gentleman, William Johnſon, Citizen and Vintener of London, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng of London, gentlemen, of thone partie, and Henry Walker, Citizen and Minſtrell of London, of thother partie; Witneſſeth, that the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng, have demiſed, graunted, and to ferme letten, and by theis preſents do demiſe, graunt, and to ferme lett unto the ſaid Henry Walker, all that dwelling-houſe or tenement, with thappurtenaunts, ſituate and being within the precinct, circuit and compaſſe of the late Black ffryers, London, ſometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner, Eſquire, and ſince that in the tenure of John Forteſcue, gent. and now or late being in the tenure or occupation of one William Ireland, or of his aſſignee or aſſignes; abutting upon a ſtreete leading downe to Puddle Wharfe, on the eaſt part, right againſt the kings Majeſties Wardrobe; part of which ſaid tenement is erected over a greate gate leading to a capitall meſſuage, which ſometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell, Eſquire, deceaſed, and ſince that in the tenure or occupation of the right honourable Henry now Earle of Northumberlande: And alſo all that plott of ground on the weſt ſide of the ſame tenement, which was lately incloſed with boords on two ſides thereof, by Anne Baton, widow, ſoe farre and in ſuch ſorte as the ſame was incloſed by the ſaid Anne Baton, and not otherwiſe; and being on

the third ſide incloſed with an old brick wall; which ſaid plott of ground was ſometyme parcell and taken out of a great voyde peece of ground lately uſed for a garden; and alſo the ſoyle whereupon the ſaid tenement ſtandeth; and alſo the ſaid brick wall and boords which doe incloſe the ſaid plott of ground; with free ewie, acceſſe, ingreſſe, egreſſe, and regreſſe, in, by, and through, the ſaid great gate and yarde there, unto the uſual dore of the ſaid tenement: And alſo all and ſingular cellors, ſollers, romes, lights, eaſiaments, profitts, commodities, and appurtenaunts whatſoever to the ſaid dwelling-houſe or tenement belonging or in any wiſe apperteyning: TO HAVE and to HOLDE the ſaid dwelling-houſe or tenement, cellers, ſollers, romes, plott of ground, and all and ſingular other the premiſſes above by theis preſents mentioned to bee demiſed, and every part and parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunts, unto the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators and aſſignes, from the feaſt of thannundciacon of the bleſſed Virgin Marye next coming after the date hereof, unto thende and terme of One hundred yeares from thence next enſuing, and fullie to be compleat and ended, withoute impeachment of, or for, any manner of waſte: YELDING and paying therefore yearlie during the ſaid terme unto the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng, their heires and aſſignes, a pepper corne at the feaſt of Eaſter yearly, yf the ſame be lawfullie demaunded, and noe more. PROVIDED alwayes, that if the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, his heires, executors, adminiſtrators or aſſignes, or any of them, doe well and trulie paie or cauſe to be paid to the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators or aſſignes, the ſome of threeſcore pounds of lawfull money of England, in and upon the nyne and twentith day of September next coming after the date hereof, at, or in, the nowe dwelling-houſe of the ſaid Henry Walker, ſituate and being in the pariſh of Saint Martyn neer Ludgate, of London, at one entier payment withoat delaie; That then and from thenesforth this preſente leaſe, demiſe and graunt,

graunt, and all and every matter and thing herein conteyned (other then this proviſoe,) ſhall ceaſe, determine, and bee utterlie voyde, fruſtrate, and of none effect, as though the ſame had never beene had, ne made; theis preſents or any thing therein conteyned to the contrary thereof in any wiſe notwithſtanding. And the ſaid William Shakeſpeare for himſelfe, his heires, executors, and adminiſtrators, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promiſſe and graunt to, and with, the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators, and aſſignes, and everie of them, by theis preſentes, that he the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, his heires, executors, adminiſtrators or aſſignes, ſhall and will cleerlie acquite, exonerate and diſcharge, or from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, well and ſufficientlie ſave and keepe harmleſs the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators, and aſſignes, and every of them, and the ſaid premiſſes by theis preſents demiſed, and every parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunts, of and from all and al manner of former and other bargaynes, ſales, guiftes, graunts, leaſes, jointures, dowers, intailes, ſtatuts, recognizaunces, judgments, executions; and of, and from, all and every other charge, titles, troubles, and incumbrances whatſoever by the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng, or any of them, or by their or any of their meanes, had made, committed or done, before thenſealing and delivery of theis preſents, or hereafter before the ſaid nyne and twentith day of September next comming after the date hereof, to bee had, made, committed or done, except the rents and ſervits to the cheef lord or lords of the fee or fees of the premiſſes, for, or in reſpect of, his or their ſegnorie or ſeignories onlie, to bee due and done.

IN WITNESSE whereof the ſaid parties to theis indentures interchangeablie have ſett their ſeales. Yeoven the day and years firſt above written, 1612 [1612-13].

Wm Shakspe. *Wm Johnson.* *Jo. Jackson.*

*Enſealed and delivered by the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, and John Jackſon *, in the preſence of*

Will. Atkinſon.
Ed. Oudry.

Robert Andrews, Scr†
Henry Lawrence, Servant to the ſaid Scr.

* John Heming did not ſign, or ſeal. MALONE.
† i. e. Scrivener. MALONE.

ANCIENT AND MODERN
COMMENDATORY VERSES
ON
SHAKSPEARE.

On WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, who died in April, 1616[1]

REnowned Spenſer, lie a thought more nigh
To learned Chaucer; and rare Beaumont lie
A little nearer Spenſer, to make room
For Shakſpeare, in your three-fold, four-fold tomb.

To

[1] In a collection of manuſcript poems which was in the poſſeſſion of the late Guſtavus Brander, Eſq. theſe verſes are entitled—"BASSE HIS ELEGIE one [*on*] poett Shakeſpeare, who died in April 1616." The Mſ. appears to have been written ſoon after the year 1621. In the edition of our authour's poems in 1640, they are ſubſcribed with the initials W. B. only. They were erroneouſly attributed to Dr. Donne, in a quarto edition of his poems printed in 1633; but his ſon Dr. John Donne, a Civilian, publiſhed a more correct edition of his father's poems in 1735, and rejected the verſes on Shakſpeare, knowing, without doubt, that they were written by another.

From the words "*who died in April* 1616," it may be inferred that theſe lines were written recently after Shakſpeare's death, when the month and year in which he died were well known. At a more diſtant period the month would probably have been forgotten; and that was not an age of ſuch curioſity as would have induced a poet to ſearch the regiſter at Stratford on ſuch a ſubject. From the addreſs to Chaucer and Spenſer it ſhould ſeem, that when theſe verſes were compoſed the writer thought it probable that a cenotaph would be erected to Shakſpeare in Weſtminſter-Abbey.

There is a copy of theſe lines in a manuſcript volume of poems written by W. Herrick and others, among Rawlinſon's Collections in the Bodleian library at Oxford; and another among the Sloanian Mſs. in the Muſeum, N°. 1702. In the Oxford Copy they are entitled "Shakſpeare's Epitaph;" but the authour is not mentioned. There are ſome ſlight variations in the different copies, which I ſhall ſet down.

Line 2. To rare Beaumond, and learned Beaumond lie, &c. edit. 1633.
Line 5. To *lodge in one bed all four* make a ſhift—Mſ. Brander.
To lodge all four in one bed, &c. Mſ. R. and S.
To *lie* all four, &c. Edit. 1633.

To lodge all four in one bed make a ſhift
Until doomſday; for hardly will a fift[a]
Betwixt this day and that by fate be ſlain,
For whom your curtains may be drawn again.
But if precedency in death doth bar
A fourth place in your ſacred ſepulchre,
Under this carved marble of thine own,
Sleep, rare tragedian, Shakſpeare, ſleep alone.
Thy unmoleſted peace, unſhared cave,
Poſſeſs, as lord, not tenant, of thy grave;
That unto us and others it may be
Honour hereafter to be laid by thee.

WILLIAM BASSE.

Line 7. So B. S. and R.
—— by *fates* be ſlain. Edit. 1633.
Line 8. So B. and S.
—— *will* be drawn again. R.
—— *need* be drawn again. 1633.
Line 9. But if precedency *of* death, &c. Edit. 1633.
If your precedency *in* death, &c. B. R. S.
Line 10. So B. R. and edit. 1633.
A fourth to have place in your ſepulcher,—S.
Line 11. So B. and R.
—— under this *curled* marble of thine own. Edit. 1633.
—— under this *fable*, &c. S.
Line 12. So B. S. and edit. 1633.
Sleep, rare *comedian*, &c. R.
Line 13. So B. and R.
Thine unmoleſted peace, unſhared cave—S.
Thy unmoleſted peace *in an unſhared* cave.—Edit. 1633.
Line 14. So B.
Poſſeſs as lord not tenant *of the* grave. S.
———————— *to thy* grave. R.
This couplet is not in edit. 1633.
Line 15. So Edit. 1633.
That unto us, *or* others, &c. B. R. and S. MALONE.

[a] *Fifth* was formerly corruptly written and pronounced *fift*. I have adhered to the old ſpelling on account of the rhyme. This corrupt pronunciation yet prevails in Scotland, and in many parts of England. MALONE.

To

To the Memory of my Beloved, the Author, Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, and what he hath left us.

To draw no envy, Shakſpeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book, and fame;
While I confeſs thy writings to be ſuch,
As neither man, nor muſe, can praiſe too much;
'Tis true, and all men's ſuffrage: but theſe ways
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praiſe:
For ſeelieſt ignorance on theſe may light,
Which, when it ſounds at beſt, but echoes right;
Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty malice might pretend this praiſe,
And think to ruin, where it ſeem'd to raiſe:
Theſe are, as ſome infamous bawd, or whore,
Should praiſe a matron; what could hurt her more?
But thou art proof againſt them; and, indeed,
Above the ill fortune of them, or the need:
I, therefore, will begin:—Soul of the age,
The applauſe, delight, the wonder of our ſtage,
My Shakſpeare, riſe! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenſer; or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room[3]:
Thou art a monument, without a tomb;
And art alive ſtill, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praiſe to give.
That I not mix thee ſo, my brain excuſes;
I mean, with great but diſproportion'd muſes:
For, if I thought my judgment were of years,
I ſhould commit thee ſurely with thy peers;
And tell—how far thou didſt our Lily outſhine[4],
Or ſporting Kyd[5], or Marlowe's mighty line[6].

And

[3] —*to make thee a room:*] See the preceding verſes by Baſſe. MALONE.

[4] —*our* Lily *outſhine,*] *Lylly* wrote nine plays during the reign of Q. Eliz. viz. *Alexander and Campaſpe*, T. C; *Endymion*, C; *Galatea*, C; *Loves Metamorphoſis*, Dram. Paſt; *Maids Metamorphoſis*, C; *Mother Bombie*, C; *Mydas*, C; *Sappho and Phao*, C; and *Woman*

And though thou hadſt ſmall Latin, and leſs Greek,
From thence to honour thee, I would not ſeek
For names; but call forth thund'ring Æſchylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles, to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To life again, to hear thy buſkin tread

n the Moon, &c. To the pedantry of this author perhaps we are indebted for the firſt attempt to poliſh and reform our language. See his *Euphues and his England*. STEEVENS.

5 — *or ſporting* Kyd,] It appears from Heywood's *Actor's Vindication* that *Thomas Kyd* was the author of the *Spaniſh Tragedy*. The late *Mr. Hawkins* was of opinion that *Soliman and Perſeda* was by the ſame hand. The only piece however, which has deſcended to us, even with the initial letters of his name affixed to it, is *Pompey the Great his fair Cornelia's Tragedy*, which was firſt publiſhed in 1594, and, with ſome alteration in the title-page, again in 1595. This is no more than a tranſlation from *Robert Garnier*, a French poet, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf during the reigns of Charles IX. Henry III. and Henry IV. and died at Mans in 1602, in the 56th year of his age. STEEVENS.

6 — *or* Marlowe's *mighty line.*] *Marlowe* was a performer as well as an author. His contemporary *Heywood* calls him *the beſt of poets*. He wrote ſix tragedies, viz. *Dr. Fauſtus's Tragical Hiſtory*; *King Edward II*; *Jew of Malta*; *Luſt's Dominion*; *Maſſacre of Paris*; and *Tamburlaine the Great*, in two parts. He likewiſe joined with *Noſh* in writing *Dido Queen of Carthage*, and had begun a tranſlation of Muſæus's *Hero and Leander*, which was finiſhed by *Chapman*, and publiſhed in 1606. STEEVENS.

Chriſtopher Marlowe was born probably about the year 1566, as he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Cambridge, in 1583. I do not believe that he ever was an actor, nor can I find any authority for it higher than the *Theatrum Poetarum* of Philips, in 1674, which is inaccurate in many circumſtances. Beard, who four years after Marlowe's death gave a particular account of him, does not ſpeak of him as an actor. "He was," ſays that writer, "by profeſſion a ſcholler, brought up from his youth in the univerſitie of Cambridge, but by practice *a play-maker* and a *poet* of ſcurrilitie." Neither Drayton, nor Decker, nor Naſhe, nor the authour of *the Return from Parnaſſus*, 1606, nor Heywood in his prologue to *the Jew of Malta*, give the ſlighteſt intimation of Marlowe's having trod the ſtage. He was ſtabbed in the ſtreet, and died of the wound, in 1593. His *Hero and Leander* was publiſhed in quarto, in 1598, by Edward Blount, as an imperfect work. The fragment ended with this line: "Dang'd down to hell her loathſome carriage." Chapman completed the poem, and publiſhed it as it now appears, in 1600. MALONE.

And

And ſhake a ſtage: or, when thy ſocks were on,
Leave thee alone; for the compariſon
Of all, that inſolent Greece, or haughty Rome,
Sent forth, or ſince did from their aſhes come.
Triumph, my Britain! thou haſt one to ſhow,
To whom all ſcenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time;
And all the muſes ſtill were in their prime,
When like Apollo he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm.
Nature herſelf was proud of his deſigns,
And joy'd to wear the dreſſing of his lines;
Which were ſo richly ſpun, and woven ſo fit,
As, ſince, ſhe will vouchſafe no other wit:
The merry Greek, tart Ariſtophanes,
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not pleaſe;
But antiquated and deſerted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet muſt I not give nature all; thy art[7],
My gentle Shakſpeare, muſt enjoy a part:—
For, though the poet's matter nature be,
His art doth give the faſhion: and that he,
Who caſts to write a living line, muſt ſweat,
(Such as thine are) and ſtrike the ſecond heat
Upon the muſes' anvil; turn the ſame,
(And himſelf with it) that he thinks to frame;
Or, for the laurel, he may gain a ſcorn,—
For a good poet's made, as well as born:
And ſuch wert thou. Look, how the father's face
Lives in his iſſue; even ſo the race
Of Shakſpeare's mind, and manners, brightly ſhines
In his well-turned and true-filed lines[8];

In

[7] —— *thy* art,
My gentle Shakſpeare, muſt enjoy a part:—] Yet this writer in his converſation with Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden in 1619, ſaid, that Shakſpeare "wanted *art*, and ſometimes ſenſe." MALONE.

[8] —*true*-filed *lines*;] The ſame praiſe is given to Shakſpeare by a preceding writer. "As Epius Stolo ſaid that the Muſes would ſpeak with Plautus his tongue, if they would ſpeak Latin, ſo I ſay that the Muſes would ſpeak with Shakſpeare's fine *filed* phraſe, if they would ſpeak Engliſh." *Wit's Treaſury*, by Francis Meres, 1598.

It

In each of which he ſeems to ſhake a lance,
As brandiſh'd at the eyes of ignorance.
Sweet ſwan of Avon, what a ſight it were,
To ſee thee in our waters yet appear;
And make thoſe flights upon the banks of Thames,
That ſo did take Eliza, and our James!
But ſtay; I ſee thee in the hemiſphere
Advanc'd, and made a conſtellation there:—
Shine forth, thou ſtar of poets; and with rage,
Or influence, chide, or cheer, the drooping ſtage;
Which, ſince thy flight from hence, hath mourn'd like night,
And deſpairs day, but for thy volume's light!

BEN. JONSON [9].

Upon

It is ſomewhat ſingular that at a ſubſequent period Shakſpeare was cenſured for the want of that elegance which is here juſtly attributed to him. "Though all the laws of Heroick Poem," ſays the authour of *Theatrum Poetarum*, 1674, "all the laws of tragedy, were exactly obſerved, yet ſtill this *tour entrejanté*, this poetick *energie*, if I may ſo call it, would be required to give life to all the reſt; which ſhines through the rougheſt, moſt unpoliſh'd and antiquated language, and may haply be wanting in the moſt polite and reformed. Let us obſerve Spenſer, with all his ruſtick obſolete words, with all his rough-hewn clouterly phraſes, yet take him throughout, and we ſhall find in him a graceful and poetic majeſtie: in like manner Shakſpeare, in ſpite of all his *unfiled* expreſſions, his rambling and indigeſted fancies, the laughter of the critical, yet muſt be confeſs'd a poet above many that go beyond him in literature ſome degrees." MALONE.

[9] —— *extinctus amabitur idem.*

This obſervation of *Horace* was never more completely verified than by the poſthumous applauſe which *Ben Jonſon* has beſtowed on *Shakſpeare*:

—— the gracious *Duncan*
Was pitied of *Macbeth*:—marry, *he was dead.*

Let us now compare the preſent elogium of old *Ben* with ſuch of his other ſentiments as have reached poſterity.

In April 1748, when the *Lover's Melancholy* by *Ford*, (a friend and contemporary of Shakſpeare,) was revived for a benefit, the following letter appeared in the *General*, now the *Public*, *Adverti*ſ*er*.

'— It is hoped that the following *gleaning of theatrical hiſtory* will readily obtain a place in your paper. It is taken from a pamphlet written in the reign of Charles I. with this quaint title, "Old *Ben's Light Heart* made heavy by Young *John's Melancholy Lover*;" and

as

Upon the Lines, and Life, of the famous Scenick Poet, Maſter WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Thoſe hands, which you ſo clapp'd, go now and wring,
You Britains brave; for done are Shakſpeare's days;
His days are done, that made the dainty plays,
Which made the globe of heaven and earth to ring:
Dry'd

as it contains ſome hiſtorical anecdotes and altercations concerning *Ben Jonſon*, *Ford*, *Shakſpeare*, and the *Lover's Melancholy*, it is imagined that a few extracts from it at this juncture, will not be unentertaining to the publick.'

'Thoſe who have any knowledge of the theatre in the reigns of *James* and *Charles* the Firſt, muſt know, that *Ben Jonſon*, from great critical language, *which was then the portion but of very few*, his merit as a poet, and his conſtant aſſociation with men of letters, did, for a conſiderable time, *give laws to the ſtage*.'

'*Ben* was by nature *ſplenetic and four*; with a ſhare of envy, (for every anxious genius has ſome) more than was warrantable in ſociety. By education rather *critically* than *politely* learned; which ſwell'd his mind into an oſtentatious pride *of his own works*, and an overbearing *inexorable* judgment of his *contemporaries*.'

'This raiſed him many enemies, who towards the cloſe of his life endeavoured to dethrone *this tyrant*, as the pamphlet ſtiles him, out of the dominion of the theatre. And what greatly contributed to their deſign, was the *ſlights* and *malignances* which the *rigid Ben* too frequently threw out againſt the *lowly Shakſpeare*, whoſe fame ſince his death, as appears by the pamphlet, was grown too great for *Ben's envy* either to *bear* with or *wound*.'

'It would greatly exceed the limits of your paper to ſet down all the *contempts* and *invectives* which were uttered and written by *Ben*, and are collected and produced in *this pamphlet*, as unanſwerable and ſhaming evidences to prove his *ill nature* and *ingratitude* to *Shakſpeare*, who firſt introduced him to the *theatre and fame*.

'But though the whole of theſe invectives cannot be ſet down at preſent, ſome few of the heads may not be diſagreeable, which are as follow.'

'That the man had *imagination* and *wit* none could deny, but that they were *ever* guided by *true judgment* in the *rules* and *conduct* of a piece, none could with juſtice aſſert, *both* being ever ſervile to raiſe the *laughter of fools* and the *wonder of the ignorant*. That he was a good poet only *in part*,—being ignorant of *all dramatick laws*,—had *little* Latin—*leſs* Greek—and ſpeaking of plays, &c.

'To make a child new ſwaddled, to proceed
'Man, and then ſhoot up, in one beard and weed,

'Paſt

Dry'd is that vein, dry'd is the Theſpian ſpring,
Turn'd all to tears, and Phœbus clouds his rays;
That corpſe, that coffin, now beſtick thoſe bays,
Which crown'd him poet firſt, then poets' king.

If

' Paſt threeſcore years: or, with three ruſty ſwords,
' And help of ſome few *foot-and-half-foot* words,
' Fight over *York* and *Lancaſter's* long jars,
' And in the tyring-houſe bring wounds to ſcars.
' He rather prays you will be pleas'd to ſee
' One ſuch to-day, as *other plays ſhould be*;
' Where neither *chorus* wafts you o'er the ſeas, &c.

' This, and ſuch like behaviour, brought *Ben* at laſt from being the *lawgiver* of the theatre to be the *ridicule* of it, being *perſonally* introduced there in ſeveral pieces, to the *ſatisfaction* of the publick, who are ever fond of encouraging *perſonal* ridicule, when the follies and vices of the object are ſuppoſed to deſerve it.

' But what wounded his pride and fame moſt ſenſibly, was the preference which the publick and moſt of his contemporary wits, gave to *Ford's* LOVER'S MELANCHOLY, before his NEW INN OR LIGHT HEART. They were both brought on in the *ſame week* and on the ſame ſtage; where *Ben's was damn'd*, and *Ford's* received with *uncommon applauſe*: and what made this circumſtance ſtill more galling, was, that *Ford* was at the head of the partiſans who ſupported *Shakſpeare's fame* againſt *Ben Jonſon's invectives*.'

' This ſo incenſed old *Ben*, that as an everlaſting ſtigma upon his audience, he prefixed this title to his play—" The *New Inn* or *Light Heart*. A comedy, as it was *never acted*, but moſt negligently play'd by ſome, the *King's idle ſervants*; and more ſqueamiſhly beheld and cenſur'd by others, the *King's fooliſh ſubjects*." This title is followed by an abuſive preface upon the audience and reader.'

' Immediately upon this, he wrote his memorable ode againſt the publick, beginning

" Come, leave the loathed ſtage,
" And the more loathſome age," &c.

The revenge he took againſt *Ford*, was to write an epigram on him as a plagiary.

" *Playwright*, by chance, hearing *toys I had writ*,
" Cry'd to my face—they were th' elixir of wit.
" And I muſt now believe him, for to-day
" Five of my *jeſts*, then ſtoln, paſs'd him a play."

alluding to a character in the *Ladies Trial*, which *Ben* ſays *Ford* ſtole from him.'

' The *next* charge againſt *Ford* was, that the *Lover's Melancholy* was not his own, but *purloined from Shakſpeare's papers*, by the connivance of *Heminge and Condel*, who *in conjunction with Ford*, had the reviſal of them.'

The

If tragedies might any prologue have,
All thoſe he made would ſcarce make one to this;
Where fame, now that he gone is to the grave,
(Death's publick tyring-houſe) the Nuntius is:
For, though his line of life went ſoon about,
The life yet of his lines ſhall never out.

HUGH HOLLAND[1].

To

[1] The malice of this charge is gravely refuted, and afterwards laughed at in many verſes and epigrams, the beſt of which are thoſe that follow, with which I ſhall cloſe this theatrical extract.'

"To my worthy friend, *John Ford*.

"'Tis ſaid, from Shakſpeare's mine your play you drew;
"What need?—when Shakſpeare ſtill ſurvives in you:
"But grant it were from his vaſt treaſury reft,
"That *plund'rer Ben* ne'er made *ſo rich a theft*."

Thomas May.

Upon *Ben Jonſon*, and his Zany, *Tom Randolph*.

"Quoth *Ben* to *Tom*, the *Lover's* ſtole,
"'Tis *Shakſpeare's* every word;
"Indeed, ſays *Tom*, upon the whole,
"'Tis much too good for *Ford*.

"Thus *Ben* and *Tom* the *dead* ſtill praiſe,
"The *living* to decry;
"For none muſt dare to wear the bays,
"Till *Ben* and *Tom* both die.

"Even *Avon's ſwan* could not eſcape
"Theſe letter-tyrant elves;
"They on his fame contriv'd a rape,
"To raiſe their pedant ſelves.

"But after times with full conſent
"This truth will all acknowledge,—
"*Shakſpeare* and *Ford* from heaven were ſent,
"*But Ben and Tom from college*."

Endymion Porter.

Mr. Macklin the comedian was the author of this letter; but the pamphlet which furniſhed his materials, was loſt in its paſſage from Ireland.

The following ſtanza, from a copy of verſes by Shirley, prefixed to Ford's *Love's Sacrifice*, 1633, alludes to the ſame diſpute, and is apparently addreſſed to Ben Jonſon:

"Look here *thou* that haſt *malice* to the ſtage,
"And *impudence* enough for the whole age;

"*Voluminouſly*

To the Memory of
the deceaſed Authour, Maſter W. SHAKSPEARE.

Shakſpeare, at length thy pious fellows give
The world thy works; thy works, by which outlive
Thy tomb, thy name muſt: when that ſtone is rent,
And time diſſolves thy Stratford monument,
Here we alive ſhall view thee ſtill; this book,
When braſs and marble fade, ſhall make thee look
Freſh to all ages; when poſterity
Shall loath what's new, think all is prodigy
That is not Shakſpeare's, every line, each verſe,
Here ſhall revive, redeem thee from thy herſe.
Nor fire, nor cank'ring age,—as Naſo ſaid
Of his,—thy wit-fraught book ſhall once invade:
Nor ſhall I e'er believe or think thee dead,
Though miſs'd, until our bankrout ſtage be ſped
(Impoſſible) with ſome new ſtrain to out-do
Paſſions of Juliet, and her Romeo;
Or till I hear a ſcene more nobly take,
Than when thy half-ſword parlying Romans ſpake:
Till theſe, till any of thy volume's reſt,
Shall with more fire, more feeling, be expreſs'd,
Be ſure, our Shakſpeare, thou canſt never die,
But, crown'd with laurel, live eternally.

L. DIGGES

To the Memory of Maſter W. SHAKSPEARE.

We wonder'd, Shakſpeare, that thou went'ſt ſo ſoon
From the world's ſtage to the grave's tyring-room:

" *Voluminouſly ignorant!* be vext
" To read this tragedy, and thy owne be next."
STEEVENS.

[1] See Wood's Athenæ Oxon. edit. 1721, Vol. I. p. 583.
STEEVENS.

[2] See Wood's Athenæ Oxonienſes, Vol. I. p. 599, and 600, edit. 1721. His tranſlation of Claudian's *Rape of Proſerpine* was entered on the Stationers' books, Oct. 4, 1617. STEEVENS.
It was printed in the ſame year. MALONE.

We thought thee dead; but this thy printed worth
Tells thy ſpectators, that thou went'ſt but forth
To enter with applauſe: an actor's art
Can die, and live to act a ſecond part;
That's but an exit of mortality,
This a re-entrance to a plaudite. J. M.[3]

Upon the Effigies of my worthy Friend, the Authour, Maſter WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, and his Works.

Spectator, this life's ſhadow is;—to ſee
The truer image, and a livelier he,
Turn reader: but obſerve his comick vein,
Laugh; and proceed next to a tragick ſtrain,
Then weep: ſo,—when thou find'ſt two contraries,
Two different paſſions from thy rapt ſoul riſe,—
Say, (who alone effect ſuch wonders could)
Rare Shakſpeare to the life thou doſt behold.[4]

On worthy Maſter SHAKSPEARE, and his Poems.

A mind reflecting ages paſt, whoſe clear
And equal ſurface can make things appear,
Diſtant a thouſand years, and repreſent
Them in their lively colours, juſt extent:
To outrun haſty time, retrieve the fates,
Roll back the heavens, blow ope the iron gates
Of death and Lethe, where confuſed lie
Great heaps of ruinous mortality:
In that deep duſky dungeon, to diſcern
A royal ghoſt from churls; by art to learn
The phyſiognomy of ſhades, and give
Them ſudden birth, wond'ring how oft they live;

[3] Perhaps John Marſton. STEEVENS.

[4] Theſe verſes firſt appeared in the folio, 1632. There is no name ſubſcribed to them. MALONE.

What

What ſtory coldly tells, what poets feign
At ſecond hand, and picture without brain,
Senſeleſs and ſoul-leſs ſhews: To give a ſtage,—
Ample, and true with life,—voice, action, age,
As Plato's year, and new ſcene of the world,
Them unto us, or us to them had hurl'd:
To raiſe our ancient ſovereigns from their herſe,
Make kings his ſubjects; by exchanging verſe
Enlive their pale trunks, that the preſent age
Joys in their joy, and trembles at their rage:
Yet ſo to temper paſſion, that our ears
Take pleaſure in their pain, and eyes in tears
Both weep and ſmile; fearful at plots ſo ſad,
Then laughing at our fear; abus'd, and glad
To be abus'd; affected with that truth
Which we perceive is falſe, pleas'd in that ruth
At which we ſtart, and, by elaborate play,
Tortur'd and tickl'd; by a crab-like way
Time paſt made paſtime, and in ugly ſort
Diſgorging up his ravin for our ſport:—
—While the plebeian imp, from lofty throne,
Creates and rules a world, and works upon
Mankind by ſecret engines; now to move
A chilling pity, then a rigorous love;
To ſtrike up and ſtroak down, both joy and ire;
To ſteer the affections; and by heavenly fire
Mold us anew, ſtoln from ourſelves:—
This,—and much more, which cannot be expreſs'd
But by himſelf, his tongue, and his own breaſt,—
Was Shakſpeare's freehold; which his cunning brain
Improv'd by favour of the nine-fold train;—
The buſkin'd muſe, the comick queen, the grand
And louder tone of Clio, nimble hand
And nimbler foot of the melodious pair,
The ſilver-voiced lady, the moſt fair
Calliope, whoſe ſpeaking ſilence daunts,
And ſhe whoſe praiſe the heavenly body chants,
Theſe jointly woo'd him, envying one another;—
Obey'd by all as ſpouſe, but lov'd as brother;—

And

And wrought a curious robe, of ſable grave,
Freſh green, and pleaſant yellow, red moſt brave,
And conſtant blue, rich purple, guiltleſs white,
The lowly ruſſet, and the ſcarlet bright:
Branch'd and embroider'd like the painted ſpring;
Each leaf match'd with a flower, and each ſtring
Of golden wire, each line of ſilk: there run
Italian works, whoſe thread the ſiſters ſpun;
And there did ſing, or ſeem to ſing, the choice
Birds of a foreign note and various voice:
Here hangs a moſſy rock; there plays a fair
But chiding fountain, purled: not the air,
Nor clouds, nor thunder, but were living drawn;
Not out of common tiffany or lawn,
But fine materials, which the muſes know,
And only know the countries where they grow.
Now, when they could no longer him enjoy,
In mortal garments pent,—death may deſtroy,
They ſay, his body; but his verſe ſhall live,
And more than nature takes our hands ſhall give:
In a leſs volume, but more ſtrongly bound,
Shakſpeare ſhall breathe and ſpeak; with laurel crown'd,
Which never fades; fed with ambroſian meat,
In a well-lined veſture, rich, and neat:
So with this robe they cloath him, bid him wear it;
For time ſhall never ſtain, nor envy tear it.

The friendly Admirer of his Endowments,
J. M. S.

A Remembrance of ſome Engliſh poets. By Richard Barnefield, 1598.

And Shakſpeare thou, whoſe honey-flowing vein
(Pleaſing the world,) thy praiſes doth contain,
Whoſe *Venus*, and whoſe *Lucrece*, ſweet and chaſte,
Thy name in fame's immortal book hath plac'd,
Live ever you, at leaſt in fame live ever!
Well may the body die, but fame die never.

England's Mourning Garment, &c. 1603.

Nor doth the ſilver-tongued Melicert
Drop from his honied muſe one ſable tear,
To mourn her death that graced his deſert,
And to his laies open'd her royal ear.
Shepherd, remember our Elizabeth,
And ſing her *Rape*, done by that *Tarquin*, death.

To Maſter W. SHAKSPEARE.

Shakſpeare, that nimble Mercury thy braine
Lulls many-hundred Argus' eyes aſleepe,
So fit for all thou faſhioneſt thy vaine,
At the horſe-foot fountaine thou haſt drunk full deepe.
Vertue's or vice's theme to thee all one is;
Who loves chaſte life, there's *Lucrece* for a teacher:
Who liſt read luſt, there's *Venus* and *Adonis*,
True modell of a moſt laſcivious leacher.
Beſides, in plaies thy wit winds like Meander,
When needy new compoſers borrow more
Than Terence doth from Plautus or Menander:
But to praiſe thee aright, I want thy ſtore.
Then let thine owne works thine owne worth upraiſe,
And help to adorne thee with deſerved baies.

Epigram 92, in an ancient collection, entitled *Run and a great Caſt*, 4to. by Tho. Freeman, 1614.

Extract from Michael Drayton's "Elegy to Henry Reynolds, Eſq. of Poets and Poeſy."

Shakſpeare, thou hadſt as ſmooth a comick vein,
Fitting the ſock, and in thy natural brain
As ſtrong conception, and as clear a rage,
As any one that traffick'd with the ſtage.

An.

An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatick Poet, W. SHAKSPEARE.

What needs my Shakſpeare for his honour'd bones,
The labour of an age in piled ſtones;
Or that his hallow'd reliques ſhould be hid
Under a ſtar-ypointing pyramid?
Dear ſon of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'ſt thou ſuch weak witneſs of thy name?
Thou, in our wonder and aſtoniſhment,
Haſt built thyſelf a live-long monument:
For whilſt, to the ſhame of ſlow-endeavouring art,
Thy eaſy numbers flow; and that each heart
Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Thoſe Delphick lines with deep impreſſion took;
Then thou, our fancy of itſelf bereaving *,
Doſt make us marble with too much conceiving;
And, ſo ſepulcher'd, in ſuch pomp doſt lie,
That kings, for ſuch a tomb, would wiſh to die.

JOHN MILTON [4]

Upon Maſter WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, the deceaſed authour.

Poets are born, not made. When I would prove
This truth, the glad remembrance I muſt love
Of never-dying Shakſpeare, who alone
Is argument enough to make that one.
Firſt, that he was a poet, none would doubt
That heard the applauſe of what he ſees ſet out

* —*of* itſelf *bereaving*,] So the copy in Milton's Poems, printed by Moſely in 1645. That in the ſecond folio, 1632, has—of *berſelf* bereaving. MALONE.

4 Theſe verſes were written by Milton in the year 1630. Notwithſtanding this juſt elogium, and though the writer of it appears to have been a very diligent reader of the works of our poet, from whoſe rich garden he has plucked many a flower, in the true ſpirit of ſour puritanical ſanctity he cenſured King Charles I. *for* having made this "great heir of fame" the *cloſet companion of his ſolitudes*. See his Εικων-κλαστης. MALONE.

Imprinted; where thou haſt (I will not ſay,
Reader, his *works*, for, to contrive a play,
To him 'twas none) the pattern of all wit,
Art without art, unparallel'd as yet.
Next Nature only help'd him, for look thorough
This whole book[5], thou ſhall find he doth not borrow
One phraſe from Greeks, nor Latins imitate,
Nor once from vulgar languages tranſlate;
Nor plagiary-like from others gleane,
Nor begs he from each witty friend a ſcene,
To piece his acts with: all that he doth write
Is pure his own; plot, language, exquiſite.
But O what praiſe more powerful can we give
The dead, than that, by him, the *king's-men* live,
His players; which ſhould they but have ſhar'd his fate,
(All elſe expir'd within the ſhort term's date)
How could *The Globe* have proſper'd, ſince through want
Of change, the plays and poems had grown ſcant.
But, happy verſe, thou ſhalt be ſung and hear'd,
When hungry quills ſhall be ſuch honour barr'd.
Then vaniſh, upſtart writers to each ſtage,
You needy poetaſters of this age!
Where Shakſpeare liv'd or ſpake, Vermin, forbeare!
Leſt with your froth ye ſpot them, come not near!
But if you needs muſt write, if poverty
So pinch, that otherwiſe you ſtarve and die;
On God's name may the *Bull* or *Cockpit* have
Your lame blank verſe, to keep you from the grave:
Or let new *Fortune's*[6] younger brethren ſee,
What they can pick from your lean induſtry.
I do not wonder when you offer at
Black-friars, that you ſuffer: 'tis the fate

[5] From this and the following lines it is probable that theſe verſes were intended to be prefixed to the folio edition of our authour's plays. MALONE.

[6] This, I believe, alludes to ſome of the company of *The Fortune* playhouſe, who removed to the *Red Bull*. See a Prologue on the removing of the late *Fortune* players to *The Bull*. Tatham's *Fancies Theatre*, 1640. MALONE.

Of

Of richer veins; prime judgments, that have far'd
The worſe, with this deceaſed man compar'd.
So have I ſeen, when *Cæſar* would appear,
And on the ſtage at half-ſword parley were
Brutus and *Caſſius*, O how the audience
Were raviſh'd! with what wonder they went thence!
When, ſome new day, they would not brook a line
Of tedious, though well-labour'd, *Catiline*;
Sejanus too was irkſome; they priz'd more
"Honeſt" *Iago*, or the jealous *Moor*.
And though the *Fox* and ſubtil *Alchymiſt*,
Long intermitted, could not quite be miſt,
Though theſe have ſham'd all th' ancients, and might raiſe
Their authour's merit with a crown of bays,
Yet theſe ſometimes, even at a friend's deſire
Acted, have ſcarce defray'd the ſea-coal fire,
And door-keepers: when, let but *Falſtaff* come,
Hal, *Poins*, the reſt,—you ſcarce ſhall have a room,
All is ſo peſter'd: Let but *Beatrice*
And *Benedick* be ſeen, lo! in a trice
The cock-pit, galleries, boxes, all are full,
To hear *Malvolio*, that croſs-garter'd gull.
Brief, there is nothing in his wit-fraught book,
Whoſe ſound we would not hear, on whoſe worth look:
Like old-coin'd gold, whoſe lines, in every page,
Shall paſs true current to ſucceeding age.
But why do I dead *Shakſpeare's* praiſe recite?
Some ſecond *Shakſpeare* muſt of *Shakſpeare* write;
For me, 'tis needleſs; ſince an hoſt of men
Will pay, to clap his praiſe, to free my pen[7].

LEON. DIGGES.

An Elegy on the death of that famous writer and actor, Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

I dare not do thy memory that wrong,
Unto our larger griefs to give a tongue.

[7] Theſe verſes are prefixed to a ſpurious edition of Shakſpeare's poems, in ſmall octavo, printed in 1640. MALONE.

I'll only ſigh in earneſt, and let fall
My ſolemn tears at thy great funeral.
For every eye that rains a ſhow'r for thee,
Laments thy loſs in a ſad elegy.
Nor is it fit each humble muſe ſhould have
Thy worth his ſubject, now thou art laid in grave.
No, it's a flight beyond the pitch of thoſe,
Whoſe worth-leſs pamphlets are not ſenſe in proſe.
Let learned *Jonſon* ſing a dirge for thee,
And fill our orb with mournful harmony:
But we need no remembrancer; thy fame
Shall ſtill accompany thy honour'd name
To all poſterity; and make us be
Senſible of what we loſt, in loſing thee:
Being the age's wonder; whoſe ſmooth rhimes
Did more reform than laſh the looſer times.
Nature herſelf did her own ſelf admire,
As oft as thou wert pleaſed to attire
Her in her native luſtre; and confeſs,
Thy dreſſing was her chiefeſt comlineſs.
How can we then forget thee, when the age
Her chiefeſt tutor, and the widow'd ſtage
Her only favorite, in thee, hath loſt,
And Nature's ſelf, what ſhe did brag of moſt?
Sleep then, rich ſoul of numbers! whilſt poor we
Enjoy the profits of thy legacy;
And think it happineſs enough, we have
So much of thee redeemed from the grave,
As may ſuffice to enlighten future times
With the bright luſtre of thy matchleſs rhimes[8].

In Memory of our famous SHAKSPEARE.

Sacred Spirit, whiles thy lyre
Echoed o'er the Arcadian plains,
Even Apollo did admire,
Orpheus wonder'd at thy ſtrains:

[8] Theſe anonymous verſes are likewiſe prefixed to Shakſpeare's Poems, 1640. MALONE.

Plautus

Plautus ſigh'd, Sophocles wept
  Tears of anger, for to hear,
After they ſo long had ſlept,
  So bright a genius ſhould appear;

Who wrote his lines with a ſun-beam,
  More durable than time or fate:—
Others boldly do blaſpheme,
  Like thoſe that ſeem to preach, but prate.

Thou wert truly prieſt elect,
  Choſen darling to the Nine,
Such a trophy to erect
  By thy wit and ſkill divine,

That were all their other glories
  (Thine excepted) torn away,
By thy admirable ſtories
  Their garments ever ſhall be gay.

Where thy honour'd bones do lie,
  (As Statius once to Maro's urn,)
Thither every year will I
  Slowly tread, and ſadly mourn.

S. SHEPPARD[9].

In remembrance of Maſter WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Ode.

I.

Beware, delighted poets, when you ſing,
To welcome nature in the early ſpring,
  Your num'rous feet not tread
The banks of Avon; for each flow'r,
As it ne'er knew a ſun or ſhow'r,
  Hangs there the penſive head.

9 This authour publiſhed a ſmall volume of *Epigrams* in 1651, among which this poem in memory of Shakſpeare is found. MALONE.

II.

Each tree, whoſe thick and ſpreading growth hath made
Rather a night beneath the boughs than ſhade,
Unwilling now to grow,
Looks like the plume a captain wears,
Whoſe rifled *falls* are ſteep'd i'tne tears
Which from his laſt rage flow.

III.

The piteous river wept itſelf away
Long ſince alas! to ſuch a ſwift decay,
That reach the map, and look
If you a river there can ſpy,
And, for a river, your mock'd eye
Will find a ſhallow brook.

WILLIAM D'AVENANT.

Part of Shirley's Prologue to The Siſters.

And if you leave us too, we cannot thrive,
I'll promiſe neither play nor poet live
Till ye come back: think what you do; 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 ſay
They could endure the bleeding a whole day.

See, my lov'd Britons, ſee your Shakſpeare riſe,
An awful ghoſt, confeſs'd to human eyes!
Unnam'd, methinks, diſtinguiſh'd I had been
From other ſhades, by this eternal green,
About whoſe wreaths the vulgar poets ſtrive,
And with a touch their wither'd bays revive.
Untaught, unpractis'd, in a barbarous age,
I found not, but created firſt the ſtage.
And if I drain'd no Greek or Latin ſtore,
'Twas, that my own abundance gave me more:

On

On foreign trade I needed not rely
Like fruitful Britain rich without ſupply.
Dryden's Prologue to his alteration of Troilus and Creſſida.

Shakſpeare, who (taught by none) did firſt impart
To Fletcher wit, to labouring Jonſon art:
He, monarch-like, gave thoſe his ſubjects law,
And is that nature which they paint and draw.
Fletcher reach'd that which on his heights did grow,
Whilſt Jonſon crept and gather'd all below.
This did his love, and this his mirth digeſt:
One imitates him moſt, the other beſt.
If they have ſince out-writ all other men,
'Tis with the drops which fell from Shakſpeare's pen.
Dryden's Prologue to his Alteration of the Tempeſt.

Our Shakſpeare wrote too in an age as bleſt,
The happieſt poet of his time, and beſt;
A gracious prince's favour cheer'd his muſe,
A conſtant favour he ne'er fear'd to loſe:
Therefore he wrote with fancy unconfin'd,
And thoughts that were immortal as his mind.
Otway's Prologue to Caius Marius.

Shakſpeare, whoſe genius to itſelf a law,
Could men in every height of nature draw.
Rowe's Prologue to the Ambitious Stepmother.

In ſuch an age immortal Shakſpeare wrote,
By no quaint rules nor hamp'ring criticks taught;
With rough majeſtick force he mov'd the heart,
And ſtrength and nature made amends for art.
Rowe's Prologue to Jane Shore.

Shakſpeare, the genius of our iſle, whoſe mind
(The univerſal mirror of mankind)
Expreſs'd

Expreſs'd all images, enrich'd the ſtage,
But ſometimes ſtoop'd to pleaſe a barb'rous age.
When his immortal bays began to grow,
Rude was the language, and the humour low.
He, like the god of day, was always bright;
But rolling in its courſe, his orb of light
Was ſully'd and obſcur'd, though ſoaring high,
With ſpots contracted from the nether ſky.
But whither is the advent'rous muſe betray'd?
Forgive her raſhneſs, venerable ſhade!
May ſpring with purple flowers perfume thy urn,
And Avon with his greens thy grave adorn!
Be all thy faults, whatever faults there be,
Imputed to the times, and not to thee!
Some ſcions ſhot from this immortal root,
Their tops much lower, and leſs fair the fruit.
Jonſon the tribute of my verſe might claim,
Had he not ſtrove to blemiſh Shakſpeare's name.
But like the radiant twins that gild the ſphere,
Fletcher and Beaumont next in pomp appear.

Fenton's Epiſtle to Southerne, 1711.

———— For lofty ſenſe,
Creative fancy, and inſpection keen
Through the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakſpeare thine and nature's boaſt?

Thomſon's Summer.

Shakſpeare (whom you and every play-houſe bill
Style the divine, the matchleſs, what you will,)
For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,
And grew immortal in his own deſpight.

Pope's Imitation of Horace's Epiſtle to Auguſtus.

An Inſcription for a Monument of SHAKSPEARE.

O youths and virgins: O declining eld:
O pale misfortune's ſlaves: O ye who dwell
Unknown with humble quiet; ye who wait
In courts, or fill the golden ſeat of kings:

O ſons

O ſons of ſport and pleaſure; O thou wretch
That weep'ſt for jealous love, or the ſore wounds
Of conſcious guilt, or death's rapacious hand,
Which left thee void of hope: O ye who roam
In exile; ye who through the embattled field
Seek bright renown; or who for nobler palms
Contend, the leaders of a publick cauſe;
Approach: behold this marble. Know ye not
The features? Hath not oft his faithful tongue
Told you the faſhion of your own eſtate,
The ſecrets of your boſom? Here then, round
His monument with reverence while ye ſtand,
Say to each other: "This was Shakſpeare's form;
"Who walk'd in every path of human life,
"Felt every paſſion; and to all mankind
"Doth now, will ever, that experience yield
"Which his own genius only could acquire."

AKENSIDE.

From the ſame Author's Pleaſures of Imagination, B. III.

——when lightning fires
The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
And ocean, groaning from his loweſt bed,
Heaves his tempeſtuous billows to the ſky;
Amid the mighty uproar, while below
The nations tremble, Shakſpeare looks abroad
From ſome high cliff, ſuperior, and enjoys
The elemental war.

From the Remonſtrance of SHAKSPEARE,
Suppoſed to have been ſpoken at the Theatre-Royal,
when the French Comedians were acting by ſubſcription.
By the ſame author.

What though the footſteps of my devious muſe
The meaſur'd walks of Grecian art refuſe?
Or though the frankneſs of my hardy ſtyle
Mock the nice touches of the critick's file?

Yet

Yet what my age and climate held to view
Impartial I ſurvey'd, and fearleſs drew.
And ſay, ye ſkilfull in the human heart,
Who know to prize a poet's nobleſt part,
What age, what clime, could e'er an ampler field
For lofty thought, for daring fancy yield?
I ſaw this England break the ſhamefull bands
Forg'd for the ſouls of men by ſacred hands;
I ſaw each groaning realm her aid implore;
Her ſons the heroes of each warlike ſhore;
Her naval ſtandard, (the dire Spaniard's bane,)
Obey'd through all the circuit of the main.
Then too great commerce, for a late found world,
Around your coaſt her eager ſails unfurl'd:
New hopes, new paſſions, thence the boſom fir'd;
New plans, new arts, the genius thence inſpir'd;
Thence every ſcene which private fortune knows,
In ſtronger life, with bolder ſpirit, roſe.

Diſgrac'd I this full proſpect which I drew?
My colours languid, or my ſtrokes untrue?
Have not your ſages, warriors, ſwains, and kings,
Confeſs'd the living draught of men and things?
What other bard in any clime appears,
Alike the maſter of your ſmiles and tears?
Yet have I deign'd your audience to entice
With wretched bribes to luxury and vice?
Or have my various ſcenes a purpoſe known,
Which freedom, virtue, glory, might not own?

When learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
Firſt rear'd the ſtage, immortal Shakſpeare roſe;
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhauſted worlds, and then imagin'd new:
Exiſtence ſaw him ſpurn her bounded reign,
And panting time toil'd after him in vain:
His pow'rful ſtrokes preſiding truth impreſs'd,
And unreſiſted paſſion ſtorm'd the breaſt.

Prologue at the opening of Drury-Lane Theatre in 1747.
By Dr. Samuel Johnſon.

Upon

Upon Shakſpeare's Monument at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Great Homer's birth ſeven rival cities claim;
Too mighty ſuch monopoly of fame.
Yet not to birth alone did Homer owe
His wond'rous worth; what Egypt could beſtow,
With all the ſchools of Greece and Aſia join'd,
Enlarg'd the immenſe expanſion of his mind:
Nor yet unrival'd the Mæonian ſtrain;
The Britiſh Eagle[1] and the Mantuan Swan
Tow'r equal heights. But, happier Stratford, thou
With incontеſted laurels deck thy brow;
Thy bard was thine *unſchool'd*, and from thee brought
More than all Egypt, Greece, or Aſia taught;
Not Homer's ſelf ſuch matchleſs laurels won;
The Greek has rivals, but thy Shakſpeare none.

T. SEWARD.

From Mr. Collins's Epiſtle to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his edition of Shakſpeare's works.

Hard was the lot thoſe injur'd ſtrains endur'd,
Unown'd by ſcience, and by years obſcur'd:
Fair Fancy wept; and echoing ſighs confeſs'd
A fixt deſpair in every tuneful breaſt.
Not with more grief the afflicted ſwains appear,
When wintry winds deform the plenteous year;
When lingering froſts the ruin'd ſeats invade
Where Peace reſorted, and the Graces play'd.
Each riſing art by juſt gradation moves,
Toil builds on toil, and age on age improves:
The muſe alone unequal dealt her rage,
And grac'd with nobleſt pomp her earlieſt ſtage.
Preſerv'd through time, the ſpeaking ſcenes impart
Each changeful wiſh of Phædra's tortur'd heart;
Or paint the curſe, that mark'd the Theban's[2] reign,
A bed inceſtuous, and a father ſlain.
With kind concern our pitying eyes o'erflow,
Trace the ſad tale, and own another's woe.

[1] Milton.
[2] The Oedipus of Sophocles.

To

To Rome remov'd, with wit ſecure to pleaſe,
The comick ſiſters kept their native eaſe.
With jealous fear declining Greece beheld
Her own Menander's art almoſt excell'd:
But every Muſe eſſay'd to raiſe in vain
Some labour'd rival of her tragick ſtrain;
Illyſſus' laurels, though transferr'd with toil,
Droop'd their fair leaves, nor knew th' unfriendly ſoil.

As arts expir'd, reſiſtleſs Dulneſs roſe;
Goths, prieſts, or Vandals,—all were learning's foes.
Till Julius[3] firſt recall'd each exil'd maid,
And Coſmo own'd them in the Etrurian ſhade:
Then deeply ſkill'd in love's engaging theme,
The ſoft Provencial paſs'd to Arno's ſtream:
With graceful eaſe the wanton lyre he ſtrung;
Sweet flow'd the lays,—but love was all he ſung.
The gay deſcription could not fail to move;
For, led by nature, all are friends to love.

But heaven, ſtill various in its works, decreed
The perfect boaſt of time ſhould laſt ſucceed.
The beauteous union muſt appear at length,
Of Tuſcan fancy, and Athenian ſtrength:
One greater Muſe Eliza's reign adorn,
And even a Shakſpeare to her fame be born.

Yet ah! ſo bright her morning's opening ray,
In vain our Britain hop'd an equal day.
No ſecond growth the weſtern iſle could bear,
At once exhauſted with too rich a year.
Too nicely Jonſon knew the critick's part;
Nature in him was almoſt loſt in art.
Of ſofter mold the gentle Fletcher came,
The next in order, as the next in name.
With pleas'd attention 'midſt his ſcenes we find
Each glowing thought, that warms the female mind;
Each melting ſigh, and every tender tear,
The lover's wiſhes, and the virgin's fear.

[3] Julius II. the immediate predeceſſor of Leo X.

His

His every ſtrain the Smiles and Graces own[4];
But ſtronger Shakſpeare felt for man alone:
Drawn by his pen, our ruder paſſions ſtand
Th' unrivall'd picture of his early hand.

With gradual ſteps[5], and ſlow, exacter France
Saw Art's fair empire o'er her ſhores advance:
By length of toil a bright perfection knew,
Correctly bold, and juſt in all ſhe drew:
Till late Corneille, with Lucan's[6] ſpirit fir'd,
Breath'd the free ſtrain, as Rome and He inſpir'd;
And claſſick judgment gain'd to ſweet Racine
The temperate ſtrength of Maro's chaſter line.

But wilder far the Britiſh laurel ſpread,
And wreaths leſs artful crown our poet's head.
Yet He alone to every ſcene could give
The hiſtorian's truth, and bid the manners live.
Wak'd at his call I view, with glad ſurprize,
Majeſtick forms of mighty monarchs riſe.
There Henry's trumpets ſpread their loud alarms,
And laurel'd Conqueſt waits her hero's arms.
Here gentler Edward claims a pitying ſigh,
Scarce born to honours, and ſo ſoon to die!
Yet ſhall thy throne, unhappy infant, bring
No beam of comfort to the guilty king:
The time ſhall come[7], when Glo'ſter's heart ſhall bleed
In life's laſt hours, with horror of the deed:
When dreary viſions ſhall at laſt preſent
Thy vengeful image in the midnight tent:
Thy hand unſeen the ſecret death ſhall bear,
Blunt the weak ſword, and break the oppreſſive ſpear.

4 Their characters are thus diſtinguiſhed by Mr. Dryden.

5 About the time of Shakſpeare, the poet Hardy was in great repute in France. He wrote, according to Fontenelle, ſix hundred plays. The French poets after him applied themſelves in general to the correct improvement of the ſtage, which was almoſt totally diſregarded by thoſe of our own country, Johnſon excepted.

6 The favourite author of the elder Corneille.

7 Turno tempus erit, magno cùm optaverit emptum
Intactum pallanta, &c.

Where'er we turn, by fancy charm'd, we find
Some ſweet illuſion of the cheated mind.
Oft, wild of wing, ſhe calls the ſoul to rove
With humbler nature, in the rural grove,
Where ſwains contented own the quiet ſcene,
And twilight fairies tread the circled green:
Dreſs'd by her hand, the woods and vallies ſmile,
And Spring diffuſive decks the inchanted iſle.

O more than all in powerful genius bleſt,
Come, take thine empire o'er the willing breaſt!
Whate'er the wounds this youthful heart ſhall feel,
Thy ſongs ſupport me, and thy morals heal.
There every thought the poet's warmth may raiſe,
There native muſick dwells in all the lays.
O might ſome verſe with happieſt ſkill perſuade
Expreſſive Picture to adopt thine aid!
What wondrous draughts might riſe from every page!
What other Raphaels charm a diſtant age!

Methinks even now I view ſome free deſign,
Where breathing Nature lives in every line:
Chaſte and ſubdued the modeſt lights decay,
Steal into ſhades, and mildly melt away.
—And ſee, where Anthony[8], in tears approv'd,
Guards the pale relicks of the chief he lov'd:
O'er the cold corſe the warrior ſeems to bend,
Deep ſunk in grief, and mourns his murder'd friend!
Still as they preſs, he calls on all around,
Lifts the torn robe, and points the bleeding wound.

But who is he[9], whoſe brows exalted bear
A wrath impatient, and a fiercer air?
Awake to all that injur'd worth can feel,
On his own Rome he turn the avenging ſteel.
Yet ſhall not war's inſatiate fury fall
(So heaven ordains it) on the deſtin'd wall.
See the fond mother, 'midſt the plaintive train,
Hung on his knees, and proſtate on the plain!

[8] See the tragedy of Julius Cæſar.
[9] Coriolanus. See Mr. Spence's dialogue on the Odyſſey.

Touch'd

Touch'd to the ſoul, in vain he ſtrives to hide
The ſon's affection, in the Roman's pride:
O'er all the man conflicting paſſions riſe,
Rage graſps the ſword, while Pity melts the eyes.

What are the lays of artful Addiſon,
Coldly correct, to Shakſpeare's warblings wild?
Whom on the winding Avon's willow'd banks
Fair Fancy found, and bore the ſmiling babe
To a cloſe cavern: (ſtill the ſhepherds ſhew
The ſacred place, whence with religious awe
They hear, returning from the field at eve,
Strange whiſp'ring of ſweet muſick through the air:)
Here, as with honey gathered from the rock,
She fed the little prattler, and with ſongs
Oft ſooth'd his wond'ring ears; with deep delight
On her ſoft lap he ſat, and caught the ſounds.

The Enthuſiaſt, or the Lover of Nature, a Poem, by the Rev. Joſeph Warton.

From the Rev. Thomas Warton's Addreſs to the Queen on her Marriage.

Here, boldly mark'd with every living hue,
Nature's unbounded portrait Shakſpeare drew:
But chief, the dreadful groupe of human woes
The daring artiſt's tragick pencil choſe;
Explor'd the pangs that rend the royal breaſt,
Thoſe wounds that lurk beneath the tiſſued veſt.

Monody, written near Stratford-upon-Avon.

Avon, thy rural views, thy paſtures wild,
The willows that o'erhang thy twilight edge,
Their boughs entangling with the embattled ſedge;
Thy brink with watery foliage quaintly fring'd,
Thy ſurface with reflected verdure ting'd;
Sooth me with many a penſive pleaſure mild.

But while I muſe, that here the Bard Divine
Whoſe ſacred duſt yon high-arch'd iſles incloſe,
Where the tall windows riſe in ſtately rows,
Above th' embowering ſhade,
Here firſt, at Fancy's fairy-circled ſhrine,
Of daiſies pied his infant offering made;
Here playful yet, in ſtripling years unripe,
Fram'd of thy reeds a ſhrill and artleſs pipe:
Sudden thy beauties, Avon, all are fled,
As at the waving of ſome magick wand;
An holy trance my charmed ſpirit wings,
And aweful ſhapes of leaders and of kings,
People the buſy mead,
Like ſpectres ſwarming to the wizard's hall;
And ſlowly pace, and point with trembling hand
The wounds ill-cover'd by the purple pall.
Before me Pity ſeems to ſtand,
A weeping mourner, ſmote with anguiſh ſore,
To ſee Misfortune rend in frantick mood
His robe, with regal woes embroider'd o'er.
Pale Terror leads the viſionary band,
And ſternly ſhakes his ſceptre, dropping blood.

By the ſame.

Far from the ſun and ſummer gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon ſtray'd,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: The dauntleſs child
Stretch'd forth his little arms, and ſmil'd.
This pencil take (ſhe ſaid) whoſe colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too theſe golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the ſacred ſource of ſympathetick tears.

Gray's Ode on the Progreſs of Poeſy.

Next Shakſpeare ſat, irregularly great,
And in his hand a magick rod did hold,
Which viſionary beings did create,
And turn the fouleſt droſs to pureſt gold:
Whatever ſpirits rove in earth or air,
Or bad, or good, obey his dread command;
To his beheſts theſe willingly repair,
Thoſe aw'd by terrors of his magick wand,
The which not all their powers united might withſtand.

Lloyd's Progreſs of Envy, 1751.

Oh, where's the bard, who at one view
Could look the whole creation through,
Who travers'd all the human heart,
Without recourſe to Grecian art?
He ſcorn'd the rules of imitation,
Of altering, pilfering, and tranſlation,
Nor painted horror, grief, or rage,
From models of a former age;
The bright original he took,
And tore the leaf from nature's book.
'Tis Shakſpeare.—

Lloyd's Shakeſpeare, a Poem.

In the firſt ſeat, in robe of various dyes,
A noble wildneſs flaſhing from his eyes,
Sat Shakſpeare.—In one hand a wand he bore,
For mighty wonders fam'd in days of yore;
The other held a globe, which to his will
Obedient turn'd, and own'd a maſter's ſkill:
Things of the nobleſt kind his genius drew,
And look'd through nature at a ſingle view:
A looſe he gave to his unbounded ſoul,
And taught new lands to riſe, new ſeas to roll;
Call'd into being ſcenes unknown before,
And, paſſing nature's bounds, was ſomething more.

Churchill's Roſciad.

A LIST OF THE MOST

AUTHENTICK ANCIENT EDITIONS

OF

SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.

QUARTO EDITIONS.

I. 1. Romeo and Juliet, 1597, John Danter.
2. D°. 1599, Thomas Creede, for Cuthbert Burby.
3. D°. no date, John Smethwicke.
This play was reprinted in 1609 and 1637.

II. King Richard II. 1597, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wiſe.
Reprinted in 1598, 1608, (with an additional ſcene) 1615, and 1634.

III. King Richard III. 1597, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wiſe.
Reprinted in 1598, 1602, 1612, 1622, &c.

IV. Love's Labour's Loſt, 1598, W. W. for Cuthbert Burby.

V. King Henry IV. Firſt Part. 1598, P. S. for Andrew Wiſe.
Reprinted in 1599, 1604, 1608, 1613, &c.

VI. 1. King Henry IV. Second Part. 1600, V. S. for Andrew Wiſe and William Aſpley.
2. D°. 1600, D°.
In one of theſe editions Sign. E contains ſix leaves; in the other the uſual number.

VII. King Henry V. 1600, Thomas Creede, for Thomas Millington, and John Buſby.
Reprinted in 1602, and 1608.

VIII.

VIII. 1. Midſummer-Night's Dream, 1600, Thomas Fiſher.
2. D°. 1600, James Roberts.

IX. 1. Merchant of Venice, 1600, I. R. for Thomas Heyes.
2. D°. 1600, James Roberts.
Reprinted in 1637, &c.

X. Much Ado about Nothing, 1600, V. S. for Andrew Wiſe and William Aſpley.

XI. Merry Wives of Windſor, 1602, T. C. for Arthur Johnſon.
Reprinted in 1619.

XII. 1. Hamlet, 1604, I. R. for N. L.
2. D°. no date, W. S. for John Smethwicke.
This play was reprinted in 1605, 1611, &c.

XIII. 1. King Lear, 1608, for Nathaniel Butter.
2. D°. 1608, for D°.
In one of theſe editions the firſt Signature is A; in the other B.

XIV. 1. Troilus and Creſſida, 1609, G. Eld, for R. Bonian and H. Whalley, with a Preface.
2. D°. for D°. by the King's Majeſties Servants at the Globe, no date.

XV. Titus Andronicus, 1611, Edward White.

XVI. 1. Othello, 1622, N. O. for Thomas Walkely
2. D°. no date, Thomas Walkely[1].

☞ Of all the remaining plays the only authentick copy is the firſt complete collection of our authour's dramas printed in folio in 1623.

FOLIO EDITION.

Mr. William Shakſpeare's Comedies, Hiſtories, and Tragedies. Publiſhed according to the true original Copies. 1623. Iſaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount.
Reprinted in 1632, 1664, and 1685. MALONE.

[1] This copy is in Mr. Pope's Liſt, but I have never ſeen it. MALONE.

MODERN EDITIONS.

Octavo, Rowe's, London, 1709. 7 Vols.
Duodecimo, Rowe's, Ditto, 1714. 9 D°.
Quarto, Pope's, Ditto, 1725. 6 D°.
Duodecimo, Pope's, Ditto, 1728. 10 D°.
Octavo, Theobald's, Ditto, 1733. 7 D°.
Duodecimo, Theobald's, Ditto, 1740. 8 D°.
Quarto, Hanmer's, Oxford, 1744. 6 D°.
Octavo, Warburton's, London, 1747. 8 D°.
Ditto, Johnson's, ditto, 1765. 8 D°.
Ditto, Steevens's, ditto, 1766. 4 D°.
Crown 8vo. Capell's, ditto, 1768. 10 D°.
Quarto, Hanmer's, Oxford, 1771, 6 D°.
Octavo, Johnson's and Steevens's, London, 1773. 10 D°.
D°. second edition, ditto, 1778. 10 D°.
D°. third edition, ditto, 1785. 10 D°.
Crown octavo, Malone's, ditto, 1789. 10 D°.

MALONE.

The reader may not be displeased to know the exact sums paid to the different Editors of Shakspeare. The following account is taken from the books of the late Mr. Tonson.

		£.		
To Mr. Rowe	—	36	10	0
Mr. Hughes[2]	—	28	7	0
Mr. Pope	—	217	12	0
Mr. Fenton[3]	—	30	12	0
Mr. Gay[4]	—	35	19	6
Mr. Whatley[5]	—	12	0	0
Mr. Theobald[6]	—	652	10	0
Mr. Warburton	—	560	0	0
Dr. Johnson[7]				
Mr. Capell	—	300	0	0

Of

[2] For correcting the press and making an index to Mr. Rowe's 12mo edition. STEEVENS.

[3] For assistance to Mr. Pope in correcting the press. STEEVENS.

[4] For the same services. STEEVENS.

[5] For correcting the sheets of Pope's 12mo. STEEVENS.

[6] Of Mr. Theobald's edition no less than 11560 have been printed. STEEVENS.

[7] From

Of theſe editions ſome have paſſed ſeveral times through the preſs; but only ſuch as vary from each other are here enumerated.

To this liſt might be added ſeveral ſpurious and mutilated impreſſions; but as they appear to have been executed without the ſmalleſt degree of ſkill either in the manners or language of the time of Shakſpeare; and as the names of their reſpective editors are prudently concealed, it were uſeleſs to commemorate the number of their volumes, or the diſtinct date of each publication.

Some of our legitimate editions will afford a ſufficient ſpecimen of the fluctuation of price in books.—An ancient quarto was ſold for ſix-pence; and the folios 1623 1632, when firſt printed, could not have been rated higher than at ten ſhillings each.—Very lately, one, and two guineas, have been paid for a quarto; the firſt folio is uſually valued at ſeven or eight: but what price may be expected for it hereafter, is not very eaſy to be determined, the conſcience of Mr. Fox, bookſeller in Holborn, having lately permitted him to aſk no leſs than *two guineas* for *two leaves* out of a mutilated copy of that impreſſion, though he had ſeveral, almoſt equally defective, in his ſhop. The ſecond folio is commonly rated at two or three guineas [8].

At the late Mr. Jacob Tonſon's ſale, in the year 1767, one hundred and forty copies of Mr. Pope's edition of Shakſpeare, in ſix volumes quarto, (for which the ſubſcribers paid ſix guineas) were diſpoſed of among the booksellers at ſixteen ſhillings per ſet. Seven hundred and fifty of this edition were printed.

At the ſame ſale, the remainder of Dr. Warburton's edition, in eight volumes 8vo. printed in 1747, (of which the original price was two pounds eight ſhillings, and

7 From the late Mr. Tonſon's books it appears, that Dr. Johnſon received copies of his edition for his ſubſcribers, the firſt coſt of which was 375l and afterwards 105l. in money. Total, 480l. MALONE.

8 And is not worth three ſhillings. See an account of it, in the preface to the preſent edition. MALONE.

the number printed 1000) was ſold off: viz. 178 copies, at eighteen ſhillings each.

On the contrary, Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition, printed at Oxford in 1744, which was firſt ſold for three guineas, had ariſen to nine or ten, before it was reprinted.

It appears however from the foregoing catalogue (when all reiterations of legitimate editions are taken into the account, together with five ſpurious ones printed in Ireland, one in Scotland, one at Birmingham, and four in London, making in the whole thirty-five impreſſions) that not leſs than 35,000 copies of our authour's works have been diſperſed, excluſive of the quartos, ſingle plays, and ſuch as have been altered for the ſtage. Of the latter, as exact a liſt as I have been able to form, with the aſſiſtance of Mr. Reed of Staple Inn, (than whom no man is more converſant with Engliſh publications both ancient and modern, or more willing to aſſiſt the literary undertakings of others) will be found in the courſe of the following pages. STEEVENS.

THE

A LIST OF THE MOST AUTHENTICK ANCIENT EDITIONS OF SHAKSPEARE'S POEMS.

1. Venus and Adonis 1596, ſmall octavo, or rather decimo ſexto, R. F. for John Harriſon.

   This poem, I have no doubt, was printed in quarto in 1593 or 1594, though no copy of the edition is now known to be extant.

   Reprinted in 1600, 1602, 1617, 1620, 1630, &c.

2. Lucrece, quarto, 1594, Richard Field, for John Harriſon.

   Reprinted in ſmall octavo, in 1596, 1598, 1600, 1607, 1616, 1624, 1632, &c.

3. The Paſſionate Pilgrim, [being a collection of Poems by Shakſpeare,] ſmall octavo, 1599, for W. Jaggard; ſold by William Leake.

4. The Paſſionate Pilgrime, or certain amorous Sonnets between Venus and Adonis, &c. The third edition, ſmall octavo, 1612, W. Jaggard.

   I know not when the ſecond edition was printed.

5. Shakſpeare's Sonnets, never before imprinted, quarto, 1609, G. Eld, for T. T.

   An edition of Shakſpeare's Sonnets, differing in many particulars from the original, and intermixed with the poems contained in *The Paſſionate Pilgrim*, and with ſeveral poems written by Thomas Heywood, was printed in 1640, in ſmall octavo, by Thomas Cotes, ſold by John Benſon.

MODERN EDITIONS.

Shakſpeare's Poems, ſmall octavo, for Bernard Lintot, no date, but printed in 1710.

The Sonnets in this edition were printed from the quarto of 1609; *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece*, from very late editions, full of errors.

The

The Poems of William Shakſpeare, containing his Venus and Adonis, Rape of Lucrece, Sonnets, Paſſionate Pilgrim, and A Lover's Complaint, printed from the authentick copies, by Malone, in octavo, in 1780.

D°. Second Edition, with the authour's plays, crown octavo, 1789.

Spurious Editions of Shakſpeare's Poems have alſo been publiſhed by Gildon, Sewell, Evans, &c.

MALONE.

DRAMATICK PIECES

ON WHICH

PLAYS WERE FORMED BY SHAKSPEARE.

I. The right excellent and famous hiſtorye of Promos and Caſſandra, &c. by George Whetſtone, 1578. Printed for Richard Jhones.

II. The firſt and ſecond part of the troubleſome raigne of John King of England, &c. As they were ſundry times publickely acted by the Queenes Majeſties players in the honourable citie of London, 1591, for Sampſon Clarke.
Reprinted in 1611, and 1622.

III. Menæchmi, a pleaſant and fine conceited comedie, &c. by W. W. 1595, Thomas Creede, for William Barley.

IV. The famous Victories of Henry the Fifth: Containing the honourable battle of Agincourt. As it was plaide by the Queenes Mageſties players, 1598, Thomas Creede.
Reprinted in 1617.

V. 1. The firſt part of the contention betwixt the two famous houſes of Yorke and Lancaſter, with the death of the good duke Humphrey, &c. As it was ſundry times acted by the right honourable the Earle of Pembroke his Servants, 1600, W. W. for Thomas Millington.

2. D°. 1600, V. S. for Thomas Millington.

This was reprinted for T. P. without date, but in fact in 1619.

VI. 1. The true tragedie of Richarde duke of Yorke, and the death of good king Henrie the Sixt, &c. As it was ſundry times acted by the right honourable the Earl of Pembroke his Servants, 1600, W. W. for Thomas Millington.

2. D°. 1600, V. S. for Thomas Millington.

This was reprinted for T. P. without date, but in fact in 1619.

VII. The true chronicle hiſtory of King Leir and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordelia, 1605, Simon Stafford, for John Wright.

VIII. A pleaſaunt conceited Hiſtorie, called, The Taming of a Shrew. As it hath beene ſundry times acted by the right honourable the Earle of Pembrooke his Servants, 1607, V. S. for Nicholas Ling.

MALONE.

LIST

LIST OF PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPEARE.

INVENIES ETIAM DISJECTI MEMBRA POETAE.

Tempeſt.

The Tempeſt, or the Enchanted Iſland. A Comedy, acted in Dorſet Garden. By Sir W. D'Avenant and Dryden. 4to. 1669.

The Tempeſt, made into an opera by Shadwell in 1673. See Downes, p. 34.

The Tempeſt, an Opera taken from Shakſpeare. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1756.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona. A Comedy written by Shakſpeare, with alterations and additions, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Victor. 8vo. 1763.

Merry Wives of Windſor.

The Comical Gallant, or the Amours of Sir John Falſtaffe. A Comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majeſties Servants. By Mr. Dennis. 4to. 1702.

Meaſure for Meaſure.

The Law againſt Lovers, by Sir William D'Avenant. Fol. 1673.

Meaſure for Meaſure, or Beauty the beſt Advocate. As it is acted at the Theatre in Lincolns Inn Fields; written originally by Mr Shakſpeare, and now very much altered: with additions of ſeveral Entertainments of Muſick. By Mr. Gildon. 4to. 1700.

Comedy of Errors.

The Comedy of Errors, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. Altered by Mr. Hull.

Much Ado about Nothing.

The Law againſt Lovers. By Sir W. Davenant. Fol. 1673.

The Univerſal Paſſion. A Comedy as it is acted at the

the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majeſties Servants. By James Miller. 8vo. 1737.

Love's Labour's Loſt.

The Students, a Comedy altered from Shakſpeare's Love's Labour's Loſt, and adapted to the ſtage. 8vo. 1762.

Midſummer-Night's Dream.

The Humours of Bottom the Weaver, by Robert Cox. 4to.

The Fairy Queen, an Opera, repreſented at the Queen's Theatre by their Majeſties Servants. 4to. 1692.

Pyramus and Thiſbe, a Comick Maſque, written by Richard Leveridge, performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields. 8vo. 1716.

Pyramus and Thiſbe, a Mock Opera, written by Shakſpeare. Set to muſick by Mr. Lampe. Performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. 8vo. 1745.

The Fairies, an Opera, taken from a Midſummer-Night's Dream written by Shakſpeare, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1755.

A Midſummer-Night's Dream, written by Shakſpeare, with Alterations and Additions, and ſeveral new Songs! As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. 8vo. 1763.

A Fairy Tale, in two acts, taken from Shakſpeare. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. 8vo. 1763.

Merchant of Venice.

The Jew of Venice, a Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields, by his Majeſty's Servants. By George Granville, Eſq. (afterwards Lord Lanſdowne.) 4to. 1701.

As you like it.

Love in a Foreſt, a Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majeſty's Servants. By C. Johnſon. 8vo. 1723.

The

May 2, 1608.

Mr. Pavyer.] A booke called a Yorkſhire Tragedy, written by Wylliam Shakeſpeare. 167

May 2, 1608.

Edw. Blount.] The book of Pericles Prince of Tyre. 167 b

A book called Anthony and Cleopatra. ibid

Jan. 28, 1608.

Rich. Bonian and Hen. Whalley.] A booke called the Hiſtory of Troylus and Creſſida. 178 b.

May 20, 1609.

Tho. Thorpe.] A booke called Shakeſpeare's Sonnets. 183 b.

Oct 16, 1609.

Mr. Welby.] Edward the Third. 189

Dec. 16, 1611.

John Browne.] A booke called the Lyfe and Death of the Lo. Cromwell, by W. S. 214 b.

Nov. 29, 1614.

John Beale.] A booke called the Hyſtorie of Lord Faulconbridge, baſtard Son to Richard Cordelion[3]. 256 b.

Feb. 16, 1616.

Mr. Barrett.] Life and Death of Lord Cromwell. 279

March 20, 1617.

Mr. Snodham.] Edward the Third, the play. 288

[3] Query, if this was Shakſpeare's *K. John*, or ſome old romance like that of *Richard Coeur de Lion*. STEEVENS.

It was undoubtedly *The famous Hiſtorie of George Lord Faulconbridge*, a proſe romance. I have an edition of it now before me printed for *I. B.* dated 1616. MALONE.

Sept.

Sept. 17, 1618.

John Wright.] The comedy called Mucedorus[4]. 293 b.

July 8, 1619.

Nich. Okes.] A play called the Merchaunt of Venice. 303
Vol. D.

Oct. 6, 1621.

Tho. Walkely.] The tragedie of Othello the Moore of Venice. 21

Nov. 8, 1623.

Mr. Blount and Iſaak Jaggard.] Mr. William Shakeſpeare's Comedyes and Tragedyes, ſoe many of the ſaid Copies as are not formerly entered to other men.

Viz.

Comedyes.
- The Tempeſt.
- Two Gentlemen of Verona.
- Meaſure for Meaſure.
- The Comedy of Errors.
- As You Like it.
- Alls Well that Ends Well.
- Twelfe Night.
- The Winter's Tale.

Hiſtories.
- The Third Part of Henry the Sixt.
- Henry the Eight.

Tragedies.
- Coriolanus.
- Timon of Athens.
- Julius Cæſar.
- Macbeth.
- Anthonie and Cleopatra.
- Cymbeline. 69

Dec. 14, 1624.

Mr. Pavyer.] Titus Andronicus.
Widow of Watling Street. 93

4 Bound up in a volume of plays attributed to Shakſpeare, and once belonging to King Charles the Firſt. See Mr. Garrick's Collection. STEEVENS.

Feb. 23, 1625.

Mr. Stanſby.] Edward the Third, the play. 115

April 3, 1626.

Mr. Parker.] Life and Death of Lord Cromwell. 120

Aug. 4, 1626.

Edw. Brewſter.] Mr. Pavyer's right in Shake-
Rob. Birde.] ſpeare's plays, or any of them.
Sir John Oldcaſtle, a play.
Titus Andronicus.
Hyſtorie of Hamblett. 127

Jan. 29, 1629.

Mr. Meighen.] Merry Wives of Windſor. 193

Nov. 8, 1630.

Ric. Cotes.] Henrye the Fift.
Sir John Oldcaſtle.
Tytus Andronicus.
Yorke and Lancaſter.
Agincourt.
Pericles.
Hamblett.
Yorkſhire Tragedy. 208

The ſixteen plays in p. 69, were aſſigned by Tho. Blount to Edward Allot, June 26, 1632. 109

Edward Allott was one of the publiſhers of the ſecond Folio, 1632. STEEVENS.

AN

ATTEMPT

TO ASCERTAIN THE

ORDER

IN WHICH

THE PLAYS OF SHAKSPEARE

WERE WRITTEN[1].

——— Primuſque per avia campi
Uſque procul, (necdum totas lux moverat umbras,)
Neſcio quid viſu dubium, incertumque moveri,
Corporaque ire videt. STATIUS.

Trattando l'ombre come coſa ſalda. DANTE.

EVERY circumſtance that relates to thoſe perſons whoſe writings we admire, awakens and intereſts our curioſity. The time and place of their birth, their education and gradual attainments, the dates of their productions and the reception they ſeverally met with, their habits of life, their private friendſhips, and even their external form, are all points, which, how little ſoever they may have been adverted to by their contemporaries, ſtrongly engage the attention of poſterity. Not ſatisfied with receiving the aggregated wiſdom of ages as a free gift, we viſit the manſions where our inſtructors are ſaid to have reſided, we contemplate with pleaſure the trees under whoſe ſhade they once repoſed, and wiſh to ſee and to converſe with thoſe ſages, whoſe labours have added ſtrength to virtue, and efficacy to truth.

[1] The firſt edition of this Eſſay was publiſhed in January 1778.

Shakſpeare above all writers, ſince the days of Homer, has excited this curioſity in the higheſt degree; as perhaps no poet of any nation was ever more idolized by his countrymen. An ardent deſire to underſtand and explain his works, is, to the honour of the preſent age, ſo much increaſed within the laſt forty years, that more has been done towards their elucidation, during that period[2], than in a century before. All the ancient copies of his plays, hitherto diſcovered, have been collated with the moſt ſcrupulous accuracy. The meaneſt books have been carefully examined, only becauſe they were of the age in which he lived, and might happily throw a light on ſome forgotten cuſtom, or obſolete phraſeology: and, this object being ſtill kept in view, the toil of wading through *all ſuch reading as was never read* has been cheerfully endured, becauſe no labour was thought too great, that might enable us to add one new laurel to the father of our drama. Almoſt every circumſtance that tradition or hiſtory has preſerved relative to him or his works, has been inveſtigated, and laid before the publick; and the avidity with which all communications of this kind have been received, ſufficiently proves that the time expended in the purſuit has not been wholly miſemployed.

However, after the moſt diligent inquiries, very few particulars have been recovered, reſpecting his private life or literary hiſtory: and while it has been the endeavour of all his editors and commentators to illuſtrate his obſcurities, and to regulate and correct his text, no attempt has been made to trace the progreſs and order of his plays. Yet ſurely it is no incurious ſpeculation, to mark the gradations[3] by which he roſe from mediocrity

[2] Within the period here mentioned, the commentaries of Warburton Edwards, Heath, Johnſon, Tyrwhitt, Farmer, and Steevens, have been publiſhed.

[3] It is not pretended that a regular ſcale of gradual improvement is here preſented to the publick; or that, if even Shakſpeare himſelf had left us a chronological liſt of his dramas, it would exhibit ſuch a ſcale. All that is meant, is, that, as his knowledge increaſed, and as he became

rity to the ſummit of excellence; from artleſs and ſometimes unintereſting dialogues, to thoſe unparalleled compoſitions,

became more converſant with the ſtage and with life, his performances *in general* were written more happily and with greater art; or (to uſe the words of Dr. Johnſon) "that however favoured by nature, he could only impart 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." Of this opinion alſo was Mr. Pope. "It muſt be obſerved, (ſays he) 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.—And I make no doubt that 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."—From the following lines it appears, that Dryden alſo thought that our authour's moſt imperfect plays were his earlieſt dramatick compoſitions:

"Your Ben and Fletcher in their firſt young flight,
"Did no *Volpone*, no *Arbaces* write;
"But hopp'd about, and ſhort excurſions made
"From bough to bough, as if they were afraid;
"And each were guilty of ſome *Slighted Maid*.
"Shakſpeare's own muſe his *Pericles* firſt bore;
"*The Prince of Tyre* was elder than *the Moor*:
"'Tis miracle to ſee a firſt good play;
"All hawthorns do not bloom on Chriſtmas day.
"A ſlender poet muſt have time to grow,
"And ſpread and burniſh, as his brothers do:
"Who ſtill looks lean, ſure with ſome p— is curſt,
"But no man can be *Falſtaff* fat at firſt."
Prologue to the tragedy of *Circe*.

The plays which Shakſpeare produced before the year 1600, are known, and are ſeventeen or eighteen in number. The reſt of his dramas, we may conclude, were compoſed between that year and the time of his retiring to the country. It is incumbent on thoſe, who differ in opinion from the great authorities abovementioned,—who think with Rowe, that "*we are not to look for his beginnings in his leaſt perfect works*," it is incumbent, I ſay, on thoſe perſons, to enumerate in the former claſs, that is, among the plays produced before 1600, compoſitions of equal merit with *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *the Tempeſt*, and *Twelfth Night*, which we have reaſon to believe were all written in the latter period; and among his late performances,

compoſitions, which have rendered him the delight and wonder of ſucceſſive ages.

The materials for aſcertaining the order in which his plays were written, are indeed ſo few, that, it is to be feared, nothing very deciſive can be produced on this ſubject. In the following attempt to trace the progreſs of his dramatick art, probability alone is pretended to. The ſilence and inaccuracy of thoſe perſons, who, after his death, had the reviſal of his papers, will perhaps for ever prevent our attaining to any thing like proof on this head. Little then remains, but to collect into one view, from his ſeveral dramas, and from the ancient tracts in which they are mentioned, or alluded to, all the circumſtances that can throw any light on this new and curious inquiry From thoſe circumſtances, and from the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, extracted and publiſhed by Mr Steevens, (to whom every admirer of Shakſpeare has the higheſt obligations,) it is probable that our authour's plays were written nearly in the following ſucceſſion; which, though it cannot at this day be aſcertained to be their true order, may yet be conſidered as approaching nearer to it, than any which has been obſerved in the various editions of his works.

Of the twenty-one plays which were not printed in our authour's life-time [4], the *majority* were, I believe, late

that is, among the plays which are ſuppoſed to have appeared after the year 1600, to point out pieces, as haſty and indigeſted, as *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *the Comedy of Errors*, and *the Two Gentlemen of Verona*, which, we know, were among his earlier works.

[4] They are, *King Henry VI. P. I.* The Second and Third Parts of *K. Henry VI.* (as he wrote them) *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *King John*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *As you like it*, *King Henry VIII.* *Meaſure for Meaſure*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Cæſar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus*, *Othello*, *The Tempeſt*, and *Twelfth Night*. Theſe were not printed in quarto, but appeared firſt in the folio edition publiſhed by Heminge and Condell, in 1623. Of theſe plays, ſeven, viz. *The firſt part of K. Henry VI.* (allowing that play to be Shakſpeare's,) *The Second and Third Parts of K. Henry VI.* *King*

late compoſitions[5]. The following arrangement is in ſome meaſure formed on this notion. Two reaſons may be aſſigned, why Shakſpeare's late performances were not publiſhed till after his death. 1. If we ſuppoſe him to have written for the ſtage during a period of twenty years, thoſe pieces which were produced in the latter part of that period, were leſs likely to paſs through the preſs in his life-time, as the curioſity of the publick had not been ſo long engaged by them, as by his early compoſitions. 2. From the time that Shakſpeare had the ſuperintendance of a playhouſe, that is, from the year 1603[6], when he and ſeveral others obtained a licence from King James to exhibit comedies, tragedies, hiſto-

King John, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, were certainly early compoſitions, and are an exception to the general truth of this obſervation. One other, viz. *All's well that ends well*, though ſuppoſed to have been an early production, was, it muſt be acknowledged, not publiſhed in Shakſpeare's life-time; but for the date of this play we rely only on conjecture.

[5] This ſuppoſition is ſtrongly confirmed by *Meres*'s liſt of our authour's plays, in 1598. From that liſt, and from other circumſtances, we learn, that of the fourteen plays which were printed in Shakſpeare's life-time, thirteen were written before the end of the year 1600.—The fourteen plays publiſhed in our authour's life-time, are—*A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *K. Richard II.* *K. Richard III.* *The Firſt Part of K. Henry IV.* *The Second Part of K. Henry IV.* *The Merchant of Venice*, *K. Henry V.* *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, *Troilus and Creſſida*, and *K. Lear*.

[6] None of the plays which in the enſuing liſt are ſuppoſed to have been written ſubſequently to this year, were printed till after the authour's death, except *K. Lear*, the publication of which was probably haſtened by that of the old play with the ſame title, in 1605.—The copy of *Troilus and Creſſida*, which ſeems to have been compoſed the year before K. James granted a licence to the company at the Globe Theatre, appears to have been obtained by ſome uncommon artifice. "Thank fortune (ſays the editor) for the *eſcape* it hath made amongſt you; ſince, by the grand poſſeſſors' wills, I believe, you ſhould have pray'd for them [r. *it*] rather than been pray'd."—By *the grand poſſeſſors*, Shakſpeare and the other managers of the Globe Theatre, were certainly intended.

ries,

ries, &c. at the Globe Theatre, and elſewhere, it became ſtrongly his intereſt to preſerve thoſe pieces unpubliſhed, which were compoſed between that year and the time of his retiring to the country; manuſcript plays being then the great ſupport of every theatre. Nor were the plays which he wrote after he became a manager, ſo likely to get abroad, being confined to his own theatre, as his former productions, which perhaps had been acted on different ſtages, and of conſequence afforded the players at the ſeveral houſes where they were exhibited, an eaſy opportunity of making out copies from the ſeparate parts tranſcribed for their uſe, and of ſelling ſuch copies to printers; by which means there is reaſon to believe that ſome of them were ſubmitted to the preſs, without the conſent of the authour.

The following is the order in which I ſuppoſe the plays of Shakſpeare to have been written:

1.	First Part of King Henry VI.	1589.
2.	Second Part of King Henry VI.	1591.
3.	Third Part of King Henry VI.	1591.
4.	A Midsummer-Night's Dream,	1592.
5.	Comedy of Errors, — —	1593.
6.	Taming of the Shrew, —	1594.
7.	Love's Labour's Loſt, — —	1594.
8.	Two Gentlemen of Verona, —	1595.
9.	Romeo and Juliet, — —	1595.
10.	Hamlet, — — —	1596.
11.	King John, — — —	1596.
12.	King Richard II. — —	1597.
13.	King Richard III. — —	1597.
14.	First Part of King Henry IV.	1597.
15.	Second Part of King Henry IV.	1598.
16.	The Merchant of Venice, —	1598.
17.	All's Well that Ends Well,	1598.
18.	King Henry V. — —	1599.
19.	Much Ado about Nothing, —	1600.
20.	As You Like It, — —	1600.
21.	Merry Wives of Windsor, —	1601.

1. THE FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI. 1589.

In what year our authour began to write for the ſtage, or which was his firſt performance, has not been hitherto aſcertained. And indeed we have ſo few lights to direct our inquiries, that any ſpeculation on this ſubject may appear an idle expence of time. But the method which has been already marked out, requires that ſuch facts ſhould be mentioned, as may ſerve in any manner to elucidate theſe points.

Shakſpeare was born on the 23d of April, 1564, and was probably married in, or before, September 1582, his eldeſt daughter, Suſanna, having been baptized on the 26th of May, 1583. At what time he left Warwickſhire, or was firſt employed in the playhouſe, tradition does not inform us. However, as his ſon Hamnet and his daughter Judith were baptized at Stratford, Feb. 2, 1584-5, we may preſume that he had not left the country at that time.

He could not have wanted an eaſy introduction to the theatre; for Thomas Green[7], a celebrated comedian, was

7 "There was not (ſays Heywood in his preface to *Greene's Tu quoque*, a comedy,) an actor of his nature in his time, of better ability in

was his townſman, perhaps his relation, and Michael Drayton was likewiſe born in Warwickſhire; the latter was nearly of his own age, and both were in ſome degree of reputation ſoon after the year 1590. If I were to indulge a conjecture, I ſhould name the year 1591, as the era when our authour commenced a writer for the ſtage; at which time he was ſomewhat more than twenty-ſeven years old. The reaſons that induce me to fix on that period are theſe. In Webbe's *Diſcourſe of Engliſh Poetry*, publiſhed in 1586, we meet with the names of moſt of the celebrated poets of that time; particularly thoſe of George Whetſtone[8] and Anthony Munday[9], who were

in the performance of what he undertook, more applauded by the audience, of greater grace at the court, or of more general love in the city." The birth-place of Thomas Greene is aſcertained by the following lines, which he ſpeaks in one of the old comedies, in the character of a clown:

"I pratled poeſie in my nurſe's arms,
"And, born where late our ſwan of Avon ſung,
"In Avon's ſtreams we both of us have lav'd,
"And both came out together."

Chetwood, in his *Britiſh Theatre*, quotes this paſſage from the comedy of the *Two Maids of Moreclack*; but no ſuch paſſage is there to be found. He deſerves but little credit, having certainly forged many of his dates; however, he probably met with theſe lines in ſome ancient play, though he forgot the name of the piece from which he tranſcribed them. Greene was a writer as well as an actor. There are ſome verſes of his prefixed to a collection of Drayton's poems, publiſhed in the year 1613. He was perhaps a kinſman of Shakſpeare's. In the regiſter of the pariſh of Stratford, Thomas Greene, alias Shakſpere, is ſaid to have been buried there, March 6, 1589. He might have been the actor's father.

[8] The authour of *Promos and Caſſandra*, a play which furniſhed Shakſpeare with the fable of *Meaſure for Meaſure*.

[9] This poet is mentioned by Meres, in his *Wit's Treaſury*, 1598, as an eminent comick writer, and the *beſt plotter* of his time. He ſeems to have been introduced under the name of Don Antonio Balladino, in a comedy that has been attributed to Ben Jonſon, called *The Caſe is Altered*, and from the following paſſages in that piece appears to have been city-poet; whoſe buſineſs it was to compoſe an annual panegyrick on the Lord Mayor, and to write verſes for the pageants: an office which has been diſcontinued ſince the death of Elkanah Settle in 1722:

Onion.

were *dramatick* writers; but we find no trace of our authour, or of any of his works. Three years afterwards, Puttenham printed his *Art of Engliſh Poeſy*; and in that work alſo we look in vain for the name of Shakſpeare[1]. Sir John Harrington in his *Apologie for Poetry*, prefixed to the *Tranſlation of Arioſto*, (which was entered in the Stationers' books Feb. 26, 1590-1, in which year, it was publiſhed,) takes occaſion to ſpeak of the theatre, and mentions ſome of the celebrated dramas of that time; but ſays not a word of Shakſpeare, or of his plays. If any of his dramatick compoſitions had then appeared, is it imaginable, that Harrington ſhould have mentioned the Cambridge *Pedantius*, and *The Play of the Cards*, which laſt, he tells us was a *London* [i. e. an Engliſh] comedy, and have paſſed by, unnoticed, the new prodigy of the dramatick world?

" *Onion.* Shall I requeſt your name?
" *Ant.* My name is Antonio Balladino.
" *Oni.* Balladino! You are not pageant-poet to the city of Milan,
" ſir, are you?
" *Ant.* I ſupply the place, ſir, when a worſe cannot be had, ſir.—
" Did you ſee the laſt pageant I ſet forth?"

Afterwards Antonio, ſpeaking of the plays he had written, ſays,

" Let me have good ground,—no matter for the pen; *the plot* ſhall
" carry it.
" *Oni.* Indeed that's right; *you are in print, already, for* THE BEST
" PLOTTER.
" *Ant.* Ay; I might as well have been put in for a dumb-ſhew too."

It is evident, that this poet is here intended to be ridiculed by Ben Jonſon: but he might, notwithſtanding, have been deſervedly eminent. That malignity which endeavoured to tear a wreath from the brow of Shakſpeare, would certainly not ſpare inferior writers.

[1] The thirty-firſt chapter of the firſt book of Puttenham's *Art of Engliſh Poeſy* is thus entitled: " Who in any age have bene the moſt commended writers in our Engliſh Poeſie, and the author's cenſure given upon them."

After having enumerated ſeveral authours who were then celebrated for various kinds of compoſition, he gives this ſuccinct account of thoſe who had written for the ſtage: " *Of the latter ſort I thinke thus;—that for tragedie, the Lord Buckhurſt and Maiſter Edward Ferrys, for ſuch doings as I have ſene of theirs, do deſerve the byeſt price; the Earl of Oxford and Maiſter Edwardes of her Majeſtie's Chappell, for comedie and enterlude.*"

In

In Spenſer's *Tears of the Muſes*, firſt printed in 1591, the following lines are found in Thalia's complaint on account of the decay of dramatick poetry:

" And he the man, whom nature's ſelf had made
" To mock her ſelfe, and truth to imitate,
" With kindly counter under mimick ſhade,
" Our pleaſant *Willy*, ah, is dead of late;
" With whom all joy and jolly merriment
" Is alſo deaded, and in dolour drent.

" Inſtead thereof ſcoffing ſcurrilitie
" And ſcornful follie with contempt is crept,
" Rolling in rymes of ſhameleſs ribaudrie,
" Without regard or due decorum kept:
" Each idle wit at will preſumes to make,
" And doth the learneds taſk upon him take.

" But that ſame gentle ſpirit, from whoſe pen
" Large ſtreames of honnie and ſweet nectar flow,
" Scorning the boldneſs of ſuch baſe-born men,
" Which dare their follies forth ſo raſhlie throwe,
" Doth rather chooſe to ſit in idle cell,
" Than ſo him ſelfe to mockerie to ſell."

Theſe lines were inſerted by Mr. Rowe in his firſt edition of *The Life of Shakſpeare*, and he then ſuppoſed that they related to our poet, and alluded to his having withdrawn himſelf for ſome time from the publick, and diſcontinued writing, from " a diſguſt he had taken to the then ill taſte of the town and the mean condition of the ſtage." But as Mr. Rowe ſuppreſſed this paſſage in his ſecond edition, it may be preſumed that he found reaſon to change his opinion. Dryden, however, he informs us, always thought that theſe verſes related to Shakſpeare: and indeed I do not recollect any dramatick poet of that time, to whom the character which they delineate is applicable, except our authour. It is remarkable that the very ſame epithet, which Spenſer has employed, " But that ſame *gentle* ſpirit," &c. is likewiſe uſed by the players

players in their preface, where they ſpeak of Shakſpeare:—" who as he was a happie imitator of nature, was a moſt *gentle* expreſſer of it." On the other hand ſome little difficulty ariſes from the line—" And doth the *learneds* taſk upon him take;" for our poet certainly had no title to that epithet. Spenſer, however, might have uſed it in an appropriated ſenſe, *learned in all the buſineſs of the ſtage*; and in this ſenſe the epithet is more applicable to Shakſpeare than to any poet that ever wrote.

It ſhould, however, be remembered, that the name *Willy*, for ſome reaſon or other which it is now in vain to ſeek, appears to have been applied by the poets of Shakſpeare's age to perſons who were not chriſtened *William*. Thus, (as Dr. Farmer obſerves to me,) in " An Eglogue made long ſince on the death of Sir *Philip* Sydney," which is preſerved in Daviſon's *Poetical Rhapſody*, 1602, we find that celebrated writer lamented in almoſt every ſtanza by the name of *Willy*:

" *Willy* is dead,
" That wont to lead
" Our flocks and us, in mirth and ſhepheards' glee," &c.

" Of none but *Willie's* pipe they made account," &c.

Spenſer's *Willy*, however, could not have been Sir Philip Sydney, for he was dead ſome years before *The Tears of the Muſes* was publiſhed.

If theſe lines were intended to allude to our authour, then he muſt have written ſome comedies in or before the year 1591; and the date which I have aſſigned to *A Midſummer-Night's Dream* is erroneous. I cannot expect to influence the deciſion of my reader on a ſubject on which I have not been able to form a decided opinion myſelf; and therefore ſhall content myſelf with merely ſtating the difficulties on each ſide. Suppoſing Shakſpeare to have written any piece in the year 1590, Sir John Harrington's ſilence concerning him in the following year appears inexplicable.

But

But whatever poet may have been in Spenſer's contemplation, it is certain that Shakſpeare had commenced a writer for the ſtage, and had even excited the jealouſy of his contemporaries, before September 1592. This is now deciſively proved by a paſſage extracted by Mr. Tyrwhitt from Robert Greene's *Groatſworth of Witte bought with a Million of Repentance*, in which there is an evident alluſion to our authour's name, as well as to a line in the *Second Part of King Henry VI.*

This tract was publiſhed at the dying requeſt of Robert Greene, a very voluminous writer of that time. The concluſion of it, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has obſerved, is "an addreſs to his brother poets to diſſuade them from writing for the ſtage, on account of the ill treatment which they were uſed to receive from the players." It begins thus: *To thoſe gentlemen his quondam acquaintance that ſpend their wits in making playes*, R. G. *wiſheth a better exerciſe, and wiſdome to prevent his extremities.* His firſt addreſs is undoubtedly to Chriſtopher Marlowe, the moſt popular and admired dramatick poet of that age, previous to the appearance of Shakſpeare. "Wonder not," (ſays Greene) "for with thee will I firſt begin, thou famous gracer of tragedians, that Greene, (who hath ſaid *with thee*, like the foole in his heart, there is no God,) ſhould now give glory unto his greatneſs; for penetrating is his power, his hand is heavy upon me; &c. Why ſhould thy excellent wit, his gift, be ſo blinded, that thou ſhould give no glory to the giver?—The brother [f. *breather*] of this diabolical atheiſm is dead, and in his life had never the felicitie he aimed at: but as he beganne in craft, lived in feare, and ended in deſpair. And wilt thou, my friend, be his diſciple?—Looke unto me, by him perſuaded to that libertie, and thou ſhalt find it an infernal bondage."

Greene's next addreſs appears to be made to Thomas Lodge. "With thee I joyne young Juvenall, that byting ſatiriſt, that laſtly with mee together writ a comedie. Sweet boy, might I adviſe thee, be adviſed, and get not many enemies by bitter words: inveigh againſt vaine

vaine men, for thou canſt do it, no man better, no man ſo well: thou haſt libertie to reprove all, and name none.—Stop ſhallow water ſtill running, it will rage; tread on a worme, and it will turn; then blame not ſchollers, who are vexed with ſharpe and bitter lines, if they reproove too much libertie of reproof."

George Peele, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has remarked, is next addreſſed. "And thou no leſſe deſerving than the other two, in ſome things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driven, as my ſelfe, to extreame ſhifts, a little have I to ſay to thee: and were it not an idolatrous oath, I would ſweare by ſweet *S. George*, thou art unworthy better hap, ſith thou dependeſt on ſo meane a ſtay. Baſe-minded men all three of you, if by my miſery you be not warned: for unto none of you, like me, ſought thoſe burs to cleave; thoſe puppets, I meane, that ſpeake from our mouths; thoſe anticks garniſht in our colours. Is it not ſtrange that I, to whom they all have bin beholding, is it not like that you, to whom they all have bin beholding, ſhall (were yee in that caſe that I am now) be both of them at once forſaken? *Yes, truſt them not, for there is an upſtart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his* tygres heart wrapt in a players hide, *ſuppoſes hee is as well able to bombaſte out a blanke verſe as the beſt of you; and being an abſolute* Johannes fac-totum, *is in his own conceit the only* Shake-ſcene *in a countrey*. O that I might intreat your rare wittes to be employed in more profitable courſes; and let theſe apes imitate your paſt excellence, and never more acquaynte them with your admired inventions."

This tract appears to have been written by Greene not long before his death; for near the concluſion he ſays, "Albeit *weakneſs will ſcarce ſuffer me to write*, yet to my fellow-ſcollers about this city will I direct theſe few inſuing lines." He died, according to Dr. Gabriel Harvey's account, on the third of September, 1592[a].

[a] Additions by Oldys to Winſtanley's *Lives of the Poets*, MS.

I have lately met with a very ſcarce pamphlet entitled *Kind Harts Dreame*, written by Henry Chettle, from the preface to which it appears that *he* was the editor of Greene's *Groatſworth of Wit*, and that it was publiſhed between September and December 1592[3]. Our poet, we find, was not without reaſon diſpleaſed at the preceding alluſion to him. As what Chettle ſays of him, correſponds with the character which all his contemporaries have given him, and the piece is extremely rare, I ſhall extract from the Addreſs *to the Gentlemen Readers*, what relates to the ſubject before us:

"About three months ſince died M. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in ſundry bookſellers' hands, among others his *Groatſworth of Wit*, in which a letter written to divers play-makers is offenſively by one or two of them taken; and becauſe on the dead they cannot be revenged, they wilfully forge in their conceites a living author: and after toſſing it to and fro, no remedy but it muſt light on me. How I have, all the time of my converſing in printing, hindered the bitter inveighing againſt ſchollers, it hath been very well known; and how in that I dealt, I can ſufficiently prove. With *neither* of them that take offence was I acquainted, and with one of them [Marlowe] I care not if I never be. The other, [Shakſpeare,] whom at that time I did not ſo much ſpare, as ſince I wiſh I had, for that as I have moderated the hate of living writers, and might have uſed my own diſcretion, (eſpecially in ſuch a caſe, the author being dead,) that I did not, I am as ſorry as if the original fault had been my fault; becauſe *my ſelfe have ſeen his demeanour no leſs civil than he excellent in the qualitie he profeſſes: Beſides, divers of worſhip have reported his uprightneſs of dealing, which argues his honeſtie, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art.* For

[3] Probably in October, for on the Stationers' books I find *The Repentaunce of Robert Greene, Maſter of Arts*, entered by John Danter, Oct. 6, 1592. The full title of Greene's pamphlet is, "Greene's *Groatſworth of wit bought with a million of* repentance."

the

the firſt, whoſe learning I reverence, and at the peruſing of Greene's booke, ſtrooke out what then in conſcience I thought he in ſome diſpleaſure writ; or had it been true, yet to publiſh it was intollerable; him I would wiſh to uſe me no worſe than I deſerve. I had onely in the copy this ſhare: it was ill written, as ſometime Greene's hand was none of the beſt; licenſed it muſt bee, ere it could be printed, which could never bee if it could not be read. To be brief, I writ it over, and as near as I could followed the copy; onely in that letter I put ſomething out, but in the whole book not a word in; for I proteſt it was all Greenes, not mine, nor Maſter Naſhes, as ſome unjuſtly have affirmed. Neither was he the writer of an Epiſtle to *The Second Part of Gerileon*; though by the workman's error T. N. were ſet to the end: that I confeſs to be mine, and repent it not.

"Thus, Gentlemen, having noted the private cauſes that made me nominate myſelf in print, being as well to purge Maſter Naſhe of what he did not, as to juſtifie what I did, and withall to confirm what M. Greene did, I beſeech you to accept the publick cauſe, which is both the deſire of your delight and common benefit; for though the toyé bee ſhadowed under the title of *Kind Harts Dreame*, it diſcovers the falſe hearts of divers that wake to commit miſchief," &c.

That I am right in ſuppoſing the two who took offence at Greene's pamphlet were Marlowe and Shakſpeare, whoſe names I have inſerted in a preceding paragraph in crotchets, appears from the paſſage itſelf already quoted; for there was nothing in Greene's exhortation to Lodge and Peele, the other two perſons addreſſed, by which either of them could poſſibly be offended. Dr. Farmer is of opinion that the ſecond perſon addreſſed by Greene is not Lodge, but *Naſhe*, who is often called *Juvenal* by the writers of that time; but that he was not meant, is decriſively proved by the extract from Chettle's pamphlet; for he never would have laboured to vindicate Naſhe from being the writer of the *Groatſ-*

worth of Wit, if any part of it had been profeſſedly addreſſed to him[4]. Beſides, Lodge had written a play in conjunction with Greene, called *A Looking Glaſs for London and England*, and was authour of ſome ſatirical pieces; but we do not know that Naſhe and Greene had ever written in conjunction.

Henry Chettle was himſelf a dramatick writer, and appears to have become acquainted with Shakſpeare, or at leaſt ſeen him, between Sept. 1592, and the following December. Shakſpeare was at this time twenty-eight years old; and then we find from the teſtimony of this writer, *his demeanour was no leſs civil than he excellent in the qualitie he profeſſed*. From the ſubſequent paragraph—"Divers of worſhip have reported his uprightneſs of dealing, which argues his honeſtie, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art,—" it may be reaſonably preſumed, that he had exhibited more than one comedy on the ſtage before the end of the year 1592; perhaps *Love's Labour's Loſt* in a leſs perfect ſtate than it now appears in, and *A Midſummer's Night's Dream*.

In what time ſoever he became acquainted with the theatre, we may preſume that he had not compoſed his firſt piece long before it was acted; for being early incumbered with a young family, and not in very affluent circumſtances, it is improbable that he ſhould have ſuffered it to lie in his cloſet, without endeavouring to derive ſome profit from it; and in the miſerable ſtate of the drama in thoſe days the meaneſt of his genuine plays muſt have been a valuable acquiſition, and would hardly have been refuſed by any of our ancient theatres.

In a *Diſſertation on The Three Parts of King Henry VI.* which I have ſubjoined to thoſe plays, I have mentioned that I do not believe *the Firſt Part of King Henry VI.*

[4] Naſhe himſelf alſo takes ſome pains in an Epiſtle prefixed to *Pierce Pennileſſe*, &c. to vindicate himſelf from being the authour of Greene's *Groatſworth of Wit*.

to

to have been the compoſition of Shakſpeare; or that at moſt he wrote but one or two ſcenes in it. It is unneceſſary here to repeat the circumſtances on which that opinion is founded. Not being Shakſpeare's play, (as I conceive,) at whatever time it might have been firſt exhibited, it does not interfere with the ſuppoſition already ſtated, that he had not produced any dramatick piece before 1590.

The Firſt Part of K. Henry VI. which, I imagine, was formerly known only by the name of *The hiſtorical play of King Henry VI.* had, I ſuſpect, been a very popular piece for ſome years before 1592, and perhaps was firſt exhibited in 1588 or in 1589. Naſhe in a Tract entitled *Pierce Pennileſſe his Supplication to the Devill*, which was firſt publiſhed in 1592[5], expreſsly mentions one of the characters in it, John Talbot Earl of Shrewſbury, who dies in the fourth act of the piece, and who is not, I believe, introduced in any other play of that time. "How" (ſays he) "would it have joyed brave Talbot, *the terror of the French*[6], to think that after he had lain two hundred years in his tomb, he ſhould triumph again on the ſtage, and have his bones new embalmed with the tears of ten thouſand ſpectators at leaſt, (at ſeveral times,) who, in the tragedian that repreſents his perſon, imagine they behold him freſh bleeding?"

In the Diſſertation above referred to, I have endeavoured to prove that this play was written neither by Shakſpeare, nor by the authour or authours of the two other plays formed on a ſubſequent period of the reign of Henry

5 *Pierce Pennileſſe his Supplication*, &c. was firſt publiſhed in that year, being entered for the firſt time on the Stationers' Books by Richard Jones, Aug. 8, 1592. There was a ſecond edition in the ſame year, printed by Abell Jeffes for John Buſbie.

6 Thus Talbot is deſcribed in *The Firſt Part of K. Henry VI.* Act I. ſc. iii.

"Here, ſaid they, is *the terror of the French.*"

Again, in Act V. ſc. i.

"Is Talbot ſlain, the Frenchman's only ſcourge,
"Your kingdom's *terror?*"

the Sixth. By whom it *was* written, it is now, I fear, impoſſible to aſcertain. It was not entered on the Stationers' books nor printed till the year 1623, when it was regiſtered with Shakſpeare's undiſputed plays by the editors of the firſt folio, and improperly entitled *The* Third *Part of King Henry VI.* In one ſenſe it might be called ſo, for two plays on the ſubject of that reign had been printed before. But conſidering the hiſtory of that king, and the period of time which the piece comprehends, it ought to have been called, what in fact it is, *The Firſt Part of King Henry VI.*

At this diſtance of time it is impoſſible to aſcertain on what principle it was that our authour's friends, Heminge and Condell, admitted *The* Firſt *Part of King Henry VI.* into their volume: but I ſuſpect they gave it a place as a neceſſary introduction to the two other parts, and becauſe Shakſpeare had made ſome ſlight alterations, and written a few new lines in it.

Titus Andronicus, as well as *The Firſt Part of King Henry VI.* may be referred to the year 1589, or to an earlier period; but not being in the preſent edition admitted into the regular ſeries of our authour's dramas, I have not given it a place in the preceding table of his plays. In a note prefixed to that play, which may be found in Vol. X. p. 375, I have declared my opinion that *Andronicus* was not written by Shakſpeare, or that at moſt a very few lines in it were written by him; and have ſtated the reaſons on which that opinion is founded. From Ben Jonſon's Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, 1614, we learn that this piece had been exhibited on the ſtage twenty-five or thirty years before, that is, at the loweſt computation, in 1589; or, taking a middle period, (which is perhaps more juſt,) in 1587. "A booke entitled a *Noble Roman Hiſtorie of Titus Andronicus*," (without any authour's name,) was entered at Stationers' Hall by John Danter, Feb. 6, 1593-4. This was undoubtedly the play, as it was printed in that year, according to Langbaine, who alone appears to have ſeen the firſt edition, and acted by the ſervants of the earls of Pembroke, Derby,

Derby, and Suſſex. Of this play there was a ſecond edition in quarto in 1611, in the title-page of which neither the name of Shakſpeare, (though he was in the zenith of his reputation,) nor of any authour, is found, and therefore we may preſume that the title-page of the firſt edition alſo (like the entry on the Stationers' books) was anonymous. Marlowe's *King Edward II.* and ſome other old plays were performed by the ſervants of the earl of Pembroke, by whom not one of Shakſpeare's undiſputed dramas was exhibited.

2. } SECOND AND THIRD PARTS OF K. HENRY VI.
3. } 1591.

In a Diſſertation annexed to theſe plays, I have endeavoured to prove that they were not written *originally* by Shakſpeare, but formed by him on two preceding dramas, one of which is entitled *The firſt part of the Contention of the two famous houſes of Yorke and Lancaſter*, &c. and the other *The true tragedie of Richard duke of Yorke*, &c. My principal object in that diſſertation was, to ſhew from various circumſtances that thoſe two old plays, which were printed in 1600, were written by ſome writer or writers who preceded Shakſpeare, and moulded by him, with many alterations and additions, into the ſhape in which they at preſent appear in his works under the titles of *The Second and Third Part of K. Henry VI.*; and if I have proved that point, I have obtained my end. I ventured, however, to go ſomewhat further, and to hazard a conjecture concerning the perſons by whom they were compoſed: but this was not at all material to my principal argument, which, whether my conjectures on that head were well or ill founded, will remain the ſame.

The paſſage which has been already quoted from Greene's pamphlet, led me to ſuſpect that theſe old plays were the production of either him, or Peele, or both of them. I too haſtily ſuppoſed that the words which have been printed in a former page,—"Yes, truſt them not; for

for there is an upſtart crow beautified with *our* feathers," &c. as they immediately followed a paragraph addreſſed to George Peele, were addreſſed to him particularly; and conſequently that the word *our* meant Peele and Greene, the writer of the pamphlet: but theſe words manifeſtly relate equally to the *three* perſons previouſly addreſſed, and allude to the theatrical compoſitions of Marlowe, Lodge, Peele, and Greene; whether we conſider the writer to lament in general that players avail themſelves of the labours of authours, and derive more profit from them than the authours themſelves, or ſuppoſe him to allude to ſome particular dramatick performances, which had been originally compoſed by himſelf or one of his friends, and thrown into a new form by ſome other dramatiſt, who was alſo a player. The two old plays therefore on which *The Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* were formed, may have been written by any one or more of the authours above enumerated. Towards the end of the Eſſay I have produced a paſſage from the old *King John*, 1591, from which it appeared to me probable that the two elder dramas, which comprehend the greater part of the reign of *King Henry VI.* were written by the authour of *King John*, who ever he was; and ſome circumſtances which have lately ſtruck me, confirm an opinion which I formerly hazarded, that Chriſtopher Marlowe was the authour of that play. A paſſage in his hiſtorical drama of *King Edward II.* which Dr. Farmer has pointed out to me ſince the Diſſertation was printed, alſo inclines me to believe, with him, that Marlowe was the authour of one, if not both, of the old dramas on which Shakſpeare formed the two plays which in the firſt folio edition of his works are diſtinguiſhed by the titles of *The* Second *and* Third *Parts of King Henry VI.*

Two lines in *The Third Part of King Henry VI.* have been produced as a deciſive and incontrovertible proof that theſe pieces were originally and entirely written by Shakſpeare. "Who" (ſays Mr. Capell,) "ſees not the future monſter, and *acknowledges at the ſame time the pen that*

that drew it, in theſe two lines only, ſpoken over a king who lies ſtabb'd before him, [i. e. before Richard duke of Gloſter,]—

" What, will the aſpiring blood of Lancaſter
" Sink in the ground? I thought it would have mounted."

let him never pretend to diſcernment hereafter, in any caſe of this nature."

The two lines above quoted are found in *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. on which, according to my hypotheſis, Shakſpeare's *Third Part of K. Henry VI.* was formed. If therefore theſe lines deciſively mark the hand of Shakſpeare, the *old* as well as the *new* play muſt have been written by him, and the fabrick which I have built with ſome labour, falls at once to the ground. But let not the reader be alarmed; for if it ſuffers from no other battery but this, it may laſt till " the crack of doom." Marlowe, as Dr. Farmer obſerves to me, has the very ſame phraſeology in *King Edward II.*

" —— ſcorning that the lowly *earth*
" *Should drink his blood, mounts up to the air.*"

and in the ſame play I have lately noticed another line in which we find the very epithet here applied to the pious Lancaſtrian king:

" Frown'ſt thou thereat, *aſpiring Lancaſter?*"

So much for Mr. Capell's irrefragable proof. It is not the proper buſineſs of the preſent eſſay to enter further into this ſubject. I merely ſeize this opportunity of ſaying, that the preceding paſſages now incline me to think Marlowe the authour of *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. and perhaps of the other old drama alſo, entitled *The firſt part of the Contention of the two famous houſes of Yorke and Lancaſter.*

The latter drama was entered on the Stationers' books by T. Millington, March 12, 1593-4. This play, however, (on which *The* Second *Part of King Henry VI.*

is formed) was not then printed; nor was *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. on which Shakſpeare's *Third Part of K. Henry VI.* is founded, entered at Stationers' Hall at the ſame time: but they were both printed *anonymouſly* by Thomas Millington, in quarto, in the year 1600.

A very ingenious friend has ſuggeſted to me, that it is not probable that Shakſpeare would have ventured to uſe the ground-work of another dramatiſt, and form a new play upon it, in the life-time of the authour or authours. I know not how much weight this argument is entitled to. We are certain that Shakſpeare *did* tranſcribe a whole ſcene almoſt *verbatim* from *The* old *Taming of a Shrew*, and incorporate it into his own play on the ſame ſubject; and we do not know that the authour of the original play was then dead. Suppoſing however this argument to have ſome weight, it does not tend in the ſlighteſt degree to overturn my hypotheſis that *the Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* were formed on the two preceding dramas, of which I have already given the titles; but merely to ſhew, that I am either miſtaken in ſuppoſing that they were new modelled and re-written in 1591, or in my conjecture concerning the authours of the elder pieces on which thoſe of Shakſpeare were formed. Greene died in September 1592, and Marlowe about May 1593. By aſſigning our poet's part in theſe performances to the end of the year 1593 or the beginning of 1594, this objection is done away, whether we ſuppoſe Greene to have been the authour of one of the elder plays, and Marlowe of the other, or that celebrated writer the authour of them both.

Dr. Farmer is of opinion, that Ben Jonſon particularly alludes in the following verſes to our poet's having followed the ſteps of Marlowe in the plays now under our conſideration, and greatly *ſurpaſſed* his original:

" For, if I thought my judgment were of years,
" I ſhould commit thee ſurely with thy peers;
" And tell how much thou did'ſt our Lily *out-ſhine*,
" Or ſporting Kyd, or *Marlowe's* mighty line."

From

From the epithet *ſporting*, which is applied to Kyd, and which is certainly in ſome meaſure a quibble on his name, it is manifeſt that he muſt have produced ſome *comick* piece upon the ſcene, as well as the two tragedies of his compoſition, which are now extant, *Cornelia*, and *The Spaniſh Tragedy*. This latter is printed, like many plays of that time, anonymouſly. Dr. Farmer with great probability ſuggeſts to me, that Kyd might have been the authour of *The* old *Taming of a Shrew* printed in 1594, on which Shakſpeare formed a play with nearly the ſame title *. The praiſe which Ben Jonſon gives to Shakſpeare, that he "*outſhines* Marlowe and Kyd," on this hypotheſis, will appear to ſtand on one and the ſame foundation; namely on his eclipſing thoſe ancient dramatiſts by new-modeling their plays, and producing pieces much ſuperior to theirs, on ſtories which they had already formed into dramas, that, till Shakſpeare appeared, ſatisfied the publick, and were claſſed among the happieſt efforts of dramatick art.

4. A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM, 1592.

The poetry of this piece, glowing with all the warmth of a youthful and lively imagination, the many ſcenes which it contains of almoſt continual rhyme [6], the poverty of the fable, and want of diſcrimination among the higher perſonages, diſpoſe me to believe that it was one of our authour's earlieſt attempts in comedy [7]

It

* Kyd was alſo, I ſuſpect, the authour of the old plays of *Hamlet*, and of *King Leir*. See p. 305.

[6] See p. 294, n. 5.

[7] Dryden was of opinion that *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, was our authour's firſt dramatick compoſition:

"Shakſpeare's own muſe his *Pericles* firſt bore,
"*The Prince of Tyre* was elder than *the Moor*."

Prologue to the tragedy of *Circe* by Charles D'Avenant, 1677.

Mr. Rowe in his *Life of Shakſpeare* (firſt edition) ſays, "There is good reaſon to believe that the greateſt part of *Pericles* was not written by him, though *it is owned ſome part of it certainly was, particularly the laſt act*. I have not been able to learn on what authority the latter aſſertion was grounded. Rowe in his ſecond edition omitted the paſſage.

Pericles

It ſeems to have been written, while the ridiculous competitions, prevalent among the hiſtrionick tribe, were ſtrongly impreſſed by novelty on his mind. He would naturally copy thoſe manners firſt, with which he was firſt acquainted. The ambition of a theatrical candidate for applauſe he has happily ridiculed in *Bottom* the weaver. But among the more dignified perſons of the drama we look in vain for any traits of character. The manners of Hippolita, *the Amazon*, are undiſtinguiſhed from thoſe of other females. Theſeus, the aſſociate of Hercules, is not engaged in any adventure worthy of his rank or reputation, nor is he in reality an agent throughout the play. Like K. Henry VIII. he goes out a Maying. He meets the lovers in perplexity, and

Pericles was not entered in the Stationers' books till May 2, 1608, nor printed till 1609; but the following lines in a metrical pamphlet, entitled *Pimlyco, or Runne Red-cap*, 1596, aſcertain it to have been written and exhibited on the ſtage, prior to that year:

"Amazde I ſtood to ſee a crowd
"Of civil throats ſtretch'd out ſo lowd:
"(As at a new play,) all the roomes
"Did ſwarme with gentiles mix'd with groomes;
"So that I truly thought all theſe
"Came to ſee *Shore* or *Pericles*."

The play of *Jane Shore* is mentioned (together with another very ancient piece not now extant) in *The Knight of the Burning Peſtle*, 1613: "I was ne'er at one of theſe plays before; but I ſhould have ſeen *Jane Shore*, and my huſband hath promiſed me any time this twelvemonth to carry me to *The Bold Beauchamps*." The date of *The Bold Beauchamps* is in ſome meaſure aſcertained by a paſſage in D'Avenant's *Playhouſe to be let*:

"——There is an old tradition,
"That in the times of mighty *Tamburlaine*,
"Of conjuring *Fauſtus*, and *the Beauchamps Bold*,
"You poets uſed to have the ſecond day."

Tamberlain and *Fauſtus* were exhibited in or before 1590.

The lamentable end of Shore's wife alſo made a part of the old anonymous play of *King Richard III.* which was entered in the Stationers' books, June 19, 1594. Both the dramas in which *Jane Shore* was introduced were probably on the ſtage ſoon after 1590; and from the manner in which *Pericles* is mentioned in the verſes above quoted, we may preſume, that drama was equally ancient and equally well known.

makes

makes no effort to promote their happineſs; but when ſupernatural accidents have reconciled them, he joins their company, and concludes his day's entertainment by uttering ſome miſerable puns at an interlude repreſented by a troop of clowns. Over the fairy part of the drama he cannot be ſuppoſed to have any influence. This part of the fable, indeed, (at leaſt as much of it as relates to the quarrels of Oberon and Titania,) was not of our authour's invention[8].—Through the whole piece, the more exalted characters are ſubſervient to the intereſts of thoſe beneath them. We laugh with Bottom and his fellows, but is a ſingle paſſion agitated by the faint and childiſh ſolicitudes of Hermia and Demetrius, of Helena and Lyſander, thoſe ſhadows of each other?—That a drama, of which the principal perſonages are thus inſignificant, and the fable thus meagre and unintereſting, was one of our authour's earlieſt compoſitions, does not, therefore, ſeem a very improbable conjecture; nor are the beauties with which it is embelliſhed, inconſiſtent with this ſuppoſition; for the genius of Shakſpeare, even in its minority, could embroider the coarſeſt materials with the brighteſt and moſt laſting colours.

Oberon and *Titania* had been introduced in a drama-

[8] The learned editor of *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, printed in 1775, obſerves in his introductory diſcourſe, (Vol. IV. p. 161,) that Pluto and Proſerpina in the Marchant's Tale, appear to have been "the true progenitors of Shakſpeare's Oberon and Titania." In a tract already quoted, *Greene's Groatſworth of Witte*, 1592, a player is introduced, who boaſts of having performed the part of *the King of Fairies* with applauſe. Greene himſelf wrote a play, entitled *The Scottiſhe Hiſtorie of James the Fourthe, ſlaine at Flodden, intermixed with a pleaſant Comedie preſented by Oberon King of Fayeries*; which was entered at Stationers' hall in 1594, and printed in 1598. Shakſpeare, however, does not appear to have been indebted to this piece. The plan of it is ſhortly this. Bohan, a Scot, in conſequence of being diſguſted with the world, having retired to a tomb where he has fixed his dwelling, is met by *After Oberon*, king of the fairies, who entertains him with an antick or dance by his ſubjects. Theſe two perſonages, after ſome converſation, determine to liſten to a tragedy, which is acted before them, and to which they make a kind of chorus, by moralizing at the end of each act.

tick

tick entertainment exhibited before Queen Elizabeth in 1591, when ſhe was at Elvetham in Hampſhire; as appears from *A Deſcription of the Queene's Entertainment in Progreſs at Lord Hartford's*, &c. printed in 4to. in 1591. Her majeſty, after having been peſtered a whole afternoon with ſpeeches in verſe from the three Graces, Sylvanus, Wood Nymphs, &c. is at length addreſſed by the Fairy Queen, who preſents her majeſty with a chaplet,

" Given me by Auberon [Oberon] the fairie king."

A Midſummer-Night's Dream was not entered at Stationers' hall till Oct. 8, 1600, in which year it was printed; but is mentioned by Meres in 1598.

From the comedy of *Dr. Dodypoll* Mr. Steevens has quoted a line, which the authour ſeems to have borrowed from Shakſpeare:

" 'Twas I that led you through the painted meads,
" Where the light *fairies* danc'd upon the *flowers*,
" *Hanging in every leaf an orient pearl.*"

So, in *A Midſummer-Night's Dream:*

" And *hang a pearl* in ev'ry cowſlip's ear."

Again:

" And that ſame dew, which ſometimes on the buds
" Was wont to ſwell, like round and *orient pearls*,
" Stood now within the pretty *flouret's* eyes,
" Like tears," &c.

There is no earlier edition of the anonymous play in which the foregoing lines are found, than that in 1600; but *Dr. Dodypowle* is mentioned by Naſhe, in his preface to *Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is up*, printed in 1596.

The paſſage in the fifth act, which has been thought to allude to the death of Spenſer[9], is not inconſiſtent with the early appearance of this comedy; for it might have been inſerted between the time of that poet's death, and the year 1600, when the play was publiſhed. And indeed, if the alluſion was intended, which I do not

9 " The thrice three muſes, mourning for the death
" Of learning, *late* deceas'd in beggary."

believe, the paſſage muſt have been added in that interval; for *A Midſummer-Night's Dream* was certainly written in, or before, 1598, and Spenſer, we are told by Sir James Ware, (whoſe teſtimony with reſpect to this controverted point muſt have great weight,) did not die till 1599: "others, (he adds,) have it *wrongly*, 1598[o]."

[o] Preface to Spenſer's *View of the State of Ireland*. Dublin, fol. 1633. This treatiſe was written, according to Sir James Ware, in 1596. The teſtimony of that hiſtorian, relative to the time of Spenſer's death, is confirmed by a fact related by Ben Jonſon to Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, and recorded by that writer. When Spenſer and his wife were forced in great diſtreſs to fly from their houſe, which was burnt in the Iriſh Rebellion, the Earl of Eſſex ſent him twenty pieces; but he refuſed them; telling the perſon that brought them, he was ſure he had no time to ſpend them. He died ſoon afterwards, according to Ben Jonſon's account, in King-ſtreet. Lord Eſſex was not in Ireland in 1598, and was there from April to September in the following year.

It ſhould alſo be remembered that verſes by Spenſer are preſixed to Lewknor's *Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, publiſhed in 1599.

That this celebrated poet was alive in Sept. 1598, is proved by the following paper, addreſſed by Queen Elizabeth to the Lords Juſtices of Ireland, which is preſerved in the Muſeum, *Mſs. Harl.* 286, and has not, I believe, been noticed by any of his biographers:

Laſt of Sept. 1598.

'To the Lords Juſtices of Ireland.

'Though we doubt not but you will without any motion from us have good regard for the appointing of meete and ſerviceable perſons to be Sheriffs in the ſeveral counties, which is a matter of great importance, eſpecially at this time, when all parts of the realme are tinged with the infection of rebellion, yet wee thinke it not amiſſe ſometime to recommend unto you ſuch men as wee ſhould [wiſh] to have for that office. Among whom we may juſtly reckon Edm. Spenſer, a gentleman dwelling in the county of Corke, who is ſo well known unto you all for his good and commendable parts, (being a man endowed with good knowledge in learning, and not unſkillful or without experience in the ſervice of the warres,) as we need not uſe many words in his behalf. And therefore as we are of opinion that you will favour him for himſelfe and of your own accord, ſo we do pray you that this letter may increaſe his credit ſo farr forth with you as that he may not fayle to be appointed Sheriffe of the county of Corke, unleſſe there be to you knowne ſome important cauſe to the contrary.

'We are perſuaded he will ſo behave himſelfe in this particular as you ſhall have juſt cauſe to allowe of our recommendation, and his good ſervice. And ſo,' &c.

So

So careful a ſearcher into antiquity, who lived ſo near the time, is not likely to have been miſtaken in a fact, concerning which he appears to have made particular inquiries.

The paſſage in queſtion, however, in my apprehenſion, has been miſunderſtood. It relates, I conceive, not to the death of Spenſer, but to *the nine Muſes lamenting the decay of learning*, in that authour's poem entitled *The Tears of the Muſes*, which was publiſhed in 1591: and hence probably the words, "*late* deceas'd in beggary." This alluſion, if I am right in my conjecture, may ſerve to confirm the date aſſigned to *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*.

5. Comedy of Errors, 1593.

The only note of time that occurs in this play is found in the following paſſage:

"*Ant. S.* In what part of her body ſtands—*France?*"

"*Drom. S.* In her forehead, arm'd and reverted, making war againſt the *hair*."

I have no doubt that an equivoque was here intended, and that, beſide the obvious ſenſe, an alluſion was intended to King Henry IV. the *heir* of France *, concerning whoſe ſucceſſion to the throne there was a civil war in that country, from Auguſt 1589, when his father was aſſaſſinated, for ſeveral years. Henry, after ſtruggling long againſt the power and force of the League, extricated himſelf from all his difficulties by embracing the Roman Catholick religion at St. Denis, on Sunday the 25th of July 1593, and was crowned king of France in Feb. 1594; I therefore imagine this play was written before that period. In 1591 Lord Eſſex was ſent with 4000 troops to the French king's aſſiſtance, and his brother Walter was killed before Rouen in Normandy. From that time till Henry was peaceably ſettled on the throne, many bodies of troops were ſent by Q. Elizabeth

* The words *heir* and *hair* were, I make no doubt, pronounced alike in Shakſpeare's time, and hence they are frequently confounded in the old copies of his plays.

to

to his aid: ſo that his ſituation muſt then have been a matter of notoriety, and a ſubject of converſation in England.

This play was neither entered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623, but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, and exhibits internal proofs of having been one of Shakſpeare's earlieſt productions. I formerly ſuppoſed that it could not have been written till 1596; becauſe the tranſlation of the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, from which the plot appears to have been taken, was not publiſhed till 1595. But on a more attentive examination of that tranſlation, I find that Shakſpeare might have ſeen it before publication; for from the printer's advertiſement to the reader, it appears that for ſome time before it had been handed about in Mſ. among the tranſlator's friends. The piece was entered at Stationers'-Hall, June 10, 1594, and as the authour had tranſlated all the comedies of Plautus, it may be preſumed that the whole work had been the employment of ſome years: and this might have been one of the earlieſt tranſlated. Shakſpeare muſt alſo have read ſome other account of the ſame ſtory not yet diſcovered; for how otherwiſe could he have got the names of *Erraticus* and *Surreptus*, which do not occur in the tranſlation of Plautus? There the brothers are called Menæchmus *Soſicles*, and Menæchmus *the traveller*.

The *alternate* rhymes that are found in this play, as well as in *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, are a further proof that theſe pieces were among our authour's earlieſt productions. We are told by himſelf that *Venus and Adonis* was "the firſt heir of his invention." *The Rape of Lucrece* probably followed ſoon afterwards. When he turned his thoughts to the ſtage, the meaſure which he had uſed in thoſe poems, naturally preſented itſelf to him in his firſt dramatick eſſays: I mean in thoſe plays which were written *originally* by himſelf. In thoſe which were grounded, like the *Henries*, on the preceding productions of other men, he naturally followed the example before him, and conſequently in thoſe pieces no alternate rhymes are found.

The doggrel meaſure, which, if I recollect right, is employed in none of our authour's plays except *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Love's Labour's Loſt*, alſo adds ſupport to the dates aſſigned to theſe plays: for theſe long doggrel verſes, as I have obſerved in a note at the end of the piece now under our conſideration, are written in that kind of metre which was uſually attributed by the dramatick poets before his time to ſome of their inferior characters. He was imperceptibly infected with the prevailing mode in theſe his early compoſitions; but ſoon learned to 'deviate boldly from the common track,' left by preceding writers.

A play with the ſame title as that before us, was exhibited at Gray's-inn in December 1594; but I know not whether it was Shakſpeare's play, or a tranſlation from Plautus. "After ſuch ſports," (ſays the writer of *Geſta Grayorum*, 1688,) *a Comedy of Errors, like* to Plautus his *Menechmus*, was played by the players: ſo that night was begun and continued to the end in nothing but confuſion and errors. Whereupon it was ever afterwards called *the Night of Errors*." The Regiſters of Gray's-inn have been examined for the purpoſe of aſcertaining whether the play above-mentioned was our authour's; but they afford no information on the ſubject.

From its having been repreſented, by *the players*, not by the gentlemen of the inn, I think it probable that it was Shakſpeare's piece.

The name of *Dowſabel*, which is mentioned in this play, occurs likewiſe in an Eclogue entitled *The Shepherd's Garland*, by Michael Drayton, printed in 4to. in 1593.

6. The Taming of the Shrew, 1594.

This play and *The Winter's Tale* are the only pieces which I have found reaſon, ſince the firſt edition of this Eſſay appeared, to attribute to an era widely different

from that in which I had originally placed them[1]. I had ſuppoſed the piece now under conſideration to have been written in the year 1606. On a more attentive peruſal of it, and more experience in our authour's ſtyle and manner, I am perſuaded that it was one of his very early productions, and near in point of time to *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Loſt*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

In the old comedies antecedent to the time of our authour's writing for the ſtage, (if indeed they deſerve that name) a kind of doggrel meaſure is often found, which, as I have already obſerved, Shakſpeare adopted in ſome of thoſe pieces which were undoubtedly among his early compoſitions; I mean his *Errors*, and *Love's Labour's Loſt*. This kind of metre being found alſo in the play before us, adds ſupport to the ſuppoſition that it was one of his early productions. The laſt four lines of this comedy furniſh an example of the meaſure I allude to:

" 'Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white,
" And being a winner, God give you good night.
" Now go thy ways, thou haſt tam'd a curſt ſhrew,
" 'Tis a wonder, by your leave, ſhe will be tam'd ſo."

Another proof of *The Taming of the Shrew* being an early production ariſes from the frequent play of words which we find in it, and which Shakſpeare has condemned in a ſubſequent comedy.

Some of the incidents in this comedy are taken from the *Suppoſes* of Gaſcoigne, an authour of conſiderable popularity, when Shakſpeare firſt began to write for the ſtage.

The old piece entitled *The Taming of a Shrew*, on which our authour's play is founded, was entered on

[1] A *minute* change has been made in the arrangement of five other plays; *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *The two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Cymbeline*; but the variation is not more than a period of two or three years.

the Stationers' books by Peter Short, May 2, 1594, and probably ſoon afterwards printed. As it bore nearly the ſame title with Shakſpeare's play, (which was not printed till 1623,) the hope of getting a ſale for it under the ſhelter of a celebrated name, was probably the inducement to iſſue it out at that time; and its entry at Stationers'-hall, and publication in 1594, (for from the paſſage quoted below it muſt have been publiſhed[2],) gives weight to the ſuppoſition that Shakſpeare's play was written and firſt acted in that year. There being no edition of the genuine play in print, the bookſeller hoped that the old piece with a ſimilar title might paſs on the common reader for Shakſpeare's performance. This appears to have been a frequent practice of the bookſellers in thoſe days; for Rowley's play of *K. Henry VIII.* I am perſuaded, was publiſhed in 1605, and 1613, with the ſame view; as were *King Leir and his three daughters* in 1605, and Lord Sterline's *Julius Cæſar* in 1607.

In the year 1607 it is highly probable that this comedy of our authour's was revived, for in that year Nicholas Ling republiſhed *The* old *Taming of a Shrew*, with the ſame intent, as it ſhould ſeem, with which that piece had originally been iſſued out by another bookſeller in 1594. In the entry made by Ling in the Stationers' books, January 22, 1606-7, he joined with this old drama two of Shakſpeare's genuine plays, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labour's Loſt*, neither of which he ever publiſhed, nor does his name appear in the title-page of any one of our authour's performances: So that thoſe two plays could only have been ſet down by him, along with the other, with ſome fraudulent intent.

[2] From a paſſage in a tract written by Sir John Harrington, entitled *The Metamorphoſis of Ajax*, 1596, this old play appears to have been printed before that time, probably in the year 1594, when it was entered at Stationers-hall; though no edition of ſo early a date has hitherto been diſcovered. "*Read*" (ſays Sir John) "the *booke* of *Taming a Shrew*, which hath made a number of us ſo perfect, that now every one can rule a ſhrew in our country, ſave he that hath her."

In

In the ſame year alſo, (Nov. 17) our authour's genuine play was entered at Stationers-hall by John Smethwyck[3] (one of the proprietors of the ſecond folio); which circumſtance gives additional weight to the ſuppoſition that the play was *revived* in that year. Smethwyck had probably procured a copy of it, and had then thoughts of printing it, though for ſome reaſon, now undiſcoverable, it was not printed by him till 1631, eight years after it had appeared in the edition by the players in folio.

It ſhould be obſerved that there is a ſlight variation between the titles of the anonymous play and Shakſpeare's piece; both of which, in conſequence of the inaccuracy of Mr. Pope, and his being very ſuperficially acquainted with the phraſeology and manner of our early writers, were for a long time unjuſtly attributed to our poet. The old drama was called *The Taming of* a *Shrew*; Shakſpeare's comedy, *The Taming of* the *Shrew*.

It muſt not be concealed, however, that *The Taming of the Shrew* is not enumerated among our authour's plays by Meres in 1598; a circumſtance which yet is not ſufficient to prove that it was not then written: for neither is *Hamlet* nor *The Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* mentioned by him; though thoſe three plays had undoubtedly appeared before that year.

I formerly imagined that a line[4] in this comedy alluded to an old play written by Thomas Heywood, entitled *A Woman kill'd with kindneſs*, of which the ſecond edition was printed in 1607, and the firſt probably not before the year 1600; but the other proofs which I have already ſtated with reſpect to the date of the play before us, have convinced me that I was miſtaken.

3 For this bookſeller *Romeo and Juliet* was printed in 4to. in 1609, and an edition of *Hamlet* without date; the latter probably was printed either in that year or 1607.

4 "This is the way to kill a wife with kindneſs." *Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV. ſc. i. Heywood's play is mentioned in *The Black Booke*, 4to. 1604. I am not poſſeſſed of the firſt edition of it, nor is it in any of the great collections of old plays that I have ſeen.

7. Love's Labour's Lost, 1594.

Shakſpeare's natural diſpoſition leading him, as Dr. Johnſon has obſerved, to comedy, it is highly probable that his firſt *original* dramatick production was of the comick kind: and of his comedies *Love's Labour's Loſt* appears to me to bear ſtrong marks of having been one of his earlieſt eſſays. The frequent rhymes with which it abounds[5], of which, in his early performances he ſeems to have been extremely fond, its imperfect verſification, its artleſs and deſultory dialogue, and the irregularity of the compoſition, may be all urged in ſupport of this conjecture.

Love's Labour's Loſt was not entered at Stationers-hall till the 22d of January 1606-7, but is mentioned by Francis Meres[6], in his *Wit's Treaſury, being the Second Part*

[5] As this circumſtance is more than once mentioned, in the courſe of theſe obſervations, it may not be improper to add a few words on the ſubject of our authour's metre. A mixture of rhymes with blank verſe, in the ſame play, and ſometimes in the ſame ſcene, is found in almoſt all his pieces, and is not peculiar to Shakſpeare, being alſo found in the works of Jonſon, and almoſt all our ancient dramatick writers. It is not, therefore, merely the uſe of rhymes, mingled with blank verſe, but their *frequency*, that is here urged, as a circumſtance which ſeems to characterize and diſtinguiſh our poet's earlieſt performances. In the whole number of pieces which were written antecedent to the year 1600, and which, for the ſake of perſpicuity, have been called his *early compoſitions*, more rhyming couplets are found, than in all the plays compoſed ſubſequently to that year; which have been named his *late productions*. Whether in proceſs of time Shakſpeare grew weary of the bondage of rhyme, or whether he became convinced of its impropriety in a dramatick dialogue, his neglect of rhyming (for he never wholly diſuſed it) ſeems to have been *gradual*. As, therefore, moſt of his early productions are characterized by the multitude of ſimilar terminations which they exhibit, whenever of two early pieces it is doubtful which preceded the other, I am diſpoſed to believe, (other proofs being wanting) that play in which the greater number of rhymes is found, to have been firſt compoſed. The plays founded on the ſtory of King Henry VI. do not indeed abound in rhymes; but this probably aroſe from their being *originally* conſtructed by preceding writers.

[6] This writer, to whoſe liſt of our authour's plays we are ſo much indebted,

Part of Wit's Commonwealth[7], in 1598, and was printed in that year. In the title-page of this edition, (the oldeſt hitherto diſcovered,) this piece is ſaid to have been *preſented before her highneſs* [Queen Elizabeth] *the laſt Chriſtmas*, [1597,] and to be *newly corrected and augmented*. from which it ſhould ſeem, either that there had been a former impreſſion, or that the play had been originally repreſented in a leſs perfect ſtate, than that in which it appears at preſent.

I think it probable that our authour's firſt draft of this play was written in or before 1594; and that ſome additions were made to it between that year and 1597, when it was exhibited before the Queen. One of thoſe additions may have been the paſſage which ſeems to allude to *The Metamorphoſis of Ajax*, by Sir John Harrington, printed in 1596: "Your lion—will be given to *A-jax**." This, however, is not certain; for the conceit of *A-jax* and *a jakes* may not have originated with Harrington, and may hereafter be found in ſome more ancient tract.

In this comedy Don Armado ſays,—"The *firſt* and *ſecond cauſe* will not ſerve my turn: the *paſſado* he reſpects not, the *duello* he regards not: his diſgrace is to be called boy; but his glory is to ſubdue man." Shakſpeare ſeems here to have had in his thoughts Saviolo's Treatiſe *Of honour and honourable quarrels*, publiſhed in 1595[8]. This paſſage alſo may have been an addition.

indebted, appears, from the following paſſage of the work here mentioned, to have been perſonally acquainted with Shakſpeare:

"As the ſoul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, ſo the ſweet witty ſoul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakeſpeare. Witneſs his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his ſugred *Sonnets* among his private friends," &c. *Wit's Treaſury*, p. 282. There is no edition of Shakſpeare's *Sonnets*, now extant, of ſo early a date as 1598, when Meres's book was printed; ſo that we may conclude, he was one of thoſe friends to whom they were privately recited, before their publication.

[7] This book was probably publiſhed in the latter end of the year 1598; for it was not entered at Stationers-hall till September in that year.

* See Vol. II. p. 423, n. 8.

[8] See a note on *As you like it*, Vol. III. p. 228, n. 8.

Bankes's horſe, which is mentioned in the play before us, had been exhibited in London in or before 1589, as appears from a ſtory recorded in Tarlton's *Jeſts*[9].

In this comedy there is more attempt at delineation of character than in either *The Comedy of Errors* or *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*; a circumſtance which inclines me to think that it was written ſubſequently to thoſe plays. Biron and Catharine, as Mr. Steevens, I think, has obſerved, are faint prototypes of Benedick and Beatrice.

The doggrel verſes in this piece, like thoſe in *The Comedy of Errors*, are longer and more hobling than thoſe which have been quoted from *The Taming of the Shrew*:

" You two are bookmen; can you tell by your wit
" What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five
weeks old as yet?"—
" O' my truth moſt ſweet jeſts! moſt incony vulgar
wit,
" When it comes ſo ſmoothly off, ſo obſcenely as it were,
ſo fit," &c.

9 " There was one Bankes in the time of Tarlton, who ſerved the Earl of Eſſex, and had a horſe of ſtrange qualities; and being at the Croſs Keyes in Gracious-ſtreete, getting money with him, as he was mightily reſorted to, Tarlton then (with his fellowes) playing at the Bell [*f. Bull*] by, came into the Croſs keyes, amongſt many people to ſee faſhions: which Bankes perceiving, to make the people laugh, ſaies, *Signior*, to his horſe, *go, fetch me the ve ieſt foole in the company*. The jade comes immediately, and with his mouth drawes Tarlton forth. Tarlton, with merry words, ſaid nothing but *God-a-mercy, horſe*. In the end Tarlton, ſeeing the people laugh ſo, was angry inwardly, and ſaid, *Sir, had I power of your horſe, as you have, I would do more than that. Whate'er it be*, ſaid Bankes, to pleaſe him, *I will charge him to do it. Then*, ſaies Tarlton, *charge him to bring me the veryeſt whore-maſter in the company. He ſhall*, ſaies Bankes. *Signior*, ſaies he, *bring Maſter Tarlton the veryeſt whore-maſter in the company*. The horſe leads his maſter to him. Then *God-a-mercy, horſe*, indeed ſaies Tarlton. The people had much ado to keep peace: but Bankes and Tarlton had like to have ſquared, and the horſe by, to give ame. But ever after it was a by word thorow London, *God'-a-mercy, horſe!* and is to this day." Tarlton's *Jeſts*, 4to. 1611.—Tarlton died in 1589.

This

This play is mentioned in a mean poem entitled *Alba, the months minde of a melancholy Lover*, by R. T. Gentleman, printed in 1598:

" *Love's Labour Loſt* I once did ſee, a play
" Y-cleped ſo, ſo called to my paine,
" Which I to heare to my ſmall joy did ſtay,
" Giving attendance to my froward dame;
" My miſgiving mind preſaging to me ill,
" Yet was I drawne to ſee it 'gainſt my will.

* * * *

" Each actor plaid in cunning wiſe his part,
" But chiefly thoſe entrapt in Cupid's ſnare;
" Yet all was fained, 'twas not from the hart,
" They ſeeme to grieve, but yet they felt no care:
" 'Twas 't that griefe indeed did beare in breſt,
" The others did but make a ſhew in jeſt."

Mr. Gildon, in his obſervations on *Love's Labour's Loſt*, ſays, *he* " *cannot ſee why the authour gave it this name.*"— The following lines exhibit the train of thoughts, which probably ſuggeſted to Shakſpeare this title, as well as that which anciently was affixed to another of his comedies,—*Love's Labour Won*.

" To be *in love*, where ſcorn is bought with groans,
" Coy looks with heart-ſore ſighs; one fading moment's [mirth
" With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights:
" If haply *won*, perhaps a hapleſs gain;
" If *loſt*, why then a grievous *labour won*."
Two Gentlemen of Verona. Act I. ſc. i.

8. Two Gentlemen of Verona, 1595.

This comedy was not entered on the books of the Stationers' Company till 1623, at which time it was firſt printed; but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, and bears ſtrong internal marks of an early compoſition. The comick parts of it are of the ſame colour with the comick parts of *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *A Mid-*

A Midſummer-Night's Dream; and the ſerious ſcenes are eminently diſtinguiſhed by that elegant and paſtoral ſimplicity which might be expected from the early effuſions of ſuch a mind as Shakſpeare's, when employed in deſcribing the effects of love. In this piece alſo, as in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Love's Labour's Loſt*, ſome alternate verſes are found.

Sir William Blackſtone concurs with me in opinion on this ſubject; obſerving, that "one of the great faults of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is the haſtening too abruptly and without preparation to the denouement, which ſhews that it was one of Shakſpeare's very early performances."

The following lines in Act I. ſc. iii. have induced me to aſcribe this play to the year 1595:

"—He wonder'd, that your lordſhip
"Would ſuffer him to ſpend his youth at home,
"While other men, of ſlender reputation,
"Put forth their ſons to ſeek preferment out:
"*Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there,*
"*Some, to diſcover iſlands far away.*"

Shakſpeare, as has been often obſerved, gives to almoſt every country the manners of his own: and though the ſpeaker is here a Veroneſe, the poet, when he wrote the laſt two lines, was thinking of England; where voyages for the purpoſe of *diſcovering iſlands far away* were at this time much proſecuted. In 1595 Sir Walter Rawleigh undertook a voyage to the iſland of Trinidado, from which he made an expedition up the river Oronoque, to diſcover Guiana. Sir Humphry Gilbert had gone on a ſimilar voyage of diſcovery the preceding year.

The particular ſituation of England in 1595 may have ſuggeſted the line above quoted: "Some to the wars, &c. In that year it was generally believed that the Spaniards meditated a ſecond invaſion of England with a much more powerful and better appointed Armada than that which had been defeated in 1588. Soldiers were levied with

with great diligence and placed on the ſea-coaſts, and two great fleets were equipped; one to encounter the enemy in the Britiſh ſeas; the other to ſail to the Weſt-Indies, under the command of Hawkins and Drake, to attack the Spaniards in their own territories. About the ſame time alſo Elizabeth ſent a conſiderable body of troops to the aſſiſtance of King Henry IV. of France, who had entered into an offenſive and defenſive alliance with the Engliſh Queen, and had newly declared war againſt Spain. Our authour therefore, we ſee, had abundant reaſon for both the lines before us:

" Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there,
" Some to diſcover iſlands far away."

Among the marks of love, Speed in this play (Act II. ſc. 1.) enumerates the walking alone, " like one that had the peſtilence." In the year 1593 there had been a great plague, which carried off near eleven thouſand perſons in London. Shakſpeare was undoubtedly there at that time, and his own recollection probably furniſhed him with this image. There had not been a great plague in the metropolis, if I remember right, ſince that of 1564, of which our poet could have no perſonal knowledge, having been born in that year.

Valentinus putting himſelf at the head of a band of outlaws in this piece, has been ſuppoſed to be copied from Sydney's *Arcadia*, where Pylades heads the Helots. The firſt edition of the *Arcadia* was in 1590.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* there are two alluſions to the ſtory of Hero and Leander, which I ſuſpect Shakſpeare had read recently before he compoſed this play. Marlowe's poem on that ſubject was entered at Stationers-hall, Sept. 18, 1593, and I believe was publiſhed in that or the following year, though I have met with no copy earlier than that printed in quarto in 1598. Though that ſhould have been the firſt edition, Shakſpeare might yet have read this poem ſoon after the authour's death in 1593: for Marlowe's fame was deſervedly ſo high, that a piece left by him for publication

tion was probably handed about in manuſcript among his theatrical acquaintances antecedent to its being iſſued from the preſs.

In the following lines of this play,

" Why, Phaeton, (for thou art Merops' ſon,)
" Wilt thou aſpire to guide the heavenly car,
" And with thy daring folly burn the world?"

the poet, as Mr. Steevens has obſerved, might have been furniſhed with his mythology by the old play of *King John*, in two parts, 4to. 1591:

" —— as ſometimes *Phaeton*,
" Miſtruſting ſilly *Merops* for his fire."

If I am right in ſuppoſing our authour's *King John* to have been written in 1596, it is not improbable that he read the old play with particular attention antecedently to his ſitting down to compoſe a new drama on the ſame ſubject; perhaps in the preceding year: and this circumſtance may add ſome weight to the date now aſſigned to the play before us.

9. Romeo and Juliet, 1595.

It has been already obſerved, that our authour in his early plays appears to have been much addicted to rhyming; a practice from which he gradually departed, though he never wholly deſerted it. In this piece *more* rhymes, I believe, are found, than in any other of his plays, *Love's Labour's Loſt* and *A Midſummer-Night's Dream* only excepted. This circumſtance, the ſtory on which it is founded, ſo likely to captivate a young poet, the imperfect form in which it originally appeared, and its very early publication[1], all incline me to believe that this was Shakſpeare's firſt tragedy; for the three parts of *K. Henry VI.* do not pretend to that title.

[1] There is no edition of any of our authour's genuine plays extant, prior to 1597, when *Romeo and Juliet* was publiſhed.

A new

"A new ballad of *Romeo and Juliet*," (perhaps our authour's play,) was entered on the Stationers' books, Auguſt 5, 1596[2], and the firſt ſketch of the play was printed in 1597; but it did not appear in its preſent form till two years afterwards.

This tragedy was originally repreſented by the ſervants of Lord Hunſdon, who was appointed Lord Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth in 1585, and died in July 1596. As it appears from the title-page of the original edition in 1597, that *Romeo and Juliet* had been *often acted* by the ſervants of that nobleman, it probably had been repreſented in the preceding year.

In the third act *the firſt and ſecond cauſe* are mentioned: that paſſage therefore was probably written after the publication of Saviolo's Book on *Honour and honourable quarrels*; which appeared in 1595.

From ſeveral paſſages in the fifth act of this tragedy it is manifeſt, I think, that Shakſpeare had recently read, and remembered, ſome of the lines in Daniel's *Complaint of Roſamond*, which, I believe, was printed in 1592[3]: the

[2] There is no entry in the Stationers' books relative to the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, antecedent to its publication in 1597, if this does not relate to it. This entry was made by Edward Whyte, and therefore is not likely to have related to the *poem* called *Romeo and Juletta*, which was entered in 1582, by Richard Tottel. How vague the deſcription of plays was at this time, may appear from the following entry, which is found in the Stationers' books, an. 1590, and ſeems to relate to Marlowe's *tragedy* of Tamburlaine, publiſhed in that year, by Richard Jones.

"To Richard Jones] Twoe Commical *Diſcourſes* of Tamburlein, the Cythian Shepparde."

In Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, as originally performed, ſeveral comick interludes were introduced; whence perhaps, the epithet *comical* was added to the title.—As tragedies were ſometimes entitled *diſcourſes*, ſo a grave poem or *ſad diſcourſe* in verſe, (to uſe the language of the time) was frequently denominated a *tragedy*. All the poems inſerted in the *Mirrour for Magiſtrates*, and ſome of Drayton's pieces, are called *tragedies*, by Meres and other ancient writers. Some of Sir David Lindſay's poems, though not in a dramatick form, are alſo by their authour entitled *tragedies*.

[3] "A booke called *Delia*, containynge diverſe ſonates, with *the Complaints of Roſamonde*," was entered at Stationers-hall by Simon Waterſon

the earlieſt edition, however, that I have ſeen of that piece is dated in 1594:

" And nought-reſpecting death, the laſt of paines,
" Plac'd his *pale colours*, (the *enſign* of his might,)
" Upon his new-got ſpoil," &c. *Complaint of Roſamond.*
" —— beauty's *enſign* yet
" Is crimſon in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
" And *death's pale flag*," &c. *Romeo and Juliet.*
" Decayed roſes of diſcolour'd cheeks
" Do yet retain ſome notes of former grace,
" *And ugly death fits faire within her face.*"
Complaint of Roſamond.
" Death that hath ſuck'd the honey of thy breath,
" Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty."
Romeo and Juliet.
" Ah now methinks I ſee *death dallying ſeeks*
" *To entertain itſelfe in love's ſweet place.*"
Complaint of Roſamond.
" ——— Shall I believe
" That unſubſtantial *death is amorous?*"
Romeo and Juliet.

If the following paſſage in an old comedy already mentioned, entitled *Dr. Dodipoll*, which had appeared before 1596, be conſidered as an imitation, it may add ſome weight to the ſuppoſition that *Romeo and Juliet* had been exhibited before that year:

" The glorious parts of fair Lucilia,
" Take them and join them in the heavenly ſpheres,
" And fix them there as an eternal light,
" For lovers to adore and wonder at." *Dr. Dodipoll.*
" Take him and cut him out in little ſtars,
" And he will make the face of heaven ſo fine,
" That all the world ſhall be in love with night,
" And pay no worſhip to the gariſh ſun."
Romeo and Juliet.

Waterſon in Feb. 1591-2, and the latter piece is commended by Naſhe in a tract entitled *Pierſe Pennileſſe his Supplication to the Diveil*, publiſhed in 1592.

In

In the fifth act of this tragedy mention is made of the practice of ſealing up the doors of thoſe houſes in which "the infectious peſtilence did reign." Shakſpeare probably had himſelf ſeen this practiſed in the plague which raged in London in 1593.

From a ſpeech of the Nurſe in this play, which contains theſe words—"*It is now ſince the earthquake eleven years*," &c. Mr. Tyrwhitt conjectured, that *Romeo and Juliet*, or at leaſt part of it, was written in 1591; the novels from which Shakſpeare may be ſuppoſed to have drawn his ſtory, not mentioning any ſuch circumſtance; while, on the other hand, there actually was an earthquake in England on the 6th of April, 1580, which he might here have had in view[4].—It formerly ſeemed improbable to me that Shakſpeare, when he was writing this tragedy, ſhould have adverted, with ſuch preciſion, to the date of an earthquake which had been felt in his youth. The paſſage quoted ſtruck me, as only diſplaying one of thoſe characteriſtical traits, which diſtinguiſh old people of the lower claſs; who delight in enumerating a multitude of minute circumſtances that have no relation to the buſineſs immediately under their conſideration[5], and are particularly fond of computing time from extraordinary events, ſuch as battles, comets, plagues, and earthquakes. This feature of their character our authour has in various places ſtrongly marked. Thus (to mention one of many inſtances,) the Grave-digger in *Hamlet* ſays, that he came to his employment, "of all the days i'the year, that day that the laſt king *o'ercame Fortinbras*,—that very day that young *Hamlet* was born."—A more attentive peruſal, however, of our poet's works, and his frequent alluſions to the manners and uſages of England, and to the events of

4 See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I. ſc. iii.

5 Thus Mrs. Quickly in *K. Henry IV.* reminds Falſtaff, that he "ſwore on a parcel-gilt goblet, to marry her, ſitting in her dolphin chamber, at a round table, by a ſea-coal fire, on Wedneſday in Whitſun-week, when the prince broke his head for likening his father to a ſinging man of Windſor.

his

his own time, which he has deſcribed as taking place wherever his ſcene happens to lie, have ſhewn me that Mr. Tyrwhitt's conjecture is not ſo improbable as I once ſuppoſed it. Shakſpeare might have laid the foundation of this play in 1591, and finiſhed it at a ſubſequent period. The paſſage alluded to is in the *firſt* act.

If the earthquake which happened in England in 1580, was in his thoughts, when he compoſed the firſt part of this play, and induced him to ſtate the earthquake at Verona as happening on the day on which Juliet was *weaned*, and *eleven* years before the commencement of the piece, it has led him into a contradiction; for according to the Nurſe's account Juliet was within a fortnight and odd days of completing her *fourteenth* year; and yet according to the computation made ſhe could not well be much more than *twelve* years old. Whether indeed the Engliſh earthquake was, or was not in his thoughts, the nurſe's account is inconſiſtent, and contradictory.

Perhaps Shakſpeare was more careful to mark the garrulity, than the preciſion, of the old woman:—or perhaps, he meant this very incorrectneſs as a trait of her character:—or, without having recourſe to either of theſe ſuppoſitions, ſhall we ſay, that our authour was here, as in ſome other places, haſty and inattentive? It is certain that there is nothing in which he is leſs accurate, than the computation of time. Of his negligence in this reſpect, *As you Like it*, *Meaſure for Meaſure*, and *Othello*, furniſh remarkable inſtances[6].

10. HAMLET, 1596.

The following paſſage is found in *An Epiſtle to the Gentlemen Students of the Two Univerſities* by Thomas

[6] See *Meaſure for Meaſure*, Act I. ſc. iii. and iv.—*As you like it*, Act IV. ſc. i. and iii.—*Othello*, Act III. ſc. iii. "I ſlept the *next night* well," &c.

Naſhe,

Naſhe, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, which was publiſhed in 1589:—"I will turn back to my firſt text of ſtudies of delight, and talk a little in friendſhip with a few of our trivial tranſlators. It is a common practice now a-days, among a ſort of ſhifting companions, that runne through every art, and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint*, whereto they were born, and buſie themſelves with the endevors of art, that could ſcarcely latinize their neck-verſe if they ſhould have neede; yet Engliſh *Seneca*, read by candle-light, yeelds many good ſentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and ſo forth: and, if you intreat him faire in a froſty morning, he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I ſhould ſay, Handfuls, of tragical ſpeeches. But O grief! *Tempus edax rerum*;—what is that will laſt always? The ſea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and *Seneca*, let bloud line by line, and page by page, at length muſt needes die to our ſtage."

Not having ſeen the firſt edition of this tract till a few years ago, I formerly doubted whether the foregoing paſſage referred to the tragedy of *Hamlet*; but the word *Hamlets* being printed in the original copy in a different character from the reſt, I have no longer any doubt upon the ſubject.

It is manifeſt from this paſſage that ſome play on the ſtory of *Hamlet* had been exhibited before the year 1589; but I am inclined to think that it was not Shakſpeare's drama, but an elder performance, on which, with the aid of the old proſe Hiſtory of Hamlet, his tragedy was formed. The great number of pieces which we *know* he formed on the performances of preceding writers [8], renders it highly probable that ſome others alſo of his dramas were conſtructed on plays that are now loſt. Perhaps the original *Hamlet* was written by Thomas Kyd; who was the authour of one play (and probably of more)

[8] See the Diſſertation on the Three Parts of *K. Henry VI.* Vol. VI. p. 429.

to which no name is affixed [9]. The only tragedy to which Kyd's name is affixed, (*Cornelia*,) is a profeſſed *tranſlation* from the French of Garnier, who, as well as his tranſlator, imitated Seneca. In Kyd's *Spaniſh Tragedy*, as in Shakſpeare's *Hamlet*, there is, if I may ſay ſo, a play repreſented *within a play*: if the old play of *Hamlet* ſhould ever be recovered, a ſimilar interlude, I make no doubt, would be found there; and ſomewhat of the ſame contrivance may be traced in *The* old *Taming of a Shrew*, a comedy which perhaps had the ſame authour as the other ancient pieces now enumerated.

Naſhe ſeems to point at ſome dramatick writer of that time, who had originally been a ſcrivener or attorney:

" A clerk foredoom'd his father's ſoul to croſs,
" Who *penn'd* a ſtanza when he ſhould engroſs,"

who, inſtead of tranſcribing deeds and pleadings, choſe to imitate Seneca's plays, of which a tranſlation had been publiſhed many years before. Our authour, however freely he may have borrowed from Plutarch and Holinſhed, does not appear to be at all indebted to Seneca; and therefore I do not believe that he was the perſon in Naſhe's contemplation. The perſon alluded to being deſcribed as originally bred to the law, (for the trade of *noverint* is the trade of an attorney or conveyancer [1],) I formerly conceived that this circumſtance alſo was deciſive to ſhew that Shakſpeare could not have been aimed at. I do not heſitate to acknowledge, that ſince the firſt edition of this eſſay I have found reaſon to believe that I was miſtaken. The comprehenſive mind of our poet embraced almoſt every object of nature,

9 *The Spaniſh Tragedy.*

1 " The country lawyers too jog down apace,
" Each with his *noverint univerſi* face."
Ravenſcroft's Prologue prefixed to *Titus Andronicus*.
Our ancient deeds were written in Latin, and frequently began with the words, *Noverint Univerſi*. The form is ſtill retained. *Know all men*, &c.

every

every trade, every art; the manners of every deſcription of men, and the general language of almoſt every profeſſion: but his knowledge of legal terms is not merely ſuch as might be acquired by the caſual obſervation of even his all-comprehending mind; it has the appearance of *technical* ſkill; and he is ſo fond of diſplaying it on all occaſions, that I ſuſpect he was early initiated in at leaſt the forms of law; and was employed, while he yet remained at Stratford, in the office of ſome country attorney, who was at the ſame time a petty conveyancer, and perhaps alſo the Seneſchal of ſome manor-court. I ſhall ſubjoin the proofs below[2].

The

[2] —— for what in me was *purchas'd*,
Falls upon thee in a much fairer ſort. *King Henry IV.* P. II.
Purchaſe is here uſed in its ſtrict legal ſenſe, in contradiſtinction to an acquiſition by *deſcent*.
Unleſs the devil have him in fee-ſimple, with fine and recovery.
Merry Wives of Windſor.
He is 'reſted *on the caſe*. *Comedy of Errors.*
— with *bills* on their necks, *Be it known unto all men by theſe preſents*, &c. *As you like it.*
— who writes himſelf armigero, in any *bill*, *warrant*, *quittance* or *obligation*. *Merry Wives of Windſor.*
Go with me to a notary, ſeal me there
Your *ſingle bond*. *Merchant of Venice.*
Say, for non-payment that the debt ſhould double.
Venus and Adonis.
On a conditional bond's becoming forfeited for non-payment of money borrowed, the whole penalty, which is uſually the double of the principal ſum lent by the obligee, was formerly recoverable at law. To this our poet here alludes.
But the defendant doth that plea deny;
To 'cide his title, is impanelled
A queſt of thoughts. *Sonnet* 46.
In *Much ado about Nothing* Dogberry charges the watch to keep their *fellows' counſel and their own*. This Shakſpeare transferred from the oath of a grand jury-man.
And let my officers of ſuch a nature
Make an *extent* upon his houſe and lands. *As you like it.*
He was taken *with the manner*. *Love's Labour's Loſt.*
Enfeof'd himſelf to popularity. *K. Henry IV. P. I.*

The tragedy of *Hamlet* was not regiſtered in the books of the Stationers' Company till the 26th of July, 1602. I believe it was then publiſhed, though the earlieſt copy now extant is dated in 1604. In the title-page of that copy, the play is ſaid to be "*newly* imprinted, and enlarged to almoſt as much again *as it was, according to the true and perfect copy*;" from which words it is manifeſt that a former *leſs perfect* copy had been iſſued from the preſs.

He will ſeal the fee-ſimple of his ſalvation, and cut the entail from all remainders, and a perpetual ſucceſſion for it perpetually.

All's well that ends well.

Why, let her *except before excepted*. *Twelfth Night.*

—which is four terms, or two actions;—and he ſhall laugh without *intervallums*. *King Henry IV. P. II.*

—keeps leets and *law-days*. *King Richard II.*

Pray in aid for kindneſs. *Antony and Cleopatra.*

No writer but one who had been converſant with the technical language of leaſes and other conveyances, would have uſed *determination* as ſynonymous to *end*. Shakſpeare frequently uſes the word in that ſenſe. See Vol. V. p. 403, n. 4.; Vol. VI. p. 84, n. *; Vol. X. p. 202, n. 8. "From and after the *determination* of ſuch term," is the regular language of conveyancers.

Humbly complaining to your highneſs. *K. Richard III.*

"Humbly complaining to your lordſhip, your orator," &c. are the firſt words of every bill in chancery.

A kiſs in fee-farm! In witneſs whereof theſe parties interchangeably have ſet their hands and ſeals. *Troilus and Creſſida.*

Art thou a *feodary* for this act? *Cymbeline.*

See the note on that paſſage, Vol. VIII. p. 380, n. 2.

Are thoſe *precepts* ſerved? ſays Shallow to Davy in *K. Henry IV.*

Precepts in this ſenſe is a word only known in the office of a Juſtice of peace.

Tell me, what ſtate, what dignity, what honour,
Can'ſt thou *demiſe* to any child of mine? *K. Richard III.*

"—hath *demiſed*, granted, and to farm let," is the conſtant language of leaſes. What *poet* but Shakſpeare has uſed the word *demiſed* in this ſenſe?

Perhaps it may be ſaid, that our authour in the ſame manner may be proved to have been equally converſant with the terms of divinity, or phyſick. Whenever as large a number of inſtances of his eccleſiaſtical or medicinal knowledge ſhall be produced, what has now been ſtated will certainly not be entitled to any weight.

In

In a tract entitled *Wits miſerie or the world's madneſſe, diſcovering the incarnate devils of the age*, by Thomas Lodge, which was publiſhed in quarto in 1596, one of the devils (as Dr. Farmer has obſerved) is ſaid to be "a foule lubber, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *ghoſt*, who cried ſo miſerably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge*." If the alluſion was to our authour's tragedy, this paſſage will aſcertain its appearance in or before 1596; but Lodge may have had the elder play in his contemplation. We *know* however from the teſtimony of Dr. Gabriel Harvey, that Shakſpeare's *Hamlet* had been exhibited before 1598[3].

The Caſe is altered, a comedy, attributed to Ben Jonſon, and written before the end of the year 1599[4], contains a paſſage, which ſeems to me to have a reference to this play:

Angelo. "But firſt I'll *play the ghoſt*; *I'll call him out*[5]."

In the ſecond act of *Hamlet*, a conteſt between the children of the queen's chapel[6], and the actors of the eſtabliſhed theatres, is alluded to. At what time that conteſt began, is uncertain. But, ſhould it appear not to have commenced till ſome years after the date here aſſigned, it would not, I apprehend, be a ſufficient reaſon for aſcribing this play to a later period; for, as

3 See Vol. X. p. 71.

4 This comedy was not printed till 1609, but it had appeared many years before. The time when it was written, is aſcertained with great preciſion by the following circumſtances. It contains an alluſion to Meres's *Wit's Treaſury*, firſt printed in the latter end of the year 1598, (See p. 295, n. 7,) and is itſelf mentioned by Naſhe in his *Lenten Stuff*, 4to. 1599.—"It is right of the merry cobler's ſtuff, in that witty play of *The Caſe is Altered*."

5 Jonſon's works, Vol. VII. p. 362. Whalley's edit.

6 Between the years 1595 and 1600, ſome of Lily's comedies were performed by theſe children. Many of the plays of Jonſon were repreſented by them between 1600 and 1609.—From a paſſage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or the Comedy of Paſquil and Catharine*, which was printed in 1601, we learn that they were much followed at that time.

additions appear to have been made to it after its firſt production, and we have ſome authority for attributing the firſt ſketch of it to 1596, or to an earlier period, till that authority is ſhaken, we may preſume, that any paſſage which is inconſiſtent with that date, was not in the play originally, but a ſubſequent inſertion.

With reſpect to the alluſion in queſtion, it probably was an addition; for it is not found in the quarto of 1604, (which has not the appearance of a mutilated or imperfect copy,) nor did it appear in print till the publication of the folio in 1623.

The ſame obſervation may be made on the paſſage produced by Mr. Holt, to prove that this play was not written till after 1597. "*Their inhibition comes by means of the late innovation.*" This indeed, does appear in the quarto of 1604. but, we may preſume, was added in the interval between 1597, (when the ſtatute alluded to, 39 Eliz. ch. 4. was enacted,) and that year.

Heywood in his *Apology for Actors*, 1612, complains of the *ſcurrility* introduced *lately* among the children of Chapel, in their theatrical exhibitions. This may ſerve to aſcertain the time when the paſſage which relates to them was inſerted in *Hamlet*.

II. KING JOHN, 1596.

This hiſtorical play was founded on a former drama, entitled *The Troubleſome Raigne of John King of England, with the Diſcoverie of King Richard Cordelion's baſe Son, vulgarly named the Baſtard Fawconbridge: alſo the Death of King John at Swinſtead Abbey. As it was (ſundry times) publikely acted by the Queenes Majeſties Players in the honourable Citie of London.* This piece, which is in two parts, and was printed at London for Sampſon Clarke, 1591, has no authour's name in the title-page. On its republication in 1611, the bookſeller for whom it was printed, inſerted the letters *W. Sh.* in the title-page; and in order to conceal his fraud, omitted the words—*publikely*—*in the honourable Citie of London*,

London, which he was aware would proclaim this play not to be Shakſpeare's *King John*; the company to which he belonged, having no *publick* theatre in London: that in Blackfriars being a private play-houſe, and the Globe, which was a publick theatre, being ſituated in Southwark. He alſo, probably with the ſame view, omitted the following lines addreſſed *to the Gentlemen Readers*, which are prefixed to the firſt edition of the old play:

" You that with friendly grace of ſmoothed brow
" Have entertain'd *the Scythian Tamburlaine*,
" And given applauſe unto an infidel;
" Vouchſafe to welcome, with like curteſie,
" A warlike Chriſtian and your countryman.
" For Chriſt's true faith indur'd he many a ſtorme,
" And ſet himſelfe againſt the man of *Rome*,
" Until baſe treaſon by a damned wight
" Did all his former triumphs put to flight.
" Accept of it, ſweete gentles, in good ſort,
" And thinke it was prepar'd for your diſport."

Shakſpeare's play being then probably often acted, and the other wholly laid aſide, the word *lately* was ſubſtituted for the word *publickly*: " — as they were ſundry times *lately* acted," &c.

Thomas Dewe, for whom a third edition of this old play was printed in 1622, was more daring. The two parts were then publiſhed, " *as they were ſundry times lately acted*;" and the name of *William Shakſpeare* inſerted at length. *By the Queen's Majeſties players* was wiſely omitted, as not being very conſiſtent with the word *lately*, Elizabeth being then dead nineteen years.

King John is the only one of our poet's uncontеſted plays that is not entered in the books of the Stationers' company. It was not printed till 1623, but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, unleſs he miſtook the old play in two parts, printed in 1591, for the compoſition of Shakſpeare.

It is obſervable that our authour's ſon, Hamnet, died in Auguſt, 1596. That a man of ſuch ſenſibility, and

of ſo amiable a diſpoſition, ſhould have loſt his only ſon, who had attained the age of twelve years, without being greatly affected by it, will not be eaſily credited. The pathetick lamentations which he has written for Lady Conſtance on the death of Arthur, may perhaps add ſome probability to the ſuppoſition that this tragedy was written at or ſoon after that period.

In the firſt ſcene of the ſecond act the following lines are ſpoken by Chatillon, the French ambaſſador, on his return from England to King Philip:

" And all the unſettled humours of the land—
" Raſh, inconſiderate, firy voluntaries,
" With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' ſpleens,—
" Have ſold their fortunes at their native homes,
" Bearing their birth-rights proudly on their backs,
" To make a hazard of new fortunes here.
" In brief, a braver choice of dauntleſs ſpirits
" Than now the Engliſh bottoms have waft o'er,
" Did never float upon the ſwelling tide,
" To do offence and ſcathe to Chriſtendom."

Dr. Johnſon has juſtly obſerved in a note on this play, that many paſſages in our poet's works evidently ſhew that " he often took advantage of the facts then recent and the paſſions then in motion." Perhaps the deſcription contained in the laſt ſix lines was immediately ſuggeſted to Shakſpeare by the grand fleet which was ſent againſt Spain in 1596. It conſiſted of eighteen of the largeſt of the Queen's ſhips, three of the Lord Admiral's, and above one hundred and twenty merchant-ſhips and victuallers, under the command of the earls of Nottingham and Eſſex. The regular land-forces on board amounted to ten thouſand; and there was alſo a large body of *voluntaries* (as they were then called) under the command of Sir Edward Winkfield. Many of the nobility went on this expedition, which was deſtined againſt Cadiz. The fleet ſailed from Plymouth on the third of June 1596; before the end of that month the great Spaniſh armada was deſtroyed, and the town of Cadiz was ſacked

ſacked and burned. Here Lord Eſſex found 1200 pieces of ordnance, and an immenſe quantity of treaſure, ſtores, ammunition, &c. valued at twenty million of ducats. The victorious commanders of this ſucceſsful expedition returned to Plymouth, Auguſt 8, 1596, four days before the death of our poet's ſon. Many of our old hiſtorians ſpeak of the ſplendor and magnificence diſplayed by the noble and gallant adventurers who ſerved in this expedition; and Ben Jonſon has particularly alluded to it in his *Silent Woman*, written a few years afterwards[7]. To this I ſuſpect two lines already quoted particularly refer:

"Have ſold their fortunes at their native homes,
"*Bearing their birth-rights proudly on their backs.*"

Dr. Johnſon conceived that the following lines in this play—

And meritorious ſhall that hand be call'd,
Canoniz'd, and worſhipp'd as a ſaint,
That takes away by any ſecret courſe
Thy hateful life.

might either refer to the bull publiſhed againſt Queen Elizabeth, or to the canonization of Garnet, Faux, and their accomplices, who in a Spaniſh book which he had ſeen, are regiſtered as ſaints. If the latter alluſion had been intended, then this play, or or at leaſt this part of it, muſt have been written after 1605. But the paſſage in queſtion is founded on a ſimilar one in the old play, printed in 1591, and therefore no alluſion to the gunpowder-plot could have been intended.

A line of *The Spaniſh Tragedy* is quoted in *King John*. That tragedy, I believe, had appeared in or before 1590.

In the firſt act of *King John*, an ancient tragedy, entitled *Solyman and Perſeda*, is alluded to. The earlieſt

[7] "I had as fair a *gold jerkin* on that day as any was worn in the Iſland Voyage, or Cadiz, none diſpraiſed." *Silent Woman*, 1609.

edition

edition of that play, now extant, is that of 1599, but it was written, and probably acted, many years before; for it was entered on the Stationers' books, by Edward Whyte, Nov. 20, 1592.

Marſton's *Inſatiate Counteſs*, which, according to Langbaine, was printed in 1603, contains a paſſage, which, if it ſhould be conſidered as an imitation of a ſimilar one in *King John*, will aſcertain this hiſtorical drama to have been written at leaſt before that year:

" Then how much more in me, whoſe youthful veins,
" *Like a proud river, overflow their bounds.*"

So, in *King John:*

" Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
" *Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds.*"

Marſton has in many other places imitated Shakſpeare.

A ſpeech ſpoken by the baſtard in the ſecond act of this tragedy [8] ſeems to have been formed on one in an old play entitled *The famous Hiſtory of Captain Thomas Stukely*. Captain Stukely was killed in 1578. The drama of which he is the ſubject, was not printed till 1605, but it is in the black letter, and, I believe, had been exhibited at leaſt fifteen years before.

Of the only other note of time which I have obſerved in this tragedy, beſide thoſe already mentioned, I am unable to make any uſe. " When I was in *France*," ſays young Arthur,

" Young gentlemen would be as ſad as night,
" Only for wantonneſs."

I have not been able to aſcertain when the faſhion of being *ſad and gentlemanlike* commenced among our gayer neighbours on the continent. A ſimilar faſhion prevailed in England, and is often alluded to by our poet, and his contemporaries. Perhaps he has in this inſtance attributed to the French a ſpecies of affectation then

[8] See Vol. IV. p. 483.

only

only found in England. It is noticed by Lily in 1592, and by Ben Jonſon in 1598.

12. KING RICHARD II. 1597.

King Richard II. was entered on the Stationers' books, Auguſt 29, 1597, and printed in that year.

There had been a former play on this ſubject, which appears to have been called *King Henry IV.* in which Richard was depoſed, and killed on the ſtage. This piece, as Dr. Farmer and Mr. Tyrwhitt have obſerved, was performed on a publick theatre, at the requeſt of Sir Gilly Merick, and ſome other followers of Lord Eſſex, the afternoon before his inſurrection: "ſo earneſt was he," (Merick) ſays the printed account of his arraignment, "to ſatisfy his eyes with a ſight of that tragedy which he thought ſoone after his lord ſhould bring from the ſtage to the ſtate." "The players told him the play was *old*, and they ſhould have loſs by playing it, becauſe few would come to it; but no play elſe would ſerve: and Sir Gilly Merick gave forty ſhillings to Philips the player to play this, beſides whatſoever he could get[9]."

It may ſeem ſtrange that this old play ſhould have been repreſented four years after Shakſpeare's drama on the ſame ſubject had been printed: the reaſon undoubtedly was, that in the old play the depoſing King Richard II. made a part of the exhibition: but in the firſt edition of our author's play, one hundred and fifty-four lines, deſcribing a kind of trial of the king, and his actual depoſition in parliament, were omitted: nor was it probably repreſented on the ſtage. Merick, Cuffe, and the reſt of Eſſex's train, naturally preferred the play in which his *depoſition* was repreſented, their plot not aiming at the life of the queen. It is, I know, commonly thought, that the parliament-ſcene, (as it is called) which was firſt printed in the quarto of 1608, was an

[9] Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. 412. *St. Trials*, Vol. VIII. p. 60.

addition made by Shakſpeare to his play after its firſt repreſentation: but it ſeems to me more probable that it was written with the reſt, and ſuppreſſed in the printed copy of 1597, from the fear of offending Elizabeth; againſt whom the Pope had publiſhed a bull in the preceding year, exhorting her ſubjects to take up arms againſt her. In 1599 Hayward publiſhed his *Hiſtory of the firſt year of Henry IV.* which in fact is nothing more than an hiſtory of the depoſing Richard II. The diſpleaſure which that book excited at court, ſufficiently accounts for the omitted lines not being inſerted in the copy of this play which was publiſhed in 1602. Hayward was heavily cenſured in the Star-chamber, and committed to priſon. At a ſubſequent period, (1608,) when King James was quietly and firmly ſettled on the throne, and the fear of internal commotion, or foreign invaſion, no longer ſubſiſted, neither the authour, the managers of the theatre, nor the bookſeller, could entertain any apprehenſion of giving offence to the ſovereign: the rejected ſcene was reſtored without ſcruple, and from ſome play-houſe copy probably found its way to the preſs.

13. King Richard III. 1597.

Entered, at the Stationers'hall, Oct. 20, 1597. Printed in that year.

14. First Part of K. Henry IV. 1597.

Entered, Feb. 25, 1597. [1597-8.] Written therefore probably in 1597. Printed in 1598.

15. Second Part of K. Henry IV. 1598.

The Second Part of King Henry IV. was entered in the Stationers' books, Auguſt 23, 1600, and was printed in that year. It was written, I believe, in 1598. From the epilogue it appears to have been compoſed before *K. Henry V.* which itſelf muſt have been written in or before 1599.

Meres

Meres in his *Wit's Treaſury*, which was publiſhed in September 1598, has given a liſt of our author's plays, and among them is *K. Henry IV.*; but as he does not deſcribe it as a play in two parts, I doubt whether this ſecond part had been exhibited, though it might have been then written. If it was not in his contemplation, it may be preſumed to have appeared in the latter part of the year 1598. His words are theſe: "As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the beſt for comedy and tragedy, among the Latines, ſo Shakſpeare, among the Engliſh, is the moſt excellent in both kinds for the ſtage: for comedy, witneſs his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love's Labour's Loſt*, his *Love's Labour's Wonne*, his *Midſummer-Night's Dream*, and his *Merchant of Venice*; for tragedy [1], his *Richard II. Richard III.* HENRY IV. *K. John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet* [2]."

The following alluſion to one of the characters in this play, which is found in Ben Jonſon's *Every Man out of his Humour*, Act V. ſc. ii. firſt acted in 1599, is an additional authority for ſuppoſing *the Second Part of King Henry IV.* to have been written in 1598:

"*Savi.* What's he, gentle Mons. Briſk? Not that gentleman?

"*Faſt.* No, lady; this is a kinſman to *Juſtice Silence*."

That this play was not written before the year 1596, is aſcertained by the following alluſions. In the laſt act Clarence, ſpeaking of his father, ſays,

"The inceſſant care and labour of his mind
"Hath wrought the mure, that ſhould confine it in,
"So thin, that life looks through, and will break out."

Theſe lines appear to have been formed on the following in Daniel's *Civil Warres*, 1595, B. III. ſt. 116.

[1] The circumſtance of Hotſpur's death in this play, and its being an hiſtorical drama, I ſuppoſe, induced *Meres* to denominate *the Firſt Part of K. Henry IV.* a tragedy.

[2] *Wit's Treaſury*, p. 282.

"Wearing

" Wearing the wall ſo thin, that now the mind
" Might well look thorough, and his frailty find."

Daniel's poem, though not publiſhed till 1595, was entered on the Stationers' books, in October 1594.

The diſtich, with which Piſtol conſoles himſelf, *Si fortuna me tormenta*, &c. had, I believe, appeared in an old collection of tales, and apothegms, entitled *Wits, Fits, and Fancies*, which was entered at Stationers-hall in 1595, and probably printed in that year. Sir Richard Hawkins, as Dr. Farmer has obſerved, " in his voyage to the South Sea in 1593, throws out the ſame jingling diſtich on the loſs of his pinnace." But no account of that voyage was publiſhed before 1598.

In the laſt act of this play the young king thus addreſſes his brothers:

" Brothers, you mix your ſadneſs with ſome fear.
" This is the Engliſh, not the Turkiſh court;
" Not Amurath an Amurath ſucceeds,
" But Harry Harry."

It is highly probable, as is obſerved in a note on that paſſage, that Shakſpeare had here in contemplation the cruelty practiſed by the Turkiſh emperor, Mahomet, who after the death of his father, Amurath the Third, in Feb. 1596[3], invited his unſuſpecting brothers to a feaſt, and cauſed them all to be ſtrangled.

16. The Merchant of Venice, 1598.

Entered at the Stationers-hall, July 22, 1598; and mentioned by Meres in that year. Publiſhed in 1600.

[3] The affairs of this court had previouſly attracted the publick attention; for in 1594 was publiſhed at London, *A Letter ſent by Amurath the great Turke to Chriſtendom.*

17. ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL, 1598.

All's well that ends well was not regiſtered at Stationers' hall, nor printed till 1623; but has been thought to be the play mentioned by Meres in 1598, under the title of *Love's Labour's Won*. No other of our authour's plays could have borne that title with ſo much propriety as that before us; yet it muſt be acknowledged that the preſent title is inſerted in the body of the play:

"*All's well that ends well*; ſtill the fine's the [crown," &c.

This line, however, might certainly have ſuggeſted the alteration of what has been thought the firſt title, and affords no deciſive proof that this piece was originally called *All's well that ends well*. The words that compoſe the preſent title appear to have been proverbial [4].

I formerly ſuppoſed that a comedy called *A bad beginning makes a good ending*, which was acted at court in 1613, by the Company of John Heminge, was the play now under conſideration, with only a new title: but I was miſtaken. The play then exhibited was written by John Ford.

In *All's well that ends well*, "The ſhewing of a heavenly effect in an earthly actor," is mentioned. If this ſhould prove to be the title of ſome tract, (which is not improbable,) and the piece ſhould be hereafter diſcovered, it may ſerve in ſome meaſure to aſcertain the date of the play.

This comedy alſo contains an alluſion to the diſpute between the puritans and proteſtants concerning the uſe of the ſurplice. That diſpute began in 1589; and was much agitated during all the remainder of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

4 See *The Remidie of Love*, tranſlated from Ovid, 1600, Sign. E. 3. b. "You take the old proverb with a right application for my juſt excuſe: *All is well that ends well*; and ſo end I. See alſo Camden's Proverbial Sentences, *Remains*, 1614.

"Plutus

" Plutus himſelf," (ſays one of the characters in this play,)
" That knows the tinct and multiplying medicine," &c.

I know not whether the purſuit of the philoſopher's ſtone particularly engaged the publick attention at the period to which this comedy has been aſcribed; and quote the paſſage only for the conſideration of thoſe who are more converſant with that ſubject.

18. KING HENRY V. 1599.

Mr. Pope thought that this hiſtorical drama was one of our authour's lateſt compoſitions; but he was evidently miſtaken. *King Henry V.* was entered on the Stationers' books, Auguſt 14, 1600, and printed in the ſame year. It was written *after* the Second Part of *King Henry IV.* being promiſed in the epilogue of that play; and while the Earl of Eſſex was in Ireland[5]. Lord Eſſex went to Ireland April 15, 1599, and returned to London on the 28th of September in the ſame year. So that this play (unleſs the paſſage relative to him was inſerted after the piece was finiſhed,) muſt have been compoſed between April and September, 1599. Suppoſing that paſſage a ſubſequent inſertion, the play was probably not written *long* before; for it is not mentioned by Meres in 1598.

The prologue to Ben Jonſon's *Every Man in his Humour*[6] ſeems clearly to allude to this play; and, if it had been written at the ſame time with the piece itſelf, might induce us, notwithſtanding the ſilence of Meres, to place *King Henry V.* a year or two earlier; for *Every Man in his Humour* is ſaid to have been acted in 1598. But the prologue which now appears before it, was not written till after 1601, when the play was printed without a prologue. It appears to have been Jonſon's firſt per-

5 See the Chorus to the fifth act of *King Henry V.*

6 " He rather prays, you will be pleaſed to ſee
" One ſuch, to-day, as other plays ſhould be;
" *Where neither Chorus wafts you o'er the ſeas,*" &c.
Prologue to *Every Man in his Humour.* Fol. 1616.

formance;

formance[7]; and we may preſume that it was the very play, which, we are told, was brought on the ſtage by the good offices of Shakſpeare, who himſelf acted in it. Malignant and envious as Jonſon appears to have been, he hardly would have ridiculed his benefactor at the very time he was ſo eſſentially obliged to him. Some years afterwards his jealouſy broke out, and vented itſelf in this prologue, which firſt appeared in the folio edition of Jonſon's Works, publiſhed in 1616. It is certain that, not long after the year 1600, a coolneſs[8]

[7] Jonſon himſelf tells us in his Induction to *the Magnetick Lady*, that this was his firſt dramatick performance.—"The authour beginning his ſtudies of this kind with *Every Man in his Humour*."

[8] See an old comedy called *The Return from Parnaſſus*: [This piece was not publiſhed till 1606; but appears to have been written in 1602, —certainly was produced before the death of Queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March 1602-3.] "Why here's our fellow Shakſpeare puts them 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."

The play of Jonſon's in which *he gave the poets a pill*, is the *Poetaſter*, acted in 1601. In that piece ſome paſſages of *King Henry V.* are ridiculed. In what manner Shakſpeare *put him down, or made him bewray his credit*, does not appear. His retaliation, we may be well aſſured, contained no groſs or illiberal abuſe; and, perhaps, did not go beyond a ballad or an epigram, which may have periſhed with things of greater conſequence. He has, however, marked his diſregard for the calumniator of his fame, by not leaving him any memorial by his Will.—In an apologetical dialogue which Jonſon annexed to the *Poetaſter*, he ſays, he had been provoked for three years (i. e. from 1598 to 1601) on every ſtage by ſlanderers; as for the players, he ſays,

"——— It is true, I tax'd them,
"And yet but ſome, and thoſe ſo ſparingly,
"As all the reſt might have ſat ſtill unqueſtion'd:—
"——— What they have done againſt me
"I am not mov'd with. If it gave them meat,
"Or got them cloaths, 'tis well; that was their end.
"Only, amongſt them, I am ſorry for
"Some better natures, by the reſt drawn in
"To run in that vile line."

By the words "*Some better natures*," there can, I think, be little doubt that Shakſpeare was alluded to.

aroſe between Shakſpeare and him, which, however he may talk of his almoſt idolatrous affection, produced on his part, from that time to the death of our authour, and for many years afterwards, much clumſy ſarcaſm, and many malevolent reflections[9].

On

[9] In his *Silent Woman*, 1609, Act V. ſc. ii. Jonſon perhaps pointed at Shakſpeare, as one whom he *viewed with ſcornful, yet with jealous, eyes*:

"So, they may cenſure poets and authors, and compare them; Daniel with Spenſer, Jonſon with *t'other youth*, and ſo forth." Decker, however, might have been meant.

Again, in the ſame play:

"You two ſhall be the *chorus* behind the arras, and whip out between the acts, and ſpeak."

In the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, which was acted in 1614, two years before the death of our authour, three of his plays, and in the piece itſelf two others, are attempted to be ridiculed.

In *The Devil's an Aſs*, acted in 1616, all his hiſtorical plays are obliquely cenſured.

Meer-cr. "By my faith you are *cunning in the chronicles*.

Fitz-dot. "No, I confeſs, I ha't from the play-books, and think they are more authentick."

They are again attacked in the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*:

"An ſome writer that I know, had but the penning o' this matter, he would ha' made you ſuch a *jig-a-jog i' the booths*, you ſhould ha' thought an *earthquake* had been in the fair. But theſe *maſter-poets*, they will ha' their own abſurd courſes, they will be informed of nothing."

The following paſſage in *Cynthia's Revels*, 1601, was, I think, likewiſe pointed againſt Shakſpeare:

"Beſides, they would wiſh your poets would leave to be promoters of other men's jeſts, and to way-lay all the ſtale apothegms or *old books* they can hear of, in print or otherwiſe, to farce their ſcenes withal:—Again, that feeding their friends with nothing of their own, but what they have *twice* or *thrice cooked*, they ſhould not wantonly give out how ſoon they had *dreſs'd it*, nor how many coaches came to carry away the broken meat, beſides hobby-horſes and foot-cloth nags."

Jonſon's plots were all his own invention; our authour's chiefly taken from preceding plays or novels. The former employed a year or two in compoſing a play; the latter probably produced two every year, while he remained in the theatre.

The Induction to *The Staple of News*, which appeared in 1625, not very long after the publication of our authour's plays in folio, contains a ſneer at a paſſage in *Julius Cæſar*:

"Know

On this play Mr. Pope has the following note, *Act I. ſc. i.*

"This firſt ſcene was added ſince the edition of 1608,

"Know, Cæſar doth not wrong; nor without cauſe
"Will he be ſatisfied."

which for the purpoſe of ridicule is quoted unfaithfully; and in the ſame play may be found an effort, as impotent as that of Voltaire *, to raiſe a laugh at Hamlet's exclamation when he kills Polonius.

Some other paſſages which are found in Jonſon's works, might be mentioned in ſupport of this obſervation, but being quoted hereafter for other purpoſes, they are here omitted.

Notwithſtanding theſe proofs, Jonſon's malevolence to Shakſpeare, and jealouſy of his ſuperior reputation, have been doubted by Mr. Pope and others; and much ſtreſs has been laid on a paſſage in his *Diſcoveries*, and on the commendatory verſes prefixed to the firſt edition of our authour's plays in folio.—The reader, after having peruſed the following character of Jonſon, drawn by Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, a contemporary, and an intimate acquaintance of his, will not, perhaps, readily believe theſe *poſthumous* encomiums to have been ſincere. "Ben Jonſon," ſays that writer, "was a great lover and praiſer of himſelf; a contemner and ſcorner of others; given rather to loſe a friend than a jeſt; jealous of every word and action of thoſe about him, eſpecially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he lived; a diſſembler of the parts which reign in him; a bragger of ſome good that he wanted: thinketh nothing well done, but what either he himſelf or ſome of his friends have ſaid or done; he is paſſionately kind and angry; careleſs either to gain or keep; vindictive, but, if he be well anſwered, [angry] at himſelf; interprets beſt ſayings and deeds often to the worſt †. He was for any religion, as being verſed in both; oppreſſed with fancy, which over-maſtered his reaſon, a general diſeaſe in many poets. His inventions are ſmooth and eaſy, but above all, he excelleth in tranſlation." *Drummond's Works*, fol. 1711; p. 226.

In the year 1619 Jonſon went to Scotland, to viſit Mr. Drummond, who has left a curious account of a converſation that paſſed between them, relative to the principal poets of thoſe times.

* "Ah! ma mere, s'écrie-t-il, il y a un gros rat derriére la tapiſſerie;—il tire ſon épée, court au rat, et tue le bon homme Polonius." Oeuvres de Voltaire, Tome XV. p. 473. 4to.

† His miſquoting a line of *Julius Cæſar*, ſo as to render it nonſenſe, at a time when the play was in print, is a ſtrong illuſtration of this part of his character. The plea of an unfaithful memory cannot be urged in his defence, for he tells us in his *Diſcoveries*, that till he was paſt forty, he could repeat every thing that he had written.

which is much ſhort of the preſent editions, wherein the ſpeeches are generally enlarged, and raiſed; ſeveral whole ſcenes beſides, and the choruſes alſo, were ſince *added by Shakeſpeare.*"

Dr. Warburton alſo poſitively aſſerts that this firſt ſcene was written after the acceſſion of K. James I. and the ſubſequent editors agree, that ſeveral additions were made *by the authour* to *King Henry V.* after it was originally compoſed. But there is, I believe, no good ground for theſe aſſertions. It is true that no perfect edition of this play was publiſhed before that in folio, in 1623; but it does not follow from thence, that the ſcenes which then firſt appeared in print, and all the choruſes, were added *by Shakſpeare*, as Mr. Pope ſuppoſes, after 1608. We know indeed the contrary to be true; for the chorus to the fifth act muſt have been written in 1599.

The fair inference to be drawn from the imperfect and mutilated copies of this play, publiſhed in 1600, 1602, and 1608, is, not that the whole play, as we now have it, did not then exiſt, but that thoſe copies were ſurreptitious; and that the editor in 1600, not being able to publiſh the whole, publiſhed what he could.

I have not indeed met with any evidence (except in three plays) that the ſeveral ſcenes which are found in the folio of 1623, and are not in the preceding quartos, were added by the ſecond labour of the authour.—The laſt chorus of *King Henry V.* already mentioned, affords a ſtriking proof that this was not always the caſe. The two copies of *the Second Part of King Henry IV.* printed in the ſame year, (1600) furniſh another. In one of theſe, the whole firſt ſcene of Act III. is wanting; not becauſe it was then unwritten, (for it is found in the other copy publiſhed in that year,) but becauſe the editor was not poſſeſſed of it. That what have been called *additions by the authour*, were not really ſuch, may be alſo collected from another circumſtance; that in ſome of the quartos where theſe ſuppoſed additions are wanting,

ing, references and replies are found to the paſſages omitted [1].

I do not however mean to ſay, that Shakſpeare never made any alterations in his plays. We have reaſon to believe that *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *the Merry Wives of Windſor*, were reviſed and augmented by the authour; and a ſecond reviſal or temporary topicks might have ſuggeſted, in a courſe of years, ſome additions and alterations in ſome other of his pieces. But with reſpect to the entire ſcenes that are wanting in ſome of the early editions, (particularly thoſe of *King Henry V.* *King Richard II.* and *the Second Part of King Henry IV.*) I ſuppoſe the omiſſions to have ariſen from the imperfection of the copies; and inſtead of ſaying that "the firſt ſcene of *King Henry V.* was *added by the authour* after the publication of the quarto in 1600," all that we can pronounce with certainty is, that this ſcene is not *found* in the quarto of 1600.

19. Much Ado about Nothing, 1600.

Much Ado about Nothing was written, we may preſume, early in the year 1600; for it was entered at Stationers' hall, Auguſt 23, 1600, and printed in that year.

It is not mentioned by Meres in his liſt of our authour's plays, publiſhed in the latter end of the year 1598.

20. As You Like It, 1600.

This comedy was not printed till 1623, and the caveat or memorandum [2] in the ſecond volume of the books of

[1] Of this ſee a remarkable inſtance in *K. Henry IV. P. II.* Act I. ſc. i. where Morton in a long ſpeech having informed Northumberland that the archbiſhop of York had joined the rebel party, the earl replies,—"*I knew of this before.*" The quarto contains the reply, but not a ſingle line of the narrative to which it relates.

[2] See Mr. Steevens's extracts from the books of the Stationers' company, *ante*, p. 253.

the Stationers' company, relative to the three plays of *As you like it*, *Henry V.* and *Much ado about Nothing*, has no date except *Aug.* 4. But immediately *above* that caveat there is an entry, dated May 27, 1600,—and the entry immediately *following* it, is dated Jan. 23, 1603. We may therefore preſume that this caveat was entered *between* thoſe two periods: more eſpecially, as the dates ſcattered over the pages where this entry is found, are, except in one inſtance, in a regular ſeries from 1596 to 1615. This will appear more clearly by exhibiting the entry exactly as it ſtands in the book:

27 May 1600.

To Mr. Roberts.] Allarum to London.

4 Aug.

As you like it, a book.
Henry the Fift, a book.
Every Man in his Humour, a book.
Comedy of Much Ado about Nothing.
} to be ſtaied.

23 Jan. 1603.

To Thomas Thorpe, and William Aſpley. } This to be their copy, &c.

It is extremely probable that this 4th of Auguſt was of the year 1600; which ſtanding a little higher on the paper, the clerk of the Stationers' company might have thought unneceſſary to be repeated. All the plays which were entered with *As you like it*, and are here ſaid *to be ſtaied*, were printed in the year 1600 or 1601. The ſtay or injunction againſt the printing appears to have been very ſpeedily taken off; for in ten days afterwards, on the 14th of Auguſt, 1600, *King Henry V.* was entered, and publiſhed in the ſame year. So, *Much ado about Nothing* was entered Auguſt 23, 1600, and printed alſo in that year: and *Every Man in his Humour* was publiſhed in 1601.

Shakſpeare,

Shakſpeare, it is ſaid, played the part of Adam in *As you like it*. As he was not eminent on the ſtage, it is probable that he ceaſed to act ſome years before he retired to the country. His appearance, however, in this comedy, is not inconſiſtent with the date here aſſigned; for we know that he performed a part in Jonſon's *Sejanus* in 1603.

A paſſage in this comedy furniſhes an additional proof of its not having been written before the year 1596, nor after the year 1603. "I will weep for nothing," ſays Roſalind, "like *Diana in the fountain*." Stowe in his *Survey of London*, 1598, informs us, that in the year 1596 at the eaſt ſide of the Croſs in Cheapſide was ſet up "a curious wrought tabernacle of gray marble, and in the ſame an alabaſter image of *Diana*, and water conveyed from the Thames, prilling from her naked breaſt." To this the paſſage above cited certainly alludes. In his ſecond edition of the ſame work, printed in 1603, he informs the reader, that the water flowed in this manner *for a time*, but that the ſtatue was then *decayed*. It was, we ſee, in order in 1598, and continued ſo without doubt for two years afterwards, that is, till 1600, when *As you like it* appears to have been written.

In this comedy a line of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is quoted. That poem was publiſhed in 1598, and probably before.

21. Merry Wives of Windsor, 1601.

The following line in the earlieſt edition of this comedy,

"Sail like my pinnace to thoſe *golden ſhores*,"

ſhews that it was written after Sir Walter Raleigh's return from Guiana in 1596.

The firſt ſketch of *The Merry Wives of Windſor* was printed in 1602. It was entered in the books of the Stationers' company, on the 18th of January 1601-2, and was therefore probably written in 1601, after the *two parts of King Henry IV.*, being, it is ſaid, compoſed

at the deſire of queen Elizabeth, in order to exhibit Falſtaff in love, when all the pleaſantry which he could afford in any other ſituation was exhauſted. But it may not be thought ſo clear, that it was written after *King Henry V.* Nym and Bardolph are both hanged in *King Henry V.* yet appear in *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, Falſtaff is diſgraced in the *Second Part of King Henry IV.* and dies in *King Henry V.*; but in the *Merry Wives of Windſor* he talks as if he were yet in favour at court; "*If it ſhould come to the ear of the court how I have been transformed, &c:*" and Mr. Page diſcountenances Fenton's addreſſes to his daughter, *becauſe he kept company with the wild prince and with Pointz.* Theſe circumſtances ſeem to favour the ſuppoſition that this play was written between the *Firſt and Second Parts of K. Henry IV.* But that it was not written then, may be collected from the tradition above mentioned. The truth, I believe, is, that though it ought to be read (as Dr. Johnſon has obſerved,) between the *Second Part of King Henry IV.* and *King Henry V.*, it was written *after King Henry V.* and after Shakſpeare had killed Falſtaff. In obedience to the royal commands, having revived him, he found it neceſſary at the ſame time to revive all thoſe perſons with whom he was wont to be exhibited; Nym, Piſtol, Bardolph, and the Page: and diſpoſed of them as he found it convenient, without a ſtrict regard to their ſituations or cataſtrophes in former plays.

There is reaſon to believe that *The Merry Wives of Windſor* was reviſed and enlarged by the authour, after its firſt production. The old edition in 1602, like that of *Romeo and Juliet*, is apparently a rough draught, and not a mutilated or imperfect copy. The preciſe time when the alterations and additions were made, has not been aſcertained: however, ſome paſſages in the enlarged copy may aſſiſt us in our conjectures on the ſubject.

Falſtaff's addreſs to Juſtice Shallow in the firſt ſcene ſhews that the alterations were made after King James came to the throne: "Now, Maſter Shallow, you'll complain of me to the *king*." In the firſt copy the words are, "*to the council*."

When

When Mrs. Page obſerves to Mrs. Ford, that "theſe knights will hack," which words are not in the original copy, Shakſpeare, it has been thought, meant to convey a covert ſneer at King James's prodigality in beſtowing knighthood in the beginning of his reign. Between the king's arrival at Berwick and the 2d of May, 1603, he made 237 knights; and in the following July near four hundred.

"The beſt courtier of them all," ſays Mrs. Quickly, "when *the court lay at Windſor*, could never have brought her to ſuch a canary. Yet there have been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, I warrant you, coach after coach," &c.

The court went to Windſor in the beginning of July, 1603, and ſoon afterwards the feaſt of Saint George was celebrated there with great ſolemnity. The Prince of Wales, the duke of Lenox, our poet's great patron the earl of Southampton, the earl of Pembroke, and the earl of Marre, were inſtalled knights of the garter; and the chief ladies of England did homage to the queen. The king and queen afterwards uſually reſided in the ſummer at Greenwich. The alluſion to the inſignia of the order of the garter in the fifth act of this comedy, if written recently after ſo ſplendid a ſolemnity, would have a peculiar grace; yet the order having been originally inſtituted at Windſor by King Edward III., the place in which the ſcene lay, might, it muſt be owned, have ſuggeſted an alluſion to it, without any particular or temporary object.—It is obſervable that Mrs. Quickly ſays, there had been knights, lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, *coach after coach*, &c. Coaches, as appears from Howes's Continuation of Stowe's Chronicle, did not come into general uſe, till the year 1605. It may therefore be preſumed that this play was not enlarged very long before that year.

There is yet another note of time to be conſidered. In the firſt ſcene of the enlarged copy of the *Merry Wives of Windſor*, Slender aſks Mr. Page, "How does your fallow grey-hound, ſir? I hear he was out run on Cotſale."

He

He means the Cotſwold hills in Gloceſterſhire. In the beginning of the reign of James the Firſt, the Cotſwold games were inſtituted by one Dover. They conſiſted, as Mr. Warton has obſerved, "of wreſtling, leaping, pitching the bar, handling the pike, dancing of women, various kinds of hunting, and particularly courſing the hare with greyhounds." Mr. Warton is of opinion that two or three years muſt have elapſed before theſe games could have been effectually eſtabliſhed, and therefore ſuppoſes that our authour's additions to this comedy were made about the year 1607. Dr. Farmer doubts whether Capt. Dover was the founder of theſe games. "Though the Captain," he obſerves, "be celebrated in the *Annalia Dubrenſia* as the *founder* of them, he might be the *reviver* only, or ſome way contribute to make them more famous; for in the ſecond part of *King Henry IV.* Juſtice Shallow reckons among the *ſwinge-bucklers*, "Will Squeele, a *Cotſole* man." In confirmation of Dr. Farmer's opinion Mr. Steevens remarks, that in Randolph's poems, 1638, is found "An eclogue on the noble aſſemblies *revived* on Cotſwold hills by Mr. Robert Dover."

If the Cotſwold games were celebrated before the death of Queen Elizabeth, the paſſage above cited certainly proves nothing. Let us then endeavour to aſcertain that fact. Dover himſelf tells us in the *Annalia Dubrenſia* that he was the *founder* of theſe games:

"Yet I was bold for better recreation
"To *invent* theſe ſports, to counter-check that faſhion."

and from Ben Jonſon's verſes in the ſame collection we learn that they were exhibited in the time of James I. and revived in 1636. Nothing more then follows from Randolph's verſes, compared with Jonſon's, than that the games had been diſcontinued after their firſt inſtitution by Dover, (probably ſoon after the death of King James) and were *revived* by their *founder* at a ſubſequent period. Cotſwold, long before the death of Elizabeth, might have been famous for ſwinge-bucklers,

or in other words for ſtrong men, ſkilled in fighting with ſword and buckler, wreſtling, and other athletick exerciſes: but there is no ground for ſuppoſing that courſing with greyhounds, in order to obtain the prize of a ſilver collar, was cuſtomary there, till Dover inſtituted thoſe prizes after the acceſſion of James to the throne.

This comedy was not printed in its preſent ſtate till 1623, when it was publiſhed with the reſt of our authour's plays in folio. The re-publication of the imperfect copy in 1619 has been mentioned as a circumſtance from which we may infer that Shakſpeare's improved play was not written, or at leaſt not acted, till ſome years after 1607. I confeſs, I do not perceive, on what ground this inference is made. Arthur Johnſon, the bookſeller for whom the imperfect copy of this play was publiſhed in 1602, when the whole edition was ſold off, reprinted it in 1619, knowing that the enlarged copy remained in Mſ. in the hands of the proprietors of the Globe Theatre, and that ſuch of the publick as wiſhed to read the play in any form, muſt read the imperfect play, of which he had ſecured the property by entering it at Stationers' hall. In the ſame manner Thomas Pavier in 1619 reprinted the firſt and ſecond parts of *The whole Contention of the two houſes of Yorke and Lancaſter*, though he could not but know that the *Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* which were formed on thoſe pieces, and were much more valuable than them, had been frequently acted, antecedent to his re-publication, and that the original plays had long been withdrawn from the ſcene. Not being able to procure the improved and perfect copies, a needy bookſeller would publiſh what he could.

22. King Henry VIII. 1601.

This play was probably written, as Dr. Johnſon and Mr. Steevens obſerve, before the death of queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March, 1602-3. The elogium on king James, which is blended with the panegyrick

panegyrick on Elizabeth, in the laſt ſcene, was evidently a ſubſequent inſertion, after the acceſſion of the Scottiſh monarch to the throne: for Shakſpeare was too well acquainted with courts, to compliment in the life-time of queen Elizabeth, her preſumptive ſucceſſor, of whom hiſtory informs us ſhe was not a little jealous. That the prediction concerning king James was added after the death of the queen, is ſtill more clearly evinced, as Dr. Johnſon has remarked, by the aukward manner in which it is connected with the foregoing and ſubſequent lines.

The following lines in that prediction may ſerve to aſcertain the time when the compliment was introduced:

" Wherever the bright ſun of heaven ſhall ſhine,
" His honour and the greatneſs of his name
" Shall be, and make new nations."

Though Virginia was diſcovered in 1584, the firſt colony ſent out went there in 1606. In that year the king granted two letters patent for planting that country, one to the city of London, the other to the cities of Briſtol, Exeter and Plymouth. The colony ſent from London ſettled in Virginia; that from the other cities in New England; the capital of which was built in the following year, and called *James-town*. In 1606 alſo a ſcheme was adopted for the plantation of Ulſter in Ireland[3]. I ſuſpect therefore that the panegyrick on the king was introduced either in that year, or in 1612, when a lottery was granted expreſsly for the eſtabliſhment of Engliſh Colonies in Virginia.

It may be objected, that if this play was written after the acceſſion of king James, the authour could not introduce a panegyrick on him, without making queen Elizabeth the vehicle of it, ſhe being the object immediately preſented to the audience in the laſt act of *King Henry VIII.*; and that, therefore, the praiſes ſo profuſely laviſhed on her, do *not* prove this play to have been written in her life-time; on the contrary, that the concluding lines of her character ſeem to imply that ſhe was dead, when it was compoſed. The objection certainly

[3] Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. p. 440.

has

has weight; but, I apprehend, the following obſervations afford a ſufficient anſwer to it.

1. It is more likely that Shakſpeare ſhould have written a play, the chief ſubject of which is, the diſgrace of queen Catharine, the aggrandizement of Anne Boleyn, and the birth of her daughter, in the life-time of that daughter, than after her death: at a time when the ſubject muſt have been highly pleaſing at court, rather than at a period when it muſt have been leſs intereſting.

Queen Catharine, it is true, is repreſented as an amiable character, but ſtill ſhe is *eclipſed*; and the greater her merit, the higher was the compliment to the mother of Elizabeth, to whoſe ſuperior beauty ſhe was obliged to give way.

2. If *King Henry VIII.* had been written in the time of king James I. the authour, inſtead of expatiating ſo largely in the laſt ſcene, in praiſe of the queen, which he could not think would be acceptable to her ſucceſſor, who hated her memory *, would probably have made him the principal figure in the prophecy, and thrown her into the back-ground as much as poſſible.

3. Were James I. Shakſpeare's chief object in the original conſtruction of the laſt act of this play, he would probably have given a very ſhort character of Elizabeth, and have *dwelt* on that of James, with whoſe praiſe he would have *concluded*, in order to make the ſtronger impreſſion on the audience, inſtead of returning again to queen Elizabeth, in a very aukward and abrupt manner, after her character ſeemed to be quite finiſhed: an aukwardneſs that can only be accounted for, by ſuppoſing the panegyrick on king James an after-production †.

4. If

* King James on his acceſſion to the throne ſtudiouſly marked his *diſregard for Elizabeth by the favour which he ſhewed to Lord Southampton*, and to every other perſon who had been diſgraced by her. Of this Shakſpeare could not be ignorant.

† After having enumerated ſome of the bleſſings which were to enſue from the birth of Elizabeth, and celebrated her majeſty's various virtues, the poet thus proceeds:

" *Cran.* In *her* days every man ſhall eat in ſafety
" Under his own vine, what he plants, and ſing

" The

4. If the queen had been dead when our authour wrote this play, he would have been acquainted with the particular circumſtances attending her death, the ſituation of the kingdom at that time, and of foreign ſtates, &c. and as archbiſhop Cranmer is ſuppoſed to have had the gift of prophecy, Shakſpeare, probably, would have made him mention ſome of thoſe circumſtances. Whereas the prediction, as it ſtands at preſent, is quite general, and ſuch as might, without any hazard of error, have been pronounced in the life-time of her majeſty; for the principal facts that it foretells, are, that ſhe ſhould die aged, and a virgin. Of the former, ſuppoſing this piece to have been written in 1601, the authour was ſufficiently ſecure; for ſhe was then near ſeventy years old. The latter may perhaps be thought too delicate a ſubject, to have been mentioned while ſhe was yet living. But we may preſume, it was far from being an ungrateful topick; for very early after her acceſſion to the throne, ſhe appears to have been proud of her maiden character; declaring that ſhe was *wedded* to her people, and that ſhe deſired no other inſcription on her tomb, than—

" The merry ſongs of peace to all his neighbours.
" God ſhall be truly known; and thoſe about her
" From her ſhall read the perfect ways of honour,
" And by thoſe claim their greatneſs, not by blood.
" [Nor ſhall this peace *ſleep* with her; but as when
" The bird of wonder *dies*, the maiden phœnix,
" Her aſhes new-create another heir,
" As great in admiration as herſelf;
" So ſhall ſhe leave her bleſſedneſs to one, &c.
" ——————— *He* ſhall flouriſh,
" And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
" To all the plains about him:—our children's children
" Shall ſee this, and bleſs heaven.
" *King*. Thou ſpeakeſt wonders.]
" *Cran*. *She* ſhall be, to the happineſs of England,
" An aged princeſs; many days ſhall ſee her
" And yet no day without a deed to crown it.
" Would I had known no more! but ſhe muſt *die*,
" She muſt, the ſaints muſt have her; yet a virgin," &c.

The lines between crotchets, are thoſe, ſuppoſed to have been inſerted by the authour after the acceſſion of king James.

Here

Here lyeth Elizabeth, who reigned and died a virgin[5]. Beſides, if Shakſpeare knew, as probably moſt people at that time did, that ſhe became very ſolicitous about the reputation of virginity, when her title to it was at leaſt equivocal, this would be an additional inducement to him to compliment her on that head.

5. Granting that the *latter part* of the panegyrick on Elizabeth implies that ſhe was dead when it was compoſed, it would not prove that this play was written in the time of king James; for *theſe latter lines* in praiſe of the queen, as well as the whole of the compliment to the king, might have been added after his acceſſion to the throne, in order to bring the ſpeaker back to the object immediately before him, the infant Elizabeth. And this Mr. Theobald conjectured to have been the caſe. I do not, however, ſee any *neceſſity* for this ſuppoſition; as there is nothing, in my apprehenſion, contained in *any* of the lines in praiſe of the queen, inconſiſtent with the notion of the *whole* of the panegyrick on her having been compoſed in her life-time.

In further confirmation of what has been here advanced to ſhew that this play was probably written while queen Elizabeth was yet alive, it may be obſerved, (to uſe the words of an anonymous writer,[6]) that "Shakſpeare has caſt the diſagreeable parts of her *father's* character as much into ſhade as poſſible; that he has repreſented him as greatly diſpleaſed with the grievances of his ſubjects, and ordering them to be relieved; tender and obliging [in the early part of the play] to his queen, grateful to the cardinal, and in the caſe of Cranmer, capable of diſtinguiſhing and rewarding true merit." "He has exerted (adds the ſame authour) an equal degree of complaiſance, by the amiable lights in which he has ſhewn the *mother* of Elizabeth. Anne Bullen is repreſented as affected with the moſt tender concern for the ſufferings of her miſtreſs, queen Catharine; receiving the honour the

[5] Camden, 27. Melvil, 49.
[6] The authour of *Shakſpeare Illuſtrated.*

king

king confers on her, by making her marchioneſs of Pembroke, with a graceful humility; and more anxious to conceal her advancement from the queen, leſt it ſhould aggravate her ſorrows, than ſolicitous to penetrate into the meaning of ſo extraordinary a favour, or of indulging herſelf in the flattering proſpect of future royalty."

It is unneceſſary to quote particular paſſages in ſupport of theſe aſſertions; but the following lines, which are ſpoken of Anne Boleyn by the Lord Chamberlain, appear to me ſo evidently calculated for the ear of Elizabeth, (to whom ſuch incenſe was by no means diſpleaſing,) that I cannot forbear to tranſcribe them:

" She is a gallant creature, and complete
" In mind and feature. I perſuade me, *from her*
" *Will fall ſome bleſſing to this land, which ſhall*
" *In it be memoriz'd.*"

Again:

" —I have peruſed her well;
" Beauty and honour are in her ſo mingled,
" That they have caught the king: *and who knows yet,*
" *But from this lady may proceed a gem,*
" *To lighten all this iſle.*"

Our authour had produced ſo many plays in the preceding years, that it is not likely that *King Henry VIII.* was written *before* 1601. It might perhaps with equal propriety be aſcribed to 1602, and it is not eaſy to determine in which of thoſe years it was compoſed; but it is extremely probable that it was written in one of them. It was not printed till 1623.

A poem, called the Life and Death of Thomas Wolſey, Cardinal, which was entered on the books of the Stationers' company, and publiſhed, in the year 1599, perhaps ſuggeſted this ſubject to Shakſpeare.

He had alſo certainly read Churchyard's *Legend of Cardinal Wolſey*, printed in *The Mirrour for Magiſtrates*, 1587.

" Have

"Have we ſome ſtrange Indian with the great tool come to court, the women ſo beſiege us," ſays the Porter in the laſt act of this play. This note of time may perhaps hereafter ſerve to aſcertain the date of this piece, though I cannot avail myſelf of it, not having been able to diſcover to what circumſtance Shakſpeare here alludes.

A play entitled *The Life and Death of Lord Cromwell*, was publiſhed at London in 1602. In the title-page it is ſaid to be written by W. S.; letters which undoubtedly were inſerted to deceive the reader, and to induce him to ſuppoſe that the piece was written by Shakſpeare, as a kind of ſequel to his *Henry VIII.* This circumſtance may ſerve in ſome meaſure to confirm my conjecture that *King Henry VIII.* had been exhibited in the preceding year. Rowley's *King Henry VIII.* was publiſhed in 1605, probably with a view that it alſo might be confounded with Shakſpeare's drama; and both it and *Lord Cromwell* were re-printed with the ſame fraudulent intention in 1613, in which year our authour's play was revived with great ſplendour.

The Globe play-houſe, we are told by the continuator of Stowe's Chronicle, was burnt down, on St. Peter's day, in the year 1613, while the play of *K. Henry VIII.* was exhibiting. Sir Henry Wotton, (as Mr. Tyrwhitt has obſerved,) ſays in one of his letters, that this accident happened during the exhibition of a *new* play, called *All is True*; which, however, appears both from Sir Henry's minute deſcription of the piece, and from the account given by Stowe's continuator, to have been our authour's play of *K. Henry VIII.* If indeed Sir H. Wotton was accurate in calling it a *new* play, all the foregoing reaſoning on this ſubject would be at once overthrown; and this piece, inſtead of being aſcribed to 1601, ſhould have been placed twelve years later. But I ſtrongly ſuſpect that the only novelty attending this play, in the year 1613, was its title, decorations, and perhaps the prologue and epilogue. The Elector Palatine was in London in that year; and it appears from the Mſ. regiſter of

lord Harrington, treaſurer of the chambers to K. James I. that many of our authour's plays were then exhibited for the entertainment of him and the princeſs Elizabeth. By the ſame regiſter we learn, that the titles of many of them were changed[7] in that year. Princes are fond of opportunities to diſplay their magnificence before ſtrangers of diſtinction; and James, who on his arrival here muſt have been dazzled by a ſplendour foreign to the poverty of his native kingdom, might have been peculiarly ambitious to exhibit before his ſon-in-law the mimick pomp of an Engliſh coronation[8]. *K. Henry VIII.* therefore, after having lain by for ſome years unacted, on account of the coſtlineſs of the exhibition, might have been revived in 1613, under the title of *All is True*, with new decorations, and a new prologue and epilogue. Mr. Tyrwhitt obſerves, that the prologue has two or three direct references to this title; a circumſtance which authorizes us to conclude, almoſt with certainty, that it was an occaſional production, written ſome years after the compoſition of the play. *King Henry VIII.* not being then printed, the fallacy of calling it a new play on its revival was not eaſily detected.

Dr. Johnſon long ſince ſuſpected, from the contemptuous manner in which "*the noiſe of targets*, and *the fellow in a long motley coat*," or, in other words, moſt of our authour's plays, are ſpoken of, in this prologue, that it was not the compoſition of Shakſpeare, but written after his departure from the ſtage, on ſome accidental revival

[7] Thus, *Henry IV.* P. I. was called *Hotſpur*; *Henry IV.* P. II. or *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, was exhibited under the name of *Sir John Falſtaff*; *Much ado about Nothing* was new-named *Benedick and Beatrix*, and *Julius Cæſar* ſeems to have been repreſented under the title of *Cæſar's Tragedy*.

[8] The Prince Palatine was not preſent at the repreſentation of *K. Henry VIII.* on the 30th of June O. S. when the Globe playhouſe was burnt down, having left England ſome time before. But the play might have been revived for his entertainment in the beginning of the year 1613; and might have been occaſionally repreſented afterwards.

of

of *King Henry VIII.* by Ben Jonſon, whoſe ſtyle, it ſeemed to him to reſemble[9]. Dr. Farmer is of the ſame opinion,

9 In ſupport of this conjecture it may be obſerved, that Ben Jonſon has in many places endeavoured to ridicule our authour for repreſenting battles on the ſtage. So, in his prologue to *Every Man in his Humour:*

" ——Yet ours, for want, hath not ſo lov'd the ſtage,
" As he dare ſerve the *ill cuſtoms* of the age;
" Or purchaſe your delight at ſuch a rate,
" As, for it, he himſelf muſt juſtly hate;
" To make, &c.
" —————— or *with three ruſty ſwords,*
" *And help of ſome few foot-and-half-foot words,*
" *Fight over York and Lancaſter's long jars,*
" *And in the tyring houſe bring wounds to ſcars.*"

Again, in his *Silent Woman*, Act IV. ſc. iv.

" Nay, I would fit out a play, that were nothing but fights at ſea, *drum, trumpet*, and *target.*"

We are told in the memoirs of Ben Jonſon's life, that he went to France in the year 1613. But at the time of the revival of *King Henry VIII.* he either had not left England, or was then returned; for he was a ſpectator of the fire which happened at the Globe theatre during the repreſentation of that piece. [See the *next note.*]

It may, perhaps, ſeem extraordinary, that he ſhould have preſumed to prefix this covert cenſure of Shakſpeare to one of his own plays. But he appears to have eagerly embraced every opportunity of depretiating him. This occaſional prologue (whoever was the writer of it) confirms the tradition handed down by Rowe, that our authour retired from the ſtage ſome years before his death. Had he been at that time joined with Heminge and Burbage in the management of the Globe theatre, he ſcarcely would have ſuffered the lines above alluded to, to have been ſpoken. In lord Harrington's account of the money diſburſed for the plays that were exhibited by his majeſty's ſervants, in the year 1613, before the Elector Palatine, all the payments are ſaid to have been made to " *John Heminge*, for himſelf and the reſt of his fellows;" from which we may conclude that he was then the principal manager. A correſpondent, however, of Sir Thomas Puckering's, (as I learn from Mr. Tyrwhitt) in a Mſ. letter, preſerved in the Muſeum, and dated in the year 1613, calls the company at the Globe, " *Bourbage's* company."—Shakſpeare's name ſtands before either of theſe, in the licence granted by K. James; and had he not left London before that time, the players at the Globe theatre, I imagine, would rather have been entitled, *his* company.—The burleſque parody on the account of Falſtaff's death, which is contained in Fletcher's comedy of *the Captain*, acted in 1613, and the ridicule of Hamlet's celebrated

 ſoliloquy,

opinion, and thinks he ſees ſomething of Jonſon's hand, here and there, in the dialogue alſo. After our authour's retirement to the country, Jonſon was perhaps employed to give a novelty to the piece by a new title and prologue, and to furniſh the managers of the Globe with a deſcription of the coronation ceremony, and of thoſe other decorations, with which, from his connection with Inigo Jones, and his attendance at court, he was peculiarly converſant.

The piece appears to have been revived with ſome degree of ſplendour; for Sir Henry Wotton gives a very pompous account of the repreſentation. The unlucky accident that happened to the houſe during the exhibition, was occaſioned by diſcharging ſome ſmall pieces, called chambers, on King Henry's arrival at cardinal Wolſey's gate at Whitehall, one of which, being injudiciouſly managed, ſet fire to the thatched roof of the theatre[1].

The

ſoliloquy, and of Ophelia's death, in his *Scornful Lady*, which was repreſented about the ſame time, confirm the tradition that our authour had then retired from the ſtage, careleſs of the fate of his writings, inattentive to the illiberal attacks of his contemporaries, and negligent alike of preſent and poſthumous fame.

Since the above note was written, I have ſeen the mortgage which is printed in a preceding page, and was executed by Shakſpeare in March 1612-13. From this deed we find that he was in London in that year: he might, however, have parted with his property in the theatre before.

[1] The Globe theatre (as I learn from the Mſs. of Mr. Oldys) was thatched with reeds, and had an open area in its center. This area we may ſuppoſe to have been filled by the loweſt part of the audience, whom Shakſpeare calls the *groundlings*.—*Chambers* are not, like other guns, pointed horizontally, but are diſcharged as they ſtand erect on their breeches. The accident may, therefore, be eaſily accounted for. If theſe pieces were let off behind the ſcenes, the paper or wadding with which their charges were confined, would reach the thatch on the inſide; or if fixed without the walls, it might have been carried by the wind to the top of the roof.

This accident is alluded to, in the following lines of Ben Jonſon's *Execration upon Vulcan*, from which it appears, that he was at the Globe playhouſe when it was burnt; a circumſtance which in ſome meaſure ſtrengthens the conjecture that he was employed on the revival

of

The play, thus revived and new-named, was probably called, in the bills of that time, a *new* play; which might have led Sir Henry Wotton to deſcribe it as ſuch. And thus his account may be reconciled with that of the other contemporary writers, as well as with thoſe arguments which have been here urged in ſupport of the early date of *King Henry VIII.* Every thing has been fully ſtated on each ſide of the queſtion. The reader muſt judge.

Mr. Roderick in his notes on our authour, (appended to Mr. Edwards's *Canons of Criticiſm,*) takes notice of ſome peculiarities in the metre of the play before us; viz. "*that there are many more verſes in it than in any other, which end with a redundant ſyllable,*"—"*very near two to one,*"—and that "*the cæſuræ or pauſes of the*

of *King Henry VIII.* for this was not the theatre at which his pieces were uſually repreſented:

"Well fare the wiſe men yet on the Bank-ſide,
"My friends, the watermen! they could provide
"Againſt thy fury, when, to ſerve their needs,
"They made a Vulcan of a ſheaf of reeds;
"Whom they durſt handle in their holy-day coats,
"And ſafely truſt to dreſs, not burn, their boats.
"But O thoſe reeds! thy mere diſdain of them
"Made thee beget that cruel ſtratagem,
"(Which ſome are pleas'd to ſtyle but thy mad prank,)
"Againſt *the Globe*, the glory of *the Bank*:
"Which, though it were the fort of the whole pariſh,
"Flank'd with a ditch, and forc'd out of a mariſh,
"*I ſaw* with two poor *chambers* taken in,
"And raz'd; ere thought could urge this might have been.
"See the world's ruins! nothing but the piles
"Left, and wit ſince to cover it with tiles.
"The breth'ren, they ſtraight nois'd it out for news,
"'Twas verily ſome relick of the ſtews,
"And this a ſparkle of that fire let looſe,
"That was lock'd up in the Wincheſtrian gooſe,
"Bred on *the Bank* in time of popery,
"When Venus there maintain'd her myſtery.
"But others fell, with that conceit, by the ears,
"And cried, it was a threat'ning to the bears,
"And that accurſed ground, *the Paris-garden*," &c.

verſe are full as remarkable." The *redundancy*, &c. obſerved by this critick, Mr. Steevens thinks (a remark, which, having omitted to introduce in its proper place, he deſires me to inſert here,) "was rather the effect of chance, than of deſign in the authour; and might have ariſen either from the negligence of Shakſpeare, who in this play has borrowed whole ſcenes and ſpeeches from Holinſhed, whoſe words he was probably in too much haſte to compreſs into verſification ſtrictly regular and harmonious; or from the interpolations of Ben Jonſon, whoſe hand Dr. Farmer thinks he occaſionally perceives in the dialogue."

Whether Mr. Roderick's poſition be well founded, is hardly worth a conteſt; but the peculiarities which he has animadverted on, (if ſuch there be) add probability to the conjecture that this piece underwent ſome alterations, after it had paſſed out of the hands of Shakſpeare.

23. Troilus and Cressida, 1602.

Troilus and Creſſida was entered at Stationers' hall, Feb. 7, 1602-3, under the title of *The booke of Troilus and Creſſida*, by J. Roberts, the printer of *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*. It was therefore, probably, written in 1602. It was printed in 1609, with the title of *The Hiſtory of Troylus and Creſſida*, with a preface by the editor, who ſpeaks of it as if it had not been then acted. But it is entered in 1602-3, "*as acted by my Lord Chamberlen's men.*" The players at the Globe theatre, to which Shakſpeare belonged, were called *the Lord Chamberlain's ſervants*, till the year 1603. In that year they obtained a licence for their exhibitions from king James; and from that time they bore the more honourable appellation of *his majeſty's ſervants*. There can, therefore, be little doubt, that the *Troilus and Creſſida* which is here entered, as acted at Shakſpeare's theatre, was his play, and

and was, if not repreſented, intended to have been repreſented there[z].

Perhaps the two diſcordant accounts, relative to this piece, may be thus reconciled. It might have been performed in 1602 at *court*, by the lord chamberlain's ſervants, (as many plays at that time were,) and yet not have been exhibited on the publick ſtage till ſome years afterwards. The editor in 1609 only ſays, "it had never been ſtaled with the *ſtage*, never clapperclaw'd with the palms of *the vulgar*."

As a further proof of the early appearance of *Troilus and Creſſida*, it may be obſerved, that an incident in it ſeems to be burleſqued in a comedy entitled *Hiſtriomaſtix*, which, though not printed till 1610, muſt have been written before the death of queen Elizabeth, who, in the laſt act of the piece, is ſhadowed under the character of Aſtræa, and is ſpoken of as then living.

In our authour's play, when Troilus and Creſſida part, he gives her his ſleeve, and ſhe, in return, preſents him with her glove.

To this circumſtance theſe lines in *Hiſtriomaſtix* ſeem to refer. They are ſpoken by Troilus and Creſſida, who are introduced in an interlude:

Troi. "Come, Creſſida, my creſſet light,
"Thy face doth ſhine both day and night.
"Behold, behold, *thy garter blue*
"*Thy knight his valiant elbow weares*,
"That, when he ſhakes his furious ſpeare,
"The foe in ſhivering fearful ſort
"May lay him down in death to ſnort.
Creſſ. "O knight, with valour in thy face,
"*Here take my ſkreene*, weare it for grace;
"Within thy helmet put the ſame,
"Therewith to make thy enemies lame.

[z] No other play with this title has come down to us. We have therefore a right to conclude that the play entered in the books of the Stationers' company, was Shakſpeare's.

In *Much ado about nothing* Troilus is mentioned as "the firſt employer of pandars." Shakſpeare, therefore, probably had read Chaucer's poem before the year 1600, when that play was printed.

In *Cymbeline* it is ſaid, that

"Therſites' body is as good as Ajax'
"When neither are alive."

This ſeems to import a precedent knowledge of Ajax and Therſites, and in this light may be regarded as a preſumptive proof that *Troilus and Creſſida* was written before *Cymbeline*.

Dryden ſuppoſed *Troilus and Creſſida* to have been one of Shakſpeare's earlieſt performances[3]; but has not mentioned on what principles he founded his judgment. Pope, on the other hand, thought it one of his laſt; grounding his opinion not only on the preface by the editor in 1609, but on "the great number of obſervations both moral and political with which this piece is crowded, more than any other of our authour's." For my own part, were it not for the entry in the Stationers' books, I ſhould have been led, both by the colour of the writing and by the above-mentioned preface, to claſs it (though not one of our authour's happieſt effuſions) in 1608, rather than in that year in which it is here placed.

24. Measure for Measure, 1603.

This play was not regiſtered at Stationers' hall, nor printed, till 1623. But from two paſſages in it, which ſeem intended as a courtly apology for the ſtately and ungracious demeanour of King James I. on his entry into England, it appears probable that it was written not long after his acceſſion to the throne:

3 "The tragedy which I have undertaken to correct, was in all probability, one of his *firſt endeavours* on the ſtage.—Shakſpeare (as I hinted) *in the apprenticeſhip of his writing* modelled it [the ſtory of Lollius] into that play which is now called by the name of *Troilus and Creſſida*."—Dryden's pref. to *Troilus and Creſſida*.

"I'll

" I'll privily away. I love the people,
" But do not like to ſtage me to their eyes.
" Though it do well, I do not reliſh well
" Their loud applauſe, and aves vehement;
" Nor do I think the man of ſafe diſcretion
" That does affect it." *Meaſ. for Meaſ.* Act I. ſc. i.

Again, Act II. ſc. iv.

" ——————————— So
" The general, ſubject to a well-wiſh'd king,
" Quit their own part, and in obſequious fondneſs
" Croud to his preſence, where their untaught love
" Muſt needs appear offence[4]."

King James was *ſo much offended* by the *untaught*, and, we may add, undeſerved, gratulations of his ſubjects, on his entry into England, that he iſſued a proclamation, forbidding the people to reſort to him.—" Afterwards," ſays the hiſtorian of his reign, " in his publick appearances, eſpecially in his ſports, the acceſſes of the people made him ſo impatient, that he often diſperſed them with frowns, that we may not ſay with *curſes*[5].

It is obſervable throughout our authour's plays, that he does not ſcruple to introduce Engliſh ſigns, habits, cuſtoms, names, &c. though the ſcene of his drama lies in a foreign country; and that he has frequent alluſions to the circumſtances of the day, though the events which form the ſubject of his piece are ſuppoſed to have happened a thouſand years before. Thus, in *Coriolanus*, *Hob* and *Dick* are plebeians; and the Romans toſs their caps in the air, with the ſame expreſſion of feſtivity which our poet's contemporaries diſplayed in Stratford or London. In *Twelfth Night* we hear of the bed of Ware, and the bells of Saint Bennet; and in *The Taming of the Shrew* the *Pegaſus*, a ſign of a publick houſe in Cheapſide in the time of Queen Elizabeth, is hung up in a town in

4 See Mr. Tyrwhitt's note.
5 Wilſon's *Hiſt. of K. James*, ad ann. 1603.

Italy.

Italy. In *Hamlet* the Prince of Denmark and Guildenſtern hold a long converſation concerning the children of the Chapel and St. Pauls'. The opening of the preſent play, viewed in this light, furniſhes an additional argument in ſupport of the date which I have aſſigned to it. When King James came to the throne of England, March 24, 1602-3, he found the kingdom engaged in a war with Spain, which had laſted near twenty years. "*Heaven grant us his* peace!" ſays a gentleman to Lucio, Act I. ſc. ii.; and afterwards the bawd laments, that "what with *the war*, what with the ſweat, ſhe was cuſtom-ſhrunk." Suppoſing theſe two paſſages to relate to our authour's own time, they almoſt deciſively prove *Meaſure for Meaſure* to have been written *in 1603*; when the war was not yet ended, as the latter words ſeem to imply, and when there was ſome *proſpect* of peace, as the former ſeem to intimate. Our Britiſh Solomon very ſoon after his acceſſion to the throne manifeſted his pacifick diſpoſition, though the peace with Spain was not proclaimed till the 19th of Auguſt, 1604.

By *the ſweat*, conſidering who the ſpeaker is, it is probable that the diſorder moſt fatal to thoſe of her profeſſion was intended. However, the plague was ſometimes ſo called; and perhaps the dreadful peſtilence of 1603 was meant; which carried off in the month of July in that year 857 perſons, and in the whole year 30,578 perſons: that is, one fifth part of the people in the metropolis; the total number of the inhabitants of London being at that time about one hundred and fifty thouſand. If ſuch was the alluſion, it likewiſe confirms the date attributed to this play.

Some part of this laſt argument in confirmation of the date which I had aſſigned ſome years ago to the comedy before us, I owe to Mr. Capell; and while I acknowledge the obligation, it is but juſt to add, that it is the only one that I met with, which in the ſmalleſt degree could throw any light on the preſent inquiry into the dates of our authour's plays,

"In the dry deſert of *ten* thouſand lines;"

after wading through two ponderous volumes in quarto, written in a ſtyle manifeſtly formed on that of the Clown in the comedy under our conſideration, whoſe narratives, we are told, were calculated to laſt out *a night in Ruſſia, when nights are at the longeſt.*

In the year 1604, ſays Wilſon the hiſtorian, "the ſword and buckler trade being out of date, diverſe ſects of vitious perſons, under the title of *roaring boys, bravadoes, royſters,* &c. commit many inſolencies; the ſtreets ſwarm night and day with quarrels: private duels are fomented, eſpecially between the Engliſh and Scotch: and great feuds between proteſtants and papiſts." A proclamation was publiſhed to reſtrain theſe enormities; which proving ineffectual, the legiſlature interpoſed, and the act commonly called the ſtatute of ſtabbing, 1 Jac. I. c. 8. was made. This ſtatute, as Sir Michael Forſter obſerves, was principally intended to put a ſtop to the outrages above enumerated, "committed by perſons of inflammable ſpirits and deep reſentment, who, wearing ſhort daggers under their cloaths, were too well prepared to do quick and effectual execution upon provocations extremely ſlight." King James's firſt parliament met on the 19th of March, 1603-4, and ſat till the 7th of July following. From the time of James's acceſſion to the throne great animoſity ſubſiſted between the Engliſh and Scotch; and many of the outrageous acts which gave riſe to the ſtatute of ſtabbing, had been committed in the preceding year, about the end of which year I ſuppoſe *Meaſure for Meaſure* to have been written. The enumeration made by the Clown, in the fourth act, of the perſons who were confined with him in the priſon, is an additional confirmation of the date aſſigned to it. Of ten priſoners whom he names, four are ſtabbers, or duelliſts: "Maſter Starve-lacky, the rapier and dagger man, young Drop-heir that kill'd luſty Pudding, Maſter Forth-right, the tilter, and wild Half-can that ſtabb'd Pots."

That *Meaſure for Meaſure* was written before 1607, may be fairly concluded from the following paſſage in a poem

poem publiſhed in that year, which we have good ground to believe was copied from a ſimilar thought in this play, as the authour, at the end of his piece, profeſſes a perſonal regard for Shakſpeare, and highly praiſes his *Venus and Adonis*[4]:

" So play the fooliſh *throngs* with one that *ſwoons*;
" Come all to *help* him, and ſo ſtop the *air*
" By which he ſhould revive."
Meaſ. for Meaſ. Act II. ſc. iv.

" And like as when ſome ſudden extaſie
" Seizeth the nature of a ſicklie man;
" When he's diſcern'd to *ſwoune*, ſtraite by and by
" Folke to his *helpe* confuſedly have ran;
" And ſeeking with their art to fetch him backe,
" So many *throng*, that he the *ayre* doth lacke."
Myrrha, the Mother of Adonis, or Luſte's Prodigies, by William Barkſted, a poem, 1607.

25. The Winter's Tale, 1604.

Greene's *Doraſtus and Fawnia*, from which the plot of this play was taken, was publiſhed in 1588.

The Winter's Tale was not entered on the Stationers' books, nor printed till 1623. It was acted at court in 1613[5].

4 See the verſes alluded to, ante, p. 251, n. 4. This writer does not ſeem to have been very ſcrupulous about adopting either the thoughts or expreſſions of his contemporaries; for in his poem are found two lines taken *verbatim* from Marſton's *Inſatiate Counteſs*, printed four years before *Myrrha the Mother of Adonis*, &c.

" Night, like a maſque, was enter'd heaven's great hall,
" With thouſand torches uſhering the way."

It appears from Ben Jonſon's *Silent Woman*, that W. Barkſted was an actor, and was employed in the theatre where our authour's plays were repreſented. He might therefore have performed a part in *Meaſure for Meaſure*, or have ſeen the copy before it was printed.

5 Mſ. of the late Mr. Vertue.—The *Tempeſt* was repreſented at the ſame time before the king. Hence probably they were both ridiculed by Ben Jonſon in his *Bartholomew Fair*, acted in the following year.

In

In the firſt edition of this eſſay I ſuppoſed *The Winter's Tale* to have been written in 1594; an errour (as it now appears to me) into which I was led by an entry in the Stationers' regiſters dated May 22, in that year, of a piece entitled *A Winter-Night's Paſtime*, which I imagined might have been this play under another name, the titles of our authour's plays having been ſometimes changed[6].

The opinion, however, which I gave on this ſubject, was by no means a decided one. I then mentioned that "Mr. Walpole thought, that this play was intended by Shakſpeare as an indirect apology for Anne Bullen, in which light it might be conſidered as a Second Part to *King Henry VIII.*; and that my reſpect for that very judicious and ingenious writer, the ſilence of Meres, in whoſe catalogue of our authour's dramas publiſhed in 1598 the play before us is not found, and the circumſtance of there not being a ſingle rhyming couplet throughout this piece, except in the chorus, made me doubt whether it ought not rather to be aſcribed to the *year 1601 or 1602, than that in which I then placed it.*"

The doubts which I then entertained, a more attentive examination of this play has confirmed; and I am now perſuaded that it was not near ſo early a compoſition as the entry above-mentioned led me to ſuppoſe.

Mr. Walpole has obſerved[7], that "*The Winter's Tale* may be ranked among the hiſtorick plays of Shakſpeare, though not one of his numerous criticks and commentators have diſcovered the drift of it. It was certainly intended (in compliment to Queen Elizabeth) as an indirect apology for her mother Anne Boleyn. The addreſs of the poet appears no where to more advantage. The ſubject was too delicate to be exhibited on the ſtage without a veil; and it was too recent, and touched the queen too nearly, for the bard to have ventured ſo home

[6] Thus, *Hamlet* was ſometimes called *Hamlet's Revenge*, ſometimes *The Hiſtory of Hamlet*; *The Merchant of Venice* was ſometimes called *The Jew of Venice*, &c. See p. 338, n. 7.

[7] *Hiſtorick Doubts.*

an

an alluſion on any other ground than compliment. The unreaſonable jealouſy of Leontes, and his violent conduct in conſequence, form a true portrait of Henry the Eighth, who generally made the law the engine of his boiſterous paſſions. Not only the general plan of the ſtory is moſt applicable, but ſeveral paſſages are ſo marked, that they touch the real hiſtory nearer than the fable. Hermione on her trial ſays,

"———————— for honour,
"'Tis a derivative from me to mine,
"And only that I ſtand for."

This ſeems to be taken from the very letter of Anne Boleyn to the king before her execution, when ſhe pleads for the infant princeſs, his daughter. Mamillius, a young prince, an unneceſſary character, dies in his infancy; but it confirms the alluſion, as queen Anne, before Elizabeth, had a ſtill-born ſon. But the moſt ſtriking paſſage, and which had nothing to do in the tragedy, but as it pictured Elizabeth, is, where Paulina deſcribing the new-born princeſs, and her likeneſs to her father, ſays, "*ſhe has the very trick of his frown.*" There is another ſentence indeed ſo applicable, both to Elizabeth and her father, that I ſhould ſuſpect the poet inſerted it after her death. Paulina, ſpeaking of the child, tells the king,

"———'Tis yours;
"And, might we lay the old proverb to your charge,
"So like you, 'tis the worſe."

This conjecture muſt, I think, be acknowledged to be extremely plauſible. With reſpect, however, to the death of the young prince Mamillius, which is ſuppoſed to allude to Queen Anne's having had a ſtill-born ſon, it is but fair to obſerve, that this circumſtance was not an *invention* of our poet, being founded on a ſimilar incident in Lodge's *Doraſtus and Fawnia*, in which Garanter, the Mamillius of *The Winter's Tale*, likewiſe dies in his infancy. But this by no means diminiſhes the force of

of the hypotheſis which has been juſt now ſtated; it only ſhews, that Shakſpeare was not under the neceſſity of twiſting the ſtory to his purpoſe, and that this as well as the many other correſponding circumſtances between the fictitious narrative of Bellaria, (the Hermione of the preſent play) and the real hiſtory of the mother of Elizabeth, almoſt forced the ſubject upon him.

Sir William Blackſtone has pointed out a paſſage in the firſt act of this play, which had eſcaped my obſervation, and which, as he juſtly obſerves, furniſhes a proof that it was not written till after the death of queen Elizabeth:

" —— If I could find example
" Of thouſands, that had ſtruck anointed kings,
" And flouriſh'd after, I'd not do it; but ſince
" Nor braſs, nor ſtone, nor parchment, bears not one,
" Let villainy itſelf forſwear it."

Theſe lines could never have been intended for the ear of her who had deprived the queen of Scots of her life. To the ſon of Mary they could not but have been agreeable.

If we ſuppoſe with Mr. Walpole that this play was intended as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, it ought rather to be attributed to the year 1602, than that in which I have placed it: but the paſſage laſt quoted is inconſiſtent with ſuch a date. Mr. Walpole himſelf alſo has quoted ſome lines, which he thinks could not have been inſerted till after the death of Elizabeth. Perhaps our authour lay'd the ſcheme of the play in the very year in which the queen died, and finiſhed it in the next. This is the only ſuppoſition that I know of, by which theſe diſcordancies can be reconciled. I have therefore attributed it to 1604.

In that year was entered on the Stationers' books " A ſtrange reporte of a *monſtrous fiſh*, that appeared *in the form of a woman* from her waiſt upward, ſeene in the ſea." To this perhaps the poet alludes, when he makes Antolycus produce a ballad " Of a *fiſh* that appeared upon the

the coaſt, on Wedneſday the fourſcore of April, forty thouſand fathom above water, and *ſung* this ballad againſt the hard hearts of maids: it was thought, *ſhe was a woman*, and was turn'd into a cold fiſh," &c.

There is, ſays one of the characters in this piece, "but one *Puritan* among them, and he ſings pſalms to hornpipes." The preciſe manners of the puritans was at this time much ridiculed by proteſtants; and the principal matters in diſpute between them (whether the ſurplice ſhould be uſed in the celebration of divine ſervice, the croſs in baptiſm, and the ring in marriage,) were gravely diſcuſſed at Hampton Court before the king, who acted as moderator, in the beginning of the year 1604. The points diſcuſſed on that occaſion were, without doubt, very popular topicks at that time; and every ſtroke at the Puritans, for whom King James had a hearty deteſtation, muſt have been very agreeable to him as well as to the frequenters of the theatre, againſt which that ſect inveighed in the bittereſt terms. Shakſpeare, from various paſſages in his plays, ſeems to have entirely coincided in opinion with his majeſty, on this ſubject.

The metre of *The Winter's Tale* appears to me leſs eaſy and flowing than many other of our poet's dramas; and the phraſeology throughout to be more involved and parenthetical than any other of his plays. In this harſhneſs of diction and involution of ſentences it ſtrongly reſembles *Troilus and Creſſida*, and *King Henry the Eighth*, which I ſuppoſe to have been written not long before.

26. KING LEAR, 1605.

The tragedy of *King Lear* was entered on the books of the Stationers' company, Nov. 26, 1607, and is there mentioned to have been played the preceding Chriſtmas, before his majeſty at Whitehall. But this, I conjecture, was not its firſt exhibition. It ſeems extremely probable that its firſt appearance was in March or April 1605; in which year the old play of *King Leir*, that had been entered at Stationers' hall in 1594, was printed by Simon

Simon Stafford, for John Wright, who, we may preſume, finding Shakſpeare's play ſucceſsful, hoped to palm the ſpurious one on the publick for his[8]. The old *King Leir* was entered on the Stationers' books, May 8, 1605, as it was *lately* acted.

Harſnet's *Declaration of Popiſh Impoſtures*, from which Shakſpeare borrowed ſome fantaſtick names of ſpirits, mentioned in this play, was printed in 1603. Our authour's *King Lear* was not publiſhed till 1608.

This play is aſcertained to have been written after the month of October, 1604, by a minute change which Shakſpeare made in a traditional line, put into the mouth of Edgar:

" His word was ſtill,—Fie, foh, fum,
" I ſmell the blood of a *Britiſh* man."

The old metrical ſaying, which is found in one of Naſhe's pamphlets, printed in 1596, and in other books, was,

" ——————— Fy, fa, fum,
" I ſmell the blood of an *Engliſhman*."

Though a complete union of England and Scotland, which was projected in the firſt parliament that met after James's acceſſion to the Engliſh throne, was not carried into effect till a century afterwards, the two kingdoms were united in *name*, and he was proclaimed king of *Great Britain*, October 24, 1604.

[8] Shakſpeare has copied one of the paſſages in this old play. This he might have done, though we ſhould ſuppoſe it not to have been publiſhed till after his *King Lear* was written and acted; for the old play had been in poſſeſſion of the ſtage for many years before 1605; and *without doubt he had often ſeen* it exhibited; nor could he have found any difficulty in procuring a manuſcript copy of it, when he ſat down to write his own tragedy on the ſame ſubject. I ſuſpect, however, the old play had been publiſhed in 1594.

27. CYMBELINE, 1605.

Cymbeline was not entered in the Stationers' books nor printed till 1623. It ſtands the laſt play in the earlieſt folio edition; but nothing can be collected from thence, for the folio editors manifeſtly pay'd no attention to chronological arrangement. Nor was this negligence peculiar to them: for in the folio collection of D'Avenant's works printed after his death, *Albovine, king of the Lombards*, one of his earlieſt plays, which had been publiſhed in quarto, in 1629, is placed at the end of the volume.

I have found in *Cymbeline* little internal evidence by which its date might be aſcertained. Such evidence, however, as it furniſhes, induces me to aſcribe it to 1605, after Shakſpeare had compoſed *King Lear*, and before he had written *Macbeth*. The character of Edgar in *King Lear* is undoubtedly formed on that of *Leonatus*, the legitimate ſon of the blind king of Paphlagonia, in Sydney's *Arcadia*. Shakſpeare having occaſion to turn to that book while he was writing *King Lear*, the name of *Leonatus* adhered to his memory, and he has made it the name of one of the characters in *Cymbeline*. The ſtory of Lear lies near to that of Cymbeline in Holinſhed's Chronicle; and ſome account of Duncan and Macbeth is given incidentally in a ſubſequent page, not very diſtant from that part of the volume which is allotted to the hiſtory of thoſe Britiſh kings. In Holinſhed's *Scottiſh Chronicle* we find a ſtory of one Hay, a huſbandman, who, with his two ſons, placed himſelf athwart a lane, and by this means ſtayed his flying countrymen; which turned the battle againſt the Danes. This circumſtance, (which our poet has availed himſelf of in the fifth act of the play before us,) connected with what has been already mentioned relative to Sydney's *Arcadia*, renders it probable that the three plays of *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, and *Macbeth*, were written about the ſame period of time, and in the order in which I have placed them. The hiſtory of King Duff, Duncan, and Macbeth, which Shakſpeare appears to have diligently read, extends from

from p. 150 of Holinſhed's *Scottiſh Chronicle* to p. 176; and the ſtory of Hay occurs in p. 154 of the ſame Chronicle.

Mr. Steevens has obſerved, that there is a paſſage in B. and Fletcher's *Philaſter*, which bears a ſtrong reſemblance to a ſpeech of Jachimo in *Cymbeline*:

" I hear the tread of people: I am hurt;
" *The Gods take part againſt me: could this boor*
" *Have held me thus, elſe?*" *Philaſter*, Act IV. ſc. i.

" ——————— I have boly'd a lady,
" The princeſs of this country; *and the air of't*
" *Revengingly enfeebles me; or could this carle,*
" *A very drudge of natures, have ſubdued me*
" *In my profeſſion?*" *Cymbeline*, Act V. ſc. ii.

Philaſter had appeared on the ſtage before 1611, being mentioned by John Davies of Hereford, in his *Epigrams*, which have no date, but were publiſhed according to Oldys, in or about that year [9]. Dryden mentions a tradition, (which he might have received from Sir William D'Avenant,) that *Philaſter* was the firſt play by which Beaumont and Fletcher acquired reputation, and that they had written two or three leſs ſucceſsful pieces, before *Philaſter* appeared. From a prologue of D'Avenant's their firſt production ſhould ſeem to have been exhibited about the year 1605. *Philaſter*, therefore, it may be preſumed, was repreſented in 1608 or 1609.

One edition of the tract called *Weſtward for Smelts*, from which part of the fable of *Cymbeline* is borrowed, was publiſhed in 1603.

In this play mention is made of Cæſar's immeaſureable ambition, and Cleopatra's ſailing on the Cydnus to meet Antony; from which, and other circumſtances, I think it probable that about this time Shakſpeare peruſed the lives of Cæſar, Brutus, and Mark Antony.

[9] *Additions* to Langbaine's *Account of the Dramatick Poets*, MS.

28. MACBETH, 1606.

Guthrie aſſerts in his Hiſtory of Scotland, that king James, "to prove how thoroughly he was emancipated from the tutelage of his clergy, deſired Queen Elizabeth in the year 1599 to ſend him a company of Engliſh comedians. She complied, and James gave them a licence to act in his capital and in his court. I have great reaſon to think, (adds the hiſtorian,) that the immortal Shakſpeare was of the number[1]. But his drama, which finds acceſs at this day to the moſt inſenſible hearts, had no charms in the eyes of the preſbyterian clergy. They threatened excommunication to all who attended the play-houſe. Many forebore to attend the theatrical exhibitions. James conſidered the inſolent interpoſition of the clergy as a freſh attack upon his prerogative, and ordered thoſe who had been moſt active, to retract their menaces, which they unwillingly did; and we are told that the playhouſe was then greatly crowded."

I know not to what degree of credit this anecdote is entitled; but it is certain, that James after his acceſſion to the Engliſh throne, was a great encourager of theatrical exhibitions. From 1604 to 1608 he devoted himſelf entirely to hunting, maſques, plays, tiltings, &c. In 1605 he viſited Oxford. From a book entitled *Rex Platonicus*, cited by Dr. Farmer, we learn, that on entering the city the king was addreſſed by three ſtudents of St. John's college, who alternately accoſted his majeſty, reciting ſome Latin verſes, founded on the prediction of the weird ſiſters relative to Banquo and Macbeth[2].

Dr. Farmer is of opinion, that this performance preceded Shakſpeare's play; a ſuppoſition which is ſtrength-

[1] If the writer had any ground for this aſſertion, why was it not ſtated? It is extremely improbable that Shakſpeare ſhould have left London at this period. In 1599 his *King Henry V.* was produced, and without doubt acted with great applauſe.

[2] See Vol. IV. p. 437.

ened

ened by the ſilence of the authour of *Rex Platonicus*, who, if *Macbeth* had then appeared on the ſtage, would probably have mentioned ſomething of it. It ſhould be likewiſe remembered, that there ſubſiſted at that time, a ſpirit of oppoſition and rivalſhip between the regular players and the academicks of the two univerſities; the latter of whom frequently acted plays both in Latin and Engliſh, and ſeem to have piqued themſelves on the ſuperiority of their exhibitions to thoſe of the eſtabliſhed theatres[3]. Wiſhing probably to manifeſt this ſuperiority to the royal pedant, it is not likely that they would chooſe for a collegiate interlude, (if this little performance deſerves that name,) a ſubject which had already appeared on the publick ſtage, with all the embelliſhments that the magick hand of Shakſpeare could beſtow.

In the following July (1606) the king of Denmark came to England on a viſit to his ſiſter, queen Anne, and on the 3d of Auguſt was inſtalled a knight of the garter. "There is nothing to be heard at court," (ſays Drummond of Hawthornden in a letter dated that day,) but ſounding of trumpets, hautboys, muſick, revellings, and comedies." Perhaps during this viſit *Macbeth* was firſt exhibited.

This tragedy contains an alluſion to the union of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, under one ſovereign, and alſo to the cure of the king's-evil by the royal touch[4]. A ritual for the healing of that diſtemper was eſtabliſhed early in this reign; but in what

3 Ab ejuſdem collegii alumnis (qui et cothurno tragico et ſocco comico principes ſemper habebantur) *Vertumnus*, comœdia faceta, ad principes exhilarandos exhibetur. *Rex Platonicus*, p. 78.

Arcadiam reſtauratam Iſiacorum Arcadum lectiſſimi cecinerunt, unoque opere, principum omniumque ſpectantium animos immenſa et ultra fidem affecerunt voluptate; *ſimulque patrios ludiones, etſi exercitatiſſimos, quantum interſit inter ſcenam mercenariam & eruditam docuerunt.* Ib. p. 228. See alſo the *Return from Parnaſſus*, (Act IV. ſc. iii.) which was acted publickly at St. John's college in Cambridge.

4 *Macbeth*, Act IV. ſc. i. ii.

year that pretended power was aſſumed by king James I. is uncertain.

Macbeth was not entered in the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623.

In *The Tragedy of Cæſar and Pompey, or Cæſar's Revenge*, are theſe lines:

" Why, think you, lords, that 'tis *ambition's* ſpur
" That *pricketh* Cæſar to theſe high attempts?"

If the authour of that play, which was publiſhed in 1607, ſhould be thought to have had Macbeth's ſoliloquy in view, (which is not unlikely,) this circumſtance may add ſome degree of probability to the ſuppoſition that this tragedy had appeared before that year:

" ——————— I have no *ſpur*
" To *prick* the ſides of my intent, but only
" Vaulting *ambition*, which o'er-leaps itſelf,
" And falls at the other—"

At the time when *Macbeth* is ſuppoſed to have been written, the ſubject, it is probable, was conſidered as a topick the moſt likely to conciliate the favour of the court. In the additions to *Warner's Albion's England*, which were firſt printed in 1606, the ſtory of " *the Three Fairies or Weird Elves*," as he calls them, is ſhortly told, and king James's deſcent from Banquo carefully deduced.

Ben Jonſon, a few years afterwards, paid his court to his majeſty by his *Maſque of Queens*[5], preſented at Whitehall, Feb. 12, 1609; in which he has given a minute detail of all the magick rites that are recorded by king James in his book of *Dæmonologie*, or by any other authour ancient or modern.

[5] Mr. Upton was of opinion that this maſque preceded *Macbeth*. But the only ground which he ſtates for this conjecture, is, " that Jonſon's pride would not ſuffer him to borrow from Shakſpeare, though he ſtole from the ancients."

Mr.

Mr. Steevens has lately diſcovered a Mſ. play, entitled THE WITCH, written by Thomas Middleton[6], which renders it queſtionable, whether Shakſpeare was not indebted to that authour for the firſt hint of the magick introduced in this tragedy. The reader will find an account of this ſingular curioſity in the note[7].—To the obſervations

[6] In an advertiſement prefixed to an edition of *A Mad World my Maſters*, a comedy by Thomas Middleton, 1640, the printer ſays, that the authour was "*long ſince dead.*" Middleton probably died ſoon after the year 1626. He was chronologer to the city of London, and it does not appear that any maſque or pageant, in honour of the Lord Mayor, was ſet forth by him after that year*. From the dates of his printed plays, and from the enſuing verſes on his laſt performance, by Sir William Lower, we may conclude, that he was as early a writer, and at leaſt as old, as Shakſpeare:

"*Tom Middleton* his numerous iſſue brings,
"And his laſt muſe delights us when ſhe ſings:
"His halting age a pleaſure doth impart,
"And his white locks ſhew maſter of his art."

The following dramatick pieces by Middleton appear to have been publiſhed in his life-time. *Your Five Gallants*, no date.—*Blurt Maſter Conſtable, or the Spaniard's Night-Walk*, 1602.—*Michaelmas Term*, 1607.—*The Phœnix*, 1607.—*The Family of Love*, 1608.—*A Trick to catch the Old One*, 1608.—*A Mad World my Maſters*, 1608.—*The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurſe*, 1611.—*Fair Quarrel*, 1617.—*A Chaſte Maid of Cheapſide*, 1620.—*A Game at Cheſſe*, 1625.—Moſt of his other plays were printed, about thirty years after his death, by Kirkman and other booksellers, into whoſe hands his manuſcripts fell.

[7] In a former note on this tragedy, I have ſaid that the original edition contains only the two firſt words of the ſong in the 4th act, beginning—*Black ſpirits*, &c; but have lately diſcovered the entire ſtanza in an *unpubliſhed* dramatick piece, viz. "A Tragi-Coomodie called THE WITCH; *long ſince* acted by his Ma.ties Servants at the Black Friers; written by *Tho. Middleton*." The ſong is there called—"A charme-ſong, about a veſſell." The other ſong omitted in the 5th ſcene of the 3d act of *Macbeth*, together with the imperfect couplet there, may likewiſe be found, as follows, in *Middleton's* performance.—The *Hecate* of *Shakſpeare*, ſays:

"I am for the air," &c.

* *The Triumph of Health and Proſperity at the Inauguration of the moſt worthy Brother, the Right Hon. Cuthbert Hoſket, draper; compoſed by* Thomas Middleton, draper, 1626, 4to.

obſervations of Mr. Steevens I have only to add, that the ſongs, beginning, *Come away*, &c. and *Black ſpirits*, &c. being

The *Hecate* of *Middleton* (who like the former is ſummoned away by aerial ſpirits) has the ſame declaration in almoſt the ſame words: "I am for aloft," &c.

"*Song.*] Come away, come away: } *in the aire.*
"*Heccat, Heccat*, come away. }
"*Hec.* I come, I come, I come,
"With all the ſpeed I may,
"With all the ſpeed I may.
"Wher's *Stadlin?*
"Heere.] *in the aire.*
"Wher's *Puckle?*
"Heere.] *in the aire.*
"And *Hoppo* too, and *Hellwaine* too. }
"We lack but you, we lack but you: } *in the aire.*
"Come away, make up the count. }
"*Hec.* I will but 'noynt, and then I mount.
"A ſpirit like a cat deſcends. { There's one comes downe to fetch his dues, / A kiſſe, a coll, a ſip of blood: / And why thou ſtaiſt ſo long / "I muſe, I muſe, } *above.*
"Since the air's ſo ſweet and good.
"*Hec.* Oh, art thou come?
"What newes, what newes?
"All goes ſtill to our delight, }
"Either come, or els } *above.*
Refuſe, refuſe. }
"*Hec.* Now I am furniſh'd for the flight.
"*Fire.*] Hark, hark, the catt ſings a brave treble in her owne language.
"*Hec. going up.*] Now I goe, now I flie,
"*Malkin*, my ſweete ſpirit, and I.
"Oh what a daintie pleaſure 'tis,
"To ride in the aire,
"When the moone ſhines faire,
"And ſing, and daunce, and toy and kiſs!
"Over woods, high rocks and mountains,
"Over ſeas, our miſtris' fountains,
"Over ſteepe towres and turrets,
"We fly by night 'mongſt troopes of ſpiritts.
"No ring of bells to our eares ſounds,
"No howles of woolves, no yelpes of hounds;
"No, not the noyſe of waters'-breache,
"Or cannons' throat, our height can reache.
"No ring of bells, &c.] *above.*

"*Fire.*

being found at full length in *The Witch*, while only the two firſt words of them are printed in *Macbeth*, favour the

" *Fire.*] Well, mother, I thank your kindneſs: you muſt be gambolling i' th'aire, and leave me to walk here, like a foole and a mortall. *Exit.* *Finis Actus Tercii.*"

This *Fire ſtone*, who occaſionally interpoſes in the courſe of the dialogue, is called, in the liſt of Perſons Repreſented,—" The *Clowne* and *Heccat's* ſon."

Again, the *Hecate* of *Shakſpeare* ſays to her ſiſters:

" I'll charm the *air* to give a ſound,
" While you perform your antique round, &c.
[*Muſick. The Witches dance and vaniſh.*"

The *Hecate* of *Middleton* ſays on a ſimilar occaſion:

" Come, my ſweete ſiſters, let the *aire* ſtrike our tune,
" Whilſt we ſhew reverence to yond peeping moone."
[*Here they dance and Exeunt.*"

In this play, the motives which incline the witches to miſchief, their manners, the contents of their cauldron, &c. ſeem to have more than accidental reſemblance to the ſame particulars in *Macbeth*. The hags of *Middleton*, like the weird ſiſters of *Shakſpeare*, deſtroy cattle becauſe they have been refuſed proviſions at farm-houſes. The owl and the cat (*Gray Malkin*) give them notice when it is time to proceed on their ſeveral expeditions. Thus *Shakſpeare's* Witch:

" Harper cries;—'tis time, 'tis time."

Thus too the *Hecate* of *Middleton*:

" *Hec.*] Heard you the owle yet?
" *Stad.*] Briefely in the copps.
" *Hec.*] 'Tis high time for us then."

The *Hecate* of *Shakſpeare*, addreſſing her ſiſters, obſerves, that Macbeth is but *a wayward ſon, who loves for his own ends, not for them.* The *Hecate* of *Middleton* has the ſame obſervation, when the youth who has been conſulting her, retires:

" I know he loves me not, nor there's no hope on't."

Inſtead of the *greaſe that's ſweaten from the murderer's gibbet*, and the *finger of birth-ſtrangled babe*, the witches of Middleton employ " the griſtle of a man that *hangs after ſunſet*," (i. e of a murderer, for all other criminals were anciently cut down before evening) and the " fat of an unbaptized child." They likewiſe boaſt of the power to raiſe tempeſts that ſhall blow down trees, overthrow buildings, and occaſion ſhipwreck; and, more particularly, that they can " *make miles of woods walk.*" Here too the Grecian *Hecate* is degraded into a preſiding witch, and exerciſed in ſuperſtitions peculiar to our own country. So much for the ſcenes of enchantment; but even other parts of *Middleton's*

the ſuppoſition that Middleton's piece preceded that of Shakſpeare; the latter, it ſhould ſeem, thinking it unneceſſary

ton's play coincide more than once with that of *Shakſpeare*. Lady *Macbeth* ſays, in Act II:

" ——— the ſurfeited grooms
" Do mock their charge with *ſnores*. I have *drugg'd* their *poſſets*."

So too *Franciſca* in the piece of *Middleton*:

" —— they're now all at reſt,
" And Gaſper there and all:—Liſt!—faſt aſleepe;
" He *cryes* it hither.—I muſt diſeaſe you ſtraight, ſir:
" For the maide-ſervants, and the girles o' th' houſe,
" I *ſpic'd* them lately with a *drowſie poſſet*,
" They will not hear in haſte."

And *Franciſca*, like lady *Macbeth*, is watching late at night to encourage the perpetration of a murder.

The expreſſion which *Shakſpeare* has put into the mouth of *Macbeth*, when he is ſufficiently recollected to perceive that the dagger and the blood on it, were the creations of his own fancy,—"There's no ſuch thing,"—is likewiſe appropriated to *Franciſca*, when ſhe undeceives her brother, whoſe imagination had been equally abuſed.

From the inſtances already produced, perhaps the reader would allow, that if *Middleton's* piece preceded *Shakſpeare's*, the originality of the magick introduced by the latter, might be fairly queſtioned; for our authour (who as actor, and manager, had acceſs to unpubliſhed dramatick performances) has ſo often condeſcended to receive hints from his contemporaries, that our ſuſpicion of his having been a copyiſt in the preſent inſtance, might not be without foundation. Nay, perhaps, a time may arrive, in which it will become evident from books and manuſcripts yet undiſcovered and unexamined, that *Shakſpeare* never attempted a play on any argument, till the effect of the ſame ſtory, or at leaſt the ruling incidents in it, had been already tried on the ſtage, and familiarized to his audience. Let it be remembered, in ſupport of this conjecture, that dramatick pieces on the following ſubjects,—viz. *King John, King Richard II and III. King Henry IV. and V. King Henry VIII. King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Meaſure for Meaſure, the Merchant of Venice, the Taming of a Shrew, and the Comedy of Errors*,—had appeared before thoſe of *Shakſpeare*, and that he has taken ſomewhat from all of them that we have hitherto ſeen. I muſt obſerve at the ſame time, that *Middleton*, in his other dramas, is found to have borrowed little from the ſentiments, and nothing from the fables of his predeceſſors. He is known to have written in concert with *Jonſon, Fletcher, Maſſinger*, and *Rowley*; but appears to have been unacquainted, or at leaſt unconnected, with *Shakſpeare*.

It

unneceſſary to ſet down verſes which were probably well known, and perhaps then in the poſſeſſion of the managers

It is true that the date of THE WITCH cannot be aſcertained. The authour, however, in his dedication (*to the truelie-worthie and generouſly-affected Thomas Holmes Eſquire*) obſerves, that he *recovered this ignorant-ill-fated labour of his* (from the play-houſe, I ſuppoſe,) *not without much difficultie. Witches* (continues he) *are, ipſo facto, by the law condemn'd, and that onely, I thinck, hath made her lie ſo long in an impriſon'd obſcuritie.* It is probable, therefore from theſe words, as well as from the title-page, that the play was written *long* * before the dedication, which ſeems to have been added ſoon after the year 1603, when the act of King James againſt witches paſſed into a law. If it be objected, that THE WITCH appears from this title-page to have been acted only by *his* majeſty's ſervants, let it be remembered that theſe were the very players who had been before in the ſervice of the *Queen*; but *Middleton*, dedicating his work in the time of *James*, ſpeaks of them only as dependants on the reigning prince.

Here too it may be remarked, that the firſt dramatick piece in which *Middleton* is known to have had a hand, viz. *The Old Law*, was acted in 1599; ſo that THE WITCH might have been compoſed, if not performed at an earlier period † than the acceſſion of *James* to the crown; for the belief of witchcraft was ſufficiently popular in the preceding reigns. The piece in queſtion might likewiſe have been neglected through the caprice of players, or retarded till it could be known that *James* would permit ſuch repreſentations; (for on his arrival here, both authours and actors who ſhould have ventured to bring the midnight mirth and jollity of witches on the ſtage, would probably have been indicted as favourers of magick and enchantment;) or, it might have ſhrunk into obſcurity after the appearance of *Macbeth*; or perhaps was forbidden by the command of the king. The witches of *Shakſpeare* (excluſive of the flattering circumſtance to which

* That dramatick pieces were ſometimes written *long* before they were printed, may be proved from the example of Marlowe's *Rich Jew of Malta*, which was entered on the books of the Stationers' company in the year 1594, but was not publiſhed till 1633, as we learn from the preface to it written by *Heywood*. It appears likewiſe from the ſame regiſters, that ſeveral plays were written, that were never publiſhed at all.

† The ſpelling in the MS. is ſometimes more antiquated than any to be met with in the printed copies of *Shakſpeare*, as the following inſtances may prove:—*Byn* for *been*—*ſollempnely* for *ſolemnly*—*dampnation* for *damnation*—*quight* for *quite*—*grizzel* for *griſſle*—*doe* for *doe*—*ollyff* for *olive*, &c.

their

managers of the Globe theatre. The high reputation of Shakſpeare's performances (to mention a circumſtance which in the courſe of theſe obſervations will be more than once inſiſted upon) likewiſe ſtrengthens this conjecture; for it is very improbable, that Middleton, or any other poet of that time, ſhould have ventured into

their prophecy alludes) are ſolemn in their operations, and therefore behaved in conformity to his majeſty's own opinions. On the contrary, the hags of *Middleton* are ludicrous in their conduct, and leſſen, by ridiculous combinations of images, the ſolemnity of that magick in which our ſcepter'd perſecutor of old women moſt reverently and potently believed.

The concluſion to *Middleton's* dedication has likewiſe a degree of ſingularity that deſerves notice.—"For your ſake alone, ſhe hath thus conjur'd her ſelf abroad; and beares no other charmes about her, but what may tend to your recreation; nor no other ſpell, but to poſſeſs you with a beleif, that as ſhe, ſo he, that *firſt* taught her to enchant, will alwaies be," &c.—"He that taught her to enchant," would have ſufficiently expreſſed the obvious meaning of the writer, without aid from the word *firſt*, which ſeems to imply a covert cenſure on ſome perſon who had engaged his *Hecate* in a *ſecondary* courſe of witchcraft.

The reader muſt have inferred from the ſpecimen of incantation already given, that this Mſ. play (which was purchaſed by *Major Pearſon* out of the collection of one *Griffin*, a player, and is in all probabillity the preſentation copy) had indubitably paſſed through the hands of Sir *William D'Avenant*; for almoſt all the additions which he pretends to have made to the ſcenes of witchcraft in *Macbeth* (together with the names of the ſupplemental agents) are adopted from *Middleton*. It was not the intereſt therefore of *Sir William*, that this piece ſhould ever appear in print: but time that makes important diſcoveries, has likewiſe brought his petty plagiariſm to light *.

I ſhould remark, that Sir *W. D.* has corrupted ſeveral words as well as proper names in the ſongs, &c. but it were needleſs to particularize his miſtakes, as this entire tragi-comedy will hereafter be publiſhed for the ſatisfaction of the curious and intelligent readers of *Shakſpeare.*

STEEVENS.

Sir William D'Avenant might likewiſe have formed his play of *Albovine King of Lombardy* on ſome of the tragick ſcenes in this unpubliſhed piece by Middleton. Yet the chief circumſtances on which they are both founded, occur in the fourth volume of the *Hiſtoires Tragiques, &c. par François de Belle-foreſt*, 1580, p. 297, and at the beginning of *Machiavel's Florentine Hiſtory.* STEEVENS.

thoſe

thoſe regions of fiction, in which our authour had *already* expatiated:

" — Shakſpeare's magick could not *copy'd* be,
" Within that circle none durſt walk but he."

Other pieces of equal antiquity may, perhaps, be hereafter diſcovered; for the names of ſeveral ancient plays are preſerved, which are not known to have been ever printed. Thus we hear of *Valentine and Orſon, plaied by her Majeſties players,*—The tragedy of *Ninus and Semiramis,*—*Titirus and Galathea,*—*Godfrey of Bulloigne,*—*The Cradle of Securitie,*—*Hit the Naile o'the Head,*—*Sir Thomas More,*—(Harl. Mſ. 7368) *The Iſle of Dogs,* by Thomas Naſhe,—The comedy of *Fidele and Fortunatus,*—The famous tragedy of *The Deſtruction of Jeruſalem,* by Dr. Legge,—*The Freeman's Honour,* by William Smith,—*Mahomet and Irene, the Faire Greek,*—*The Play of the Cards,*—*Cardenio,*—*The Knaves,*—*The Knot of Fools,*—*Raymond Duke of Lyons,*—*The Nobleman,* by Cyril Tourneur,—[the laſt five, acted in the year 1613.] *The honoured Loves,*—*The Parliament of Love,*—and *Nonſuch,* a comedy; all by William Rowley;—*The Pilgrimage to Parnaſſus,* by the authour of *the Return from Parnaſſus,*—*Believe as you Liſt,* by Maſſinger,—*The Pirate,* by Davenport,—*Roſania or Love's Victory,* a comedy by Shirley, (ſome of whoſe plays were extant in Mſ. in Langbaine's time,)—*The Twins,* a tragedy, acted in 1613,—*Tancredo,* a tragedy, by Sir Henry Wotton,—*Demetrius and Marſina, or the imperial Impoſtor and unhappy Heroine,* a tragedy,—*The Tyrant,* a tragedy,—*The Queen of Corſica,*—*The Bugbears,*—*The Second Maid's Tragedy,*—*Timon,* a comedy,—*Catiline's Conſpiracy,* a tragedy,—and *Captain Mario,* a comedy; both by Stephen Goſſon,—*The True Hiſtorie of George Scanderbeg,* as played by the right hon. the Earl of Oxenforde's ſervants,—*Jane Shore,*—*The Bold Beauchamps,*—*The Second Part of Sir John Oldcaſtle,*—*The General,*—*The Toy,*—*The Tell-tale*[8], a comedy,—*The Woman's Plot,*—*The Woman's*

[8] The perſons repreſented in this play (which is in my poſſeſſion) are—Duke; Fidelio; Aſpero; Hortenſio; Borgias; Picentio; Count Giſmond;

Woman's too hard for Him, [both acted at court in 1621.] —*The Love-ſick Maid*, [acted at court in 1629]—*Fulgius and Lucrelle*,—*The Fool Transformed*, a comedy,—*The Hiſtory of Lewis the Eleventh, King of France*, a tragi-comedy,—*The Chaſte woman againſt her Will*, a comedy, —*The Tooth-Drawer*, a comedy,—*Honour in the End*, a comedy,—*The Hiſtory of Don Quixote, or the Knight of the ill-favoured Countenance*, a comedy,—*The Fair Spaniſh Captive*, a tragi-comedy,—The tragedy of *Heildebrand*, —*Love yields to honour*,—*The Noble Friend*, &c. &c. Soon after the Reſtoration, one Kirkman, a bookſeller, printed many dramatick pieces that had remained unpubliſhed for more than ſixty years; and in an advertiſement ſubjoined to "*A true, perfect, and exact catalogue of all the comedies, tragedies, &c. that were ever yet printed and publiſhed, till this preſent year* 1671," he ſays, that although there were, at that time, but eight hundred and ſix plays in print, yet many more had been written and acted, and that "he himſelf had *ſome quantity in manuſcript*."—The reſemblance between *Macbeth* and this newly diſcovered piece by Middleton, naturally ſuggeſts a wiſh, that if any of the unpubliſhed plays, above enumerated, be yet in being, (beſide *The Second Maid's tragedy*, *The Tell-tale*, *Timon*, and *Sir Thomas More*, which are known to be extant,) their poſſeſſors would condeſcend to examine them with attention; as hence, perhaps, new lights might be thrown on others of our authour's plays.

It has been already ſuggeſted that it is probable our authour about the time of his compoſing *Cymbeline* and *Macbeth* devoted ſome part of his leiſure to the reading of the lives of Cæſar and Anthony in North's tranſlation of Plutarch. In the play before there are two paſſages which countenance that conjecture. "Under him," ſays Macbeth,

"My genius is rebuk'd, as, it is ſaid,
"Mark Antony's was by Cæſar."

Giſmond; Ferneſe; Bentivoglio; Coſmo; Julio; Captain; Lieutenant; Ancient; two Doctors; an Ambaſſador; Victoria; Eleanor; Iſabel; Leſbia.—Scene, Florence.

The alluſion here is to a paſſage in the Life of Antony; where Shakſpeare alſo found an account of "the inſane root that takes the reaſon priſoner," which he has introduced in *Macbeth*.

A paſſage in the 8th book of Daniel's *Civil Wars* ſeems to have been formed on one in this tragedy [9]. The ſeventh and eighth books of Daniel's poem were firſt printed in 1609.

29. JULIUS CÆSAR, 1607.

A tragedy on the ſubject, and with the title, of *Julius Cæſar*, written by Mr. William Alexander, who was afterwards earl of Sterline, was printed in the year 1607. This, I imagine, was prior to our authour's performance, which was not entered at Stationers-hall, nor printed, till 1623. Shakſpeare, we know, formed at leaſt twelve plays on fables that had been unſucceſsfully managed by other poets [1]; but no contemporary writer was daring enough to enter the liſts with him, in his life-time, or to model into a drama a ſubject which had already employed his pen: and it is not likely that Lord Sterline, who was then a very young man, and had ſcarcely unlearned the Scottiſh idiom, ſhould have been more hardy than any other poet of that age.

I am aware, it may be objected, that this writer might have formed a drama on this ſtory, not knowing that Shakſpeare had previouſly compoſed the tragedy of *Julius Cæſar*; and that, therefore, the publication of Mr. Alexander's play in 1607, is no proof that our authour's performance did not then exiſt.—In anſwer to this objection, it may, perhaps, be ſufficient to obſerve, that Mr. Alexander had, before that year, very wiſely left the bleak fields of Menſtrie in Clackmananſhire, for a warmer and more courtly reſidence in London, having

[9] See Vol. IV. p. 299, n. 4.

[1] See a note on *Julius Cæſar*, Act I. ſc. i. in which they are enumerated.

been

been appointed gentleman of the privy chamber to prince Henry: in which ſituation his literary curioſity muſt have been gratified by the earlieſt notice of the productions of his brother dramatiſts.

Lord Sterline's *Julius Cæſar*, though not printed till 1607, might have been written a year or two before; and perhaps its publication in that year was in conſequence of our authour's play on the ſame ſubject being then firſt exhibited. The ſame obſervation may be made with reſpect to an anonymous performance, called *The Tragedie of Cæſar and Pompey, or Cæſar's Revenge*[2], of which an edition (I believe the ſecond) was likewiſe printed in 1607. The ſubject of that piece is the defeat of Pompey at Pharſalia, the death of Julius, and the final overthrow of Brutus and Caſſius at Philippi. The attention of the town being, perhaps, drawn to the hiſtory of the *hook-noſed fellow of Rome*, by the exhibition of Shakſpeare's *Julius Cæſar*, the bookſellers, who printed theſe two plays, might have flattered themſelves with the hope of an expeditious ſale for them at that time, eſpecially as Shakſpeare's play was not then publiſhed.

It does not appear that Lord Sterline's *Julius Cæſar* was ever acted: neither it nor his other plays being at all calculated for dramatick exhibition. On the other hand, Shakſpeare's *Julius Cæſar* was a very popular piece; as we learn from Digges, a contemporary writer, who in his commendatory verſes prefixed to our authour's works, has alluded to it as one of his moſt celebrated performances[3].

We

[2] There is an edition without date, which probably was the firſt. This play, as appears by the title-page, was privately acted by the ſtudents of Trinity College in Oxford. In the running title it is called *The Tragedy of Julius Cæſar*; perhaps the better to impoſe it on the publick for the performance of Shakſpeare.

[3] "Nor fire nor cank'ring age, as Naſo ſaid
"Of his, thy wit-fraught book ſhall once invade:
"Nor ſhall I e'er believe or think thee dead,
"(Though miſs'd) untill our bankrout ſtage be ſped
"(Impoſſible!) with ſome new ſtrain, t'out do
"Paſſions of *Juliet* and her *Romeo*;

"Or

We have certain proof that *Antony and Cleopatra* was compoſed before the middle of the year 1608. An attentive review of that play and *Julius Cæſar*, will, I think, lead us to conclude that this latter was firſt written [3]. Not to inſiſt on the chronology of the ſtory, which would naturally ſuggeſt this ſubject to our authour before the other, in *Julius Cæſar* Shakſpeare does not ſeem to have been thoroughly poſſeſſed of Antony's character. He has indeed marked one or two of the ſtriking features of it, but Antony is not fully delineated till he appears in that play which takes its name from him and Cleopatra. The rough ſketch would naturally precede the finiſhed picture.

" Or till I hear a ſcene *more nobly take*
" *Than when thy half-ſword parlying Romans ſpake.*"

Verſes by L. Digges, prefixed to the firſt edition of our authour's plays, in 1623.

3 The following paſſages in *Antony and Cleopatra*, (and others of the ſame kind may perhaps be found,) ſeem to me to diſcover ſuch a knowledge of the appropriated characters of the perſons exhibited in *Julius Cæſar*, and of the events there dilated and enlarged upon, as Shakſpeare would neceſſarily have acquired from having previouſly written a play on that ſubject:

" *Pompey.*—I do not know
" Wherefore my father ſhould revengers want,
" Having a ſon and friends, ſince *Julius Cæſar*,
" *Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghoſted*,
" There ſaw you labouring for him. What was't,
" That mov'd *pale* Caſſius to conſpire? And what
" Made *all-honour'd, honeſt, Roman Brutus*,
" With the arm'd reſt, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
" To drench the capitol, but that they would
" Have one man but a man?"

So, in another place:

" When Antony found Julius Cæſar dead,
" He cry'd almoſt to roaring; and he wept,
" When at Philippi he found Brutus ſlain."

Again:

" *Ant.* He at Philippi kept
" His ſword ev'n like a dancer, while I ſtruck
" The *lean* and *wrinkled* Caſſius; and 'twas I
" That the *mad* Brutus ended."

Shakſpeare's making the *capitol* the ſcene of Cæſar's murder, contrary to the truth of hiſtory, is eaſily accounted for, in *Hamlet*, where it afforded an opportunity for introducing a quibble; but it is not eaſy to conjecture why in *Julius Cæſar* he ſhould have departed from Plutarch, where it is expreſsly ſaid that Julius was killed in *Pompey's portico*, whoſe ſtatue was placed in the centre. I ſuſpect he was led into this deviation from hiſtory by ſome former play on the ſubject, the frequent repetition of which before his own play was written probably induced him to inſert theſe lines in his tragedy:

" —— How many ages hence
" Shall this our lofty ſcene be *acted* o'er,
" In ſtates unborn, and accents yet unknown!
" How many times," &c.

" The accents yet unknown" could not allude to Dr. Eedes's *Latin* play exhibited in 1582, and therefore may be fairly urged as a preſumptive proof that there had been ſome Engliſh play on this ſubject previous to that of Shakſpeare. Hence I ſuppoſe it was, that in his earlier performance he makes Polonius ſay that in his youth he had *enacted* the part of the Roman Dictator, and had been killed by Brutus in the capitol; a ſcenick exhibition which was then probably familiar to the greater part of the audience.

From a paſſage in the comedy of *Every Woman in her humour*, which was printed in 1609, we learn, that there was an ancient droll or puppet-ſhew on the ſubject of Julius Cæſar. " I have ſeen (ſays one of the perſonages in that comedy,) *the city of Nineveh* and *Julius Cæſar* acted by mammets." I formerly ſuppoſed that this droll was formed on the play before us: but have lately obſerved that it is mentioned with other " motions," (*Jonas, Ninevie*, and *the Deſtruction of Jeruſalem*,) in Marſton's *Dutch Courteſan*, printed in 1605, and was probably of a much older date.

In the prologue to *The Falſe One*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, this play is alluded to[4]; but in what year that tragedy was written, is unknown.

If the date of *The Maid's Tragedy* by the ſame authours, were aſcertained, it might throw ſome light on the preſent inquiry; the quarreling ſcene between Melantius and his friend, being manifeſtly copied from a ſimilar ſcene in *Julius Cæſar*. It has already been obſerved that *Philaſter* was the firſt play which brought Beaumont and Fletcher into reputation, and that it probably was repreſented in 1608 or 1609. We may therefore preſume that the *Maid's Tragedy* did not appear before that year; for we cannot ſuppoſe it to have been one of the unſucceſsful pieces which preceded *Philaſter*. That the *Maid's Tragedy* was written before 1611, is aſcertained by a Mſ. play, now extant, entitled *The* SECOND *Maid's Tragedy*, which was licenſed by Sir George Buck, on the 31ſt of October, 1611. I believe it never was printed[5].

If, therefore, we fix the date of the original *Maid's Tragedy* in 1610, it agrees ſufficiently well with that here aſſigned to *Julius Cæſar*.

It appears by the papers of the late Mr. George Vertue, that a play called *Cæſar's Tragedy* was acted at court before the 10th of April, in the year 1613. This was

4 "New titles warrant not a play for new,
"The ſubject being old; and 'tis as true,
"Freſh and neat matter may with eaſe be fram'd
"Out of their ſtories that have oft been nam'd
"With glory on the ſtage. What borrows he
"From him that wrought old Priam's tragedy,
"That writes his love for Hecuba? Sure to tell
"Of Cæſar's amorous heats, and *how he fell*
"*In the Capitol*, can never be the ſame
"To the judicious." Prologue to *The Falſe One*.

5 This tragedy (as I learn from a Mſ. of Mr. Oldys) was formerly in the poſſeſſion of John Warburton, Eſq. Somerſet Herald, and is now in the library of the Marquis of Lanſdown. It had no authour's name to it, when it was licenſed, but was afterwards aſcribed to George Chapman, whoſe name is eraſed by another hand, and that of *Shakſpeare* inſerted.

probably Shakſpeare's *Julius Cæſar*, it being much the faſhion at that time to alter the titles of his plays.

30. Antony and Cleopatra, 1608.

Antony and Cleopatra was entered on the Stationers' books, May 2, 1608; but was not printed till 1623.

In Ben Jonſon's *Silent Woman*, Act IV. ſc. iv. 1609, this play ſeems to be alluded to:

"*Moroſe*. Nay, I would fit out a play that were nothing but *fights at ſea*, drum, trumpet and target."

31. Timon of Athens, 1609.

32. Coriolanus, 1610.

Theſe two plays were neither entered in the books of the Stationers' company, nor printed, till 1623. Shakſpeare, in the courſe of ſomewhat more than twenty years, having produced thirty-four or thirty-five dramas, we may preſume that he was not idle any one year of that time. Moſt of his *other* plays have been attributed, on plauſible grounds at leaſt, to *former years*. As we have no proof to aſcertain when the two plays under our conſideration were written, it ſeems reaſonable to aſcribe them to that period, to which we are not led by any particular circumſtance to attribute any other of his works; at which, it is ſuppoſed, he had not ceaſed to write; which yet, unleſs theſe pieces were then compoſed, muſt, for aught that now appears, have been unemployed. When once he had availed himſelf of North's Plutarch, and had thrown any one of the lives into a dramatick form, he probably found it ſo eaſy as to induce him to proceed, till he had exhauſted all the ſubjects which he imagined that book would afford. Hence the four plays of *Julius Cæſar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon*, and *Coriolanus*, are ſuppoſed to have been written in ſucceſſion. At the time he was writing *Cymbeline* and *Macbeth* there is reaſon to believe he began to ſtudy Plutarch with a particular view

view to the uſe he might make of it on the ſtage*. The Lives of Cæſar and Antony are nearly connected with each other, and furniſhed him with the fables of two plays; and in the latter of theſe lives he found the ſubject of a third, *Timon of Athens.*

There is a Mſ. comedy now extant, on the ſubject of *Timon*, which, from the hand-writing and the ſtyle, appears to be of the age of Shakſpeare. In this piece a ſteward is introduced, under the name of *Laches*, who, like *Flavius* in that of our authour, endeavours to reſtrain his maſter's profuſion, and faithfully attends him when he is forſaken by all his other followers.—Here too a mock-banquet is given by Timon to his falſe friends; but, inſtead of warm water, ſtones painted like artichokes are ſerved up, which he throws at his gueſts. From a line in Shakſpeare's play, one might be tempted to think that ſomething of this ſort was introduced by him; though, through the omiſſion of a marginal direction in the only ancient copy of this piece, it has not been cuſtomary to exhibit it:

"*Second Senator.* Lord Timon's mad.
"*3d. Sen.* I feel it on my bones.
"*4th Sen.* One day he gives us diamonds, next day *ſtones.*"

This comedy, (which is evidently the production of a ſcholar, many lines of Greek being introduced into it,) appears to have been written after Ben Jonſon's *Every Man out of his Humour*, (1599,) to which it contains a reference; but I have not diſcovered the preciſe time when it was compoſed. If it were aſcertained, it might be ſome guide to us in fixing the date of our authour's *Timon of Athens*, which, on the grounds that have been already ſtated[6], I ſuppoſe to have been poſterior to this anonymous play.

The great plagues of 1593 and 1603 muſt have made ſuch an impreſſion upon Shakſpeare, that no inference

* See p. 355, and p. 366.

[6] P. 367.

can be ſafely drawn from that dreadful malady being more than once alluded to in *Timon of Athens*. However, it is *poſſible* that the following paſſages were ſuggeſted by the more immediate recollection of the plague which raged in 1609.

"I thank them," ſays Timon, "and would ſend them back the plague, could I but catch it for them."

Again:

"Be as a planetary *plague*, when Jove
"Will o'er ſome *high-vic'd city* hang his poiſon
"I'the ſick air."

Cominius, in the panegyrick which he pronounces on Coriolanus, ſays,

"—In the brunt of ſeventeen battles ſince
"He *lurch'd* all ſwords *of the garland*."

In Ben Jonſon's *Silent Woman*, A&V. ſc. laſt, we find (as Mr. Steevens has obſerved) the ſame phraſeology: "You have *lurch'd* your friends of the better half of *the garland*."

I formerly thought this a ſneer at Shakſpeare; but have lately met with nearly the ſame phraſe in a pamphlet written by Thomas Naſhe, and ſuppoſe it to have been a common phraſe of that time.

This play is aſcertained to have been written after the publication of Camden's *Remaines*, in 1605, by a ſpeech of Menenius in the firſt act, in which he endeavours to convince the ſeditious populace of their unreaſonableneſs by the well-known apologue of the members of the body rebelling againſt the belly. This tale Shakſpeare certainly found in the Life of Coriolanus as tranſlated by North, and in general he has followed it as it is there given: but the ſame tale is alſo told of Adrian the Fourth by Camden, in his *Remaines*, p. 199, under the head of *Wiſe Speeches*, with more particularity; and one or two of the expreſſions, as well as the enumeration of the

the functions performed by each of the members of the body, appear to have been taken from that book.

"On a time," ſays Menenius in *Plutarch*, "all the members of man's body dyd rebel againſt the bellie, complaining of it that it only remained in the mideſt of the bodie without doing any thing, neither dyd bear any labour to the maintenaunce of the reſt: whereas all other partes and members dyd labour paynefully, and was veri careful to ſatisfy the appetites and deſiers of the bodie. And ſo the bellie, all this notwithſtanding, laughed at their follie, and ſayde, it is true, I firſt receyve all meates that noriſhe mans bodie; but afterwardes I ſend it againe to the noriſhment of other partes of the ſame. Even ſo (q^d. he,) o you, my maſters and citizens of Rome," &c.

In Camden the tale runs thus: "All the members of the body conſpired againſt the ſtomach, as againſt the *ſwallowing gulfe* of all their labours; for whereas *the eies beheld, the eares heard, the handes laboured, the feete travelled, the tongue ſpake, and all partes performed their functions; onely the ſtomache lay ydle and conſumed all.* Hereuppon they joyntly agreed al to forbeare their labours, and to pine away their lazie and publike enemy. One day paſſed over, the ſecond followed very tedious, but the third day was ſo grievous to them all, that they called a common counſel. The eyes waxed dimme, the feete could not ſupport the body; the armes waxed lazie, the tongue faltered, and could not lay open the matter. Therefore they all with one accord deſired the *advice* of the *heart*. There *Reaſon* layd open before them," &c.

So Shakſpeare:

"There was a time when all the body's members
"Rebell'd againſt the belly; thus accus'd it:—
"That only *like a gulph* it did remain
"In the midſt of the body, idle and unactive,
"Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
"Like labour with the reſt; where the other inſtruments
"Did *ſee* and *hear*, *deviſe*, *inſtruct*, *walk*, *feel*,
"And mutually participate did miniſter

" Unto the appetite and affection common
" Of the whole body. The belly anſwered—
" True it is, my incorporate friends, quoth he,
" That I receive the general food at firſt;—
" ——————— But, if you do remember, c
" I ſend it through the rivers of the blood,
" Even to the court, *the heart, to the ſeat o' the brain.*"

The heart is called by one of the citizens, " the *counſellor*-heart;" and in making the *counſellor*-heart the ſeat of the brain or underſtanding, where *Reaſon* ſits enthroned, Shakſpeare has certainly followed Camden.

The late date which I have aſſigned to *Coriolanus*, derives likewiſe ſome ſupport from Volumnia's exhortation to her ſon, whom ſhe adviſes to addreſs the Roman people—

" ——— now humble as the *ripeſt mulberry*,
" Which cannot bear the handling."

In a preceding page I have obſerved that mulberries were not much known in England before the year 1609. Some *few* mulberry-trees however had been brought from France and planted before that period, and Shakſpeare, we find, had ſeen ſome of the fruit in a ſtate of maturity before he wrote *Coriolanus*.

33. OTHELLO, 1611.

Dr. Warburton thinks that there is in this tragedy a ſatirical alluſion to the inſtitution of the order of Baronets, which dignity was created by king James I. in the year 1611:

" —— The hearts of old gave hands,
" But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts."
Othello, Act III. ſc. iv.

" Amongſt their other prerogatives of honour," (ſays that commentator,) " they [the new-created baronets] had an addition to their paternal arms, of an hand *gules* in an eſcutcheon argent. And we are not to doubt but that this was *the new heraldry* alluded to by our authour; by

by which he inſinuates, *that ſome then created had hands indeed, but not hearts; that is, money to pay for the creation, but no virtue to purchaſe the honour.*"

Such is the obſervation of this critick. But by what chymiſtry can the ſenſe which he has affixed to this paſſage, be extracted from it? Or is it probable, that Shakſpeare, who has more than once condeſcended to be the encomiaſt of the unworthy founder of the order of Baronets, who had been perſonally honoured by a letter from his majeſty, and ſubſtantially benefited by the royal licence granted to him and his fellow-comedians, ſhould have been ſo impolitick, as to ſatirize the king, or to depretiate his new-created dignity?

Theſe lines appear to me to afford an obvious meaning, without ſuppoſing them to contain ſuch a multitude of alluſions:

Of old, (ſays Othello,) *in matrimonial alliances, the heart dictated the union of hands; but our modern junctions are thoſe of hands, not of hearts.*

On every marriage the arms of the wife are *united* to thoſe of the huſband. This circumſtance, I believe, it was, that ſuggeſted *heraldry*, in this place, to our authour. I know not whether a heart was ever uſed as an armorial enſign, nor is it, I conceive, neceſſary to inquire. It was the office of the herald to *join*, or, to ſpeak technically, to *quarter* the arms of the new-married pair[7]. Hence, with his uſual licence, Shakſpeare uſes *heraldry* for *junction*, or *union* in general. Thus, in his *Rape of Lucrece*, the ſame term is employed to denote that *union* of colours which conſtitutes a beatiful complexion:

"This *heraldry* in Lucrece' face was ſeen,
"Argued by beauty's red, and virtue's white."

This paſſage not affording us any aſſiſtance, we are next to conſider one in *The Alchemiſt*, by Ben Jonſon,

I.

7 "I may *quarter*, coz," ſays *Slender* in *the Merry Wives of Windſor*. "You may (replies juſtice Shallow) by *marrying*."

which,

which, if it alluded to an incident in *Othello*, (as Mr. Steevens ſeems to think it does,) would aſcertain this play to have appeared before 1610, in which year *The Alchemiſt* was firſt acted:

"*Lovewit.* Didſt thou hear a cry, ſay'ſt thou?
"*Neighb.* Yes, ſir, like unto a man that had been ſtrangled an hour, and could not ſpeak."

But I doubt whether *Othello* was here in Jonſon's contemplation. Old Ben generally ſpoke out; and if he had intended to ſneer at the manner of Deſdemona's death, I think, he would have taken care that his meaning ſhould not be miſs'd, and would have written—"like unto a *woman*," &c.

This tragedy was not entered on the books of the Stationers' company, till Oct. 6, 1621, nor printed till the following year; but it was acted at court early in the year 1613[8]. How long before that time it had appeared, I have not been able to aſcertain, either from the play itſelf, or from any contemporary production. I have, however, perſuaded myſelf that it was one of Shakſpeare's lateſt performances: a ſuppoſition, to which the acknowledged excellence of the piece gives ſome degree of probability. It is here attributed to the year 1611, becauſe Dr. Warburton's comment on the paſſage above-cited may convince others, though, I confeſs it does not ſatisfy me.

Emilia and *Lodovico*, two of the characters in this play, are likewiſe two of the perſons repreſented in *May-day*, a comedy by Chapman, firſt printed in 1611.

34. The Tempest, 1612.

Though ſome account of the Bermuda Iſlands, which are mentioned in this play, had been publiſhed in 1600, (as Dr. Farmer has obſerved,) yet as they were not generally known till Sir George Somers arrived there

[8] Mſ. Vertue.

in

n 1609, *The Tempeſt* may be fairly attributed to a period ſubſequent to that year: eſpecially as it exhibits ſuch ſtrong internal marks of having been a late production.

The entry at Stationers' hall does not contribute to aſcertain the time of its compoſition; for it appears not on the Stationers' books, nor was it printed, till 1623, when it was publiſhed with the reſt of our authour's plays in folio: in which edition, having, I ſuppoſe by mere accident, obtained the firſt place, it has ever ſince preſerved a ſtation to which indubitably it is not entitled[9].

As the circumſtance from which this piece receives its name, is at an end in the very firſt ſcene, and as many other titles, all equally proper, might have occurred to Shakſpeare, (ſuch as *The Inchanted Iſland*,—*The Baniſhed Duke*,—*Ferdinand and Miranda*, &c.) it is poſſible, that ſome particular and recent event determined him to call it *The Tempeſt*. It appears from Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 913, that in the October, November, and December of the year 1612, a dreadful tempeſt happened in England, "*which did exceeding great damage, with extreme ſhipwrack throughout the ocean.*" "*There periſhed*" (ſays the hiſtorian) "*above an hundred ſhips in the ſpace of two houres.*"—Several pamphlets were publiſhed on this occaſion, decorated with prints of ſinking veſſels, *caſtles topling on their warders' heads*, the devil overturning ſteeples, &c. In one of them, the authour deſcribing the appearance of the waves at Dover, ſays, "*the whole ſeas appeared like a fiery world, all ſparkling red.*" Another of theſe narratives recounts the eſcape of Edmond Pet, a ſailor; whoſe preſervation appears to have been no leſs marvellous than that of Trinculo or Stephano: and ſo great a terror did this tempeſt create in the minds of the people, that a form of prayer was ordered on the occaſion, which is annexed to one of the publications above mentioned.

There is reaſon to believe that ſome of our authour's dramas obtained their names from the ſeaſons at which they were produced. It is not very eaſy to account for

[9] See p. 354, Article, *Cymbeline*.

the

the title of *Twelfth Night*, but by ſuppoſing it to have been firſt exhibited in the Chriſtmas holydays[1]. Neither the title of *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, nor that of *The Winter's Tale*, denotes the ſeaſon of the action; the events which are the ſubject of the latter, occurring at the time of ſheep-ſhearing, and the dream, from which the former receives its name, happening on the night preceding May-day.—Theſe titles, therefore, were probably ſuggeſted by the ſeaſon at which the plays were exhibited, to which they belong; *A Midſummer-Night's Dream* having, we may preſume, been firſt repreſented in June, and *The Winter's Tale* in December.

Perhaps then it may not be thought a very improbable conjecture, that this comedy was written in the ſummer of 1612, and produced on the ſtage in the latter end of that year; and that the authour availed himſelf of a circumſtance then freſh in the minds of his audience, by affixing a title to it, which was more likely to excite curioſity than any other that he could have choſen, while at the ſame time it was ſufficiently juſtified by the ſubject of the drama.

Mr. Steevens, in his obſervations on this play, has quoted from the tragedy of *Darius* by the earl of Sterline, firſt printed in 1603, ſome lines[2] ſo ſtrongly reſembling

[1] It was formerly an eſtabliſhed cuſtom to have plays repreſented at court in the Chriſtmas holydays, and particularly on *Twelfth Night*. Two of Lily's comedies (*Alexander and Campaſpe*, 1584, and *Midas*, 1592,) are ſaid in their title pages, to have been *played before the queenes majeſtie on Twelfe-day at night*; and ſeveral of Ben Jonſon's maſques were preſented at Whitehall, on the ſame feſtival. Our authour's *Love's Labour's Loſt* was exhibited before queen Elizabeth in the Chriſtmas holydays; and his *King Lear* was acted before king James on St. Stephen's night: the night after Chriſtmas-day.

[2] "Let greatneſs of her glaſſy ſcepters vaunt,
"Not ſcepters, no but reeds, ſoon bruis'd, ſoon broken,
"And let this worldly pomp our wits enchant,
"*All fades, and ſcarcely leaves behind a token.*
"Thoſe golden *palaces*, thoſe *gorgeous* halls,
"With furniture ſuperfluouſly fair,
"Thoſe ſtately courts, thoſe *ſky-encount'ring* walls,
"*Evaniſh all like vapours in the air.*"

Darius, Act III. Ed. 1603.

"——Theſe

ſembling a celebrated paſſage in *The Tempeſt*, that one authour muſt, I apprehend, have been indebted to the other. Shakſpeare, I imagine, borrowed from lord Sterline [3].

Mr. Holt conjectured [4], that the maſque in the fifth act of this comedy was intended by the poet as a compliment to the earl of Eſſex, on his being united in wedlock, in 1611, to lady Frances Howard, to whom he had been contracted ſome years before [5]. However this might have been, the date which that commentator has aſſigned to this play, (1614,) is certainly too late; for it appears from the Mſs. of Mr. Vertue, that the *Tempeſt* was acted by John Heminge and the reſt of the King's Company, before prince Charles, the lady Elizabeth, and the prince Palatine elector, in the beginning of the year 1613.

The names of *Trinculo* and *Antonio*, two of the characters in this comedy, are likewiſe found in that of *Albumazar*; which was printed in 1614, but is ſuppoſed by Dryden to have appeared ſome years before.

Ben Jonſon probably meant to ſneer at this play in the prologue to *Every man in his humour*, firſt printed in 1616, and probably written a few years before:

"——— nor *tempeſtuous* drum
"Rumble to tell you when *the ſtorm* will come."

"——— Theſe our actors,
"As I foretold you, were all ſpirits, and
"*Are melted into air, into thin air*;
"And, like the baſeleſs fabrick of this viſion,
"The *cloud-capt* tow'rs, the *gorgeous palaces*,
"The ſolemn temples, the great globe itſelf,
"Yea, all which it inherit, ſhall diſſolve,
"And, like this unſubſtantial pageant *faded*,
"*Leave not a rack behind.*" *Tempeſt*, Act IV. ſc. i.

3 See a note on *Julius Cæſar*, Act I. ſc. i.

4 Obſervations on the *Tempeſt*, p. 67. Mr. Holt imagined, that lord Eſſex was united to lady Frances Howard in 1610; but he was miſtaken: their union did not take place till the next year.

5 Jan. 5, 1606-7. The earl *continued abroad four years from that time*; ſo that he did not cohabit with his wife till 1611.

In

In the induction to his *Bartholomew Fair* he has endeavoured to depretiate this beautiful comedy by calling it a *foolery*. Dryden, however, informs us that it was a very popular play at Blackfriars, but unluckily has not ſaid a word relative to the time of its firſt repreſentation there, though he might certainly have received information on that ſubject from Sir William D'Avenant.

The only note of time which I have obſerved in this play, is in Act II. ſc. ii. "— when they [the Engliſh] will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to ſee a dead Indian." This probably alludes to ſome recent circumſtance with which I am unacquainted.

35. Twelfth Night, 1614.

It has been generally believed, that Shakſpeare retired from the theatre, and ceaſed to write, about three years before he died. The latter ſuppoſition muſt now be conſidered as extremely doubtful; for Mr. Tyrwhitt, with great probability, conjectures, that *Twelfth Night* was written in 1614: grounding his opinion on an alluſion [6], which it ſeems to contain, to thoſe parliamentary *undertakers* of whom frequent mention is made in the Journals of the Houſe of Commons for that year [7]; who were ſtigmatized with this invidious name, on account of their having *undertaken* to manage the elections of knights and burgeſſes in ſuch a manner as to ſecure a majority in parliament for the court. If this alluſion was intended, *Twelfth Night* was probably our authour's laſt production; and, we may preſume, was written after he had retired to Stratford. It is obſervable that Mr. Aſhley, a member of the Houſe of Commons, in one of the debates on this ſubject, ſays, "that the rumour concerning theſe *undertakers* had ſpread into the *country*."

[6] "Nay, if you be *an undertaker*, I am for you." See *Twelfth Night*, Act IV. ſc. iii. and the note there.

[7] Comm. Journ. Vol. I. p. 456, 457, 470.

When

When Shakſpeare quitted London and his profeſſion, for the tranquillity of a rural retirement, it is improbable that ſuch an excurſive genius ſhould have been immediately reconciled to a ſtate of mental inactivity. It is more natural to conceive, that he ſhould have occaſionally bent his thoughts towards the theatre, which his muſe had ſupported, and the intereſt of his aſſociates whom he had left behind him to ſtruggle with the capricious viciſſitudes of publick taſte, and whom, his laſt Will ſhews us, he had not forgotten. To the neceſſity, therefore, of literary amuſement to every cultivated mind, or to the dictates of friendſhip, or to both theſe incentives, we are perhaps indebted for the comedy of *Twelfth Night*; which bears evident marks of having been compoſed at leiſure, as moſt of the characters that it contains, are finiſhed to a higher degree of dramatick perfection, than is diſcoverable in ſome of our authour's earlier comick performances [8].

In the third act of this comedy, Decker's *Weſtward Hoe* ſeems to be alluded to. *Weſtward Hoe* was printed in *1607, and from the prologue to Eaſtward Hoe* appears to have been acted in 1604, or before.

Maria, in *Twelfth Night*, ſpeaking of Malvolio, ſays, "he does ſmile his face into more lines than the *new* map with the augmentation of the Indies." I have not been able to learn the date of the map here alluded to; but, as it is ſpoken of as a *recent* publication, it may, when diſcovered, ſerve to aſcertain the date of this play more exactly.

The comedy of *What you will*, (the ſecond title of the play now before us,) which was entered at Stationers' hall, Aug. 9, 1607, was certainly *Marſton's* play, as it was *printed* in that year for T. Thorpe, by whom the above-mentioned entry was made; and it appears to have been the *general* practice of the bookſellers at that time, *re-*

[8] The comedies particularly alluded to, are, *A Midſummer-Night's Dream, The Comedy of Errors, Love's Labour's Loſt*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

cently

cently before publication, to enter thoſe plays of which they had procured copies.

Twelfth Night was not regiſtered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623.

It has been thought, that Ben Jonſon intended to ridicule the conduct of this play, in his *Every Man out of his Humour*, at the end of Act III. ſc. vi. where he makes Mitis ſay,—"That the argument of his comedy might have been of ſome other nature, as of a duke to be in love with a counteſs, and that counteſs to be in love with the duke's ſon, and the ſon in love with the lady's waiting-maid: *ſome ſuch croſs wooing, with a clown to their ſerving-man*, better than be thus near and familiarly allied to the time [9]."

I do not, however, believe, that Jonſon had here *Twelfth Night* in contemplation. If an alluſion to this comedy were intended, it would aſcertain it to have been written before 1599, when *Every Man out of his Humour* was firſt acted. But Meres does not mention *Twelfth Night* in 1598, nor is there any reaſon to believe that it then exiſted.

"Mrs. Mall's picture," which is mentioned in this play, probably means the picture of Moll Cutpurſe, who was born in 1585, and made much noiſe in London about the year 1611.

The Sophy of Perſia is twice mentioned in *Twelfth Night*. 1. "I will not give my part of this ſport for a penſion of thouſands to be paid by *the Sophy*." 2. "He pays you as ſure as your feet hit the ground you ſtep on. They ſay he has been fencer to *the Sophy*."

When Shakſpeare wrote the firſt of theſe paſſages, he was perhaps thinking of Sir Robert Shirley, "who," ſays Stowe's Continuator, "after having ſerved the Sophy of Perſia for ten years as general of artillerie, and married the Lady Tereſa, whoſe ſiſter was one of the queens of Perſia, arrived in England as ambaſſador from the *Sophy* in 1612. After ſtaying one year he

[9] See the firſt note on *Twelfth Night*, Act I. ſc. i.

and

and his wife returned to Perſia, (Jan. 1612-13,) leaving a ſon, to whom the queen was godmother, and Prince Henry godfather."

Camden's account agrees with this, for according to him Sir Robert Shirley came to England on his embaſſy, June 26, 1612: but both the accounts are erroneous; for Sir Robert Shirley certainly arrived in London as ambaſſador from the Sophy in 1611, as appears from a letter written by him to Henry prince of Wales, dated Nov. 4, 1611, requeſting the prince to be godfather to his ſon[1]. Sir Robert, and his Perſian Lady, at this time made much noiſe; and Shakſpeare, it is highly probable, here alludes to the magnificence which he diſplayed during his ſtay in England, out of the funds allotted to him by the emperor of Perſia. He remained in England about eighteen months.

If the dates here aſſigned to our authour's plays ſhould not, in every inſtance, bring with them conviction of *their propriety, let it be remembered,* that this *is a ſubject* on which conviction cannot at this day be obtained; and that the obſervations now ſubmitted to the publick, do not pretend to any higher title than that of "AN ATTEMPT to aſcertain the chronology of the dramas of Shakſpeare."

Should the errors and deficiencies of this eſſay invite others to deeper and more ſucceſsful reſearches, the end propoſed by it will be attained: and he who offers the preſent arrangement of Shakſpeare's dramas, will be happy to transfer the ſlender portion of credit that may reſult from the novelty of his undertaking, to ſome future claimant, who may be ſupplied with ampler materials, and endued with a ſuperior degree of antiquarian ſagacity.

To ſome, he is not unapprized, this inquiry will appear a tedious and barren ſpeculation. But there are

[1] Mſs. Harl. 7008.

many, it is hoped, who think nothing which relates to the brighteſt ornament of the Engliſh nation, wholly unintereſting; who will be gratified by obſerving, how the genius of our great poet gradually expanded itſelf, till, like his own Ariel, *it flamed amazement* in every quarter, blazing forth with a luſtre, that has not hitherto been equalled, and probably will never be ſurpaſſed.

MALONE.

SHAKSPEARE, FORD, AND JONSON

——*ubi nulla fugam reperit fallacia, victus,*
In ſeſe redit. VIRG.

I HAVE long had great doubts concerning the authenticity of the facts mentioned in a letter printed in a former page, [ſee p. 202,] giving a pretended extract from a pamphlet of the laſt age, entitled "Old Ben's *Light Heart* made heavy by young John's *Melancholy Lover*," containing ſome anecdotes of Shakſpeare, Ben Jonſon, and John Ford, the dramatick poet; and ſuſpected that the plauſible tale which the writer of the letter alluded to has told, was an innocent forgery, fabricated for the purpoſe of aiding a benefit, and making the town believe that *The Lover's Melancholy* came from the mint of Shakſpeare. Some additional information on this ſubject, which I have lately obtained, appears to me ſo deciſively to confirm and eſtabliſh my opinion, that I ſhall here, though ſomewhat out of place, devote a few pages to the examination of this queſtion.

Having always thought with indignation on the taſteleſſneſs of the ſcholars of that age in preferring Jonſon to Shakſpeare after the death of the latter, I did not find myſelf much inclined to diſpute the authenticity of a paper, which, in its general tenour, was conformable to my own notions: but the love of truth ought ever to be ſuperior to ſuch conſiderations. Our poet's fame is fixed upon a baſis *as broad and general as the caſing air*, and ſtands in no need of ſuch meretricious aids as the pen of fiction may be able to furniſh. However, before I entered on this diſcuſſion, I thought it incumbent on me to apply to Mr. Macklin, the authour of the letter in queſtion, upon the ſubject: but his memory is ſo much impaired, (he being now in the ninety-firſt year of his age,) that he ſcarcely recollects having written ſuch a letter, much leſs the circumſtances attending it. I ought, however, to add, that I had ſome converſation with him a few years ago upon the ſame topick, and then ſtrongly urged to

him that no kind of diſgrace could attend his owning that this letter was a mere *jeu d'eſprit*, written for an occaſional harmleſs purpoſe: but he perſiſted in aſſerting that the pamphlet of which he has given an account, (for which I in vain offered by a publick advertiſement, continued for ſome time in the newſpapers, to pay two guineas, and of which no copy has been found in any publick or private library in the courſe of forty years,) was once in his poſſeſſion; was printed in quarto, and bound up with ſeveral ſmall political tracts of the ſame period; and was loſt with a large collection of old plays and other books, on the coaſt of Ireland, in the year 1760. I cannot therefore boaſt, *habeo confitentem reum*. However, let the point be tried by thoſe rules of evidence which regulate trials of greater importance; and I make no doubt that I ſhall be able to produce ſuch teſtimony as ſhall convict our veteran comedian of having, ſportively, ingeniouſly, and falſely, (though with no malice afore-thought,) invented and fabricated the narrative given in the letter already mentioned, contrary to the Statute of Biography, and other wholeſome laws of the Parnaſſian Code, in this caſe made and provided, for the ſecurity of the rights of authours, and the greater certainty and authenticity of dramatick hiſtory.

Nor let our poet's admirers be at all alarmed, or ſhrink from this diſcuſſion; for after this ſlight and temporary fabrick, erected to his honour, ſhall have been demoliſhed, there will ſtill remain abundant proofs of the gentleneſs, modeſty, and humility, of Shakſpeare; of the overweening arrogance of old Ben; and of the ridiculous abſurdity of his partizans, who for near a century ſet *above* our great dramatick poet a writer whom no man is now hardy enough to mention as even his competitor.

I muſt premiſe, that *The Lover's Melancholy*, written by John Ford, was *announced* for repreſentation at Drury-lane theatre on Friday the 22d of April, 1748. Mr. Steevens has mentioned that it was performed for *a benefit*; but the perſon for whoſe benefit this play was acted is in the preſent caſe very material: it was performed

for

for the benefit of Mrs. Macklin; and conſequently it was the *intereſt* of Mr. Macklin that the entertainment of that night ſhould prove profitable, or in other words that ſuch expectation ſhould be raiſed among the frequenters of the playhouſe as ſhould draw together a numerous audience. Mr. Macklin, who had then been on the ſtage about twenty-five years, was ſufficiently converſant with the arts of puffing, which, though now practiſed with perhaps ſuperior dexterity, have at all times (by whatever name they may have gone) been tolerably well underſtood: and accordingly on Tueſday the 19th of April, three days before the day appointed for his wife's benefit, he inſerted the following letter in *The General* (now *The Publick*) *Advertiſer*, which appears to have eſcaped the notice of my predeceſſor:

'Sir,

'As *The Lover's Melancholy*, which is to be revived on *Friday* next at the theatre-royal in Drury-Lane, for the benefit of Mrs. Macklin, is a ſcarce play, and in a very few hands, it is hoped, that a ſhort account of the author, his works in general, and of that piece in particular, will not be unacceptable to the publick.'

'John Ford, Eſq. was of the Middle Temple, and though but a young man when Shakſpeare left the ſtage, yet as he lived in ſtrict friendſhip with him till he died, *which appears by ſeveral of Ford's ſonnets and verſes*, it may be ſaid with ſome propriety that he was a contemporary of that great man's.'

'It is ſaid that he wrote twelve or fourteen dramatick pieces, eight of which only have been collected, viz. *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice*, *Perkin Warbeck*, *The Ladies' Trial*, *'Tis Pity ſhe's a Whore*, *The Sun's Darling*, a Maſque, and *The Lover's Melancholy*.'

'Moſt of thoſe pieces have great merit in them, particularly *The Lover's Melancholy*; which in the private opinion of many admirers of the ſtage, is written with an art, eaſe, and dramatick ſpirit, inferior to none before or ſince his time, Shakſpeare excepted.'

'The moral of this play is obvious and laudable; the fable natural, ſimple, intereſting, and perfect in all

its parts; the action one and entire; the time twelve hours, and the place a palace.'

'The writing, as the piece is of that ſpecies of the drama, which is neither tragedy, nor comedy, but a play, is often in familiar, and ſometimes in elevated, proſe, *after the manner of Shakſpeare*; but when his ſubject and characters demand it, he has ſentiment, diction, and flowing numbers, at command.'

'His characters are natural, and well choſen, and ſo diſtinct in manners, ſentiment, and language, that each as he ſpeaks would diſtinctly live in the reader's judgment, without the common help of marginal directions.'

'As Ford was an intimate and a profeſſed admirer of Shakſpeare, it is not to be wondered at, that *he often thinks and expreſſes like him*; which is not his misfortune, but his happineſs; for when he is moſt like Shakſpeare, he is moſt like nature. He does not put you in mind of him like a plagiariſt, or an affected mere imitator; but like a true genius, who had ſtudied under that great man, and could not avoid catching ſome of his divine excellence.'

'This praiſe perhaps by ſome people may be thought too much: of that the praiſer pretends not to be a judge; he only ſpeaks his own feeling, not with an intent to impoſe, but to recommend a treaſure to the publick, that for a century has been buried in obſcurity; which *when they have ſeen*, he flatters himſelf that they will think as well of it as he does; and ſhould that be the caſe, the following verſes, written by Mr. Ford's contemporaries, will ſhew, that neither the preſent publick, nor the letter-writer, are ſingular in their eſteem of *The Lover's Melancholy*.'

"To my honoured friend, Maſter JOHN FORD, on his [excellent play, *The*] [2] *Lover's Melancholy*.

"If that thou think'ſt theſe lines thy worth can raiſe,
"Thou doſt miſtake; my liking is no praiſe.

[2] The words within crotchets here and below were interpolated by *Mr. Macklin, not being found in the original.*

"Nor

" Nor can I think thy judgment is ſo ill,
" To ſeek for bays from ſuch a barren quill.
" Let your true critick that can judge and mend,
" Allow thy ſcenes, and ſtile: I, as a friend
" That knows thy worth, do only ſtick my name,
" To ſhew my love, not to advance thy fame."

G. DONNE.

On [that excellent play] *The Lover's Melancholy.*

" 'Tis not the language, nor the fore-plac'd rhimes
" Of friends that ſhall commend to after-times
" *The Lover's Melancholy*; its own worth
" Without a borrow'd praiſe ſhall ſet it forth."

PHILOS[3].

Your's, B. B.'

How far *The Lover's Melancholy* is entitled to all this high praiſe, it is not my buſineſs at preſent to inquire. I ſhall only obſerve, that this kind of prelude to a benefit play appears at that period to have been a common artifice. For *The Muſes Looking-Glaſs*, an old comedy of Randolph's, being revived for the benefit of Mr. Ryan in 1748, I find an account of the authour, and an high elogium on his works, in the form of a letter, inſerted in the month of March, in the ſame newſpaper.

In the preceding letter it is obſervable, we are only told that the authour of *The Lover's Melancholy* lived in the ſtricteſt intimacy with Shakſpeare till he died, *as appears by ſeveral of Ford's Sonnets and Verſes* (which unluckily, however, *are no where to be found*); that the piece is inferior to none written before or ſince, except thoſe of Shakſpeare; that as Ford was an intimate and profeſſed admirer of Shakſpeare, and had ſtudied under him, it is not to be wondered at that it ſhould be written *in his manner*, and that the authour ſhould have caught ſome portion of his divine excellence: but no hint is yet given,

[3] In the original, this ſignature is in Greek characters, ο φιλος; a language with which Mr. Macklin is unacquainted. In this inſtance therefore he muſt have had the aſſiſtance of ſome more learned friend.

that *The Lover's Melancholy* had a ſtill higher claim to the attention of the town than being written in Shakſpeare's manner, namely its being ſuppoſed to be compiled from the papers of that great poet, which, after his death, as we ſhall preſently hear, fell into Ford's hands. And yet undoubtedly this valuable piece of information was on Monday the 21ſt day of April, (when this letter appears to have been written,) in Mr. Macklin's poſſeſſion, *if ever he was poſſeſſed of it*; for ſo improbable a circumſtance will not, I ſuppoſe, be urged, as that he found the uncommon pamphlet in which it is ſaid to be contained, between that day and the following Friday.

Judiciouſly as the preceding letter was calculated to attain the end for which it was written, it appears not to have made a ſufficient impreſſion on the publick. All the boxes for Mrs. Macklin's benefit, it ſhould ſeem, were not yet taken; and the town was not quite ſo anxious as might have been expected, to ſee this tranſcendent and incomparable ſecular tragedy; though it was announced in the bills as not having been performed for one hundred years; though its moral, fable, and action, were all perfect and entire; though the time conſumed in the drama was as little as the moſt rigid French critick could exact; and though the audience during the whole repreſentation would enjoy the ſupreme felicity of beholding not a foreſt, an open plain, or a common room, but the inſide of a palace. What then was to be done? An ordinary application having failed, Spaniſh flies are to be tried; for though the publick might not go to ſee a play *written in the manner of Shakſpeare*, they could not be ſo inſenſible as not to have ſome curioſity about a piece, which, if the inſinuations of the authour's contemporaries were to be credited, was *actually written by him*; a play, which none of them had ever ſeen repreſented, and very few had read or even heard of. Mr. Barry, a principal performer in this revived tragedy, is very *commodiouſly* taken ill; and the repreſentation, which had been announced for Friday the 22d, is deferred to Thurſday the 28th, of April. Full of the new idea, the letter-writer takes up his pen; but fabricks of this kind

are

are not eaſily conſtructed, ſo as to be ſecure on every ſide from aſſault. However, in three days the whole ſtructure was raiſed; and on Saturday morning the 23d of April appeared in *The General Advertiſer* a Second Eulogy on *The Lover's Melancholy*, which I am now to examine.

This letter of the 23d of April which we are now to conſider, having been printed in a former page[4], the reader can eaſily turn to it. Before, however, I enter upon an examination of its contents, I will juſt obſerve, that the attention of the publick had been drawn in a peculiar manner to our authour's productions by the publication of Dr. Warburton's long expected edition of his plays in the preceding year, and was ſtill more ſtrongly fixed on the ſame object by Mr. Edwards's ingenious *Canons of Criticiſm*, which firſt appeared in the month of April, 1748.

Mr. Macklin begins his ſecond letter with the mention of a pamphlet written in the reign of Charles the Firſt, with this quaint title—"Old Ben's *Light Heart* made heavy by young John's *Melancholy Lover*;" and as this curious pamphlet contains "ſome hiſtorical anecdotes and altercations concerning Ben Jonſon, Ford, Shakſpeare, and *The Lover's Melancholy*," he makes no doubt that a few extracts from it will "*at this juncture*" be acceptable to the publick.

He next obſerves, that Ben Jonſon from great critical language, (*learning*, he ſhould have ſaid,) which was then the portion of but very few, from his merit as a poet, and his aſſociation with men of letters, for a conſiderable time gave laws to the ſtage. That old Ben was ſplenetick, ſour, and envious; too proud of his own works, and too ſevere in his cenſure of thoſe of his contemporaries. That this arrogance raiſed him many enemies, who were particularly offended by the *ſlights* and *malignancies* which the *rigid* Ben threw out againſt the *lowly Shakſpeare*, "whoſe fame, *ſince his death*, as appears by the pamphlet, was grown too great for Ben's envy either to bear with or wound."

[4] See p. 202.

To

To give the whole of theſe invectives, we are then told, would take up too much room; but among other inſtances of Jonſon's ill-nature and ingratitude to Shakſpeare, "who firſt introduced him to the theatre and to fame," it is ſtated, *from the pamphlet*, that Ben had aſſerted, that Shakſpeare had indeed wit and imagination, but that they were not guided by judgment, being ever ſervile to raiſe the laughter of fools and the wonder of the ignorant; that he had little Latin, and leſs Greek: and the writer of the pamphlet, as a further proof of Ben's malignity, quotes ſome lines from the prologue to *Every man in his humour*,—

"To make a child new ſwaddled, to proceed
"Man, and then ſhoot up, in one beard and weed,
"Paſt threeſcore years," &c.

which were levelled at ſome of Shakſpeare's plays. The firſt of the lines quoted, and above given, we are told in a note, was pointed at *The Winter's Tale*; but whether this note was furniſhed by the pamphlet or by the writer of the letter, we are left to conjecture. Whichſoever of theſe we are to ſuppoſe, the fact is undoubtedly not true, for the new-born child introduced in *The Winter's Tale* never does in the courſe of the play ſhoot up *man*, being no other than the lovely Perdita. In the following lines however of that prologue, our poet is undoubtedly ſneered at.

So much for Shakſpeare. We are now brought to *The Lover's Melancholy*; the *extraordinary ſucceſs* of which, the pamphlet informs us, wounded Ben the more ſenſibly, as it was brought out on the ſame ſtage, and *in the ſame week*, with his *New Inn* or *Light Heart*, which was damned; and as Ford, the writer of *The Lover's Melancholy*, was at the head of Shakſpeare's partizans. The ill ſucceſs of the *Light Heart*, we are next told, ſo incenſed Jonſon, that, when he printed his play, he deſcribed it in the title-page, as a comedy *never acted, but moſt negligently played by ſome, the king's idle ſervants, and more ſqueamiſhly beheld and cenſured by others, the king's fooliſh ſubjects*; and *immediately upon this*, adds the

the letter-writer, he wrote his famous ode, "Come, leave the loathed ſtage," &c. The revenge which he took on Ford, was, we are told, (from the pamphet,) the writing an epigram upon him, in which there is an alluſion, as we are informed in a note, to a character in a play of Ford's, "which *Ben ſays, Ford ſtole from him.*"

The next information which we derive from this curious pamphlet, is entirely new, no trace of it being found in the preface prefixed by the firſt editors to the folio edition of Shakſpeare's plays in 1623, or in any other book of thoſe times. This curious fact is, that John Ford, in conjunction with our poet's friends, Heminge and Condell, had the reviſal of his papers after his death; and that Ben aſſerted, Ford's *Lover's Melancholy*, by the connivance of his aſſociates in this truſt, was ſtolen from thoſe papers. This malicious charge gave birth, we are told, to many verſes and epigrams, which are ſet forth in the pamphlet, but the letter-writer contents himſelf with producing two copies of theſe verſes only *, to one of which is ſubſcribed the name of *Thomas May*, and to the other theſe words: "*Endim. Porter*, the ſuppoſed author of theſe verſes."

Such is the ſubſtance of Mr. Macklin's ſecond letter. Let us now ſeparately examine the parts of which it is compoſed.

The quaint title which the writer of this letter has given to this creature of his own imagination, (for ſo I ſhall now take leave to call the pamphlet,) "Old Ben's *Light Heart* made heavy by young John's *Melancholy Lover*,' is, it muſt be acknowledged, moſt happily invented, and is ſo much in the manner of thoſe times, that it for a long time ſtaggered my incredulity, and almoſt convinced me of the authenticity of the piece to which it is ſaid to have been affixed: and not a little, without doubt, did the inventor plume himſelf on ſo fortunate a thought. But how ſhort-ſighted is man!

* Of all the ancient poems which Chatterton pretended to have found in the famous Briſtol cheſt, he wiſely produced, I think, but *four*, that he ventured to call originals.

This

This very title, which the writer thus probably exulted in, and ſuppoſed would ſerve him,

" ——— as a charmed ſhield,
" And eke enchanted arms that none might pierce,"

is one of the moſt deciſive circumſtances to prove his forgery.

Neſcia mens hominum fati, ſortiſque futuræ!
Turnò tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, et cum ſpolia iſta, diemque
Oderit.—
——— Pallas te, hoc vulnere, Pallas
Immolat, et pœnam ſcelerato ex ſanguine ſumit.

Ben Jonſon was in his own time frequently called the *judicious* Ben, the *learned* Ben, the *immortal* Ben, but had not, I believe, at the time this pamphlet is ſuppoſed to have been publiſhed, obtained the appellation of *Old* Ben. However, as this title was given him ſome years afterwards by Sir John Suckling in his *Seſſion of the Poets*, which appears to have been written in Auguſt 1637, about the time of Jonſon's death, (See Strafford's Lett. Vol. II. p. 114,) which celebrated poem, as well as the language of the preſent day, probably ſuggeſted the combination of *Old Ben* to Mr. Macklin, I ſhall lay no ſtreſs upon this objection. But the other part of the title of this pamphlet—"*Young John's* Melancholy Lover," is very material in the preſent diſquiſition.—John Ford in the Dedication to his *Lover's Melancholy* ſays, that was the firſt *play* which he had *printed*; from which the letter-writer concluded that he muſt then have been a young man. In this particular, however, he was egregiouſly miſtaken; for John Ford, who was the ſecond ſon of Thomas Ford, Eſq. was born at Ilſington in Devonſhire, and baptized there April 17, 1586[5]. When he was not yet ſeventeen, he became a member of the Middle-Temple, November 16, 1602, as I learn from the Regiſter of that Society; and conſequently in the year 1631, when

[5] For this information I am indebted to the Rev. Mr. Palk, Vicar of Ilſington.

this

this pamphlet is ſuppoſed to have been publiſhed, he had no title to the appellation of *young* John, being forty-five years old. And though *The Lover's Melancholy* was the firſt play that he publiſhed, he had produced the Maſque of *The Sun's Darling* on the ſtage five years before, namely in March 1623-4; had exhibited one or more plays before that time; and ſo early as in the year 1606 had publiſhed a poem entitled *Fame's Memorial*, of which I have his original preſentation-copy in Mſ. in my collection. Theſe are facts, of the greater part of which no writer of that time, converſant with dramatick hiſtory, could have been ignorant. Here certainly I might ſafely cloſe the evidence; for Ben Jonſon was born on the 11th of June, 1574[6], and conſequently in 1631

[6] According to the beſt accounts. The preciſe year however of this poet's birth has not been aſcertained. Fuller tells us, that "with all his induſtry he could not find him in his cradle, but that he could fetch him from his long coats;—when a little child, he lived in Hartſhorne-lane near Charing-Croſs." I in vain examined the Regiſter of St. Margaret's, Weſtminſter, and St. Martin's in the Fields, for the time of his baptiſm. There is a *lacuna* in the latter regiſter from February to Dec. 1574. Ben Jonſon therefore was probably born in that year, and he has himſelf told us that he was born on the 11th of June. This agrees with the account given by Anthony Wood, who ſays, that *before his* death in Auguſt 1637, he had completed his ſixty-third year. I found in the Regiſter of St. Martin's, that a Mrs. Margaret Jonſon was married in November 1575 to Mr. Thomas Fowler. He was perhaps the poet's ſtep-father, who is ſaid to have been a bricklayer.

The greater part of the hiſtory of this poet's life is involved in much confuſion. Moſt of the facts which have been tranſmitted concerning him, were originally told by Anthony Wood; and there is ſcarcely any part of his narrative in which ſome error may not be traced. Thus, we are told, that ſoon after his father's death his mother married a bricklayer; that ſhe took her ſon from Weſtminſter-ſchool, and made him work at his ſtep-father's trade. He helped, ſays Fuller, at the building of the new ſtructure in Lincoln's-Inn, where having a trowel in his hand, he had a book in his pocket: and this book Mr. Gildon has found out to be *Horace*. In this ſituation, according to Wood, being pitied by his old maſter, Camden, he was recommended to Sir Walter Raleigh as a tutor to his ſon; and after attending him on his adventures, they parted, on his return, not, as I think ſays Wood, in cold blood. He *then*, we are told, was admitted into St. John's college in Cambridge, and after

1631 was in his fifty-ſeventh year; a period of life at which, though not in the hey-day of the blood, he could with

after a ſhort ſtay there, went to London, and became an actor in the Curtain playhouſe: and ſoon afterwards, "having improved his fancy by keeping ſcholaſtick company, he betook himſelf to writing plays." *Laſtly, we are told by the ſame writer, on the death of Daniel* [in October 1619] "he ſucceeded him as poet-laureat, as Daniel ſucceeded Spenſer."

If Jonſon ever worked with his ſtep-father at his trade in Lincoln's-Inn, it muſt have been either in 1588, or 1593, in each of which years, as I learn from Dugdale's *Origines Judiciales*, ſome new buildings were erected by that ſociety. He could not have been taken from thence to accompany young Raleigh on his travels, who was not born till 1594, nor ever went abroad except with his father in 1617 to Guiana, where he loſt his life. The poet might indeed about the year 1610 or 1611 have been private tutor to him; and it is probable that their connexion was about that time, as Jonſon mentions that he furniſhed Sir Walter Raleigh with a portion of his Hiſtory of the World, on which Sir Walter muſt have been then employed; but if the tutor and the pupil then parted in ill humour, it was rather too late for Jonſon to enter into St. John's college, at the age of thirty-four or thirty-five years.

That at ſome period he was tutor to young Raleigh, is aſcertained by the following anecdote, preſerved in one of Oldys's Manuſcripts:

"Mr. Camden recommended him to Sir Walter Raleigh, who truſted him with the care and education of his eldeſt ſon Walter, a gay ſpark, who could not brook Ben's rigorous treatment, but perceiving one foible in his diſpoſition, made uſe of that to throw off the yoke of his government: and this was an unlucky habit Ben had contracted, through his love of jovial company, of being overtaken with liquor, *which Sir Walter did of all vices moſt abominate, and hath moſt exclaimed againſt.* One day, when Ben had taken a plentiful doſe, and was fallen into a ſound ſleep, young Raleigh got a great baſket, and a couple of men, who lay'd Ben in it, and then with a pole carried him between their ſhoulders to Sir Walter, telling him, their young maſter had ſent home his tutor." This, adds Mr. Oldys, "I have from a Mſ. memorandum-book written in the time of the civil wars, by Mr. Oldſworth, who was ſecretary, I think, to Philip earl of Pembroke."

The truth probably is, that he was admitted into St. John's college as a ſizar in 1588, at which time he was fourteen years old, (the uſual time then of going to the Univerſity,) and after ſtaying there a few weeks was obliged from poverty to return to his father's trade; with whom he might have been employed on the buildings in Lincoln's-Inn in 1593, when he was nineteen. Not being able to endure this ſituation, he went, as he himſelf told Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden,

with no great propriety be called *Old*, unleſs by way of oppoſition to a *very young* man. But no ſuch difference of

to the Low Countries, where he ſerved a campaign, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the field. On his return, perhaps in 1594, being now uſed to a life of adventure, he probably began his theatrical career, as a ſtrolling player, and after having "ambled for ſome time by a play-waggon in the country," repaired to London, and endeavoured at the Curtain to obtain a livelihood as an actor, till, as Decker informs us, "not being able to ſet a *good face* upon't, he could not get a ſervice among the mimicks."

Between that year and 1598, when his *Every Man in his Humour* was acted, he probably produced thoſe unſucceſsful pieces which Wood mentions. It is remarkable that Meres in that year enumerates Jonſon among the writers of *tragedy*, though no tragedy of his writing, of ſo early a date, is now extant: a fact which none of his biographers have noticed.

Some particulars relative to this poet, which I have lately learned, will ſerve to diſprove another of the facts mentioned by Wood; namely, that "he ſucceeded Daniel as poet-laureat, [in October 1619,] as Daniel did Spenſer." I do not believe that any ſuch office as poet-laureat exiſted in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and conſequently Spenſer never could have poſſeſſed it; nor has any proof whatſoever been produced of Daniel's having ever enjoyed that office.

Spenſer, we are told by Camden, died in great poverty in 1598, and ſuch has been the prevailing opinion ever ſince; but a fact which I have lately diſcovered, and which has not been noticed by any writer of that great poet's life, renders Camden's aſſertion very diſputable. Spenſer, I find, in February 1590-1, obtained from queen Elizabeth an annuity or penſion of fifty pounds a year, during his life; which, *the value of money and the modes of life being jointly conſidered, may* be eſtimated as equal to two hundred pounds a year at this day. We ſee, therefore, that the incenſe laviſhed on his parſimonious miſtreſs in the *Faery Queen*, which was publiſhed in the preceding year *, did not paſs unrewarded, as all our biographical writers have ſuppoſed. The firſt notice I obtained of this grant, was from a ſhort abſtract of it in the Signet-office, and with a view to aſcertain whether he was deſcribed as poet-laureat, I afterwards examined the patent itſelf, (*Patent Roll*, 33 Eliz. P. 3.) but no office or official duty is there mentioned. After the uſual and formal preamble, *pro diverſis cauſis et conſiderationibus*, &c. the words are, "*damus et concedimus* dilecto ſubdito noſtro, *Edmundo Spenſer*," &c.

King James by letters patent dated February 3, 1615-16, granted to Ben Jonſon an annuity or yearly penſion of one hundred marks, during his

* *The Faery Queen* was entered on the Stationers' books by W. Ponſonby, in December, 1589.

of age ſubſiſted between theſe two poets. *If a* man of fifty-ſeven is to be accounted old, the man of forty-five is not young.

The

his life, " *in* conſideration of the good and acceptable ſervice heretofore done and hereafter to be done by the ſaid B. J." Therefore, and not in 1619, undoubtedly it was that he was made poet-laureat, if ever he was ſo conſtituted; but not one word is there in the grant, which I examined in the chapel of the Rolls, touching that office: unleſs it may be ſuppoſed to be comprehended in the words which I have juſt quoted. On the 23d of April 1630, king Charles by letters patent, reciting the former grant, and that it had been ſurrendered, was pleaſed, " in conſideration (ſays the patent) of the good and acceptable ſervice done unto us and our ſaid father by the ſaid B. J. and eſpecially to encourage him to proceed in thoſe ſervices of his wit and pen, which we have enjoined unto him, and which we expect from him," to augment his annuity of one-hundred marks, to one hundred pounds *per ann.* during his life, payable from Chriſtmas, 1629, and the firſt payment to commence at Lady-day 1630. Charles at the ſame time granted him a tierce of Canary Spaniſh wine yearly during his life, out of his majeſty's cellars at Whitehall: of which there is no mention in the former grant. From hence, and from the preſent of one hundred pounds ſent to Jonſon by the king in 1629, we may ſee how extremely improbable the ſtory is, which has been recorded, on I know not what authority, and which Dr. Smollet was idle enough to inſert in his Hiſtory; that Ben in that year, being reduced to great diſtreſs, and living in an obſcure alley, petitioned his majeſty to aſſiſt him in his poverty and ſickneſs; and on receiving ten guineas, ſaid to the meſſenger who brought him the donation, " his majeſty has ſent me ten guineas, becauſe I am poor and live in an alley; go and tell him that his ſoul lives in an alley."

None of his biographers appear to have known that Ben Jonſon obtained from king James a reverſionary grant of the office of Maſter of the Revels. His majeſty by letters patent dated October 5, in the nineteenth year of his reign, (1621) granted him, by the name and addition of " our beloved ſervant, Benjamin Jonſon, *gentleman*," the ſaid office, to be held and enjoyed by him and his aſſigns, during his life, from and after the death of Sir George Buck and Sir John Aſtley, or as ſoon as the office ſhould become vacant by reſignation, forfeiture, or ſurrender: but Jonſon never derived any advantage from this grant, becauſe Sir John Aſtley ſurvived him. It ſhould ſeem from a paſſage in the *Satiromaſtix* of his antagoniſt Decker, printed in 1602, that Ben had made ſome attempt to obtain a reverſionary grant of this place before the death of queen Elizabeth: for *Sir Vaughan* in that piece ſays to *Horace*, [i. e. Jonſon,] " I have ſome coſſens-german at court ſhall beget you the *reverſion* of the *Maſter of the King's Revels*, or elſe to be his Lord of Miſrule nowe at Chriſtmas."

It

The next ſuſpicious circumſtance in the letter which we are now examining, is, that in the pretended extracts from this old pamphlet moſt of the circumſtances mentioned might have been collected by a modern writer from books of either thoſe or ſubſequent times: and ſuch *new* facts as are mentioned, can be proved to be fictions. Such of the pretended extracts as are true, are old; and ſuch as are new, are falſe. Thus, to take the former claſs firſt, we are informed, (as from the pamphlet,) that our poet and Jonſon were at variance; that old Ben took every means of depreciating the lowly Shakſpeare; that he aſſerted our poet had little Latin, and leſs Greek, and did not underſtand the dramatick laws[7]; that Jonſon ridiculed ſome of his pieces; and that this was a ſtrong proof of his ingratitude, Shakſpeare having firſt introduced him to the ſtage.—All theſe facts Mr. M. might have learned from Rowe's Life of Shakſpeare, and Pope's Preface to his edition; from Dr. Birch's Life of Ben Jonſon publiſhed in 1743; from Drummond of Hawthornden's Converſation with that poet; from the old

It has been commonly underſtood, that on Ben Jonſon's death in Auguſt 1637, Sir William D'Avenant [then Mr. D'Avenant] was appointed poet-laureate in his room: but he at that time received no favour from the crown. Sixteen months afterwards, Dec. 13, 1638, in the 14th year of Charles the Firſt, letters patent paſſed the great ſeal, granting, "in conſideration of ſervice heretofore done and hereafter to be done by William Davenant, gentleman," an annuity of one hundred pounds *per Ann.* to the ſaid W. D. *during his majeſty's pleaſure.* By this patent no Canary wine was granted; and no mention is made of the office of poet-laureate. It is at preſent conferred, not by letters patent, but by a warrant ſigned and ſealed by the Lord Chamberlain, nominating A. B. to the office, with the accuſtomed fees thereunto belonging.

7 Which Ben claimed the merit of having firſt taught his contemporaries. See his Verſes to his old ſervant Richard Brome, prefixed to *The Northern Laſs*, which was firſt acted in July, 1629:

"Now you are got into a nearer room
"Of fellowſhip, profeſſing my old arts,
"And you do do them well, with good applauſe;
"Which you have juſtly gained from the ſtage,
"By obſervation of thoſe *comick laws*
"*Which I*, your maſter, *firſt did teach the age.*"

play entitled *The Return from Parnaſſus*; from Fuller's *Worthies*, Winſtanley, and Langbaine; from Jonſon's own verſes on Shakſpeare prefixed to all the editions; from his prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*; from his *Bartholomew Fair* and his *Diſcoveries*, and from many other books. In Mr. Pope's preface was found that praiſe, that in our poet's plays every ſpeech might be aſſigned to its proper ſpeaker without the aid of marginal directions: an encomium which perhaps is too high, even when applied to Shakſpeare; but which, when applied to Ford, (as it is in Mr. Macklin's *firſt* letter,) becomes ridiculous.

Let us now conſider the *new* facts, which for the firſt time are given to the publick from this rare old tract. The firſt new fact ſtated is, that Shakſpeare's fame, *after his death*, grew too great for Ben either to bear with or wound. Now this was ſo far from being the caſe, that it was at this particular period that Jonſon's pieces, which were collected into a volume in 1616, appear to have been in moſt eſtimation; and from the time of Shakſpeare's death to the year 1625, both Ben's fame and that of Fletcher, ſeem to have been at their height. In this period Fletcher produced near thirty plays, which were acted with applauſe; and Jonſon was during the whole of that time well received in the courts of James and Charles, for each of whom he wrote ſeveral Maſques, which the wretched taſte of that age very highly eſtimated; and was patronized and extravagantly extolled by the ſcholars of the time, as much ſuperior to Shakſpeare. In this period alſo he produced his *Devil's an Aſs*, and his *Staple of News*, each of which had ſome ſhare of ſucceſs. In the year 1631 indeed he was extremely indigent and diſtreſſed, and had been ſo from the year 1625, when I think he was ſtruck with the palſy; but in conſequence of this indigence and diſtreſs he was not preciſely at that period an object of jealouſy to the partizans of Shakſpeare.

Another and a very material falſe fact ſtated from this pamphlet is, that Jonſon's *New Inn or Light Heart*, and Ford's *Melancholy Lover*, were produced for the firſt time

on

on the ſame ſtage, in *the ſame week*: a fact concerning which the writer of the pamphlet, *if the pamphlet had any real exiſtence*, could ſcarcely have been miſtaken.

Theſe two plays were certainly repreſented for the firſt time at *the ſame theatre*, namely Blackfriars, as Mr. Macklin learned from their reſpective title-pages; but not in the ſame *week*, there being no leſs than *two months* interval between the production of the two pieces.

Ford's play was exhibited at the Blackfriars on the 24th of November, 1628, when it was licenſed for the ſtage, as appears from the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Maſter of the Revels to King Charles the Firſt, a manuſcript now before me, of which a more particular account may be found in the Second Part of this volume [*Hiſtorical Account of the Engliſh Stage*, &c.]; and Jonſon's *New Inn* on the 19th of January in the following year, 1628-9. Very ſoon indeed after the ill ſucceſs of Jonſon's piece, the King's Company brought out at the ſame theatre a new play called *The Love-ſick Maid, or the Honour of young Ladies*, which was licenſed by Sir Henry Herbert, on the 9th of February, 1628-9, and acted with extraordinary applauſe. This play, which was written by Jonſon's own ſervant, Richard Brome, was ſo popular, that the managers of the King's Company, on the 10th of March, preſented the Maſter of the Revels with the ſum of two pounds, "on the good ſucceſs of *The Honour of Ladies*;" the only inſtance I have met with of ſuch a compliment being paid him. No mention whatſoever is made of *The Lover's Melancholy* having been attended with any extraordinary ſucceſs, though Mr. M. from private motives choſe to repreſent it as having been acted with uncommon applauſe.

We are next told, that Ben was ſo exaſperated by the damnation of his piece, that he printed it with a very ſingular title-page, which is given; and that *immediately upon this* he wrote his celebrated ode, "Come, leave the loathed ſtage," &c. It is not very clear what the letter-writer means by the words, *immediately upon this*. If he means that Jonſon wrote his Ode immediately after

his play was damned in 1629, the aſſertion is made at random; if he means that immediately after he had publiſhed his play he wrote his ode, the fact is not true. The ode is printed at the end of the play, which was publiſhed in April, 1631.

The next new fact found in this curious pamphlet is, that Ben Jonſon, mortified by his own defeat and the ſucceſs which Ford's play obtained, wrote the following Epigram upon his ſucceſsful competitor:

" PLAYWRIGHT, by chance, hearing ſome toys I had writ,
" Cry'd to my face, they were th' elixir of wit;
" And I muſt now believe him, for to-day
" Five of my jeſts, then ſtolne, paſs'd him a play."

This epigram, I own, is ſo much in the manner of the time, and particularly of Ben Jonſon, that for a long time I knew not how to queſtion its authenticity. It is ſo ſtrongly marked, that every poetical reader muſt immediately exclaim, *aut Eraſmus, aut diabolus.* Nor indeed is it to be wondered at that it is much in Ben's manner; for,—not to keep the reader longer in ſuſpence, it *was written* by him.—Well then, ſays the writer of the letter in queſtion, here you have a ſtrong confirmation of all the other facts which you affect to doubt, and every impartial judge muſt acquit me of having fabricated them. This, however, we ſhall find a *non ſequitur:* for this very epigram, though written by Jonſon, is as deciſive a proof of impoſition as any other which I have produced. The fact is, this epigram, addreſſed to PLAYWRIGHT, is found among Jonſon's printed poems, as are two others addreſſed to the ſame perſon[8]. Mr. M. I ſuppoſe, was

[8] See Jonſon's Works, folio, 1616.

Epig. XLIX.

To PLAYWRIGHT.

" PLAYWRIGHT me reades, and ſtill my verſes dampes;
" He ſayes, I want the tongue of epigrammes;
" I have no ſalt; no bawdrie he doth meane,
" For wittie, in his language, is obſcene.
" PLAYWRIGHT, I loath to have thy manners knowne
" In my chaſte booke: profeſſe them in thine owne."

Epig.

was poſſeſſed only of the modern edition of Jonſon's Works printed in 8vo. in 1716, and, no dates being aſſigned to the *poems*, thought he might ſafely make free with this epigram, and affix the date of the year 1630, or 1631, to it; but unluckily it was publiſhed by Old Ben himſelf fourteen or fifteen years before, in the firſt folio collection of his works in 1616, and conſequently could not have any relation to a literary altercation between him and Ford at the time *The New Inn* and *The Lover's Melancholy* were brought on the ſcene. It appears from Ben Jonſon's Dedication of his Epigrams to Lord Pembroke, that moſt of them, though publiſhed in 1616, were written ſome years before[9]; the epigram in queſtion therefore may be referred to a ſtill earlier period than the time of its publication.

On one of the lines in this epigram, as exhibited by Mr. Macklin,

"Five of my jeſts, then ſtolne, paſs'd him a play."

we find the following note:—"*Alluding to a character in The Ladies' Trial*, which Ben ſays Ford ſtole from him." If the writer of this letter had ſaid, "Alluding to a character in *The Ladies' Trial*, which Ford ſtole from Ben Jonſon," we might ſuppoſe him only miſtaken; and this anachroniſm (ſuppoſing that the epigram had been written in 1631) might not affect the preſent queſtion. But we are told, "*Ben* ſays ſo." He certainly has not ſaid ſo in his works, and therefore the letter-writer muſt mean, that it is aſſerted in the pamphlet from which he pretended to quote, that Ben had ſaid ſo. But Ben could

Epig. LXVIII.

ON PLAYWRIGHT.

"PLAYWRIGHT, convict of publick wrongs to men,
Takes private beatings, and begins againe.
"Two kindes of valour he doth ſhew at ones,
"Active in his braine, and paſſive in his bones."

The perſon aimed at, under the name of *Playwright*, was probably Decker.

9 "I here offer to your lordſhip the *ripeſt* of my ſtudies, my epigrammes, which, though they carry danger in the ſound, do not therefore ſeek your ſhelter. For *when I made them*, I had nothing in my conſcience, to expreſſing of which I did need a cypher. But if I be falne into *thoſe times*, wherein, for the likeneſs of vice," &c.

not poſſibly have ſaid ſo, even if he had written this epigram at the time to which it has been falſely aſcribed; for this plain reaſon, that *The Ladies' Trial* was not produced till ſeveral years afterwards. It was firſt printed in 1639, two years after Ben Jonſon's death, and does not appear to have been licenſed by Sir Henry Herbert before that time. The origin of this note, by which *confuſion is worſe confounded*, was probably this: Langbaine under the article, *Fletcher*, mentions that a ſcene in his *Love's Pilgrimage* was *ſtollen* from the very play of which we have been ſpeaking; Jonſon's *New Inn*. This ſcene Fletcher himſelf could not have ſtollen from *The New Inn*, for he was dead ſome years before that play appeared; but Shirley, who had the reviſal of ſome of thoſe pieces which were left imperfect by Fletcher, (as appears from Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book[1],) finding *The New Inn* unſucceſsful, took the liberty to borrow a ſcene from it, which he inſerted in *Love's Pilgrimage*, when that play was revived, or as Sir Henry Herbert calls it, *renewed*, in 1635[2]. Mr. M. had probably

[1] In Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book is the following entry: "For a play of Fletcher's, *corrected by Shirley*, called *The Night-walkers*, the 11th of May, 1633,—£.2 0 0.

[2] "Received of Blagrove from the King's Company, for the *renewing* of *Love's Pilgrimage*, the 16th of September, 1635,—£.1 0 0." *Ibidem.*

The addition of a new ſcene, and ſometimes an entire act, to an old play, appears from the following entries in the ſame book to have been common:

"For the adding of a ſcene to *The Virgin Martyr*, this 7th July, 1624,—£.0 10 0."

"For allowing of a new act in an ould play, this 13th May, 1629,—£.0 10 0."

"For allowing of an ould play, new written or forbiſht by Mr. Biſton, the 12th of January, 1631,—£.1 0 0."

"An ould play, with ſome new ſcenes, *Doctor Lambe and the Witches*, to Salisbury Courte, the 16th Auguſt, 1634,—£.1 0 0."

"Received of ould Cartwright for allowing the [Fortune] company to add ſcenes to an ould play, and to give it out for a new one, this 12th of May, 1636, £.1 0 0."

This practice prevailed in Shakſpeare's time. "The players," ſays Lupton, in his *London and the Country carbonadoed and quartered*, 8vo, 1602, "are as crafty with an old play, as bauds with old faces: the one puts on a new freſh colour, the other a new face and name."

If

probably ſome imperfect recollection of what he had read in Langbaine, and found it convenient to ſubſtitute Ford's play for that of Fletcher.

We are next told, that this pamphlet aſſerts that Ben Jonſon had given out that *The Lover's Melancholy* was not written by Ford, but purloined from Shakſpeare's papers, of which Ford in conjunction with Heminge and Condell is ſaid to have had the reviſal, when the firſt folio edition of our poet's works was publiſhed in 1623.

It ſhould not be forgotten, that the writer of this letter had aſſerted in a former letter, that it appears from *ſeveral of Ford's Sonnets and Verſes* that he lived in the ſtricteſt intimacy with Shakſpeare, to the time of his death: and I may confidently add, that there is not the ſmalleſt ground for the aſſertion, no ſuch ſonnets or verſes being extant. We need not, therefore, heſitate to pronounce the preſent aſſertion to be equally unfounded as the former.

After what has been already ſtated, it would be an *idle waſte of time to enter into any long diſquiſition on* this fiction. It was evidently thrown out to excite the expectation of the town with reſpect to the piece itſelf on the night of the performance. The old plays of the minor poets of the laſt age being in 1748 little known or attended to, thoſe who were curious could not eaſily ſatisfy themſelves concerning the merit or demerit of *The Lover's Melancholy* by *reading* it, (it not being republiſhed in Dodſley's Collection,) and therefore would naturally reſort to the theatre to examine whether there was any ground for ſuch an aſſertion: the preciſe end which the letter-writer had in view. When he talked of Shakſpeare's *papers*, he was probably thinking of what Heminge and Condell have ſaid in their preface,—"we have ſcarce received from him a blot in *his papers*." But by *his papers* they meant nothing more than

If the Office-books of Edmund Tilney, Eſq. and Sir George Buck, who were Maſters of the Revels during the greater part of the reign of King James the Firſt, ſhall ever be diſcovered, I have no doubt that the *Flying Maſque*, and *Prophecy*, in the fifth act of *Cymbeline*, will be found to have been interpolated by the players after our poet's death.

the old copies of his plays which had lain long in their houſe, from which they printed part of their edition. Whatever other papers our poet left, without doubt devolved to his family at Stratford.

The four encomiaſtick lines ſigned "Thomas May," and the elegant verſes aſcribed to Endymion Porter, now alone remain to be conſidered.

Endymion Porter, whom Sir William Davenant, Shakſpeare's ſuppoſed ſon, calls "lord of his muſe and heart," being mentioned by Mr. Rowe in his Life of Shakſpeare, as a great admirer of our poet, his name naturally preſented itſelf to the writer of this letter, as a proper one to be ſubſcribed to an eulogy on him and Ford; and he found, or might have found, in Langbaine's Account of the Dramatick Poets, that May lived in the ſtricteſt intimacy with Endymion Porter, to whom he has dedicated his *Antigone*, publiſhed in 1631; a play which probably, when this letter was written, was in Mr. Macklin's poſſeſſion. Thomas Randolph and Thomas Carew having each of them written verſes to Jonſon after the publication of the celebrated ode annexed to his unfortunate *New Inn*, requeſting him not to leave the ſtage, as the letter-writer might alſo have learned from Langbaine, who has given Randolph's Ode at length, he naturally would read over their lines; and Randolph having written "*A Gratulatory Poem to Ben Jonſon for his adopting of him to be his ſon*," in which we find the following hyperbolical couplet,

"But if heaven take thee, envying us thy lyre,
"'Tis to pen anthems for an angel's quire;"

he is not improperly ſtyled by the letter-writer, "Jonſon's ZANY[3]."

[3] Randolph's attachment to Ben Jonſon was alſo notic[illegible] in the letter printed in the preceding month, in *The General Adverciſer*, (the Theatrical Gazette of that time,) by way of prelude to Mr. Ryan's benefit. "He was, ſays the writer, a man of pregnant wit, gay humour, and of excellent learning; which gained him the eſteem of the town, and *particularly recommended him to Ben Jonſon*, who adopted him *one of his ſons*, and held him in equal eſteem with the ingenious Mr. Cartwright, another of the laureat's adopted ſons."

The

The four lines to which May's name is affixed, are inſcribed, " To *my worthy friend* John Ford;" and it is obſervable that a copy of verſes written by William Singleton, and prefixed to *The Lover's Melancholy*, are alſo inſcribed, " *To my worthy friend*, the author, Maſter *John Ford*." But why, we ſhall be told, might not May, *as well as Mr. Singleton, addreſs Ford as his worthy friend?* Be it ſo then; but unluckily, May, preciſely when he is ſuppoſed to have made this panegyrick upon Ford, and to have informed the publick, that, even ſuppoſing *The Lover's Melancholy* was from Shakſpeare's

" ——— *treaſury* reft,
" That *plunderer Ben* ne'er made ſo *rich a theft*;"

unluckily, I ſay, at this very time, May was living in the ſtricteſt friendſhip with Jonſon; for to May's tranſlation of Lucan, *publiſhed in* 1630, is prefixed a commendatory poem by Jonſon,—addreſſed " To his *choſen friend*, the learned tranſlator of Lucan, *Thomas May*, Eſquire," and ſubſcribed, " *Your true friend in judgment and choiſe*, Benjamin Jonſon."

The verſes ſubſcribed, *Thomas May*, are as follows:

" 'Tis ſaid, from Shakſpeare's *mine* your play you drew;
" What need, when Shakſpeare ſtill ſurvives in you?
" But grant it were from his *vaſt treaſury* reft,
" That *plunderer* Ben ne'er made ſo *rich a theft*."

I have already obſerved, that, Randolph having written a reply to Jonſon's ode, the writer of this letter would naturally look into his works. In a poem *addreſſed to Ben Jonſon*, ſpeaking of the works of Ariſtotle, (the writer by the way, to whom that ſentence of Greek which is found in the title-page of the preſent edition was originally applied,) he has theſe lines:

" ——— I could ſit
" Under a willow covert, and repeat
" Thoſe deep and learned lays, on every part
" Grounded in judgment, ſubtilty, and art,

" That

" That the great tutor to the greateſt king,
" The ſhepherd of Stagira us'd to ſing;
" The ſhepherd of Stagira, *that unfolds*
" *All nature's cloſet*, ſhews what e'er it holds,
" The matter, form, ſenſe, motion, place, and meaſure,
" Of every thing contain'd in her *vaſt treaſure*."

As Shakſpeare's " *vaſt treaſury*" may have been borrowed from this writer, ſo the " *rich theſts* of that *plunderer* Ben" might have been ſuggeſted to Mr. M. by the following lines addreſſed by Thomas Carew " to Ben Jonſon, upon occaſion of his ode of defiance annext to his play of the *New Inn*:"

" Let them the dear expence of oil upbraid,
" Suck'd by thy watchful lamp, that hath betray'd
" To *theft* the blood of martyr'd authors, ſpilt
" Into thy ink, whilſt thou grow'ſt pale with guilt.
" Repine not at the taper's thrifty waſte,
" That ſleeks thy terſer poems; nor is haſte
" Praiſe, but excuſe; and if thou overcome
" A knotty writer, bring the *booty* home;
" Nor think it *theft*, if the *rich* ſpoils ſo torn
" From conquer'd authors, be as trophies worn."

I have traced the marked expreſſions in this tetraſtick to Randolph and Carew; they might, however, have been ſuggeſted by a book ſtill more likely to have been conſulted by the writer of it, Langbaine's *Account of the Dramatick Poets*; and particularly by that part of his work in which he ſpeaks of *Ben Jonſon's* literary *thefts*, on which I have this moment happened to caſt my eye.

" To come laſtly to *Ben Jonſon*, who, as Mr. Dryden affirms, has borrowed more from the ancients than any; I crave leave to ſay in his behalf, that our late laureat has far out-done him in *theſts*.—When Mr. Jonſon borrowed, 'twas from the *treaſury* of the ancients, which is ſo far from any diminution of his worth, that I think it is to his honour, at leaſt-wiſe I am ſure he is juſtified by his ſon Cartwright, in the following lines:

" What though thy ſearching Muſe did rake the duſt
" Of time, and purge old metals from their ruſt?
" Is it no labour, no art, think they, to
" Snatch ſhipwrecks from the deep, as divers do;
" And reſcue jewels from the covetous ſand,
" Making the ſeas hid *wealth* adorn the land?
" What though thy culling Muſe did *rob* the ſtore
" Of Greek and Latin gardens, to bring o'er
" Plants to thy native ſoil? their virtues were
" Improv'd far more by being planted here.—
" *Thefts* thus become juſt works; they and their grace
" Are wholly thine: thus doth the ſtamp and face
" Make that the king's that's raviſh'd from the *mine*;
" In others then 'tis ore, in thee 'tis coin."

" On the contrary, though Mr. Dryden has likewiſe borrowed from the Greek and Latin poets,—which I purpoſely omit to tax him with, as thinking what he has taken to be lawful prize, yet I can not but obſerve withal, that he has *plunder'd* the chief Italian, Spaniſh, and French wits for forage, notwithſtanding his pretended contempt of them; and not only ſo, but even his own countrymen have been forced to pay him tribute, or, to ſay better, have not been exempt from being *pillaged*[4]."

Here we have at once—the *mine*, the *treaſury*, the *plunderer*, and the *rich thefts*, of this modern-antique compoſition[5].

The

4 *Account of the Dramatick Poets*, 8vo. 1691, pp. 145, 148, 149.

5 Mr. Macklin tells us, that the pamphlet from which he pretends to quote, mentions, that among other depreciating language Jonſon had ſaid of Shakſpeare, that " the man had imagination and *wit* none could deny, but that they were ever guided by true judgment in the *rules* and conduct of a piece, none could with juſtice aſſert, both being ever ſervile to *raiſe the laughter of fools* and *the wonder of the ignorant*."

" Being guided by judgment in the conduct of a piece," is perfectly intelligible; but what are we to underſtand by *being guided by judgment in the* rules *of a piece?* However, every part of this ſentence alſo may be traced to its ſource. Mr. Pope has ſaid in his preface, that " not only the common audience had no notion of the *rules* of writing, but few 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

The laſt copy of verſes, aſcribed to Endymion Porter, are uncommonly elegant, and perhaps one of the neſt invented fictions that can be pointed out. "Their *letter-tyrant* elves" is much in the manner of the time, as is "*their pedant ſelves*," in a ſubſequent line. But how difficult is it to aſſume the manner or language of a former age, without occaſionally lapſing into thoſe of the preſent! The phraſes, "*upon the whole*," and *from college*,—

"Indeed, ſays Tom, *upon the whole*," &c.
"But Ben and Tom *from college*—"

critical learning into vogue:" and Jonſon himſelf in his *Diſcoveries*, ſpeaking of Shakſpeare, ſays, "his *wit* was in his power, would the *rule* of it had been ſo."

In Mr. Pope's Preface we are told, that "in tragedy nothing was ſo ſure to *ſurpriſe*, and create *admiration*, as the moſt ſtrange, improbable, and conſequently moſt unnatural, incidents and events.—In comedy, nothing was ſo ſure to pleaſe, as mean buffoonery, vile ribaldry, and *unmannerly jeſts of fools and clowns*."

Prefixed to Randolph's Works is a panegyrick written by Mr. Richard Weſt, from whoſe poem two lines are quoted by Langbaine which were alſo inſerted in *The General Advertiſer* of the 5th of March 1748, in the encomium on Randolph's plays.

In Mr. Weſt's Verſes, ſpeaking of ordinary dramatick poets, he ſays,

"For humours to lie leiger, they are ſeen
"Oft in a tavern or a bowling-green.
"They do obſerve each place and company,
"As ſtrictly as a traveller or ſpy;—
"And ſit with patience an hour by the heels,
"To learn the nonſenſe of the conſtables;
"*Such jig-like flim-flams being got, to make*
"*The rabble laugh*, and nut-cracking forſake."

Randolph is then deſcribed, and among other high praiſes, we are told,

"There's none need fear to ſurfeit with his phraſe;
"He has no giant raptures, to *amaze*
"And torture *weak capacities with wonder*."

We have already ſeen that Mr. Macklin had been juſt peruſing Ben Jonſon's Epigrams. In his ſecond Epigram, which is addreſſed to his book, are theſe lines:

"——by thy wiſer temper let men know,
"Thou art not covetous of leaſt ſelf-fame,
"Made from the hazard of another's ſhame:
"Much leſs, with lewd, prophane, and beaſtly
"*To catch the world's looſe laughter, or vaine gaze*."

have

t very modern ſound, and are not, I believe, uſed
of our old Engliſh writers.—I muſt alſo obſerve
Mr. M. found his *after-times* in the old panegyrick
d, which he inſerted in his firſt letter, and *Avon's*
in Ben Jonſon's Verſes on Shakſpeare, prefixed to
e editions of his plays; and that the extravagant
nfounded praiſe here given to Ford, who, like our
poet, is ſaid to have been *ſent from heaven*, and
nſinuation that the *Lover's Melancholy* was "*Shake's, every word,*" were evidently calculated for the
mporary purpoſe of aiding a benefit, and putting
money into the purſe of the writer.

While, however, we transfer theſe elegant lines from Endymion Porter to Mr. Macklin, let us not forget that they exhibit no common ſpecimen of an eaſy verification and a good taſte, and that they add a new wreath to the poetical crown of this veteran comedian.

I have only to add, that John Ford and Thomas May were ſo far from being at variance with Old Ben, that in *Jonſonius Virbius*, a collection of poems on the death of Ben Jonſon, publiſhed in 1638, about ſix months after his death, there is an encomiaſtick poem by *John Ford*; and in this volume is alſo found a panegyrick by Ford's friend, George Donne, and another by *Thomas May*, who ſtyles Ben "the beſt of our Engliſh poets." On this, however, I lay no great ſtreſs, becauſe the ſame collection exhibits a poem by Jonſon's old antagoniſt, Owen Feltham: but if, after all that has been ſtated, the ſmalleſt doubt could remain concerning the ſubject of our preſent diſquiſition, I might obſerve, that Ford appears not only to have lived on amicable terms with Ben Jonſon himſelf, (at leaſt we have no proof to the contrary,) but with his ſervant, Richard Brome; to whoſe play entitled *The Northern Laſs*, which was acted by the King's Company on the 29th of July 1629, the very year of the publication of *The Lover's Melancholy*, and of the firſt exhibition of *The New Inn*, is prefixed an high panegyrick by "the author's *very friend, John Ford.*"

Let

Let the preſent detection be a leſſon to n
matters of greater moment, and teach thoſe wh
conſiderations do not deter from invading the
property of others by any kind of fiction, to abſ
ſuch an attempt, from the *inefficacy* and *folly* o
the moſt plauſible and beſt fabricated tale, if
examined, will crumble to pieces, like "the
mole," looſened from its foundations by the co
force of the ocean; while ſimple and honeſt truth
and ſelf-dependent, will ever maintain its ground a
all aſſailants,—

"As rocks reſiſt the billows and the ſky."

MALON

END OF THE FIRST PART OF THE FIRST VOLUME.