Fernando Senra.

# BACON'S NOVA RESUSCITATIO

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OR

## The Unveiling of his Concealed Works and Travels

BY THE

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'IS IT SHAKESPEARE?' 'THE BIBLIA CABALISTICA,' 'THE BIBLIA ANAGRAMATICA,' ETC

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II.—THE EXIT OF SHAKSPERE

LONDON

GAY AND BIRD

22 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND

1905

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# THE EXIT OF SHAKSPERE

## CHAPTER I

### PREFATORY

In my former book entitled 'Is it Shakespeare?' (John Murray, 1903) I showed that Francis Bacon was the author of 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece,' and that two famous critics living at the time knew these poems to be Bacon's, and said so as nearly as they dared.

In my present volume I have added so many new facts and discoveries that I think its title is justified. However, the unprejudiced reader must be the judge of this.

The statements of my former book have never been refuted; but it appears that some readers were offended because they thought I tried to defame Bacon. I did no such thing. I sought only the truth. Why should I try to defame the hero of my own book?—a man, too, who had

never done me any harm, and died long before I was born? Why should anyone try to defame the great men of the past? I had no wish but to discover truth, and I think my present book will show this.

My present book was virtually finished before the great Shakespeare Memorial was brought forward. That is not, therefore, discussed here. I may, however, say that I am in favour of the suggested memorial in so far as it may extend the knowledge and study of the immortal Shakespeare's works. It will be naturally inferred that I should not give the Stratford genius the place of honour.

I hope the rather presumptuous sound of the title of my book will be excused by the candid reader when he hears the strong evidences I bring forward to justify it. But before plunging forthwith into the evidences, I wish to make what seems to me to be some rather important remarks—in fact, I look at them as the Alpha and Omega of the whole controversy; and so I venture to introduce them both at the beginning and the ending of my book. They are these :—

In the first place it appears to be not a very hard matter to discover who was the real author of the

immortal plays and poems, and it seems to me an extraordinary thing that people should have gone on wrangling and writing books on both sides for these forty years over a matter which is so easily decided. It is surely enough if one good and impartial critic who lived in those times be found to declare implicitly, but clearly enough, that Bacon was the author; for if we have one contemporary witness of this sort, there is such a tremendous amount of corroborative evidence, both from the internal character of the works and from the lives and comparative culture of Bacon and Shakspere, that everything would work together to induce us to take this one critic's word. But I have shown, both in the present work and my former one, that there is not only one critic, but several, and they the best of their time, who implicitly and allusively declare Bacon was the author; while there is no single literary critic contemporary with the Stratford man, who in clear and definite language either explicitly or implicitly declared William Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon to be the author either of the poems or the plays. I do not here refer to the large amount of evidence that has been gathered for Bacon and against Shakespeare, for I think the candid consideration of the facts above stated

ought to make an end of this really very one-sided controversy.

In the second place, if we try to form a correct conception of the manner in which our Elizabethan drama arose, we shall inevitably be taken to the dramatists of Italy, Spain, and France. These three countries left the fogs of the Middle Ages, and passed into the brighter and lighter air of the Renaissance, earlier than England, and consequently when our first native dramatists and poets essayed to improve the old miracle plays and moralities, and when there was a demand for something better than rude horse-play and jigging rhymes of mother-wits, it was to Italy, France, and Spain that our best literary workmen looked for patterns and novelties, and it was there that they found them. In the last two decades of the sixteenth century was laid the glorious foundation of our English drama, and in its earlier stages it was in no way inferior to that of any Continental country. Nay, thanks to the immortal Shakespeare productions, it rose almost to the acme of perfection in the first twenty or thirty years after its renewed or Renaissance origin. But for anyone to boast of our immortal Elizabethan drama as a glorious native product would

be a plain exposure of literary ignorance. The stones were laid in this country, but they were nearly all quarried abroad. The plays, whether tragedy or comedy, were in English—that was an absolute necessity; but in nearly all else they were 'adaptations' in style, subject-matter, and stage-characters from the earlier plays and tales of Italy and other Continental nations that had breathed the new vivifying spirit earlier than ourselves.

If, then, it be admitted, and it can hardly be denied, that the beginnings of the Italian and French drama were anterior to our own, and that they served as the great pioneers for our countrymen when we began to enter upon the new up-sloping ways of dramatic representation—if it be also allowed that the art, beauties, and methods of these Continental pioneers of the Renaissance drama could hardly be grasped adequately without the ability to read them easily in their own language—then it must also be allowed that Will Shakspere of Stratford would have been most heavily handicapped; for many plays of the Italian pioneers would have been as a sealed book to him, and possibly the same with the French ones, and certainly with Lopez de Vega and the Spanish patterns.

But how different with Francis Bacon! We may say, with some degree of confidence, that there was not a single young man of his generation who was more qualified than he by linguistic, philosophic, and dramatic gifts (for he was an early arranger of dumb-shows and interludes) to write the immortal plays of the end of the sixteenth century. I am sure Bacon knew Ariosto and his comedies well. I do not believe Shakspere could or did read a word of them. Ariosto was the father of *commedia erudita*—*i.e.*, the scholarly comedy suited to the taste of gentlemen and the aristocrats of the Court circle. What was understood then by decorum was a special feature of such plays, and the Shakespeare plays have this, although they may sometimes pass the limits of our decorum, which is somewhat more rigid.

The result of the preceding remarks may be briefly summed up thus :—

From the internal character of the immortal plays and their Italian and French connections, we are bound to say, judging *a priori*, that William Shakspere of Stratford, who was no traveller, was quite unequal to such productions.

The remaining part of this book shall be

chiefly devoted to showing the same thing about Shakspere *a posteriori*.

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I have but one word more, and that is in the nature of personal acknowledgment. I cannot conclude this preface without expressing my many thanks for the great assistance rendered to me by my friend Dr. R. M. Theobald, M.A., and also by Dr. Tebb, of Hampstead. After my blindness had set in, Dr. Tebb went through the whole work with me again, and Dr. Theobald has revised the proofs for the press. I owe some suggestions to them for making the books shorter, for which I am sure some busy men will be grateful.

*June*, 1905.

## CHAPTER II

### THE INABILITY TO SAY 'BACON'

I THINK we most of us remember that amusing cartoon where a great British statesman is shown trying to make a parrot (Mr. Kruger) say 'Suzerainty.' I doubt whether Mr. Chamberlain ever had to tackle a more difficult job. But it has often struck me that it is, if possible, a still more difficult task to induce a confirmed Shakespearian to say 'Bacon.'

What *are* we authors to do? We are in most parlous case. If we write a short popular account, it is accounted threadbare twaddle;—if we carefully gather together a large mass of evidence, no busy man of letters has the time either to read it or digest it. I say, then, that from an obstinate, though often unconscious, prejudice, and from a want of painstaking research into the merits of the controversy, there is at the present time with the majority of the English-speaking race a

marked inability to say 'Bacon.' And I would add that in Elizabethan times also, when both Shakespeare and Bacon were alive, there was the same inability to say 'Bacon,' though from very different reasons.

It is important to understand this, for one of the commonest and most prevailing of all orthodox arguments is this :—viz., that Bacon's contemporaries must have known who was the real author, and the very fact that they did not attribute the plays or poems to Bacon shows 'as clear as daylight' that he did not write them.

But this argument of the orthodox is by no means so strong as it looks. I admit that in these days of the liberty of the press it *seems* ridiculous to say that Elizabethan literary critics 'dared not say right out that Bacon was the author,' and I think many orthodox Shakespearians utterly scoff at such an absurd assertion, the real reason being that they are unacquainted with the methods of press censorship in Baconian days. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London counted then for very much more than they do now, and there was the Star Chamber, and there was the pillory; there was the case of cutting off the offending hand with an axe, and applying the cauterizing iron to the bleeding stump till

the poor printer or author roared like a bull before the assembled crowd. An honourable and conscientious writer might have his ears cropped off or sliced off or nailed to the posts without a moment's hesitation if he had offended the 'powers that be' or the leading rulers of the State.

Look at poor Prynne and saintly Leighton, of 'Sion's Pleas against the Prelacie,' and many others. Consider how few dared to write or print anything against Bishops, and, if they did, how rigorously were their secret presses hunted out and destroyed, and the chief actors hanged (sometimes in private), if they could only be caught!

To calumniate the dominant party in Church or State in those days was to get short shrift indeed if they seized you for it. Now, Bacon belonged by birth and associates to the dominant class both in politics and religion. Whitgift, the Archbishop, was his tutor at Trinity, and his protecting friend afterwards, and probably got 'Venus and Adonis' through the press for him. But, anyhow, all historians agree that Bacon was a man of considerable influence, even in early days, in Parliament and also with the Queen, and with Essex, Southampton, Walsingham, and other

rising men and approved statesmen, who recognised his talents. That he also took his share on the side of the Bishops in the Martin Marprelate Controversy I fully believe, and have evidence ready. But my point now is, that a man would think twice in those days before he ventured to 'name' Bacon (as it was called), or to offend or calumniate him, and that he could be laid hold of or prosecuted for it. It is by no means mere conjecture that Bacon could, by his influence and surroundings, make matters very unpleasant, and even dangerous, for any who tried their loose tongues on *him*.

This, then, as I take it, is one great reason why Bacon was never *named* by contemporaries as the concealed author of so many literary marvels. It was the *naming* that brought danger of *scandalum magnatum*, or criminal libel, and both Nash and Ben Jonson, bold and unscrupulous satirists as they were, saved their ears by the plea which they both personally used on more than one occasion, that 'they named no one.' Some of Harvey's enemies, and Nash was amongst them, wanted to get Harvey into trouble for satirizing the Earl of Oxford in the 'Speculum Tuscanismi'; but Gabriel Harvey denied aiming at the Earl at all, and, as the Earl was nowhere named, Harvey with some trouble and, it seems,

apologies got out of danger. Marston and Hall, with their Labeo and *mediocria firma*, sailed very close to the wind, but there was no naming of Bacon, and consequently, though their books were stayed or prohibited, neither Hall nor Marston were ever prosecuted. And though Jonson ran greater risks, he was only threatened by Bacon, and not prosecuted, as he tells us in Epigram LIV.:

> 'Cheveril cries out my verses libels are,
> And threatens the Star Chamber and the Bar.'

And that Cheveril means Bacon is one of the facts that critics cannot wipe out.

But I have said quite enough to prove my point, and if people will still persist in saying that some one *must* have mentioned Bacon's authorship in all those years, it should be remembered that the difficulty of reference to him was often covered by the *nom de guerre* Shake-speare, and there was no danger in using that. There were plenty of contemporaries who, when they saw Shake-speare's 'Sonnets' in prominent type on the title-page of the 1609 first complete edition, knew well enough who the man with the hyphen was—but they did not *name* him.

Alleyn, the great tragedian, had the curiosity to buy a copy for 6d., but he never named the author,

though he knew his name well enough. Moreover, there were doubtless other reasons of a political or Court character which were mixed up with Bacon's career both early and late, and his probable missions or travels for Essex, Leicester, and perhaps the Queen. All these circumstances required strict reticence. And then, again, young Francis belonged to Sidney's set, and knew Bruno, and had, I am afraid, the reputation in early days of being a 'conjurer,' and somewhat unsound in theology. Here again reticence would be required; it would hardly do to say that he was the conjurer who was responsible for Dr. Faust and the Shepherd's Kalendar, or its vestibule at least; for that would set people asking questions which were not proper to be answered. And if the cuckoo cry is still repeated, 'Someone *must* have mentioned Bacon in print, or at least thrown out clearer hints than we now possess,' I would answer that, if that *did* happen, Bacon and his influential friends, and especially his friend and old tutor, Whitgift, the licenser for the press, could soon arrange that such books or pamphlets should be stayed from printing or otherwise wiped out. Look how curiously defective some of Marlowe's plays are in their vestibule, the most important part for our purpose. Someone had

evidently been at work tearing out leaves and wiping out inconvenient evidence.

But enough of this. I claim to have furnished well authenticated evidence that many of Bacon's contemporaries knew the real author well enough, and gave pretty strong hints, though no one dared to name him, and that therefore the principal orthodox argument, viz., want of contemporary evidence, falls to pieces;—and I turn to the allied question, Why don't critics accept this?

Now, we know that Canon Henson holds that it is the duty of 'an official teacher of Christianity' to recognise in his teaching 'the well-authenticated results of historical criticism,' but it is a well-known fact that the bulk of the clergy of the Church of England positively refuse to recognise such results, even if some of them be as evident as 'two and two make four.'

Somewhat similarly, but on another platform, I hold that it is the duty of an official exponent or professor of English literature to recognise any well-authenticated results of literary criticism, as pointed out by myself or others in the Baconian problem.

I know what their scornful reply would be,—'What you may call "well authenticated" we call "utter rubbish"—the ravings of semi-lunatics.

It is not our duty, thank God, to notice or recognise such trash; and if it did come within our duty, it is so thoroughly repulsive a subject that we should find means to evade it somehow.'

Whether this state of mind in many critics comes from blindness, or perverseness, or prejudice, or all three combined, I know not; but I have some superior critics in my mind who have managed to combine the three perfectly without apparently being at all aware of it.

A lady once said to Archbishop Whately, when he was trying to explain the evidence for a certain matter,—'I don't understand it, your Grace, and I don't wish to understand it.' To which the Archbishop replied,—'Then, madam, I think you will succeed in not understanding it.' This suits the people who are unable to say 'Bacon' very well.

What is ultimately to be done with such people? I should almost be inclined to recommend the 'Jowett treatment,' if there were means of carrying it out. The great Master of Balliol had once a rather unpleasant rencontre with an undergraduate of his college who was 'unable to say' that God existed. This blatant young sceptic had the audacity to call upon Jowett personally, and officiously assailed him with his doubts.

Jowett listened placidly for a while, but soon finding that, like Messrs. Sidney Lee and Churton Collins, he had neither the *suaviter in modo* nor the *fortiter in re*, the Master, with well-preserved serenity, told him 'to find God within twenty-four hours,' or to pack his things and leave college. Fortunately, the blatant and abusive Shakespearians who deserve to be 'Jowetted' are very few in number, but in any case they are safe enough at present, for they belong to the majority.

I think very few people are able to realize the immense difficulty there is in overcoming a prejudiced view, whether it be of a literary or of a scientific character. Just for a moment consider and compare the so-called mesmeric and spiritualistic delusions and the so-called Baconian delusions. There are some striking similarities between them, although the opposition they met with proceeded in one case from men of science, and in the other from men of letters. The evidence on the side of mesmerism was of a very wide and remarkable character, but there was hardly a single man of science or doctor of medicine, except Elliotson, Braid, and Esdaile, who would listen to or act on the evidence for one moment. All serious attempts to gain the ear of qualified experts were flouted and met

with ridicule and vituperation, and this lasted for fifty years or more. Take the spiritualists. There were undoubtedly some cranks among them, and some impostors as well, and that is another point of similarity between the evidence for spiritualism and the evidence for the Bacon theory; for there are and have been many cranks among the Baconians, and perhaps some who were endeavouring, consciously or unconsciously, to mislead the public. And, again, the Bacon theory has sent one poor lady to an asylum—Delia Bacon, to wit—and perhaps others less known to fame, while the spiritualistic theory has sent scores and scores to the mad-house, both in our country and America.

And yet in spite of the prejudice and disbelief and vituperation, that lasted for quite fifty years, and was even stronger than the poor Baconians have had to put up with, now at last it is admitted that, with the exception of the cases of certain paid mediums and impostors, all, or nearly all, the immense amount of evidence offered to the public, and contumeliously rejected, was evidence both good and true and valid, and is now held to be fairly established by the best men of the new generation of scientists and physicians, who have in the progress of time come to occupy the position

and sit in the seat of the scorners who were before them.

'The more striking phenomena of the induced trance and of automatism, such as suggestional anæsthesia, hallucination, catalepsy, involuntary speaking and writing, are now, it may be presumed, fairly established. But it must not be overlooked that it is only in the last generation —almost, it may be said, in the last decade—that these phenomena have come to be recognised as genuine accompaniments of a genuine if still obscure cerebral condition. . . . They have been recorded in bewildering variety, in innumerable treatises, and have yet failed until yesterday, not merely to secure a favourable verdict, but even to gain entrance to the Court of Science.'*

These are the words of a man who has studied the history and phenomena of spiritualism as carefully and thoroughly as any man living;—I mean, as far as the recorded evidences enabled him so to do. And I cannot but think that if the reading public would carefully weigh the evidence so far recorded for the Baconian theory, instead of scornfully rejecting it almost without a hearing, after the manner of the medical and scientific

* 'Modern Spiritualism: A History and a Criticism,' by Frank Podmore, 1902, vol. i., pp. xv, xvi.

big-wigs of a former generation with regard to mesmerism, etc., it might stand a chance, after a few score years, or perhaps less, of being 'fairly established' also.

I remember I was much struck, when quite a lad, with the strange fact that spiritualists as a rule remained spiritualists even after the most clear and positive detection of barefaced imposture shown up to them before their very eyes. I asked some friends, who were spiritualists, the reason, and the same answer was invariably given :—'No exposure of any medium can shatter my belief, for I have seen and heard things which I know to be supernatural.' If they had said 'supernormal,' they would have been possibly nearer the final truth ; but it was this *personal* knowledge of the strange 'facts' of the so-called spiritualism that made them such firm and unassailable converts, and was able to raise the number of professing spiritualists to a very large figure indeed both here and across the Atlantic.

And much as we may laugh at the vagaries of the rapping and table-turning humbugs of former days, we are obliged to say now that spiritualism, though mixed up with imposture and folly, was in a certain sense 'justified of her children'; for the evidences which convinced so many faithful

spiritualists were often of a true and genuine character, although misunderstood and misinterpreted. We know now that trance-speaking, automatic writing, and telepathy are 'facts,' and we have no need to go to 'another world' to explain them.

Fortunately, the Baconian theory has never been complicated by mixing it up with the other world;—all our facts are mundane facts. We have therefore something more tangible to present than had the spiritualists, and, I would add, something much more antecedently credible.

The spiritualists had their charlatans and their cranks, and so have most movements, whether political, social, religious, or literary. The Baconians are not exceptions to this usual rule, but this no more damns their theory than the capture of some impostor and the exposure of his slate writing tricks damns the fact of automatic writing. Some Americans start a boom in Baconian ciphers, and it is shown to be fictitious rubbish, but that does not prove that there is no cipher at the head of 'Lucrece' or elsewhere. Ordinary people will not discriminate, and the expert and orthodox lecturers cannot be expected to do so. Who will cry stinking fish if he is a fishmonger?

But in spite of the drawback which cranks are

responsible for, more or less, in all novelties and restatements, there is this consolation for all inquirers who have enlisted, or intend to enlist, under the illustrious banner of Francis of Verulam —viz., *the man who enlists here, from inquiry and conviction, never deserts.* The Baconian community is a small one at present, but it is steadily increasing in a quiet and unobserved manner, as did, long ago, another 'pestilent sect everywhere spoken against.' 'Faithful unto death' is a Baconian truism, for no one, having once assumed our Franciscan habit (of thought), has ever yet been known to become a revert or pervert, but has lived and died in the faith. Why is this? Because there are certain Baconian 'facts' which, when once fairly estimated, cannot be 'got over' anyhow.

And so I say of 'Is it Shakespeare?' and other Baconian books, *Telle lege.*

## CHAPTER III

### NEW EVIDENCE—HALL'S SATIRES

'Now hath not Labeo done wondrous well?'

THE new evidence I am going to bring forward in this chapter is both important and interesting. It is no less than a summary account of the literary life of young Francis Bacon up to about the year 1596. It was written, too, by one of the best critics of the time, before Bacon was forty years old.

This summary points to the plays of 'Titus Andronicus,' the contest between York and Lancaster, and possibly other historical plays of that time. It points to 'Venus and Adonis,' and to 'Lucrece.' It points to Bacon as being the author of one of the several elegies on Astrophel's (Philip Sidney's) death.

This summary of young Francis Bacon's literary work seems to point out that the young poet began with pastorals. These may be lost, or

they may be Immerito's share in the 'Shepheards' Kalendar.'

The reader shall soon see the summary, with a few comments.

The amount of contemporary evidence and allusion that I have gathered together since my first attempt to settle the question, 'Is it Shakespeare?' has been so unexpectedly large that I am somewhat embarrassed as to which portions of evidence I shall first select.

But seeing that Hall and Marston proved so useful to me in affording clues to the Baconian labyrinth when I first entered it, and seeing that a more careful perusal of their satires has revealed other clues before unnoticed, I think therefore they deserve the same place of honour and credit which they had, and still hold (at least, in my opinion) untarnished, in my former work.

So we will begin with Joseph Hall, the celebrated and saintly Bishop of Exeter and Norwich, to whom, perhaps, I owe more thanks than to anyone else for the new light I have been able to throw on two of our greatest Englishmen—Bacon and Milton. It was through reading his 'Mundus Alter et Idem' that I was first induced to read carefully a rare and curious book in my library called 'Nova Solyma,' supposing it to be a moral

satire of a similar kind. I soon found out my mistake, and that a greater man than Bishop Hall, even his illustrious opponent, John Milton, was the author of that remarkable Puritan and Utopian romance became a profound conviction confirmed by every chapter I read. That conviction I still hold unshaken, and the discovery has been accepted by critics and experts recently. I have, therefore, weighty reason to thank this good Bishop for being the unconscious means of a Love's Labour on my part not altogether 'Lost.' Little did I think then that within a short year this same Bishop would reveal to my astonished and, at first, incredulous eyes the hidden features of the mysterious Domino of the earlier Elizabethan period. But it was even so, for it was through the Labeo of Bishop Hall's 'Virgidemiæ' that I came to the equally profound conviction that the author of the beautiful poems of 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece' was none other than Francis Bacon. I saw, too, at once the obvious inference that here was an excellent 'short method' to get rid of the wretchedly prolonged and much abused Bacon-Shakespeare controversy. For if Francis Bacon was the 'William Shakespeare' who signed the dedication of these poems to his known friend Southampton, and was their

true and sole author, there was then an end of the Stratford man's claim to these, and also to much more inimitable literary work.

I now recall Labeo to give fresh evidence. Labeo has puzzled the critics most amusingly. Dr. Grosart thought he was meant for Marston once, and then Chapman was supposed to be the man, and eventually both suggestions were abandoned; and he was wise at last, for Dr. Grosart's men had not a leg to stand upon. Mr. Singer thought it was Drayton, and Mr. Warton had previously declared for Chapman, and I dare say there were other names suggested which I have not seen; but the vast majority of critics took the wisest course and said nothing, although Labeo was the most prominent individual in Hall's book. The fact is they were all quite 'at sea.'

But Labeo undoubtedly stands for Bacon, and I will now proceed to give a contemporary summary of his earlier literary efforts, which are not to be found mentioned or referred to by Spedding.

If Hall's Labeo in the following passage is not the author of 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece,' I shall be glad to hear who he possibly can be:—

> 'Tho' Labeo reaches right (who can deny?)
> The true strains of heroic poesy;

For he can tell how fury reft his sense,
And Phœbus filled him with intelligence.
He can implore the heathen deities
To guide his bold and busy enterprise;
Or filch whole pages at a clap for need
From honest Petrarch, clad in English weed:
While big *but oh's!* each stanza can begin,
Whose trunk and tail sluttish and heartless been.
He knows the grace of that new elegance,
Which sweet Philisides fetch'd of late from France,
That well beseem'd his high-styl'd Arcady,
Tho' others mar it with much liberty.
In epithets to join two words in one,
Forsooth, for adjectives can't stand alone;
As a great poet could of Bacchus say,
That he was *Semele-femori-gena.*
Lastly he names the spirit of Astrophel.
Now hath not Labeo done wondrous well?'

My commentary reads Bacon thus between the lines :—

'Phœbus filled him':—Here we have the distich prefixed to 'Venus and Adonis' brought into court again.

'mihi flavus *Apollo*
*Pocula* Castalia *plena ministret* aqua'

—*i.e.*, Phœbus Apollo would fill his cup.

'The heathen deities (who) guide his bold and busy enterprise,'—Possibly Venus and Apollo are meant.

'Or filch . . . from honest Petrarch,'—every one did this. Petrarch was the model of all courtly poets.

'While big *but oh's!* each stanza can begin,'—In 'Lucrece' the very large proportion of thirty-two stanzas, each beginning with 'but' or 'oh,' is found. There are fifteen stanzas beginning with 'but,' and seventeen stanzas begin with 'oh,' and in two cases more 'oh's' follow the first line.

'Philisides,'—This was Sir Philip Sidney, who was virtually the first to use compound English words, in his 'Arcady' or 'Arcadia.' He fetched this style from France, and Bacon was the next man to adopt this *new elegance*.

'Others mar it,'—*E.g.*, Nash and Harvey, who quite overdid the new style by barbarous exaggerations.

> 'In epithets to join two words in one,
> Forsooth, for adjectives can't stand alone':

This is a distinct feature of the great Shakespeare poems, and the beautiful double adjectives of 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece' help very much to heighten the charm of these metrical gems.

> 'Lastly he names the spirit of Astrophel.
> Now hath not Labeo done wondrous well':

This Astrophel allusion is rather puzzling.

My impression is that Hall either thought or had private information that Francis Bacon was responsible for 'The Ruines of Time,' or else for the later 'Pastorall Elegie' entitled 'Astrophel.' In both the 'Spirit' of Sidney is specially addressed in frequently repeated praise and in passionate poetry. But I have considered this more fully when dealing with E. K. and Immerito.

But this is barely half the evidence bearing in the direction of Bacon, and the more remarkable and important is to come.

If we read on further, we shall see that Hall knew a great deal about Francis Bacon's earlier work, and puts it in somewhat chronological order.

There can hardly be more important new evidence than this, especially when we consider who gives it. Hall was one of the best literary critics of the time. He was well acquainted with members of the elder branch of the Bacon family, and afterwards travelled abroad with Edward Bacon. He would therefore be a most likely man to know about the concealed work of Francis. In fact, if my interpretation should hold good, we have on excellent authority, in the few next lines, a summary of Bacon's literary work up to about 1596.

This should be very important, for there is considerable 'concealment' about Bacon's early literary attempts, and many difficulties that need clearing up, and every little may help.

Having suggested that Labeo 'hath done wondrous well,' Hall proceeds to sketch his earlier attempts thus :

> 'But ere his Muse her weapon learn to wield,
> Or dance a sober pirrhique in the field,
> Or marching wade in blood up to the knees,
> Her *arma virum* goes by two degrees.
> The sheep-cote first hath been her nursery,
> Where she hath worn her idle infancy,
> And in high startups walk'd the pastur'd plains,
> To tend her tasked herd that there remains.
> And winded still a pipe of oat or breare
> Striving for wages who the praise shall beare;
> As did whilere the homely Carmelite,
> Following Virgil, and he Theocrite.'

In these important lines we have clearly allusion to Titus Andronicus marching through seas of blood, and to the contests of war of York and Lancaster, and other historical warlike plays of that period.

We have also a fairly distinct allusion to 'Lucrece' and to Bacon's magniloquent style generally.

Hall tells us plainly enough that Bacon began

with pastoral poetry. This may be lost, or may never have been published. I rather think, however, that Hall was referring to the 'Shepheards' Kalendar' of 1579, and to Immerito's share in it. But of that on some other occasion.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE EARLY EVIDENCE OF NASH AND GREENE (1587–1592)

THERE can hardly be more important evidence than that published by Greene and Nash in 'Menaphon' and their other writings, all dated some years before the world had heard anything about either a Shakspere or a Shakespeare. But this evidence has been rendered comparatively useless through the diverse interpretations it has received, and because no critic has been able to offer an explanation sufficiently satisfactory to hold the field against opposers.

Of course, as a heretic, my own view is that the orthodox critics could not help getting into a fog more or less thick, because they were all on the *qui vive* for evidence pointing to William Shakspere, playwright and actor, while, as a matter of fact, at this early period he was in a most obscure position, and not likely to attract the

attention of Nash or Greene, or of any other contemporary writer whatever, much less to receive attacks from anybody in print.

But Greene and Nash did undoubtedly make a series of attacks for some years (1587-1592) on certain playwrights and actors, whom they do not expressly name, although they let fall several allusions which ought to enable us to discover them. I will restate the matter as lucidly as I can, but also with as much brevity as possible, because I may assume that on such a well-worn subject my interested readers know the chief points discussed.

About the year 1589, which is the date of our valuable asset 'Menaphon,' or perhaps a year or two earlier, there were some new plays and new playwrights rising into fame, and eclipsing the lustre of the established University pens, Greene, Peele, Marlowe, and others, who were the principal writers for the stage at that time. Robert Greene was perhaps the most prominent of these, for Nash tells us he wrote more than all the others, and he was the spokesman in print for the rest, though Nash wrote a pretty long address 'To the Gentleman Students of both Universities,' as a kind of preface to Greene's 'Menaphon,' and a witness to the grievances of its author.

The grievances were against *actors* as well as *playwrights*. The attack made was against certain 'vainglorious tragedians,' and also against 'their idiote art-masters that intrude themselves as the alcumists of eloquence.' It was these latter, who thought they could, as Nash says, 'outbrave better pens with the swelling bombast of a bragging blank verse,' that formed the greatest grievance, for they, by supplying the actors with plays, were really taking the bread out of the mouths of Greene and the rest of the University pens then supplying the London stage. Moreover, they were plagiarists, and stuck like burrs to Greene, and took many shreds of wool from his fleece, according to his own account.

But what were the plays these 'alcumists of eloquence' supplied to the 'vainglorious tragedians'? Are any allusions given to help us to discover what plays are referred to? Yes, certainly, and they have not been sufficiently noted. Two famous plays are as good as 'named' in the following passage, where Nash complains that the actors on the stage,—

'contend not so seriously to excel in action as to indulge in vainglorious ranting wherein they proceed to embowell the cloudes in a speach of comparison; thinking themselves more than

initiated in poets' immortalitie if they but once get Boreas by the beard and the heavenly bull by the dew-lap.'

Now, who was it that went so far as 'to embowell the cloudes in a speach of comparison'? This is a sufficiently remarkable expression of itself, and I am surprised that no critic, as far as I have noticed, has attempted to explain it. The reference is to the anonymous author of 'Tamburlaine,' who in 'a speach of comparison,' properly so called, produces the odd simile :—

> 'As when a fiery exhalation
> Wrapt in the bowls of a freezing cloud
> Fighting for passage makes the welkin crack,
> And casts a flash of lightning to the earth.'
>
> 1 *Tamburlaine*, IV. ii.

This allusion seems too clear to be contested. (Compare also '1 Henry IV.,' i., 27-35.)

Next, who was it that got 'Boreas by the beard'? Well, there is not much doubt about the source of this, and Mr. R. Simpson and others noticed it some years ago. What Nash was referring to occurs in the two following lines of the early play, 'The Taming of a Shrew,' first printed anonymously in 1594, but evidently written much earlier. The lines are :

> 'Whiter than are the snowy Apennines,
> Or icy hair that grows on Boreas' chin.'

And, besides Nash, we have Robert Greene in 'Menaphon' itself referring to and parodying the same passage when he makes Roscius, who plays the wag as the shepherd Doron, remark,—'We had an ewe among our rams whose fleece was white as the hairs that grow on Father Boreas' chin.'

Here we get the actor who spoke the words as well, and it is probably Burbage; for though Roscius was a general term for a prominent actor, it was more closely connected with Burbage than any one else. This seems to be carrying us into Shakspere's company, for without doubt he was a fellow-actor with Burbage for some years. But if we take Shakspere to be the 'alcumist of eloquence' who was the anonymous author of 'The Taming of a Shrew' or of 'Tamburlaine,' we shall be entangled in an inextricable difficulty, for both these plays are of too early date and of too great originality and literary excellence to be his production.

At this early date (1589) Shakspere was really a nonentity both as actor or playwright. Not even some years later (1592), when Nash is referring to Bentley and some other principal *actors* of the time, does he so much as mention Shakspere's name; and it was as late as 1597

before anything was heard of him as a playwright, this year or the next marking his début on the title pages of certain quarto plays. So I repeat with some confidence that I do *not* think the Stratford man is in any way the object of the continuous attacks made by Greene and Nash so shortly after the Armada almost year by year.

There are certain other allusions to playwrights and actors, where ingrossers and trivial translators and actors travelling with their bundles are aimed at. Kyd is here certainly referred to, and possibly Munday and Alleyn, but there is not a word that can apply to the actor from Warwickshire. No, not even when Greene, in his dying legacy to his fellow-playwrights in 1592, utters his famous tirade against Johannes Factotum, the upstart crow, and the only Shake-scene in a country. But that shall be examined in the next chapter.

But if Shakspere is conspicuous by his absence in these early allusions, is Francis Bacon, the genius of Gray's Inn, to be found there? That is naturally an important question for us heretics. I think he is there though he is not named. There is a semi-concealed reference to certain 'sweet gentlemen' of a higher social scale than had been previously criticised, and who are

spoken of civilly as if they were Mæcenases either in *esse* or *posse*, and this may account for 'biting' Nash not even showing his teeth, although both he and Greene were sufferers through them.

Nash's words are these :—

'Sundrie other sweet gentlemen have vaunted their pens in private devices and trickt up a companie of taffeta fooles with their feathers, whose beautie if our Poets had not peccte* with the supply of their periwigs, they might have antickt it untill this time up and downe the country with the King of Fairies and dinde [dined] everie daie at the pease porridge with Delphrigus.'

Now, have we not Francis Bacon here, and some of his play loving aristocratic friends? If ever there was a 'sweet gentleman' who was good at supplying literary matter and dumb-shows and 'private devices' for his lordly friends and patrons, or for his own 'Inne of Court,' then Francis Bacon was that man.

The date 1589 is early for him, but by no means too early; for he was getting on for thirty, and

* '*Peccte*.' All commentators took this to mean 'pecked' until Mr. R. Simpson said, 'Apparently it should be "decked."' But why not 'pieced'—*i.e.*, patched up? *Cf.* 'A Lover's Complaint,' 119.

had been ten years in town, with an immense amount of time (for he never wasted any) for these and other literary toys.

The grievance that made Nash and Greene so sore was not the 'private devices,' but the tricking up of a company of 'taffeta fooles' and inferior country tramping actors with feathers which were not their own—that is to say, supplying them with plays and fine phrases which had been partly 'conveyed' from the good old stock of the University poets and playwrights without so much as asking their leave. Greene was the greatest sufferer, possibly because he had written the most, and there is good contemporary evidence to show that he had a real grievance here, and did not complain of these 'sweet gentlemen' and the company of players they tricked out, and the damage such rivalry inflicted upon him, without strong personal reasons. If it be asked what company it was which contained these 'taffeta fooles,' I can only answer that the history and chronology of the various companies of actors about this time is in a most uncertain state. If, however, we may take the result of Mr. Fleay's laborious researches and of Mr. Hopkinson's equally thorough going study of the 'doubtful plays,' we arrive at their joint agreement that

Burbage and Shakspere had broken away from the Queen's men (for whom Greene was the principal writer) before the year 1589, and had joined Pembroke's company, which shortly afterwards was merged into Lord Strange's company, which soon enjoyed almost a monopoly of the Court performances. So it is just possible that here we have the rise and progress of the 'taffeta fooles' that were so greatly helped by the 'sweet gentlemen' about town—those aristocratic 'good-fellows' and 'lively copesmates' of whom, in my opinion, Francis Bacon was by no means the least, either in genius or in literary activity, though he had not their wealth.

But, after all, the chief result I claim to have gained by this inquiry into the early allusions of Nash and Greene, is that Shakspere at this period was of no reputation whatever, either as actor or writer. Nash and Greene despised the whole company, and did not hesitate to say so. The only reservation they made was in favour of one actor, a Roscius of 'deserved reputation,' who in their opinion saved the company. Now, this was clearly Burbage, and not Shakspere.

But I will now come to the famous 'Shake-scene' allusion by Greene in his 'Groatsworth of Wit' (1592), and to another chapter.

## CHAPTER V

### SHAKE-SCENE SHOWN NOT TO BE SHAKSPERE THE ACTOR

In this chapter I must ask a little forbearance, as I am going to make a suggestion which runs counter to the opinion of all students of the subject, whether orthodox or heretics, and contrary to my own view also till very recently.

To change one's opinion as the result of further investigation is, however, not a very heinous literary crime; on the contrary, it is often the mark of an open mind. It was brought about in my own case by a more thorough and careful consideration of the early evidence of Nash and Greene, which has been partly laid before the reader in the preceding chapter.

When we think of all the circumstances, and especially of these frequently repeated and very early envious references to 'alcumists of eloquence,' and to those who 'obtruded them-

selves as fountains of our finer phrases' (Nash's 'Anatomie of Absurditie,' printed 1589), can we suppose, I say, that Burbage's stable lad lately arrived from Stratford-on-Avon could be of such importance as thus early to attract the notice and continued criticism of two of the most noted of the University scholars then about town? We hear nothing of the Stratford man either as actor or writer for many years yet to come, for it was not he, but Shake-speare, with or without a hyphen, who was responsible for the two popular poems; and we hear nothing of him in connection with any plays till 1598, quite six years later.

However, the mountain has laboured enough, and shall produce the mouse at once. Here it is.

I suggest that the famous 'upstart crow,' the 'Tiger's heart wrapp'd in a player's hide,' the new bombaster and maker of blank verse, the 'Johannes Factotum and only Shake-scene in a country,' was not Shaxper of Stratford-on-Avon at all, but was William Shake-speare, the very same cultured and courtier poet who next year (1593) signed his name to 'Venus and Adonis,' and in the year after (1594)* was referred to as Shake-speare (with a hyphen), the depictor of Lucrece's Rape,

* In 'Willobie his Avisa.'

and a very different kind of man both in culture and position.

I shall presently give my reasons, but I hope it is thoroughly understood that I *suggest* it only: I neither swear nor affirm. In fact, I would not swear to anything in this controverted subject except that some orthodox critics* would do much better in the matter of fairness and courtesy if they *didn't do as they do do.*†

Indeed, the actor Shakspere hardly seems to come before the public at all until we hear of him taking a part in one of Ben Jonson's plays, and having his name, as we say, 'on the bills.' We get a note or two of his name in official documents as being one of Burbage's company, but if Mr. Payne Collier or Mr. Peter Cunningham have had anything to do with the production of

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* Mr. J. Churton Collins, Judge Willis, and Father Thurston, S.J., ex. gr.

† My authority for 'do do' is this. When I was a boy, one of Lord Leicester's most respected tenant farmers, on the vast Holkham estate, was asked at an annual dinner to respond to a toast. He was not a born orator, but he did his best. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I have not much to say, but what I *do* say is, that if all landlords were to do as Lord Leicester do (*sic*) they wouldn't do as they do do.' He then sat down amid loud shouts of 'Well done, old Do-do!'

any of these proofs, they are rendered in the highest degree doubtful.

In fact, from the Stratford man's arrival in London about 1586 or so, with 'Venus and Adonis' in his pocket, having composed it as early, perhaps, as 1585 (which latter is Mr. J. Churton Collins' most ridiculous recent conjecture)* up to 1598, he is practically non-existent. We do not hear of his fame either as actor or playwright for the long period of quite a dozen years (1586-1598). It is true we hear of a great and very popular poet who signed himself William Shakespeare, and wrote two very elegant classical and aristocratic poems in 1593 and 1594, addressed to young Lord Southampton; but we claim to have shown that *they* did not proceed, and were not thought by contemporaries and critics to proceed, from the Stratford actor.† Indeed, the only oasis in this desert-like journey of twelve years or more is to be found, or is thought to be found, in the Shake-scene reference by Greene, the playwright.

Here all the critics, whatever other views they may hold, agree that we have reached firm ground

* *Cf.* 'Studies in Shakespeare,' by J. Churton Collins, 1904, p. 108.

† *Cf.* 'Is it Shakespeare?' *passim.*

and clear light amid the shifting sands and deceitful mirage of this long and desolate desert journey. This Shake-scene alluded to in 1592 was Will Shakspere of Stratford, and no one else—so said and so say they all. Mr. Courthope, the last exponent of the Shakespeare plays, has insisted on this point as strongly as the whole body of his predecessors. His words are,—

'We know for certain from Greene's testimony that he [Shakspere] had established a high reputation as a dramatist in 1592, and that he was a *Johannes Factotum* equal to taking in hand tragedy, comedy, or whatever kind of work was required.'

In fact, I believe that no one has ever ventured to dispute the assertion that Greene, when he spoke of this *Johannes Factotum*, this 'only Shake-scene in a country,' referred to the Stratford man obviously, from the very pun on his name. I confess I too have taken it for granted,—it seems so very obvious—and, indeed, I did not think twice about it, nor do I suppose that anyone else did. But I have thought twice lately and my second thoughts have suggested to me that the world and his wife may be wrong after all. It was the hyphen in Shake-scene

which further helped me on what I believe to be the right road. Why, the Stratford man never had a 'Shake' in his name, nor yet his ancestors; and as to having a hyphen in the middle, all his people would have stared with amazement. They would not have been able either to recognise the thing or to name it. But there was a 'sweet gentleman' who had both a 'Shake' and a hyphen, and was a capital hand at bombasting out a blank-verse, too, and a Johnny Factotum with a vengeance; for he had taken all knowledge for his province, and was ready for every sort of poetry—at least, so Hall informs us, and he knew him well.*

So my second thoughts were that Greene, when he brought his 'Shake' and the hyphen into play, might well mean a certain 'sweet gentleman' who within two years' time (1594) had these both well in evidence in his own name in print in 'Willobie his Avisa,' where we are told plainly that Shake-speare was responsible for painting 'poore Lucrece rape.' But this great feat was far above Shakspere's art then or at any other time. However, I draw this inference, that if Shake-speare was known in print openly as the author of 'Lucrece'

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* For this see 'Is it Shakespeare?' and also the new evidence from Hall in the present volume.

in 1594, he would be known also to be the author of 'Venus and Adonis' in 1533, and so we get very near (within a year) to Shake-speare being known to Greene as a promising writer; and if Greene knew that, we have his use of the nickname Shake-scene fully accounted for without any need to go to Burbage and ask him where his Factotum was that was going to 'shake' a country, or, at least, be the biggest man in it. Burbage *would* have stared!

Moreover, whoever studies the series of quotations from Greene's publications, where he shows his rancour against certain people who were taking away his professional profits and purloining from his plays as well, will see that this attack on Shake-scene in 1592 was no sudden thought, but that it was the crowning and pointed result of a long jealousy which had begun some time before, when Greene had found out there were certain concealed pens at work who dared to imitate and borrow from himself and others, and especially one, an 'upstart crow,' a veritable Johannes Factotum, who thought he was better able to place 'eternity' in the mouth of a player than the old regular practitioners.

But, as I have ventured to suggest a perfectly novel hypothesis, I must bring Greene's famous

passage again on the scene. I would, however, first notice that, if Shakspere were meant, Greene ought to have said Shak-scene, for then he would be using the very spelling and pronunciation of the Warwickshire name, and his new-coined word, 'Shak-scene' would have been in strict analogy with similar compound English words. For Hall, his contemporary, writes

'Like a broad *shak-fork* with a slender steale,'*

where a pitchfork for shaking hay is meant.

We have also *Shak-bag*, a low character in a contemporary drama. But Greene did not write 'Shak-scene,' as he might have done, because he was aiming at Pallas Shake-speare, or Francis Bacon, the lawyer 'burr' who had been tearing the shreds of wool from his fleece.

But let us come to the famous crucial passage, and get through it as soon as we can, for it has been said that the public have been dosed with this till they are quite sick of it. I will try and vary the dose, or, at least, put another label on the bottle. A change of medicine sometimes works wonders.

Briefly, then, Greene just before his death, in

* 'Satires,' Book III., Satire vii.

a fit of repentance, left an address to certain 'Gentlemen his quondam acquaintances, that spend their wits in making playes.' He addresses them separately, and we find they were three, his 'fellowe Schollers about this Cittie'—Marlowe, Nash and Peele.

He warns them, among other things, to beware of a certain

'upstart Crow beautified with our Feathers, that with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Player's hyde* supposes he is as well able to bombast out a Blanke-verse as the best of you [*i.e.*, you writers,—you University penmen], and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is in his owne conceyt the onely Shake-scene in a Countrey.'

Here, says everyone, is Shakspere of Stratford without a doubt. I think now that there is a doubt, and that reconsideration is necessary. It has not been sufficiently noticed that Greene's letter was addressed to three *playwrights*, and that the fourth man mentioned was a *playwright* too. This is perfectly clear, for Shake-scene was a filler-out of blank-verse, and supplied the puppets or actors with his borrowed material. Thus, it appears that there was no hint that any one of the four who were alluded to was an *actor*.

Of course, the traditional Shakespearians will

say this is nonsense, because Chettle (who published Greene's address, and afterwards defended himself in print against two of the four who took offence at what Greene had said of them) gave a clear proof that one of the two that took offence was an actor, and that this one was Shake-scene, or Shakspere, the actor.

But the old critics are wrong here also, for it is perfectly clear that Chettle does not refer to Shakspere at all, and there is not a scrap of evidence that Shakspere was one of the two that took offence. For these two that took offence are distinctly stated to be two of the 'divers playmakers' addressed by Greene; and Shake-scene was not addressed by Greene at all. The three addressed were Marlowe, Nash, and Peele, and it was two of these that took offence—Marlowe and Nash, I should say. Marlowe was the one that Chettle did not care to be ever acquainted with, and Nash the one he had heard well reported of for his 'facetious grace in writing,' and well spoken of by 'divers of worship.' In fact, Nash suits the remarks of Chettle, but Shakspere does not.

One thing that makes for Nash rather than Shakspere is the fact that Nash was about this time (1592) much brought into connection with 'men of worship,' who thought and spoke well of

him and favoured him. We have direct evidence of this from Nash's own lips, but there is no direct evidence of anything similar with regard to Shakspere now that 'Lucrece' has lost its Warwickshire author.

Nash says in his 'Foure Letters Confuted' (1592): 'I can name divers good Gentlemen that have been my adherents and favourers a long time;' and he further adds they would stand up for him if attacked. One of his 'favourers' was the Earl of Southampton, whom he repeatedly refers to as such, and Southampton's set, which included Bacon, would certainly be favourable to him, and I contend it was this that Chettle knew and referred to. Nash, too, had been fighting on the side of the Bishops against the Martinists, and this gave him highly placed friends.

Chettle's expression, 'facetious grace in writing,' also applies well to Nash.* Yes, Nash had that quality in a greater measure that most of his coetaneans. Indeed, he was far too 'facetious' for most people with his Valentines and Dildos; but his gay young Mæcenas overlooked it, and Francis Bacon was no precisian about this time.

* But the best point of all is that this 'facetious grace' was *in writing*, and Shakspere as yet had written nothing at all.

Moreover, he had 'Venus and Adonis' either in his thoughts or memory just now. Nash also had helped in the Marprelate war on the same side as Bacon. So I feel somewhat justified in my suggestion, especially as it is clear that Shakspere was not among the addressed playwrights that took 'offence,' and that Chettle does not refer to a man of such stamp as Shakspere at all, for he lets us know that he is talking about 'schollers' pretty plainly a few lines previously.

His words are: 'How I have all the time of my conversing in printing hindered the bitter inveying against schollers it hath been very well knowne; and how in that I dealt, I can sufficiently proove.'

Chettle means here that he had toned down what Greene had said about Marlowe, and had not put a word in anywhere of his own, and that he was for sparing any invectives against Marlowe and Nash as being 'schollers.' How people for so many years have read the Stratford man who was no 'scholler' into this passage of the preface to 'Kind-hartes Dreame' I cannot conceive, except by supposing they took the current view without referring to the book, which was almost inaccessible. No contemporary ever held Shakspere the player to be a 'scholler.' It is reserved for Mr. J.

Churton Collins to discover his wonderful knowledge of the Greek tragedians.

Add to this, Shakspere was not a man to complain or take offence; he had no 'railing wit,' as Davies of Hereford tells us, and Ben Jonson confirms this view. We know, too, how the play pirates and printers were unmolested by him.

But some critics may think that I have evaded or forgotten the remark of Chettle, that the man he is referring to is one 'exelent in the qualitie he professes,' and that therefore Chettle means Shakspere the actor, and not Nash, because this word 'qualitie' is one most commonly used of the actor's profession.

I have not forgotten this point, which has, indeed, been supposed by most people to settle the question in favour of Shakspere, but have purposely reserved it till now. I think it has been given more importance than it will bear.

1. If we look out 'qualitie' in the Oxford Dictionary, we shall find the word is by no means restricted to the actor's art, but will bear other references as well.

2. It is by no means clear that Nash was not an actor during parts of his career.

He certainly was connected with the stage, and got into great trouble (*circa* 1597) about the 'Isle

of Dogs,' a play which was severely proceeded against, and through which Nash was imprisoned for some time.

Now, there is the following memorandum in the registers of the Privy Council:—

'Uppon information given us of a lewd plaie that was plaied in one of the plaie houses on the Bancke side, contayninge very seditious and sclaunderous matter, wee caused some of the players to be apprehended and comytted to pryson, whereof one of them was not only an actor, but a maker of parte of the said plaie.' (Dated Greenwich, August 15, 1597.)*

This memorandum seems to apply to Nash more than anyone else we know of, and here we have him called 'an actor' as well as 'a maker' of plays. So in all ways Nash suits the remarks of Chettle better than Shakspere, who, as already shown, was an unknown and unimportant man when Greene died. And, moreover, Nash was 'exelent in one qualitie' he professed, which was that of a biting satirist.

It has been suggested that this evidently opprobrious epithet Shake-scene was applied to the Stratford factotum because he was the *scene-*

* I have not verified this. My authority is mislaid.

*shifter*, and made himself generally useful as a supernumerary. If the word was really used in that sense, it would, of course, exclude Francis Bacon from Greene's indictment, but would hardly help the orthodox theory much; for it would then come to this, that William Shakspere was a scene-shifter in 1592, and next year, 1593, addressed his 'Venus and Adonis' to young Lord Southampton, having either brought it to London in his pocket or composed it more recently in the intervals between shifting the scenes, and his other odd jobs. But surely the poem is too courtly, too classical, and too aristocratically conceived and worded, for a horny-handed scene-shifter.

I can only say that, if my suggestion is accepted or corroborated, it will help much to hasten Shakspere's exit from the scene of his many triumphs. For if the Stratford genius has to retire from the Shake-scene allusion, and from any connection with the 'Sonnets' which bore Shake-speare's name so obtrusively on their title-page, if also he is obliged to give up any claim to be the William Shakespeare who thus signed the dedications of 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece,' and showed both his head and tail in the latter famous poem—well, if this be so,

Shakspere will certainly have to make his EXIT from *this* stage, leaving the greater part of his literary baggage, stage properties, and dramatic creations behind him for their true possessor. He need not necessarily take his departure thoroughly stripped and unaccompanied. He will still, probably, be covered with many locks of wool and shreds which he could claim as his own, and some of his Stratford cronies might choose to accompany him as their lawful owner and creator —some local roisterers of Warwickshire and fat ale-wives of the Stratford neighbourhood—but most assuredly neither Hamlet, nor Lear, nor Biron, nor Romeo, nor Rosalind, nor Beatrice, nor Juliet, would follow at *his* heels as he turned to go.

Still, it cannot be supposed that he would make his exit without applause and honour. I feel sure that both the spectators and the puppets themselves in this imaginary exit would give the good old actor manager a hearty round of applause as he made his final bow. For they knew him to be an honest, capable man whose heart was in his work, who did his best for his company, and had honourably worked his way up from the lowest ranks of the profession, even as some other good fellows had, and was not a

'railing wit,' either. But it may be thought that though *Johannes Factotum* and *Shake-scene* might be made applicable to Francis Bacon, still, there is an 'upstart crow' to be reckoned with, and it will prove hard to bring in Bacon there. On the contrary, the term will suit Bacon very well; as we proceed to show.

Most bibliophiles will doubtless remember that Gosson used the term 'upstart new-fangled gentlemen' on one of his title-pages. In fact, 'upstart' seems a word of reproach more applicable to a gentleman such as Bacon was, than to a base groom, or peasant, or vagrant actor such as was Will Shakspere. But perhaps it will be objected that, although 'upstart' might pass in regard to Bacon, still, the word 'crow' is quite inappropriate to him. I do not think so, and for two reasons: (1) Crow was only a variation of Æsop's jackdaw with borrowed feathers, and we have Ben Jonson calling Bacon Sir John Daw in the 'Silent Woman,' which corroborates my view. And although the Stratford actor did borrow a good deal from his old stock of plays, as Marston and Ben both hinted, yet he was not called a crow or a jackdaw. There is an alternative reason:—(2) Legal gentlemen shared with divines the exclusive use of black professional

robes. A legal 'crow' would be well understood.*

Again, in these early satirical remarks of Nash and Greene we have a frequent mention of 'burrs' who stuck to the playwrights and carried off the best passages of their works, just as a brier-brush or 'burrs' would rob silly sheep of the wool from their fleece if they came too close for the sake of protection.

Now, this word 'burrs' suggests *lawyers* rather than any other profession that the 'sweet gentleman' could belong to; for it was a well-known Elizabethan saying that lawyers were like 'burrs' or 'briers,' because they robbed their clients of their wool in the same way that the 'burrs' or 'brierbrush' robbed the unsuspicious sheep.†

I am quite aware that this Shake-scene allusion of Green in 1592 has been thought to be cor-

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* The late Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Temple) did not, however, recognise this term for divines. A clergyman once asked his lordship if he might reside outside his parish, at a house which he stated was 'only two miles off the parish church *as the crow flies*.' Leave was tersely refused on the ground that the parson was not a crow.

† *Cf.* Hall's Sat. II. 3, *ad finem* for 'briars and lawyers'; also 'Palladis Tamia,' *s.v.*, 'Lawyers,' for the same; also Phantasma's speech in the 'Return from Parnassus.' —3 Parn. 2183.

roborated by Gabriel Harvey in his contemporary remark: 'Vile Green, would thou wearest halfe so honest as the worst of the four whom thou upbraidest, or halfe so learned as the unlearnedst of the three.' This Harvey passage was taken in the early 'allusion-books' of Dr. Ingleby to mean 'half as honest as Shakspere, or half as learned as Nash.'* But this fine Shaksperian proof had to be withdrawn in a later edition, for it soon became quite evident that the four referred to were the three brothers Harvey and their father, the ropemaker. So neither Shakspere nor Nash were intended at all.

Nor is this by any means the only gross error in the early Shakspere 'allusion-books' which had to be struck out afterwards. But I will not recount them, and will only say generally that the 400 or more Shakespeare allusions gathered by Ingleby and Furnivall—both shining lights among the orthodox—are of little use to prove their case, and are of much less force and value than the majority of the Baconian parallels which are so jeered at and despised. So this great piece of evidence from Harvey in favour of the early

* 'Shakspere Allusion-books.' Published for the New Shakspere Society, London, 1874, at p. xxiii of Introduction.

notice in 1592 of Shakspere the Shake - scene may be put in the waste paper basket along with many other early ones of note. In fact, 1591 or 1592 was far too early for 'Shakspur' to be written or talked about, although some of the Shake-speare plays had been written some years.

I know that my suggestion about Shake-scene is a paradox in the strictest sense of the word—that is, it is contrary to the expressed opinion of the vast majority of traditional experts, who will, as usual in such cases, either laugh it to scorn or else vilify it in some way. In fact, the whole Baconian theory is a paradox of the deepest dye, but it does not follow that therefore it cannot be true. Paradoxes much more aggravating than these have in our own generation asserted their correctness, and have prevailed. Let the orthodox Shakespearians, who laugh to scorn the paradox that Shakspere, the born genius of Stratford, *did not* write the immortal plays and poems, bear in mind the fate of other orthodox critics who for a much longer time laughed to scorn the paradox that Moses *did not* write the Book of Genesis.

Where are these orthodox Biblical critics now? Why, clearly, they are in that place to which the blind are said to lead the blind, and in this case a ditch from which no one can pull them out now,

whether by fair means or foul. Let the orthodox Shakespearians take a glance at the first polychrome edition of Genesis they may chance to meet; it ought to give them a fit of the blues or of the horrors before they have gone far into it. Only fancy what this polychrome text means:—Moses is turned out of possession after much more than 2,000 years' tenancy, and does not figure in the variegated text to the amount of a single line.

Poor Shakspur's case can never be so bad as that, it is true. How much of the polychrome Folio will be in Shakspere's colour I cannot venture even to conjecture. Unless the next few generations of critics show considerably more unanimity of opinion than we have at present, this question will not be settled for a very long time. There will be other colours, too, in the future Folio. Fletcher, for instance, according to some of our best critics, must be represented; and since there was so much collaboration in plays in Elizabethan days, and since both Bacon and Shakspere seem to have been quite ready to avail themselves of other people's feathers to adorn their own work, and possibly asked friendly playwrights to lend a helping hand occasionally in producing a play, it does not seem unlikely

that such playwrights as Munday, Dekker, Chettle, Hathaway, Drayton, and other writers who was willing to assist Bacon and the company, may have a claim to some passages in their own colour in the polychrome volume, but he would be a very daring critic who ventured to assign them. But these are details which do not really interfere with my main contention, which is that I hold that the two great Shakespeare poems will certainly be in a monochrome which is *not* that of the Stratford actor; and much of the immortal plays will be in the same colour, and perhaps all the sonnets. I know not what colour will be chosen for other portions, but the special tint of Gabriel Harvey's face might do very well; for we know from Nash that Harvey's complexion was very much like 'resty bacon.' However, it matters not much what colour be chosen for the B portion of the first polychrome edition; in any case it will be sure to comprise the greater part of the volume, and we shall have no chance of getting the beautifully variegated and almost kaleidoscopic arrangement of the up-to-date Genesis.

But we shall have to wait a long time, I fear, before the public or the press ask for such an edition. The orthodox critics have much more

dust to throw into the eyes of the public from their old traditional kitchen middens yet.

The Shakspere worshippers and the Shakspere societies will be sure to make strong rally round their idol before such a dreadful event would be allowed to happen. And then there are the vested interests; they would resist very strongly.

The old editions, and, worse still, the many new editions, would go out of request, and the facsimiles would have to be relabelled, and many lives and lectures would be rendered almost useless. Pockets would be touched as well as reputations. Perhaps this accounts for the late constant volleys against the Baconians, of which we hear the reports in the newspapers and reviews. One fellow Baconian has suggested to me that these are the last upward flickers of a dying flame, but I am not nearly so sanguine as to think that.

## CHAPTER VI

### HARVEY'S EVIDENCE

If any reader is inclined to ridicule my attempts to throw light on literary puzzles by fanciful dealing with proper names, such as Puntarvolo, Valentine, Sir John Daw, Ovid junior, and other supposed hidden references to Bacon (see the discussion of this in the appendix), they should remember how often a little attention to satirical nicknames has revealed the hidden character aimed at. And even when there is no satire and no intention to conceal, still, the want of due attention to proper names may keep up a literary mystery, when it is absolutely staring us in the face.

Lovers of Milton will remember how Mr. W. G. Clark of Trinity, Cambridge, found out in 1859 the Sphinxian remark about 'Rivers arise' in the poem 'At a Vacation Exercise.' No one could interpret this for over 200 years,

and then it was the *name allusion* that supplied the long-delayed solution.

So under the ægis of such a successful attempt as that of the Vice-Master of Trinity I will try if I cannot make Gabriel Harvey say Bacon under another name as well as Jonson (*vide* appendix). If I can do so with any acceptance I shall be proud of it, for Gabriel Harvey is so reticent about any connection with, or any reference to, Francis Bacon that one would imagine he did not know of his existence. And yet, according to my theory, he must have known Bacon in a very intimate and friendly way. Harvey is careful enough to keep Bacon out of his printed works, that is clear; but, fortunately, he was in the habit of annotating his books in their margins, and writing his name at least once or twice at the beginning or end.

I possess two of his books with his marginalia and his excellent calligraphy, but I could not find Bacon there.

It was in his fine copy of Quintilian, now in the British Museum, that I found, as I suspect, one notice of Bacon, and in a volume with Harvey's manuscript notes, sold last year (1904) at Sotheby's for £112, I found the other.

The references are both to a friend of Harvey's

whom he calls *Eutrapelus*, and he says of him in the Quintilian,—'Quicquid humanitùs acciderit, Eutrapelus semper megalander.' That is to say: 'Whatever shall happen in the course of human events to Eutrapelus, he must always be considered a true *megalander*.' Which was Harvey's pet word for a man truly great in his opinion.

The other reference to Eutrapelus follows a manuscript paragraph about the connection between poetry and the drama, about 'Picta Poesis,' and living delineations, and almost without breaking off or leaving any gap we have the highest praise of Eutrapelus, apparently for his ability in the poetical drama.

My suggestion is that Eutrapelus was Harvey's fictitious name for young Francis Bacon, whom Harvey had ample opportunity of knowing at Cambridge, when the Bacons were *in statu pupillari*, and likely students in rhetoric as well, and with whom he afterwards renewed acquaintance when young Francis came to England and joined the literary brotherhood of Sidney, Dyer, and others with whom Harvey was an authority and a frequent correspondent.

'Eutrapel' was the pseudonym of Noel du Faille, who wrote 'Baliverneries'—*i.e.*, jest-books with facetious anecdotes intermingled—and as

Bacon, even in serious and mature age, could never pass a jest, and was always ready with an anecdote, and could unload a budget full faster than his scribes could write them down, I therefore conclude with some probability that Harvey gave young Francis that appropriate name of the French contemporary wit because of his early aptitude for those jokes and anecdotes in which he afterwards displayed such readiness.

Harvey recognised the youth as a true megalander *whatever should befall him.*

## CHAPTER VII

### CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE; ALLUSIONS

In no division of this controversy have the Baconians been so successful as in this matter of contemporary evidence. The orthodox argument used to be thus: 'The contemporary evidence of people who knew the author quite settles the matter against Bacon. There are hundreds of allusions all pointing to Shakespeare, and not a single one naming Bacon or even pointing to him.'

This would virtually settle the question, I admit, if the argument were true. Nearly everybody believes this to be true, and holding that belief they cannot be Baconians. But it is not true, and every year more inaccuracies are discovered in the details. The early allusions to Shakespeare which have been constantly repeated from one book to another, right away from the famous hundred allusions of Mr. Ingleby's 'Cen-

turie of Prayse' to the present year, will no longer hold good. They are not the allusions we really want in this difficult matter; they are not allusions touching the crucial point of the controversy.

The earliest allusions are naturally the most important, and it can now be shown that these refer *to a poet Shake-speare* (the hyphen being used in several very early allusions). Nothing is said about his being an actor. Does not this strike one as strange, especially as we know the Stratford man went up to London to join a company of actors, and *to adopt their profession?*

But the critics of the orthodox party have always been so sure of their man that this suspicious looking circumstance has never troubled them. Moreover, there was the early Shake-scene allusion, and as that was always supposed by both sides to refer to the Stratford actor, no one has ever alluded, as far as I know, to *the absence of any reference to an actor* in the earliest allusions to Shake-speare or Shakespeare, who, too, is never called Shakspere at this date.

I make bold to say that the earliest allusions before 1597-98 are all directed to a poet Shake-speare, whose name is spelled in the same un-

Stratfordian way as the signature to 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece.'

I further say there is no early hint whatever that this poet was an actor. In the much discussed passage of Greene in 1592 I hope I have already shown that he is there dealing with poets and playwriters such as Marlowe, Nash, Peele, and the new 'upstart crow' who was their competitor, imitator, and plagiarizer, but not an actor. The dying Greene looks with prophetic vision into the future, and sees a new rising universal genius, an upstart black robed lawyer burr and lawyer crow who would strip his fellow University men of the best shreds in their fleece, or, to change the metaphor, would pluck off from them their finest feathers of diction, and adorn himself with them, like the crow in Æsop.

Greene might well know from his London gossips what a Johannes Factotum the rising man was at masques, dumb shows, and Court interludes, that he was a 'sweet gentleman' for courtly verse as well as a youthful political adviser of the Queen, and concealed author of the greatest Birth of Time. He might readily have heard of his devices and his quaint conceits,—Pallas in her equipage of shield and shaking spear.

If a man of this description were not appropriately referred to by Greene as 'the greatest Shake-scene in a country,' I do not know another in the whole land to whom the phrase could so well apply. But in 1592 what had the actor done? He had not even set the Thames on fire; much less had he aspired for the position of the greatest Shake-scene in the whole country.

But there is 'the player's hide,' critics will say. You cannot get away from the actor in that sarcastic parody of Greene, where he changes the line of the early Shakespearian play of 'Henry VI.':

'O Tyger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide,'

into

'O Tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide.'

You cannot get away from the player or actor here. My reply is,—Possibly not; but this line quite fits in with the rest of my hypothesis. For Greene might well have an inkling that one or more actors were used by the lawyer crow to hide his own personality, and so Greene made the allusive parody, meaning thereby that the upstart crow and versatile pilferer from the University playwrights concealed himself under a player's hide, or stage robe, using that player as his mask

or instrument, and putting immortality in a player's mouth, as the attack phrased it. And so the Tiger-heart of the great factotum and Shake-scene hid itself under the garb of a common player, and put the immortality he claimed in a player's stage utterance. This immortality allusion was doubtless a sarcasm on Greene's part, but we know now that this same sarcasm is one of the 'eternal verities' of our English literature. The dramas then bombasted forth from the rude and limited stage of the Elizabethan playhouses are truly immortal.

Later on we get undoubted allusions to the actor from Stratford, but very few, the best being from the pen of John Davies of Hereford. He was undoubtedly amicably disposed to both Shakspere and Burbage, and he mentions both with praise; but it is not at all clear that he reckoned Shakspere a poet, and in one of his short poems he speaks strongly against the indecent tone of 'Venus and Adonis,' and seems to hint at an aristocrat as the author rather than a player.

But, anyhow, the fact remains that none of the allusions combine the actor and poet playwright in a way that is absolutely clear and free from suspicion. This is shown more fully in my chapter on 'The True Shakspere.'

But the most important point in this whole matter is that several of the formerly undoubted allusions to the Stratford man turn out now to belong to Bacon really.

I will give an instance;—Henry Chettle, in his 'England's Mourning Garment,' written just after Elizabeth's death, describes, in a dialogue between Thenot and Collin, the glories of the late Queen's reign. Thenot says to Collin:

'Resolve us . . . for thou hast heard the songs of that warlike Poet Philisides, good Melæbee, and smooth tongued Melicert, tell us what thou hast observed in their sawes, seene in thine owne experience, and heard of undoubted truths touching those accidents [of her reigne].'

'Philisides' is Philip Sidney, 'Melæbee' is Walsingham—praised under this name by Watson—and 'Melicert' is some writer, evidently of the same class and social standing, who also praised the Queen and was noted for a smooth tongue.

This is generally acknowledged as the true interpretation, but 'Melicert' is far less agreed upon as to his identification than the other two.

A few pages further on Chettle speaks in verse of those who had not celebrated by suitable funeral praises the dead Queen, and calls upon

them to do so without further delay. He mentions Samuel Daniel, William Warner, George Chapman, Michael Drayton, and some others, not by their names, but by allusions to their works which identify them without any doubt. He then mentions another who has failed to praise the dead Queen, and this one is that same Melicert who remained doubtful in the former allusion. His lines on him are :

> 'Nor doth the silver tongued Melicert,
> Drop from his honied muse one single teare
> To mourne her death that graced his desert,
> And to his laies opened her Royall eare.
> Shepheard remember our Elizabeth,
> And sing her Rape, done by that Tarquin, Death.'

This has always been included among the Shakespeare allusions, because it clearly refers to the author of 'The Rape of Lucrece.' But I fear it must be taken away and put among the assets belonging to the Baconian heretics, for it is really an allusion to Bacon, not to Shakspere of Stratford.

Sidney, Walsingham, and Shakspere form a most inconguous trio as far as the last is concerned, especially for songs and 'sawes,' and the Melicert in the first quoted passage is clearly 'a statesman or person of eminence,' as Dr. Brinley

Nicholson suggested, and a 'smooth-tongued' politician as well; but when he put him down as intended for Burghley he made a very bad conjecture, assuredly.

Bacon is the man designated by Melicert, and the only man who fits all the circumstances of Chettle's 'England's Mourning Garment.' I think any unprejudiced inquirer will admit this. Here then we have a strong, as supposed, Shakspearian orthodox allusion turned into a still stronger Baconian one. And this holds good with all the early allusions if they are thoughtfully examined. Here is one of the prime Shakespearian orthodox arguments with the very ground cut from under its feet, and placed as a stepping-stone for Baconians to approach the real Shakespeare—the honey tongued favourite of the Court gallants' study and the lady's boudoir.

Again, the way in which Shakespeare's dramatic fame was first openly discovered to the world of literature is very suggestive. Not till about 1598 do we hear a word about Shakespeare as having written a play of any kind, either tragedy or comedy. Then all at once we receive a good long list of plays, published and unpublished, comedies and tragedies, attributed to Shakespeare as 'the most excellent in both kinds for the stage.'

But who volunteered this information? That is an important question, and the answer should make orthodox Shakespearians pause and think. I will give the answer in the very words of Mrs. Stopes, a well-known disbeliever in the Bacon theory. She says,—*

'Shakspere's fame became fixed in 1598 by the liberal praise of Francis Meres, Professor of Rhetoric at Oxford, brother-in-law of Florio, the philological protégé of the Earl of Southampton.'

Now, seeing that Bacon wrote an admirable sonnet to Florio, who was a friend of his, in 1591, and seeing that Florio, referring to this same sonnet seven years later, in 1598, said that its author (Bacon) was 'a gentleman, a friend of mine that loved better to be a Poet than to be counted so,' and seeing, in addition to these, that Meres was a relative of Florio's and living in London in close contact with him, is it not highly probable, knowing what we do now, that Meres would hide the true name of the modest and retiring poet friend of Florio under any mystification that came most readily to hand, rather than break through the veil of secrecy which their mutual friend had used already, and

* 'Shakespeare's Sonnets; with Introduction and Notes,' by C. C. Stopes, p. xl (1904).

clearly wished to retain? As Meres would not violate secrecy by naming Bacon, he took the readiest mystification there was, and that was the name Shakespeare—the very same one that he and Florio and Southampton must have known had been used by the same retiring poet twice in some beautiful poems a few years before, addressed to Southampton himself. Bacon did not wish his name to be known as a poet or dramatist, but something must be done in the matter, for the plays and their success were becoming subjects of common knowledge by 1598. It was needful to attribute them to someone, so as to stop curious questioning tongues, and so the old mystification Shakespeare did service again. It would not mystify the few friends of Bacon and Southampton who really knew, but it would mystify the general public who were not behind the scenes, and by a coincidence of name with a rising and pushing actor manager it would admirably serve its purpose of concealment. The misnomer 'caught on,' as we say nowadays, and, strangely enough, it has 'held on' right up to our generation. This is my explanation of the famous Shakespeare criticisms in Meres' 'Palladis Tamia,' which, be it remembered, was one of the Bodenham series, and who Bodenham was I have

tried to show in the previous volume. I do not expect orthodox critics will accept it, or term it any else than 'plausible' or 'fanciful,' but I submit it for what it is worth, and for my assertion that Bacon wrote the sonnet to Florio I refer my readers to 'Is it Shakespeare?' p. 182 *et seq.*

The second laudatory poem before R. Greene's 'Menaphon' shows pretty clearly that it was not Shakspere the player that Greene and Nash were aiming at in 1589 and 1592. The poem says that they were 'witts' who were aimed at, or the talented 'sweet gentlemen' who were vaunting the 'pompe of speach' in their 'drumming descant,' and who strove 'to thunder from a stageman's throat.' Therefore, plainly, these 'witts' were not stagemen themselves, and therefore Shakspere is excluded, as we may well imagine he would be at this period (1589).

This is what Thomas Brabine, Gent., says in praise of Greene's 'Menaphon':

'Come forth you witts that vaunt the pompe of speach
And strive to thunder from a stageman's throat;
View "Menaphon" a note beyond your reach,
Whose sight will make a drumming descant doat.
Players avaunt! you know not to delight;
Welcome sweet shepherd, worth a scholar's sight.'

This prefatory poem distinguishes between the

playwrights (the 'witts') and the actors ('players avaunt!') just as Greene does here and elsewhere. Certainly, if we look at the characters portrayed in 'Menaphon,' we shall find that Doron and Melicert might well stand for two 'witts' who 'vaunt the pompe of speach,' and might well be two 'sweet gentlemen who had vaunted their pens in private devices.' In which case Melicert would be Bacon, and this identification agrees with all the other reference to Melicert in Elizabethan literature. Melicert was a courtly personage, that seems quite clear, and the general result of Greene's Sphinxian tales of the period 1589-1592 comes to this, that Shakspere the actor is everywhere excluded, while Bacon the courtier, 'sweet gentleman,' and planner of devices and impresario of a motley company of players, is constantly in evidence under Greene's reticent allusions.

And now, having brought to a conclusion my early Shake-scene and Shake-speare evidence, and discussed what notices could be found of the doubtful plays, I will ask leave to hazard a general conjecture on this obscure period.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE FOR BACON

My next contemporary evidence is from 'Histriomastix.' I cannot help thinking that ornamental woodcut headings may possibly form part of Bacon's plan of ear marking his writings—for he certainly had a way of leaving his mark on his productions, as I contend I have shown.

I would not call anyone irrational who considered there was some hidden import in the very funny hatted owl which appears in several publications connected with Bacon, Shakespeare, Nash, and Essex. The owl was the sacred bird of Pallas, and I well remember an engraved frontispiece of a Baconian work where two owls are depicted in the bottom corners holding torches. But I was more struck by some singular allusions to owls and owlets in the play of 'Histriomastix,' in which that sharp-eyed satirist Marston seems to have had a share, if, indeed, the whole play be

not his. As its name shows, it is a scourging satire on stage players generally, and some 'translating scholler' in particular, and has a great deal to say about a certain 'Maister Posthast, the poet,' whom I take to be Anthony Munday, a friend of Francis Bacon to a greater extent than has been hitherto supposed. Also the play refers to certain Lords Mavortius and Philarchus, who send for the players to perform whenever they want them.

These Lords might well be Southampton and Essex, and the players Shakespeare's company; for one of the actors says, 'Here's a Gentleman scholar writes for us,' and then Posthast adds the very odd declaration, 'I am desperate of a horse,' which recalls 'My kingdom for a horse,' and was one of Marston's Baconian allusions also.

But my main point is about owlets, and the allusion comes in early in the first act. One of the players asks: 'But whose men are we all this while?' Posthast (*i.e.*, Munday) answers: 'Whose but the merry Knights, Sir Oliver Owlets? There was never a better man to Players.'

What if Munday is referring here to Bacon? But Bacon was not knighted yet; he had to wait for that till King James came.

True! but he was a merry Knight of the Helmet, and Munday and Marston knew that well enough, and perhaps Lynceus of the Satires had seen the 'Owle in the Ivybush,' of which we hear in Scene ii., for a ballad-singer enters and says in a series of questions,—

'What's your playes name? Maisters, whose men are ye?

'How, the signe of the Owle i' th' Ivybush? Sir Oliver Owlets?'

And is answered by a player: 'Tis a sign ye are not blind, sir.'

Presently the players with Posthast, the poet, come to the great hall of Lord Mavortius, and the usher says:

> 'Sir Oliver Owlets men welcome. By God's will
> It is my Lords pleasure it should be so.'

Afterwards part of a play, 'Troilus and Cressida,' is performed, and in Act VI., when the poor players cannot pay their tavern bill, and a constable is called in, the following curious conversation ensues:—

'Belcher (*a player*). Why, Constable, do you know what you see?

'Const. Aye, I see a Madge-howlet, and she sees not me.

'Posthast. Know you our credit with Sir Oliver?

'Const. True, but your boasting hath cracked it, I fear.'

'Histriomastix' is worth reading as a curiosity; as for Sir Oliver Owlet, I leave him to better eyes than mine, but by a good searchlight I think the gloom of the ivy-bush would be dispelled.

I feel sure that some will think that the idea of Francis Bacon having a company of players, after the manner of the great noblemen of the land, is most ridiculous. But, as they may read in the 'Memoirs of Edward Alleyn' (p. 5),—'Even knights had their dependent players, and as early as 1553 we hear of those of Sir Francis Leek, and in 1571 of those of Sir Rob. Lane.'

Moreover, it is not suggested that Francis Bacon 'ran' this company alone. There were 'grand possessors' and promoters who, no doubt, helped financially. Indeed, the liberality of Essex and Southampton to Bacon, of which we hear on good authority, points somewhat in this direction.

Concerning Posthast there is, I hold, very little room for doubt. The sobriquet points out the man aimed at clearly enough. Anthony Munday was a Queen's Messenger, and such a one of all men should, when on duty, execute his affairs

with post-haste. But the name is by no means the only proof. Posthast, like Anthony Munday, is said in 'Histriomastix' to be a poet, who began as a ballad-writer, and when his trade as a dramatist fails he says he will write ballads again,—

> 'Faith, I'll e'en paste all my ballads together.'
> *Histriomastix*, Act V., 91.

And Galch, one of the players in this comedy, says of Posthast's extemporizing,—

> 'Well, fellows, I never heard happier stuff.
> Here's no new luxury or blandishment,
> But plenty of old Englands mothers words.'
> *Histriomastix*, Act II., 127.

Which suits well enough what we know of Munday from his acknowledged writings.

Now, if Munday was the poet for Shakspere's company, as 'Histriomastix' seems to show us, we get a strong light thrown upon some early notices of the Elizabethan drama which no critic so far has satisfactorily explained. For as early as 1589 we have Nash telling us of some 'sweet gentlemen,' who had been in the habit of supplying 'devices' (*i.e.*, masques, plays, and interludes) for private patrons, now taking upon themselves

to trick up a company of taffety fools with their feathers. In plainer language, certain well bred gentlemen had demeaned themselves so far as to descend from providing private entertainment for a select company as to write plays for a vagrant company of bedizened and ignorant actors, mere taffety fools. In this way the profession of such University scholars as Greene, Peele, and the rest, had been damaged, their fresh services dispensed with, and their old plays used, revised, and appropriated without so much as 'by your leave.' This is the grievance that Nash and Greene refer to again and again in 1589 and in 1592, and on other occasions.

Now, the question is, Who supplied these taffety fools with their immortal words? Who were the sweet gentlemen who placed immortality in the words that breathed from a mere player's mouth? That indeed is the secret we all want to know. Well, is it not partly revealed in such passages as we have been considering? What sweet gentleman was more likely to 'trick up' the actors with what they required than Francis Bacon, who might very well be helped by Essex or some Gray's Inn friend, or more than one Anthony; for we are told that Anthony Bacon was an equally good wit, but was not so learned

as his brother.* And there was another Anthony, Posthast Munday, to help in the plots, a most suitable man, too, for according to Francis Meres, who in 1598 told us so much about the immortal plays, Munday was 'our best plotter,' and he was a translator as well, even as Kyd was.

After Greene's death the plays continued to be written and produced anonymously until about 1597 and 1598, and we really hear nothing from contemporaries about Shakspere the playwright till 'Love's Labour's Lost' appeared in 1597, with his name on the title-page as the reviser. This seems to me to be the first entrance of 'Shakspere' on the scene of the immortal plays, and that the Stratford man's name should first appear in connection with such an original work of aristocratic genius as was the comedy of 'Love's Labour's Lost' would be enough, one would think, to rouse the suspicion of every competent critic in the town; and it is just because the Shakespearians *assume* that all his contemporaries accepted Shakspere as the author without any demur, and take it *for a settled fact* that no doubts were ever raised adverse to the Stratford man's claim—it is mainly through this that the

* He was not in England, but might have sent lyrics, etc., as A. B. was good at these.

Baconian theory can find no place in so many reasonable minds. The Shakespearian argument, with this assumption granted, is absolutely convincing. If Shakspere's name appeared as reviser or author on play after play and in year after year, and if his contemporaries who knew him accepted his authorship without either doubt or objection, what possible right have we, after this lapse of time, to try and make the critics and ordinary mortals of those days all blind and wrong? Is it not far more likely that the Baconians are blind and wrong? This is apparently a very forcible argument, and has kept thousands of sensible men firm in the traditional belief, and with their faces fixed as a flint against the Baconian lunatics. But, forcible as it seems, it cannot stand. It is not an argument at all; it is an assumption, and a wrong assumption, too.

This, among other things, is what I claim to have shown beyond contradiction in my former and present books. I claim to have proved that some of the keenest and best literary critics of the time did not accept the Stratford man as the author of either the poems at all or of the plays entirely. I claim to have shown that Hall, Marston, and Ben Jonson were well acquainted with the fact that Francis Bacon, and not Will

Shakspere, was responsible for the poems and much of the plays passing under the name of Shakespeare. And I claim to have produced, in addition to this, a good *primâ facie* case that many other notabilities and writers of that age knew who the real, but concealed, author was, but for various reasons refrained from divulging or publishing the true facts of the case. What these various reasons were we are not likely to find out with any certainty at this distance of time, but we may hold it probable that among them were such reasons as I have ventured to give here and there when the difficulty occurred. I also believe Bacon had many contemporaries who admired the genius and undeniably great qualities he possessed, and many friends as well, such as Camden, Selden, Lancelot Andrewes, and others; I think all these would keep a Pythagorean silence, if they thought Bacon wished it or the circumstances demanded it.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE FOR BACON (*continued*)

My next contemporary evidence for Bacon will be taken from those enigmatical personages known as 'Aetion' and 'pleasant Willy,' who are mentioned in 'Colin Clout's come Home again' and in 'The Teares of the Muses,' both composed before 1591. It has been supposed again and again by critics that here we have two of the very earliest allusions to the Stratford genius, or, in any case, if not Shakspere it was Drayton, but no one for a moment suggested Francis Bacon. However, I think he should claim a hearing here as well as elsewhere.

The controversies about the personage alluded to as 'Aetion' have been persistent, inconclusive, and sometimes rather ridiculous. The word 'Aetion' has been supposed to mean Eaglet, and a Greek diminutive not known to the lexicographers has apparently been invented to meet the present case. Then we have its derivation and meaning

deduced from ἀετια, which is said to be equivalent to Daniel's Idea, and then Drayton has been brought in because he sometimes took the name Rowland, which may be said to 'heroically sound.'

But why go beyond the man of Greece who bore the name in question, and is referred to by Lucian (at some length), Cicero, and others? He was a famous painter, and the picture best known was his 'Marriage of Alexander and Roxana.' He is also reported, under the name of Echion, to have depicted 'Tragedy and Comedy' (Echion being a corrupt form of Aetion, as some have said).

If any Elizabethan took interest in Alexander the Great and his history, I should think it would be Bacon above all others; also in Tragedy and Comedy, which to him were both of one alphabet and were speaking pictures.

And if any name was heroically sounding, it was that of Shake-speare, a name, I believe, adopted by Francis Bacon somewhat earlier than Greene's allusion of 1592.

There is an additional reason for taking Aetion as a personal name derived from classic times, for many other names such as Corydon, Amyntas, Alcon, Palin, etc., are of this nature.

As to 'our pleasant Willy' being Tarleton the

jester, Mr. Lee, while trying to show this, showed rather his inability to understand plain English. It is not Tarleton, but Bacon, who is referred to in those important lines in the 'The Teares of the Muses.'

Since this, if correct, is a very weighty and early allusion, being anterior even to the famous 'Shake-scene' quotation, I must quote the whole passage, especially as I here again run counter to the opinions of all the experts.

The literary history of the allusion is briefly this. In 1591, the year before that in which we first heard of the 'upstart crow,' there was published by Ponsonby, who had recently (1590) issued the first instalment of Spenser's 'Faerie Queene,' a volume of 'Complaints, containing Sundry Small Poems of the World's Vanity,' wherein were expressed many lamentations concerning the contemporary retrograde movement in poetry and the drama. 'The Ruins of Time' and 'The Teares of the Muses' were the two poems which chiefly dealt with this theme of complaint. The nine Muses each shed their tears in a short poem of ten stanzas, and it was Thalia, the Muse of Comedy, who made the reference, as I take it, to Bacon. It is historically certain that poets and playwrights and actors were just at

this period under a cloud. Burghley, though a great administrator, was very parsimonious in his support of literature and art, and had apparently a natural aversion to the fancies of poets, and the Puritans, especially of the City of London, were successfully pushing forward their almost fanatical opposition to the drama and the theatres. So Thalia begins thus,—

'Where be the sweete delights of learning's treasure,
That wont with Comick sock to beautifie
The painted theaters, and fill with pleasure
The listners eyes and eares with melodie?
In which I late was wont to raine as Queene,
And maske in mirth with graces well beseene?'

After relating in the three next stanzas how Ignorance and Barbarism had lately altered all these for the worse, Thalia goes on to say,—

'All these and all that else the Comick Stage
With seasoned wit and goodly pleasance graced,
By which mans life in his likest image
Was limned forth, are wholly now defaced;
And those sweet wits, which wont the like to frame,
Are now despizd and made a laughing game.

'And he 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.

'In stead thereof scoffing Scurrilitie
And scorning Follie with Contempt is crept
Rolling in rhymes of shamelesse ribaudry
Without regard or due Decorum kept
Each idle wit at will presumes to make,
And doth the Learned's taske upon him take.

'But that same gentle Spirit, from whose pen
Large streames of honnie and sweete nectar flowe,*
Scorning the boldnesse of such base-born men,
Which dare their follies forth so rashly throwe,
Doth rather choose to sit in idle Cell,
Than so himselfe to mockerie to sell.'

Now, who was 'our pleasant Willy'? Who was 'that same gentle Spirit' who had a pen flowing with honey and nectar? Dryden was one of the earliest to attempt to answer this important literary question, and he thought that the passage could refer to no one but Shakespeare, meaning, of course, the actor of Stratford. This was taken for granted for some time, but it was noticed that Willy was described as 'dead of late' in 1591, so that answer could not possibly stand. It was suggested by a seventeenth-century commentator that the famous comedian Tarleton, who had died a few years before the lines were written, was the man meant, and

* Here is 'sweet Mr. Shakespeare' again.

Mr. Sidney Lee endorsed that view in his 'Life of Shakespeare.'

Dean Church, in his excellent monograph on Spenser, thinks that Philip Sidney and his masking performances was here alluded to. So we have Shakespeare the actor, Tarleton the comedian, and Sidney the courtier to choose from.

Mr. Sidney Lee says 'there is no reason to dispute the view' that Willy means Tarleton, and adds,—'Similarly, the "gentle spirit" who is described by Spenser in a later stanza as sitting "in idle cell" . . . cannot be reasonably identified with Shakespeare.' Here he makes Spenser refer to *two* personages, and misquotes or leaves out the adjective 'same' before 'gentle spirit,' which adjective shows that Spenser is still referring to Willy. In fact, Mr. Lee has badly blundered over the Spenserian allusions, both here and with Aetion.

I hold that not one of the three answers satisfies the conditions of the questions anything like so well as the answer I propose now to give.

Shakspere of Stratford is excluded without a chance of appeal on account of the date. In 1590 he was a thoroughly unimportant personage, of whom no mention had been made by anyone, and for Spenser to call *him* 'our pleasant Willy,' and

then to say he was 'dead of late,' is ridiculous. And it was not much less absurd to speak of the Stratford stable-boy as one who would

> 'rather choose to sit in idle Cell,
> Than so himselfe to mockerie to sell.'

Was Will Shakspere a man to sit and cogitate in an idle cell or study? Was he one to refuse to sell anything, whether it brought 'mockerie' or not, so long as it brought a profit to himself? Neither Tarleton nor Sidney was a writer of comedy or a votary of the Muse Thalia, in the strict sense of the word; nor was the name of either Willy, although I know it may fairly be said that Willy was a general name of familiarity, and appears with Colin and Cuddie and other such friendly abbreviations in pastoral poesy, and especially in the 'Shepherds' Calendar.'

But the man I suggest—viz., Francis Bacon—is not excluded in any of these ways. The early date of 1590 certainly does not exclude him, for I have no doubt that the talented youth of eighteen brought back from France several pieces of good literary work in 1579, and comedies, too, partly sketched and ready for revision, and he had ten years to revise and compose others between 1579 and 1590. If we read and properly interpret the

letters of Harvey and Immerito in 1580 and a little earlier, we shall not find it difficult to believe that Francis Bacon, in the decade 1580-1590, brought out several pleasing and 'decorous' comedies, whether at Gray's Inn or before the Court circles, or perhaps now and then at the Bull or elsewhere, which, after further revision and amplification, had their final literary issue among the immortal dramas of the First Folio.

There are floating traditions and notices of plays which may well have developed later on into 'the Jew that Shakespeare drew' in 'The Merchant of Venice,' and into the wonderful Fairy Court of Oberon and Titania. And, besides these, there are the *prima stamina* of the great chronicle plays, some of which first sketches may well have been written before the poet made Thalia weep; but these would be out of her province.

Again, to Spenser he was 'pleasant Willy.' But who so soon afterwards signed 'Venus and Adonis' as William Shakespeare? And who said in the sonnets, 'My name is Will'? But if I ask the orthodox such questions they seem deaf.

Look, too, again at Thalia's fine account of what true pleasing and decorous comedy should be. Read the stanzas again, and see what it was that

made Willy 'choose to sit in idle cell' and give up writing his comedies for a time. He was disgusted with the low ebb the drama had reached by reason of 'scoffing Scurrilitie and scorning Follie,'—

> 'Rolling in rhymes of shamelesse ribaudry
> Without regard or due Decorum kept.'

Now, this would apply well to Francis Bacon, who certainly was for elevating the drama and making it a vehicle of his views and plans for the public good. If Bacon printed or revised plays, he would exclude the vile 'clownage' as far as possible, and would not sell himself to 'mockerie,' certainly; for he had a most high opinion of decorum in all things, and, as far as we know about his earlier years in London, would much rather 'sit in his studie' like Faustus, or in 'his idle cell' at Gray's Inn indulge his genius in 'concealed' works of recreation, than subject his name and fame to common envy.

But some critic will be sure to say that my suggestion is 'plausible' enough, but utterly 'in the air,' and 'will fall down with a mere touch like a house of cards.' This is the way of the pretty Fannys of the press, and I know it well. If I did not anticipate them, they would all come down like a wolf on the fold with a hungry yelp-

ing chorus of 'To Earlswood with him! It's a clear case without a doctor's certificate. Why, this Willy was *dead* in 1590, and Bacon was alive till 1626. How could Willy be Bacon?'

Well, if they put me away for that, they must send Dean Church to keep me company, for that accomplished divine and elegant Spenserian scholar says that, as far as Willy is concerned,—

'the lines imply, not that he is literally dead, but that he is in retirement. The expression that he is "dead of late" is explained in four lines below as "choosing to sit in idle Cell," and is one of Spenser's common figures for inactivity or sorrow.'*

Also Rowe in 1709 held a similar view that *dead* meant only retirement, but, curiously enough, did not refer to the proof so evidently there.

So the result of the careful examination of this important and very early allusion is that it cannot allude to Sidney, as some Shakespearians try to make out, nor yet to Tarleton, for both of these were not merely 'dead of late,' but were dead altogether; and to suppose that these 'same' two, or either of them, could be sitting years after in an idle cell, and meditating with closed doors, we must also assume that they had risen

* 'Spenser,' by R. W. Church, London, 1902, p. 107.

from the dead. But miracles cannot be admitted into this purely literary question ; and since Bacon was alive, and suits the case better than anyone else, we accept this allusion of Spenser as a useful piece of biography to fill up an empty space in Bacon's life.

And even though Bacon's name was Francis, and Shakespeare's William, there are good reasons for taking Bacon to be 'Willy,' rather than Shakspur of Stratford; and the man who says to himself, 'Willy Bacon is ridiculous,' is, I fear, not acquainted with the hidden peculiarities of this Elizabethan question.

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Believers in the Swan of Avon have always thought that their strongest argument was the fact that all Shakspere's contemporaries acknowledged *him* to be the author of the works passing under his name, and there was absolutely no hint or reference concerning Bacon for nearly 250 years. This was their *terra firma*, and when on this ground they have always felt themselves invincible and secure.

The truth is, this was really a very sandy foundation, and if they do not speedily decamp, the moving quicksand will swallow them up, and their

pretensions with them. The new evidence of Hall, Marston, and others, which I adduced in 'Is it Shakespeare?' still remains uncontradicted, and I have seen no reasons to qualify or retract it, and have now been able to corroborate it and to add several other pieces of contemporary evidence to show that the Baconian authorship was well known in certain circles, but was not openly divulged.

My first additional witness is found in an early piece of contemporary evidence for Bacon—as early, indeed, as 1593-1595.

It is from Thomas Edwards, who wrote 'Cephalus and Procris,' and had it licensed for the press in October, 1593. The only copy extant is dated 1595. This has at the end another poem by the same author, called 'Narcissus,' which is also dated 1595.

In this latter poem we have references to many contemporary poets, and among them the very earliest notice of Marlowe's 'Hero and Leander,' with several quotations from it. Thomas Edwards must have seen a copy, either in manuscript or printed, very shortly after Marlowe's death; and seeing that our earliest copy of 'Hero and Leander' is dated 1598, or five years after the author's death, this is a fact of interest, which

I am surprised to find quite unnoticed in all the editions of Marlowe that I have seen.

But 'Narcissus' tells us things of far greater import than this; for we are introduced to 'Adonis' not long after the latter had been first published. In the last part of 'Narcissus,' called 'L'Envoy,' we have a cursory notice of Elizabethan poets, beginning,—

'Collyn was a mighty swaine;'

and, mentioning Rosamund [Daniel], Amyntas [Watson], Leander [Marlowe], he says,—

'Amintas and Leander's gone
* * * *
That so amorously could sing.'

And, of course, in 1593-1595 Watson and Marlowe had both recently died. So Edwards does not seem to have any doubt of the true author of 'Hero and Leander.'

And next he comes to 'Adon,' and possibly to Bacon. I will give this in full:—

'Adon deafly* masking thro,
Stately troupes rich conceited
Shew'd he well deserved to,†
Love's delight on him to gaze,
And had not love herself intreated
Other nymphs had sent him baies.

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* ? Deftly. † ? Too.

'Eke in purple roabes distain'd
Amidst the center of this chime
I have heard saie doth remaine
One whose power floweth far,
That should have been of our rime
The only object and the star.

'Well could his bewitching pen,
Done* the Muses objects to us,
Although he differs much from men
Tilting under Frieries
Yet his golden art might woo us
To have honored him with laies.'

Now, who can this last poet be who 'should have been the only object and the star' of Edwards' rime?

This puzzle has taxed the ingenuity of critics for many years past. Some have said the Earl of Oxford, Vere; some Lord Buckhurst; some Southwell the Jesuit; others Essex or Raleigh. Henry Morley thought Michael Drayton, and Dr. B. Nicholson thought Shakespeare; Dr. Grosart and the Rev. W. E. Buckley, the editor of the rare book itself, both declared for Bacon. So do I. For I cannot see how with anyone else we can get out of the 'Adonis' allusion—a poem which had just been written and was already becoming famous. If it be Bacon really, we

* Done = have done, auxiliary 'have' being omitted.

certainly have very early contemporary evidence from Edwards.

At this early date (1593-1595) Burbage's 'stable-boy' is, of course, out of the question.

The next piece of contemporary evidence is from Heywood. There is a very peculiar character in Thomas Heywood's 'Rape of Lucrece' (1608), which to me suggests that Heywood knew Francis Bacon was a sonnetteer and maker of love ditties and poems.

I mean the character in the play who is called Lord Valerius. This aristocratic Roman is brought on the stage in the singular and uncalled for character of a singer of love songs and ballads, both in season and out of season, but chiefly the latter.

The question arises, What could induce Heywood to bring in such apparently irrelevant songs and love lyrics, and attach them to the acting part of a noble Roman of whom classic history records no such characteristics?

Surely it was the title of his play, 'The Rape of Lucrece,' and the current talk in literary circles that Bacon was a kind of Ovid junior and a sonnetteer, which prompted Heywood to make such an unconventional character.

It is pretty clear now that Jonson knew the

current talk, and apparently believed it, or he would not have put Bacon and his sonnets and love-elegies so plainly on the boards in his 'Poetaster' and other plays, which were composed some time before Heywood's 'Rape of Lucrece.' Bacon had also written before this a Latin philosophical piece, under the name of 'Valerius Terminus.' This might have come to Heywood's knowledge also.

But let us see whether there is more internal proof that Lord Valerius is a skit on Bacon. The second mention of Valerius appears in the play 'Rape of Lucrece' (Act II., Scene i.) when the question is asked,—

'But where's Valerius?
How does he taste these times?'

And this answer comes a little further on,—

'Strangely; he is all song, he's ditty all.
* * * * *
Conclusively, he's from a toward hopeful gentleman
Transformed to a mere ballater, none knowing
Whence should proceed this transmutation.'

Shortly after this Valerius begins to sing of love, and we have these two noticeable lines:

'Now what is love I will you show:
A thing that creeps and cannot go.'

Now these two lines are highly significant.

They are, in fact, nothing less than one of the most famous of the numerous 'parallelisms' between Bacon and Shakespeare which the Baconian heretics are so fond of collecting.

This is how they put it,—

'Love
Will creep in service where
it cannot go.'
*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, IV. ii. 19.

'Love must creep in service
where it cannot go.'
*Bacon's Letter to King James.*

I have already said in my former book that I do not rely much on the parallelisms adduced in such enormous numbers by Baconians; but if there are a few grains of wheat, and I certainly think there are, among mountains of chaff, then this looks like one of the grains.

But let us take the very first words that Valerius utters on the boards; we have seen before how useful it is to search the vestibule.

Valerius replies to Collatine,—'No doubt, Collatine, no doubt here's a giddy and drunken world; it reels; it hath got the staggers.'

Now, what says the great dramatist in Richard III.?

'It is a reeling world indeed.'
*Richard III.*, III. ii. 38.

And again :—

'Does the world go round?
How come these staggers on me?'

*Cymbeline*, V. v. 233.

Again :—

'A' bears the third part of the world, man; see'st not?
The third part, then, is drunk.'

*Antony and Cleopatra*, II. vii. 98.

Again :—

'He that is giddy thinks the world turns round.'

*Taming of the Shrew*, V. ii. 20.

I attach little importance to these parallelisms, but they are curious coincidences.

However, there seems rather more importance in the words which finish the second act. They are spoken by the Clown, and are, 'O my sweet Lord Valerius.' Whereupon *omnes exeunt* and curtain falls.

We cannot help being reminded of 'O sweet Mr. Shakespeare,' which meets us in 'The Returne from Parnassus,' and stands almost alone in its respectful courtesy title to the actor manager and poet ape. There were not many Misters then among the licensed vagrants who helped to amuse the audiences round about Shoreditch or the Bankside. Even University men who had taken their Arts degree, when they joined their interests

with the players', mostly lost their chance of being dubbed Mister.

We do not hear much of Mr. Nash, Mr. Spenser, Mr. Marlowe, or Mr. Ben Jonson, or even of Mr. Chapman, old and respected as was this last poet and playwright; but we get Mr. Shakespeare much more often. Was it not pretty well known to the author of 'The Returne from Parnassus,' and several other writers in those days, who 'sweet Mr. Shakespeare' and 'gentle Shakespeare' really was? I certainly think so from the way he is sometimes spoken of or alluded to, and consequently I think it just possible that Thomas Heywood was aiming in his ditty loving Lord Valerius at no less a prominent personage in the State than Sir Francis Bacon, who was about this time (1607-08) made Solicitor-General, Clerk of the Star Chamber, and *Lord* Treasurer. Of course there is the ready and obvious reply that he alone was called Mr. Shakespeare because he alone applied for his father's heraldic arms. But why call him Lord Valerius?

And why call him 'sweet' Lord Valerius? There is more in that word 'sweet' than meets the eye. It was almost an especial epithet for Shake-speare among poets, which he seemed to share with the other epithet 'gentle.' As a poet

he was named by his contemporaries 'mellifluous, honey tongued, and other adjectives of the same saccharine character, and his 'sugred' sonnets are almost proverbial. He was also one of the 'sweet gentlemen' whom Nash and Greene were rather annoyed with for supplying the 'taffeta fooles' with verses and plays.

Indeed, sweet and gentle are the distinguishing marks of Shake-speare's early Muse, the chief faults admitted against that Muse being 'love's foolish lazy languishments,' and that the written word was not altogether 'cleanly.'*

There are some curious allusions in the play called 'Histriomastix' to *Sir Oliver Owlet* and his players. I leave the curious reader to conjecture who is referred to.

My next witness is a new one, who has not before been examined in this difficult case of identity. I refer to Edmund Bolton, who in his 'Hypercritica' seems to have had a good idea as to the real author of the two great Shakespeare poems.

In his 'Addresse the Fourth,' which deals with 'the best authors for written English' in prose and verse, he leaves out all notice of the poems

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* *Cf.* 'The Returne from Parnassus,' p. 87 (Macray); Hall's Satires, Labeo, *passim*.

and sonnets of Shakespeare, though he mentions all such similar authors of fame and repute.

There was clearly some reason for this, for such popular and highly praised poems could not be undesignedly ignored in such a general survey as Bolton was giving.

I think the reason is that Bolton was unwilling to offend that great man of 'mystery,' the rising Francis Bacon, by letting out any literary secret, or by mentioning his poems at all, when he knew Bacon wished to repudiate his connection with them.

So he got out of the difficulty by mentioning Sir Francis Bacon under the first head of Historical Prose Writers.

He mentions him *last* in order, but certainly *first* in general praise, for he concludes :—

'Most of all Sir Francis Bacon's writings have the freshest and most savoury form and aptest utterances, that (as I suppose) our Tongue can bear.'

Another strange omission among the 'best authors in verse' is that of Marlowe and his famous 'Hero and Leander.'

There is an earlier rough draft of Bolton's 'Hypercritica' among the Rawlinson manuscripts, and there we have Marlowe's 'Hero and Leander'

duly recorded; but in the later printed edition of the 'Hypercritica' this item is totally omitted, and nothing said of Marlowe whatever. Hence we may perhaps be permitted to suggest the inference that between the writing of the Rawlinson manuscript and the final revision of the book there was an appreciable interval during which Bolton found out the truth about Marlowe as an author and left him out, as well as Shakespeare, thus effectually excluding two 'masks' from the fame roll of the 'best authors.'

Bolton is also one of the first to give definitely the fame of that remarkable Elizabethan anonymous treatise, 'The Arte of English Poesie,' to Puttenham, but, knowing what has been just shown, it is not improbable that Bolton again wished to help the concealment of Bacon's literary work.

Indeed, the evidence for George or Richard Puttenham writing 'The Arte of English Poesie' is very weak. For twenty-five or thirty years there is no mention of any author for it, although the book itself is several times referred to and borrowed from, and sometimes spoken of as a work of authority. Bolton is nearly the first author who at all connected a Puttenham with this work, and this was more than thirty years

after 'The Arte of English Poesie' had been printed. No Christian name is given, and Bolton goes no further than saying the book was 'the work as the Fame is' of one of her (*i.e.*, Queen Elizabeth's) Gentlemen Pensioners, Puttenham. But this Puttenham authorship has been already considered.

There are several reasons for believing that Bolton knew the secret of Bacon's great literary activity. He was of Trinity Hall, Cambridge (Gabriel Harvey's college), where he says that he 'lived many years on his charge a free commoner.' He then proceeded to the Middle Temple, and 'lived in the best and choicest company of gentlemen.' He was in early life well acquainted with Camden, and in the year 1600 he first appears as an author, being a contributor to 'England's Helicon,' a notable book with which Bacon, as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere, had much to do. He was also a great advocate for instituting a Royal Academy or College of Learning and Honour on a somewhat magnificent scale. We may be well assured this would greatly interest Bacon, who had Solomon's House of the 'New Atlantis,' or something like it, strongly impressed on his heart and brain. What more likely than

this to bring these two contemporaries into a literary correspondence and friendship? So I hold, from all these facts, that Bolton was a very likely man to know about Bacon's literary pre-eminence.

Having now come to the end of my 'new contemporary evidence for Bacon' I would ask 'those who know' to compare it with what is called the 'contemporary evidence' for William Shakspere the actor.

Big books have been filled with this so called evidence, but of late years they have been so gutted that they almost present the appearance of the framework of a burnt-out house, the covers and the title being about all that remains solid and standing.

Indeed, the reservation of contemporaries in their references to Shakspere is really very remarkable, when we consider both the number of persons who avoided any mention of him, and the extreme likelihood, also, that these same persons should frequently refer to him.

Look at Gabriel Harvey. Not the slightest allusion can be discovered in all Harvey's works and voluminous letters—at least, so says Mr. Grosart, who edited his works and made a most careful glossarial index of the whole.

Spenser, Sir James Harington, and many other literary Elizabethans from whom we should certainly expect some occasional references to their great contemporary, are all mute as a fish. What if they all went on the excellent principle of learning wisdom from proverbs, and took the advice, 'Never stir up Camarina,' as the best for the case in hand? Some such explanation on Baconian lines would do away with the otherwise insuperable difficulties, but they remain insuperable if Shakspere's personality is retained.

Both Shakespeare's 'Centurie of Prayse' and the 300 extra allusions published as a kind of sequel and complement to it, though they are the compilation of excellent orthodox researchers, are disappointing, and are very far from fulfilling the promise of their title-pages. One would suppose that the praises of the Stratford man were in the mouths of hundreds of his contemporaries; but, as a matter of fact or proof, that is far from being the case—indeed, we get very little to help us with regard to the manager actor from Stratford and *his* wonderful poems and plays. In fact, far too much has been made of the so-called contemporary recognition of Shakespeare's excellence.

It may be admitted that the poems of 'Venus

and Adonis' and 'Lucrece' did undoubtedly receive considerable attention and praise shortly after their production. But the *kind of mention* these poems received is not exactly of the nature we require for settling a piece of literary history. We have, strange to say, nothing definite from the great and eminent littérateurs or historians of the age to help us to a verdict. Such authorities absolutely refrain from mentioning Shakespeare at all. The most careful researches into the works of John Selden, Henry Vaughan, Lord Clarendon, Viscount St. Alban, Lord Brooke, Sir John Beaumont, and many other notabilities in the literary world, have not been able to discover even the most trivial allusion to these wonderful productions or to their author.

## CHAPTER X

### NEW EVIDENCE FROM BEN JONSON

THE problem of the Shakespeare poems and plays partakes somewhat of the nature of a chess game or problem. The problem cannot be possibly solved without a good previous knowledge of the game. Like chess, this problem has many openings of a different character and name, and unless the solver is fairly well acquainted with the moves in these respective openings, and the way they have developed by the best players, he will have poor chance either of winning his game or finding the solution required. For instance, there is the Southampton opening and there is the Herbert opening, both chiefly connected with the problem of the sonnets and poems, but each very different from the other in inception and progress. Then there is the Ben Jonson opening, which has been much used by players ever since it was so brought into prominence in the famous First Folio of 1623

I have already dealt with the first few peculiar moves of this in 'Is it Shakespeare?' and shall presently add a few instances of Ben Jonson's play before this opening of his was invented. Then there is the Dark Lady's gambit, and her opening as well—a much used one—but the problems connected therewith seem still unsolved. We have also the Ruy Lopez or Queen's Doctor's gambit—a fatal one, as it proved. The two Knights' and Mary Fitton's moves must be known, and many other such complicated positions that for a junior pressman to judge the result off hand from a superficial survey of the game is simply absurd. But they do it, sometimes even without so much as looking at the board.

Let us now consider how Ben Jonson gives us further help to solve the Baconian problem. I have considered his Ovid junior, his Sir John Daw, his Poet-Ape, his Cheverell the lawyer, and his Luscus, and have no reason to think that Ben Jonson's help has led us to make any grossly mistaken moves so far. Does he suggest any new moves? I think he does, and I think he gives them in the earlier plays, before the stage quarrel was at its height in 1601. The plays I refer to chiefly are 'The Case is Altered,' 'Every Man out of his Humour,' and 'Cynthia's Revels.'

After a few statements I will proceed to make some suggestions.

(1) Jonson's earlier plays are full of allusions to personalities of the time, generally literary men. He draws pictures of the humours and habits and phraseology of certain characters whose identity is in several cases absolutely certain. For instance, Asper, Crites, and Horace in three different plays are all meant, with absolute certainty, to represent Jonson himself. Antonio Balladino and Poet Nuntius in two early succeeding plays stand for Anthony Munday without a doubt. Carlo Buffone, in 'Every Man out of his Humour,' is Charles Chester with equal certainty. I mention these *certainties* because some of the Shakespearian experts are pleased to say *ex cathedrâ* that whoever builds on the identities from Jonson's plays builds on 'a sandy foundation.' My answer is, there is plenty of firm rock to build upon if you can only get down to it, and I assert that rock is being reached frequently nowadays.

Look at Posthast in 'Histriomastix.' What a time he and his critics were floundering together in the quicksands! He is firm on the rock now. So is Carlo Buffone at last, being now on the hard rock where Aubrey first of all put him.

Of my own work of this kind I forbear to say more. My statement, then, is this. Ben Jonson *did* allude personally to certain living characters, and in some cases they have been actually and undoubtedly unveiled to present day readers. The inference is that the Ben Jonson 'moves' in the Baconian problem may help considerably to a correct solution, and need not be sandy or unlawful.

(2) The next statement is that Ben Jonson's personal allusions are often 'composite'—that is to say, he blends two different persons sometimes under the same stage name. This was done for sake of safety; it gave him a loophole of escape if threatened by the authorities for libel or scandal. Therefore, if in our investigations of a character in Jonson's plays we discover certain clear traces of Marston, and again traces equally distinct of Gabriel Harvey or Francis Bacon, perhaps in the same person, we are not to say at once, 'Here is a contradiction and no identity of any value;' but we are to remember how and why Ben Jonson so mixes up his characters, and do our best to separate their several characteristics.

(3) The third statement is that Jonson in his earlier plays rings the changes on certain characters, which reappear under different names in

successive plays. This gives us useful help in identifying them. Thus, we have Asper, Crites, Horace, Puntarvolo, Amorphus, Valentine, and others of a similar nature, though none quite so marked as these. The first trio represents Jonson throughout; this is allowed by all. The second trio is untried ground, and as it seems to help the solution of the Bacon problem I offer a few suggestions.

The second trio of names seems to refer to one man throughout, because in all cases we have references to a great and boastful traveller who had been to Constantinople, the Tower of Babylon, Mesopotamia, the Indies, Jerusalem—in fact, such out of the way places as fall to the lot of few people to visit—while in addition to these we have particularly mentioned the 'Goodwin Sands.' Now, who *could* this be? We may be quite sure that the Tower of Babylon and the Goodwin Sands were not introduced without an object, nor were they likely to be chosen because they were the first names that came into Jonson's head at the time. Ben was not such a slipshod satirist as that. When he used names in his early comedies he meant something by them. I shall presently venture to suggest who this peculiar traveller was, and give some reasons and

corroborations with regard to what must *primâ facie* appear to be very ridiculous assertions.

Unfortunately, my suggestions cannot be fairly appreciated by the few extracts I can find space for here.

First I would say that Ben Jonson has generally some useful hint in the *name* of his characters, if we could only take it; for instance, Carlo Buffone is Charles Jester, *i.e.*, Charles Chester. There is the man *named* clearly, but no one saw it till quite recently. Now, I think Valentine gives us a hint, as a *name* pointing to Bacon. Valentine and Proteus of 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' were not likely to be unknown to such a dramatic critic as Jonson, or their true author, either. Jonson must know that Burbage's stable assistant was not equal to writing so courtly a play.

Moreover, in all these early plays by Jonson there is such abundance of allusion to well known living characters that this assured fact alone is sufficient to render my suggestions and conjectures *probable*. even if they seem at first sight rather far fetched. But in many cases I hope to pass the bounds of mere probability, and to show for certain that Bacon is the man to whom Jonson is referring.

What surprises me most in these my unveilings

of Jonson's hidden meaning is that not one of the many American and English students of Jonson, and of his share in the 'Poetomachia,' or poets' war, have noticed, so far as I know, these curious allusions.

I will take first the important though neglected play of

'THE CASE IS ALTERED.'

The date of this play is, fortunately, known with accuracy, for it was acted *after* Mere's 'Palladis Tamia' (1598), to which it refers, and *before* Nash's 'Lenten Stuff' (1599), which notices the 'merry cobbler' in the 'witty play of "The Case is Altered."' So we fix the date between 1598 and 1599, a narrow limit. It was not printed till 1609.

Two of the characters of the play are skits on Harvey and Nash, *Juniper* standing for Harvey, and *Onion* for Nash.* Antonio Balladino, another character, stands for Anthony Munday. These three are certain identifications—at least, I think they will appear so to anyone who will read their parts carefully in the play. But my present object is to show that the character of

* This has been shown at some length in *Notes and Queries* by Mr. Hart, who is, I believe, a Shakespearian.

Valentine is a skit on Francis Bacon, and shows on the face of it that Ben Jonson well knew who was the true author of the Shakespeare plays.

I will first draw attention to certain special *words* and *scenes* which point to Bacon, and next unveil the traveller to the Goodwin Sands, Constantinople, and other odd places.

*Words and Expressions.*

As Juniper and Onion can be clearly seen from the *words* used by them or of them in the play, so, I hold, is the case with Valentine. I quote from Cunningham's edition of Jonson, and my first extract is from vol. ii., p. 521, italicizing the significant words :—

'JUNIPER. Come on you precious rascal *Sir Valentine*, I'll give you a health i' faith, for the heavens, you *mad Capricio, hold hook and line.*'

Now, 'Capricio' is almost a test word for Bacon —it is used by Harvey, Marston, and other contemporaries, to denote a phantastical and capricious intellect, as well as here, too, by Ben Jonson. None of them *name* Bacon—they dare not—but no one suits the several allusions so well. Take Jonson, for instance, in 'The Poetaster' (Act III., Scene i.). He brings on Tucca, talking to Histrio, a player (viz., Alleyn, of the Fortune Theatre, as

appears plainly by the allusions), about the players and poets of the time,—

'There are some of you players honest gentlemanlike scoundrels, and suspected to have some wit, as well *as your poets both at drinking and breaking of jests, and are companions for gallants.* Dos't thou not know that there?

HISTRIO. No, I assure you, Captain.'

Tucca then recommends this Capricio as one of the poets who 'pens high, lofty, in a new stalking strain,' and that if Histrio secured his services, 'if he pen for thee once,' that then Histrio would soon be a rich man.

Now, no successful or popular playwright at this period suits Jonson's allusions so well as the author of the Shakespeare plays, and by using the name Capricio Jonson shows that he knew the *real* author, for no one ever called the Stratford man either phantastical or capricious—*he* was an honest, sensible, money making man.

No, Capricio stood for Bacon here (1601), just as mad Capricio stood for him in 'The Case is Altered' (1599); but this harping on the same word in two nearly successive plays was, I suppose, too obvious, and so Ben Jonson in the next edition of 'The Poetaster' altered Capricio to Pantalabus, and got rid of the Baconian allusion here, just as

he got rid of the Baconian allusion 'Knight' elsewhere in a second edition.

'Capricious' is used again in 'The Case is Altered' in a very significant manner, by Valentine to Juniper (Bacon to Harvey), and as we have both 'capricious' and 'capricio' in two Shakespeare plays* that hail from the same period, or a little earlier, we get strong additional force to the suggestion that under the name of Valentine we have marked allusions to the real author of the immortal plays, whose odd words would be fresh in the minds of the play going critics among the audience, for whom Jonson especially prepared his numerous allusions. In fact, Jonson in his early plays especially strove to depict the 'humours' of the different classes of society, the Court ('Cynthia's Revels'), and the literary circles, and he 'spiced' his plays with semi-concealed personal allusions, often purposely enigmatical and 'composite.' But they were comparatively easy to discover then, for the dress, action, and theatrical make up all helped to point to the man or woman alluded to.

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* In one passage Touchstone says to Audrey, 'I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet honest Ovid was among the Goths.' (A very Baconian pun, for 'Goths' and 'goats' were pronounced almost alike.) See 'As You Like It,' III. ii. 7.

We nowadays are, of course, without this advantage of seeing a personal caricature, but, in spite of Jonson's cautious allusions, many of his caricatures and topical allusions have been discovered recently, and I am proud, naturally, to claim my share in this work.

I next come to a very marked allusion in the extraordinary health which Juniper-Harvey gives to Valentine-Bacon. 'I'll give you a health, i' faith,' he says, '*hold hook and line*,' and that is the end of the scene, and they leave the stage together (Act I., Scene i.).

To the man in the street, or even in the club, nowadays, this would be pure nonsense; but at that time it was pure Shakespeare, taken from a piece only recently acted, and would be recognised as 'a play-scrap' by the critical frequenters of the drama. It is to be found in '2 Henry IV.,' II. iv., 171, where Pistol says: 'Hold hook and line, say I; Down, down, dogs!' and it occurs nowhere else in the whole of Shakespeare.

If this and many other almost equally striking allusions to the Shakespeare plays do not bring Valentine into premeditated connection with the real author, whom Jonson clearly knew, I do not understand evidence.

The next significant word I take is 'hieroglyphic.'

It occurs in the first meeting of Juniper and Valentine:—

'JUNIPER. What, Valentine! . . . tell me how thou dost, sweet ingle.

'VALENTINE. Faith, Juniper, the better to see thee thus *frælich*.

'JUN. Nay, 'slid I'm no *changeling*; I am Juniper still. I keep the pristinate; ha, you mad *hieroglyphic*, when shall we swagger?

'VAL. Hieroglyphic! What meanest thou by that?

'JUN. Mean! od'so is it not a good word, man? What, stand upon meaning with your friends?' and presently he adds: 'Valentine, I prithee *ruminate* thyself welcome. What, *fortuna de la guerra*.'

And then Balthasar comes in shortly afterwards, and also welcomes Valentine:—

'BALTH. Welcome, sweet rogue . . . And how is't, man? What *allo coragio*?'

Now, I hold that the words I have drawn attention to by the italics point to Shakespeare and his recent plays indubitably. The two foreign exclamations occur in 'Love's Labour's Lost' and in 'All's Well.'

The little Indian *changeling* plays a conspicuous part in 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' and also

most probably in the blind Indian Boy Prince of the 'Gesta Grayorum,' and thereby hangs a Baconian tale, or tail, which no one has managed properly to adjust. Ben in the witness-box on this subject would be very interesting, I have no doubt.

*Frælich*, or frolic, is used also in Shakespeare, but as Jonson brings this word up in several other places where Bacon seems intended, there seems to have been some hidden reference here which is now lost.

But when Jonson makes two different characters of his play welcome Valentine in certain outlandish expressions recently heard and known through Shakespeare's plays, we come to but one conclusion, and that conclusion will be strongly corroborated by the fact that Valentine is addressed as 'you mad hieroglyphic.' What an extraordinary fashion of speech! It is almost as bad as calling the Billingsgate woman in the tale an 'isosceles triangle.' What could the word possibly mean as applied to Valentine? First let us see what was meant by the word. The 'New English Dictionary' gives this,—'A figure, device, or sign, having some hidden meaning; a secret or enigmatical symbol or emblem.' Ah! this gives us the clue—it was

'Bacon's head' which he promised, if needs be, to show to Southampton in 'Lucrece.'* It was the hieroglyphic $F^{R}_{B}$ which Bacon used in varying forms to put at the head of 'Lucrece' and other 'hidden' works of his. And Jonson, like Marston, knew the secret, and we credit Jonson with this knowledge, especially since we are well aware that he used a hieroglyphic himself of a nearly exactly similar kind against Bacon as Cheveril the lawyer, and also in the dedication of his 'Epigrams' says plainly that he, at least, had no cause to hide himself under a hieroglyphic—for 'I had nothing in my conscience, to expressing of which I did need a *cypher*.' Marston knew Bacon's hieroglyphic, too, and referred to its one letter which bounded or enclosed the others—*i.e.*, the F of $F^{R}_{B}$. This was in his contemporaneous 'Satires,' so it is not likely that the omnivorous reader and critic Jonson would be ignorant of this device or *hieroglyphic*, as he was the first to call it.

Harvey used the word once or twice, though not quite in this sense, and also the words *changeling* and *capricious*, so the words would come in aptly in a dialogue between Harvey (Juniper) and Valentine (Bacon), and Ben could have thrown it upon Harvey if challenged by Cheverel the

* See 'Is it Shakespeare?' chapter I., for this.

lawyer, or any other offended aristocrat, and so escaped. Ben was clever, for the same plan could have been adopted with regard to Capricio. But Capricio was too marked, and he had to alter that.

There are other words, such as *alabaster*, p. 548 (Richard III. and Harvey), and *assoil*, p. 549 (Puttenham—*i.e.*, Bacon—in this peculiar sense), and *peregrination through Mesopotamia*, all pointing to Bacon and Harvey, though the last is peculiarly Baconian; also *keisar*, etc. But we will leave the *words* pointing to Bacon, and come to the

*Scenes which indicate Bacon.*

These scenes are Act II., Scene iv., and Act IV., Scene i. They deserve reading carefully, and I have no doubt that others more expert than myself will be able to add much that has escaped me.

In the former scene we have Valentine appealed to as an authority on *fencing in Italy*, and on *theatres and the drama in Italy*. And when we remember how well Bacon, from his friendship with Essex, must have been acquainted with Saviolo's book of fencing, which was dedicated to Essex, and how Shakespeare also borrowed from it in his plays, and still further how Bacon-Shakespeare drew his plays and characters

from Italy—if, I say, we remember these things in reading through the scene, we shall not hesitate to admit that Bacon is lying *perdu* there. Harvey is mixed in as well, I do not deny that, but I hold Bacon to be the principal character in this scene.

The other scene is a remarkable one indeed (Act IV., Scene i.), and I cannot understand how the stinkards and groundlings could sit through it, as far as the words go; but doubtless there was ludicrous action and make up in the three characters which passed it off satisfactorily. The action is of the nature of a dialogue between two finical foreign pages, who meet in a private room in a nobleman's house, and take the opportunity to practise the last fashionable society phrases and motions then used when aristocrats, who had travelled, met each other in public places.

I take this scene to be, from beginning to end, a fine and cleverly arranged Jonsonian skit on the extraordinary frequency of courtesy words and finical compliments used by that master of decorum Bacon-Shakespeare in the plays already acted.

It is well known that the author of the immortal plays was distinguished above all contemporary writers and dramatists by his excep-

tionally frequent use of such courtesy phrases as 'good-morrow,' 'good-day,' 'bonjour' (once used by an extraordinary anachronism in 'Titus Andronicus'), and other polite salutations, when gentlemen meet each other. Indeed, we know Bacon studied these phrases and put them in his 'Promus,' to be brought forth on proper occasions, and wrote on the back of the leaf of the manuscript 'Formularies and Elegancies.' We have in this scene of Jonson's play a very fine list of Shakespearian 'Formularies and Elegancies' brought before the audience for their amusement and ridicule, and it is Valentine that is being covertly satirized, though he is not on the stage as a speaker.

How we know that it is Valentine who fits these allusions is in this way. The two pages had just begun their practice, when Onion calls from without, 'Sirrah Finio!' on which Pacue, the other page, exclaims, 'Mort Dieu, le paisant!'—that is to say, ''Sdeath, it's the peasant!' Onion then comes on the scene, and says, 'Didst thou see Valentine?' and the other page answers, 'Valentine? No.' Now, the point of this is only clear when we remember that Valentine in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' is once called (very inappropriately, as it seems) 'peasant Valentine,' and

it seems that sometimes this word 'peasant' was applied by contemporaries to the author of 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona.'

So it seems that one of the pages, hearing a voice calling out, at once, conscience-struck at what they were going to do, thought it was the very man they were going to parody and ridicule, and cries out: ''Sdeath, here's our peasant himself!' Onion, overhearing this, and knowing well enough who 'the peasant' was (for Onion was Nash, who was strongly suspected by Harvey of aiming at great folks by this very word), says: 'What, was Valentine here, or have you seen him?' But I fear I have overlaboured this to make it clear.

I hold that Jonson, with great stagecraft, thus brought Valentine in merely to prepare the critical audience for what was really coming. By somewhat similar 'business' did Toole make himself heard before he appeared, by calling out something in his whimsical way while in the street or passage outside.

But in these days of Shakespeare knowledge we do not require such a preliminary hint as Jonson vouchsafed to the critical playgoers. Nearly every complimentary word or phrase in this most interesting and neglected scene of 'The Case is Altered' is to be found in the Shakespeare

plays that had been recently written. 'Bonjour;' 'Good-morrow;' 'Good signior;' 'Glad to see you;' 'I return you most kind thanks, sir;' 'Dieu vous garde;' 'God save you;' 'Welcome, signior;' 'By this hand;' 'Faith, exceeding well;' 'Pray be covered, I beseech you, sir;' 'Pardonnez-moi, you wrong me' — all these occur, and some of them an extraordinary number of times, in the plays already known.

I hold that I have sufficiently shown that Jonson referred to the Shakespeare plays and their author, who was the very glass of fashion in his courteous decorum, which art he certainly never learnt among the yokels of Stratford-on-Avon, nor among the stable boys and ostlers in Burbage's pay.

Having thus, I hope, somewhat prepared the ground for the entrance of the great traveller Valentine, who was acquainted with the Goodwin Sands, the Tower of Babylon, Constantinople, and Mesopotamia (blessed word!), he shall introduce himself with 'Bonjour, messieurs, alla coragio; by this hand, you have wronged me.'

The 'great traveller' is first brought into notice just after Juniper had called Valentine a 'mad hieroglyphic' (p. 520), and Juniper proceeds to recall these travels thus,—