THE FIVE AUTHORS OF 'SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS'

THE FIVE AUTHORS
OF
'SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS'

BY H. T. S. FORREST
Indian Civil Service.

LONDON
CHAPMAN & DODD, LTD.
MCMXXIII

Cahill & Co., Ltd., London and Dublin.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	7
Chapter I.	THE NEW THEORY	9
Chapter II.	PERSONAL SONNETS—FIRST BATCH	21
Chapter III.	PERSONAL SONNETS—SECOND BATCH	57
Chapter IV.	PERSONAL SONNETS—THIRD BATCH	85
Chapter V.	THE DRAMATIC SONNETS	122
Chapter VI.	THE NON-SERIAL OR OCCASIONAL SONNETS	173
Chapter VII.	THE ORDER OF THE SONNETS	187
Chapter VIII.	THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE RIVAL POETS	202
Chapter IX.	THE NEW THEORY AND TWO OLD PROBLEMS	215
Chapter X.	THE THEORY DEFENDED	225

APPENDICES

App. i.	DIAGRAMMATIC SCHEME OF THE SONNETS	245
App. ii.	DISTRIBUTION OF THE 154 SONNETS	246
App. iii.	FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE-PAGE OF THE 1609 QUARTO	250
App. iv.	FACSIMILE OF THE DEDICATION OF THE 1609 QUARTO	251
App. v.	TEXT OF THE 1609 QUARTO	252

PREFACE

In the following pages an entirely new solution of the 'Problem of the *Sonnets*' is propounded and demonstrated. Compared with most of its predecessors, it will, I fear, be found dull and unromantic—it has nothing to do with Mary Fitton or William Hughes, The Ideal Man or the Doctrine of a Celibate Church. 'Competitive Sonnetteering' is the *mot d'énigme*, and stripped to its essentials my new theory may be stated shortly thus:

Of the one hundred and fifty-four sonnets published in 1609 under the title of "*Shakespeares Sonnets*," Shakespeare was responsible for rather less than a quarter, while nine-tenths of the remainder were contributed in varying proportions by four other poets (who may be identified with more or less certainty as Barnes, Warner, Donne, and Daniel) writing in competition with him and each other in a series of private sonnet-tournaments, which were fought out some time between 1594 and 1599, under the auspices of the Earl of Southampton.

A statement of this theory in its complete form is given in *Chapter I.*

Chapters II., III. and IV. present the eighty-eight sonnets of the eight 'Personal' or 'Patron and Poet' series, each chapter dealing with one of the three 'batches' in which they were successively presented to Southampton for judgment. These eight series are by far the most interesting section of the *Sonnets*. They are all historically connected, and form a more or less homogeneous whole; the four contributors, Shakespeare, Barnes, Warner, and Donne, remain the same throughout; they speak in their own persons; and their contributions are full of personal allusions to the Patron and to each other. *Chapter V.* presents the fifty-two sonnets of the five 'Dramatic' or 'Lover and Mistress' series. Each of these series is merely a self-contained example of the art of competitive sonnetteering; the contributors are (except in one unimportant case) three in number instead of four; they are not the same throughout; they speak not in their own persons, but in that of their employer (Southampton or another); and there is a complete absence of repartee and personal allusion. In these four chapters each series (whether four-poet or three-poet) has been printed *across the double-page*, with each sonnet standing under its proper author, and in its proper order. And to each series has been attached its quota of notes discussing the various treatments of the common theme, collating 'verbal parallelisms,' calling attention to examples of the 'characteristics' of the various authors, explaining personal allusions, and, in short, giving a detailed interpretation of each sonnet on the lines demanded by The Theory.

Chapter VI. presents the fourteen remaining non-serial or 'Occasional' sonnets. Though only three of them have any relation to The Theory, I have thought it desirable, for the sake of completeness, to annotate all of them in the same way as the serial sonnets, mainly with reference to the question of authorship—Shakespearean or non-Shakespearean. *Chapter VII.* uses The Theory to illuminate the obscure question of the 'Order' of the Sonnets, *i.e.*, the way in which they were arranged in the original Quarto. *Chapter VIII.* gives an abstract of the evidence on which my

identifications of Shakespeare's four fellow-competitors are based. *Chapter IX.* reviews from the new angle of vision provided by The Theory the two well-worn problems, 'The People of the *Sonnets*,' and 'Mr. W. H.' And *Chapter X.* anticipates and attempts to meet certain more or less obvious objections to my general thesis.

In the Appendix will be found the text of the *Sonnets* with the original spelling and punctuation. The text used in the body of the work is (by kind permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons) that of the Everyman Shakespeare, while the text of Appendix V., Shake-speares Sonnets, is by the courtesy of the Clarendon Press, taken from that published in the Tudor and Stuart Library. The quotations from the notes of previous commentators are taken almost exclusively from Mr. Knox Pooler's excellent edition in the Arden Series (1918).

I desire to express my gratitude to my two friends Mr. R. Sheepshanks and Mr. H. Wardle—to the former for much valuable advice, to the latter for substantial assistance in the task of preparing this book for publication.

That all Shakespearean scholars will, sooner or later, agree in accepting the general thesis of 'Competitive Sonnetteering' as the one and only clue to the complicated series of puzzles presented by the *Sonnets* seems to me to be quite certain. My own detailed analyses of these puzzles are bound, of course, to contain many errors, but these errors will be found to be errors of detail only; I am entirely confident that the more critically my main position is examined, and the more severely it is tested, the more clearly will its essential soundness be made to appear.

H. T. S. FORREST.

Budleigh Salterton, September,
1923.

CHAPTER I.—THE NEW THEORY.

In 1609 there was published in London, under the title of "*Shake-speares Sonnets*,"[1] a small quarto containing a collection of 154 'English-form' sonnets, to which was appended a narrative poem in Rime Royal, entitled *A Lover's Complaint*. The publisher was a stationer's assistant named Thomas Thorpe, and the literary historians agree in holding that the publication was a 'piratical' one, *i.e.*, a publisher's venture made without the author's knowledge or consent. The venture appears to have been a failure; no second edition was printed, and no allusion either to the collection itself or to individual lines or passages is traceable in contemporary literature. In fact, when some thirty years later the *Sonnets* were reprinted (in a mangled and defective form) as part of a collection of Shakespearean and pseudo-Shakespearean poetry, they were referred to in the preface in terms which clearly show that the editor, John Benson, regarded them as an entirely new 'discovery.' They remained more or less neglected till the latter part of the eighteenth century, when Steevens 're-discovered' Thorpe's text, and published it as a supplement to his edition of Shakespearean quartos. Since this republication the *Sonnets* have attracted an increasingly large share of critical attention, and the many biographical puzzles which they present have given rise to an enormous mass of speculative writing—some of it of a very wild character. But many of our soundest Shakespeareans, from Steevens himself onwards, have found their chief stumbling-block not in these *biographical* puzzles but in the *literary* difficulty that the *Sonnets* exhibit a good deal of very indifferent verse, and convict the author of having shewn himself on a good many occasions to be a very indifferent artist.

Both classes of difficulties, the biographical as well as the literary, are removed by my new theory of 'Competitive Sonnetteering' which is set forth in detail below. This theory owes nothing to 'outside' sources, being based solely on an analysis of the text of the original quarto. And I am convinced that any unprejudiced investigator who will take the trouble to subject this text to a really strict and systematic analysis of the kind attempted in the following pages will find himself confronted by such a mass of unexpected, and indeed unprecedented, phenomena that he will be forced to the conclusion—quite apart from any consideration of the correctness or otherwise of the *synthetic* part of my theory—that Shakespeare could not have been the sole, or even the main, author of the *Sonnets*.

I have considered several ways of introducing this new theory, and after much hesitation have decided to employ 'The Historical Method'—that is to say, I am going to ask the kind reader to be good enough to listen to a circumstantial account of how the idea of composite authorship first came into my mind, and how it was gradually elaborated into the complete Theory which he will find set forth at the end of this chapter. The disadvantage of this personal way of presenting a thesis is that it makes one appear insufferably egotistical; and I can only hope that he will accept my assurance that I

[1] The unusual *form* of the title deserves notice; there appears to be no contemporary parallel.

am adopting it for no other reason than that I think that it is, in the long run, the method most likely to economize his time and attention.

. . . . . .

Well, then, it happened in the early summer of 1918 that being then resident "somewhere east of Suez" and much afflicted by one of the vilest of the many vile climates to be met with in those regions of our planet I had sought relief in a well-thumbed volume of Shakespeare, and after reading for the twentieth or thirtieth time that lovely poem *Venus and Adonis* was idly turning over the pages of the *Sonnets*, and wondering why they always aroused in me so strong a feeling of repulsion, when a happy thought flashed across my mind—Why not do what I had never done before, read the *Sonnets* right through from beginning to end, and see if I cannot appreciate them as one ought to appreciate the lyrical *magnum opus* of the greatest of all our poets? I set to work then and there; but, as I plodded on conscientiously from sonnet to sonnet with the music of the *Venus* still ringing in my ears, I became aware of an ever-deepening sense of disillusionment and disappointment until, at last, about half-way through the collection, I found myself exclaiming—"Shakespeare simply *couldn't* have written some of this rubbish"—and, although I did not know it, my new Theory was born!

Shutting up the *Sonnets* with a sigh of relief, I hastened to consult the only books about Shakespeare to be found in the house—the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and Sir W. Raleigh's monograph in the Men of Letters series—in order to discover the amount of critical authority available for the support of my newly-born idea of 'composite authorship.' To my great astonishment, I found that though there had been any amount of theorizing about the *Sonnets*—about their date, the people they were addressed and dedicated to, their autobiographical value, and so forth—the possibility of their being the work of more than one author seemed never to have been considered. Shaken but still clinging obstinately to my faith in my own judgment I refused to be put off by this unaccountable oversight on the part of the authorities, and made up my mind to follow up the clue I had hit upon to the end, no matter into what heresies or absurdities it might lead me.

For the next three weeks or so, therefore, I devoted the whole of my not over-abundant leisure to the task of examining minutely every single one of the hundred and fifty-four sonnets in the collection. And at the end of that period, I found that I had succeeded in producing two lists, the *first* consisting of sonnets so bad that they couldn't have been written by Shakespeare, and the *second* consisting of sonnets so good that they couldn't have been written by anybody else. Here are the two lists (I copy them from my rough notes made at the time):

† *List No.* 1. (Non Shakespearean.) 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 35, 38, 42, 46, 47, 48, 51, 53, 54, 56, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 69, 72, 81, 82, 84, 93, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 111, 112, 113, 118, 119, 122, 124, 125, 128, 135, 145, 151, 153.

* *List No.* 2. (Shakespearean.) 1, 2, 3, 18, 26, 29, 33, 64, 66, 73, 78, 79, 102, 106, 132, 143, 144, 146.

The remaining eighty sonnets I had marked as 'doubtful.'

In compiling these lists I was guided solely by *æsthetic* considerations. In every sonnet in the first list I had found a serious flaw or flaws—confusion of thought or language, banality or clumsiness of expression, preciosity or absurdity of phrase, deficiency in rhythm or rhyme, etc.—which I could not conceive of as existing in the work of the author of *Venus and Adonis*. And in the second list I included no sonnet which had not completely satisfied my mind and my ear as being the work of Shakespeare at his lyrical best.

Now in the course of my repeated perusals of the text, I had noticed (as, of course,

the most casual reader must notice) that in a good many cases one sonnet is clearly a continuation of its predecessor and forms with it a single poem. So my next very obvious step was to try to pick out all these 'sequences' in the hope that they might supply some additional items for my two lists. After a careful search, I discovered no less than twenty-two cases in which the connection appeared to be quite certain. Here is the list :

List of 'Sequences.' Nos. 5-6, 9-10, 15-16, 27-28, 33-34, 44-45, 50-51, 67-68, 73-74, 78-79, 50-51, 67-68, 73-74, 78-79, 82-83, 85-86, 88-89-90, 91-92-93, 98-99, 100-101, 109-110, 113-114.

This list gave me nine new items for my first list, *viz.*, Nos. 6, 10, 15, 50, 68, 83, 91, 92, 114 ; and two for my second list, viz., Nos. 34, 74.

My lists, therefore, in their final form read as follows :—

† *List No.* 1. (Non-Shakespearean.) 65 Sonnets, *viz.*: Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 35, 38, 42, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 72, 81, 82, 83, 84, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 111, 112, 113, 114, 118, 119, 122, 124, 125, 128, 135, 145, 151, 153.

* *List No* 2. (*Shakespearean.*) 20 Sonnets, *viz.*: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 18, 26, 29, 33, 34, 64, 66, 73, 74, 78, 79, 102, 106, 132, 143, 144, 146.

At this point I must digress a little in order to explain that a few days after the birth of The Theory in the circumstances mentioned above, I had written to the nearest bookseller (three hundred miles away), ordering Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* and any reasonably modern annotated edition of the *Sonnets* he might have in stock or be able to procure elsewhere. And now, just as I had completed these two lists, the *Life* arrived, together with an intimation that the annotated edition was not available but had been ordered from Home. This meant, in the then prevailing conditions, a delay of anything from two to three months ; so there was nothing for it but to await its arrival with what patience I might, and meanwhile get all I could out of the *Life*.

Sir Sidney Lee's book was my first introduction to *Sonnets* criticism. I found to my great satisfaction, that he had treated the *Sonnets* with exceptional fulness, especially in the matter of their affinity with the work of Shakespeare's contemporaries and the common debt which he and they owed to the sonnetteering schools of France and Italy. I read most carefully everything he had to say on the subject of the *Sonnets* and sonnetting, checking the references by the text ; and I eventually came to the provisional conclusion (which I have seen no reason to alter since), that he had established his three main points, *viz.* :

(1.) The *Sonnets* are conventional in tone and sentiment, and cannot be considered as reflecting to any material degree the author's real emotions.

(2.) The 'hero' of the *Sonnets* is the third Earl of Southampton.

(3.) The *Sonnets* were not printed in their proper order.

This third point of Sir Sidney's cheered me considerably, as it went to confirm a strong suspicion I had formed as the result of my repeated investigations of the text, namely, that the *Sonnets* had been written on not more than ten or a dozen themes, and that the individual sonnets belonging to these themes had been scattered more or less at random about the collection. Furthermore, an *obiter dictum* of Sir Sidney's on *The Phœnix and the Turtle* had given a definite bent to my speculations as to how or why the work of other men had been mixed up with Shakespeare's and published under his name. Speaking of that strange poem, Sir Sidney says : "It is chiefly memorable for the evidence it affords of Shakespeare's amiable acquiescence in a fantastic scheme of professional homage on the part of contemporary poets to a patron of promising repute."

This sentence linking itself up in my mind with my two ideas of 'composite authorship' and 'dislocated themes' at once suggested the hypothesis that my 'non-Shakespearean' sonnets were the work of some other poet or poets writing in rivalry with Shakespeare on certain specified topics or themes in pursuance of some "scheme of professional homage" to Southampton. I determined to test this hypothesis thoroughly, and as a first step in this direction set myself to make a list of these themes or topics, and to sort out the sonnets belonging to each theme from the jumble-heap. This proved to be a lengthy and at times a very exasperating business, but eventually after much intending of the mind and many reshufflings I managed to produce the following list. (I transcribe, as always, from my rough notes.) :

List of Themes.

Theme No. (1).—The Poet urges The Patron to marry. Seventeen Sonnets, viz.: Nos. *1, *2, *3, 4, †5, †6, †7, †8, †9, †10, 11, †12, 13, 14, †15, †16, †17.

Theme No. (2).—The Poet promises to immortalise his Patron in his verse. Twelve Sonnets, viz.: Nos. *18, 19, †21, †53, †54, 55, †60, 62, †63, *64, †65, †81.

Theme No. (3).—The Poet forgets his troubles in thinking of his Patron. Four Sonnets, viz.: Nos. *29, 30, †31, 37.

Theme No. (4).—The Poet dedicates his sonnets to his Patron. Four sonnets, viz.: Nos. †23, *26, †38, †105.

Theme No. (5).—The Poet makes excuses for not writing. Sixteen sonnets, viz.: Nos. †59, *78, *79, 80, †82, †83, †84, 85, 86, †100, †101, *102, †103, 104, *106, 108.

Theme No. (6).—The Poet absent from the object of his affections (man or woman uncertain) describes his painful feelings. Twenty-one sonnets, viz.: Nos. †24, †27, †28, 43, 44, 45, †46, †47, †48, †50, †51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 75, †97, †98, †99, †113, †114.

Theme No. (7).—The eternal Triangle. Charges and Counter-charges of infidelity, neglect, and breach of friendship (persons indistinct). Thirty-one sonnets, viz.: Nos. 25, *33, *34, †35, 36, 40, 41, †42, †56, †69, 70, 94, 95, 96, 109, 110, †111, †112, 115, 116, 117, †118, †119, 120, 121, 123, †124, †125, 133, 134, *144.

Theme No. (8).—The Poet anticipates imminent death. Eight sonnets, viz.: Nos. †22, 32, 39, 71, †72, *73, *74, 76.

Theme No. (9).—The Poet anticipates estrangement from the object of his affections (man or woman uncertain). Eight sonnets, viz.: Nos. 49, 87, 88, 89, 90, †91, †92, †93.

Theme No. (10).—The Poet reproaches his dark and fickle mistress. Nine sonnets, viz.: Nos. 127, 131, *132, 137, 141, 147, 148, 150, 152.

Theme No. (11).—The Will sonnets. Four sonnets, viz.: Nos. †135, 136, 142, *143.

Miscellaneous Sonnets, i.e., unconnected with any special theme. Twenty sonnets, viz.: Nos. 20, *66, †67, †68, 77, †107, †122, 126, †128, 129, 130, 138, 139, 140, †145, *146, 149, †151, †153, 154.

N.B.—Sonnets marked with an asterisk * belong to *List No.* 2 above (Shakespearean). Sonnets marked with an obelus † belong to *List No.* 1 above (Non-Shakespearean). Sonnets unmarked belong to the 'doubtful' list.

By this time I had become very familiar with the text of the *Sonnets*, and I found that my first vaguely-formed idea of composite authorship, *i.e.*, of a poet or poets writing in rivalry with Shakespeare on certain definite themes had gradually crystallized into a belief that there were at least three such poets, and that the work of each of these three could be more or less easily distinguished from that of Shakespeare and the other two by certain peculiar characteristics of thought and style—poet A's chief characteristic being graceful writing marred by a certain 'sloppiness' of thought and expression, poet B's a clear but pedestrian style strongly flavoured with technical legal phraseology, and poet C's super-subtle thought expressed in obscure and extravagant language. I accordingly christened them The Minor Poet, The Lawyer, and The Concettist respectively, and set to work to distribute among them as many of the sixty-five Sonnets in List No. 1 as I could. I was more successful than I expected, and without much difficulty produced the following list :

1. **The Minor Poet.** Ten sonnets, viz.: Nos. 7, 8, 38, 54, 60, 72, 98, 99, 118, 119.
2. **The Lawyer.** Thirteen sonnets, viz.: Nos. 6, 9, 21, 31, 35, 46, 65, 69, 82, 83, 84, 111, 125.
3. **The Concettist.** Nine sonnets, viz.: Nos. 16, 24, 53, 59, 81, 100, 103, 113, 114.
4. **Unassigned.** Thirty-three sonnets, viz.: Nos. 5, 10, 12, 15, 17, 22, 23, 27, 28, 42, 47, 48, 50, 51, 56, 63, 67, 68, 91, 92, 93, 97, 101, 105, 107, 112, 122, 124, 128, 135, 145, 151, 153.

Another point, too, I had come to see more and more clearly. The striking samenesses in the 'thoughts' of sonnets belonging to the same theme, and the really extraordinary number of repetitions in the language ('verbal parallelisms' was the name I eventually decided to give them), which they exhibited could mean only one thing, and that was that the competing poets were not merely dealing with the same themes, but were in each case writing with their eyes on an actual 'copy'—a sonnet or set of sonnets of which they had to make 'a free translation' so to speak. It was not hard to guess which of them was most likely to have furnished the 'copy,' and so I arrived at the general idea of "*Shakespeare's Sonnets*" being in essence a collection of competitive exercises composed by Shakespeare and some other poets on certain set themes with Shakespeare's contribution as the model for imitation in each case.

This sent me back again to my List of Themes. And here I found at once a very striking confirmation of the accuracy of this general idea. If the reader will kindly refer to the list on the previous page, he will find that in no less than six out of the ten Themes the number of sonnets is either four or a multiple of four, viz.: Nos. 3, 4 and 11, four; Nos. 8 and 9, eight; No. 2, twelve; and No. 5, sixteen. This fact considered along with my identification of *three* rival poets made me almost certain in my own mind that Shakespeare's rivals were these three, and these three only. And this belief was still further strengthened when I discovered that it did not clash in any way with the provisional distribution I had made among these three poets of half the obelized sonnets comprised in List No. 1—negative evidence, it is true, but still when the laws of chance were considered, evidence of a highly significant character. Another significant circumstance also not easily reconcilable with the laws of chance forced itself on my attention. This was the circumstance that among the twenty-one sonnets which made up the Absence (No. 6) series, there was *not a single one* starred as Shakespearean. This fact considered along with the number of sonnets in the series (21), naturally suggested the idea that in this series Shakespeare's contribution was—for some reason or other—missing, and the number of poets, therefore, three instead of four. For the same reason I came to the same conclusion about Series No. 10, except that in the case of this series the poet who had dropped out could not be Shakespeare, inasmuch as one of the sonnets (No. 132) belonged to the Shakespearean list (No. 2), but one of the three others. This train of reasoning left, it is true, two Themes, viz., No. 1 (seventeen sonnets), and No. 7 (thirty-one sonnets) unaccounted for, but I was more than satisfied with the measure of success I had attained, and very well content to leave these two exceptions to be investigated later on.

So with the idea of four rival poets firmly fixed in my mind I started with great confidence to take what was plainly indicated as the next step in my investigations, namely, to distribute the 'competitive' sonnets among these four competitors, Theme by Theme. This I found a long and difficult task; but it was made extraordinarily interesting by the discovery, as each new Theme was taken up, of many fresh instances of identity of thought, of 'verbal parallelism,' and of idiosyncrasy of style and language—all working out perfectly into 'a concatenation accordingly.' I had worked through Themes Nos. one to five, and hammered them out into practically the identical shape in which they will be presented in this book, when the long-expected annotated

edition of the *Sonnets* arrived in the shape of Mr. Knox Pooler's just-published volume in the Arden Series.

The arrival of this book marked a very definite stage in the development of my ideas about The Theory, and the way in which I should treat it. I suspended forthwith my labours on my themes and lists, and devoted the whole of my attention for the next month or two to Mr. Knox Pooler's notes and explanations. I read the book through from beginning to end, with the greatest care, twice. It yielded me a very substantial addition to my stock of information about the *Sonnets* and their problems, much enlightenment with regard to the various passages which had puzzled me, and a quite satisfactory number of points which went to confirm the conclusions of The Theory. But the evidence it afforded of the care and thoroughness with which practically every line in the collection had been weighed and tested by successive generations of commentators forced upon me the depressing conviction, that if The Theory was to be given a fair chance it would not be enough for me merely to give an outline sketch of it in a magazine article (as had been my intention), for others to fill up if they chose; but I must write a regular book in which each series should be considered in detail from the point of view of The Theory, sonnet by sonnet.

The history of the development of The Theory from this point onwards to its completion about a year later, becomes so complicated that I have found it impossible to continue it on chronological lines. Mr. Pooler's book pointed out to me many promising-looking paths, and I determined to explore them all. Some of them led me to rich tracts of undiscovered country; others proved to be mere connections between these main paths; and not a few of them ended in a cul-de-sac. A detailed account of my wanderings could be of no possible interest to the reader, even if I were able to set them down with any approach to accuracy, which I very much doubt. But the actual fruits of these explorations—the 'discoveries' I made from time to time of facts which went to swell the steadily-increasing mass of evidence in favour of The Theory—stand on record in my notes, and I will note here three of the more important.

Discovery No. I. The Link Sonnet. (No. 121.)

The kind reader will remember that my Series No. 7—the largest of all, consisting of no less than thirty-one sonnets—did not fit in with either the 'Four-poet' or the 'Three-poet' theory, and was left for future investigation. I struggled with the problem of this series for a long time before it dawned on me that sonnet No. 121, which was worrying me a good deal by its truculent tone (so out of harmony with the others in which the poets admit the error of their ways), was a reply to some sonnets in the series, and was in turn alluded to in some others. Working out this clue I found the series fall into line as if by magic. The thirty-one sonnets resolved themselves swiftly and easily into a series of eight in which the four poets gently chide The Patron for his neglect of them, a single sonnet (No. 121) in which The Patron makes a truculent reply, a series of sixteen in which the four poets hasten to make him an *amende honorable*, and six sonnets on an 'Intrigue' *motif*, which were seen to form a separate 'three-poet' series (with Shakespeare as one of the three).

Discovery No. II. The distinction between the 'Personal' and the 'Dramatic' series.

When examining the different series for 'verbal parallelisms' I noticed several instances in which a competitor was obviously holding up to ridicule a line or phrase used by one of his rivals; but it was some time before I realized the great lengths to

which this parody business had been carried, and longer still before it struck me that some of the lines which were puzzling me owed their difficulty to the fact that the authors were making a concealed personal allusion (usually of an uncomplimentary nature) to one of the others' appearance, or profession, or private character. But what puzzled me considerably was the fact that while some series exhibited a remarkable profusion of parody and personal allusion, others (including some of the longest) had none at all. However, after the discovery first of the Link-Sonnet (No. 121), and secondly, of a ninth 'Estrangement' Sonnet (No. 149), which converted that series from a 'four-poet' into a 'three-poet' one, and at the same time established pretty conclusively that the addressee was a woman, I began to put two and two together and eventually made a very important discovery, which explained away the two above-mentioned difficulties as well as several others. This was the discovery that the thirteen series fell into two very distinctly differentiated divisions or sections, the first section consisting of eight connected series addressed to a masculine patron by the four poets speaking in their own persons and incidentally 'ragging' each other with great freedom, and the second section consisting of five disconnected series addressed to a woman (or women) by three of the four poets (the composition of the trio varying from series to series) speaking in the person of a patron or employer and eschewing personal and satirical allusions of every kind. Adopting a nomenclature suggested in Mr. Massey's book on the *Sonnets* I called them the 'Personal' and the 'Dramatic' sections respectively, and this distinction between the eight 'Personal' series and the five 'Dramatic' series at once took its place as one of the fundamental propositions of The Theory.

A corollary to the discovery of the systematic 'ragging' of the 'Personal' series was the re-christening of The Concettist. I found that right through the eight Personal series The Concettist stood out as the champion parodist and allusion-monger, his contributions containing more of this sort of thing than those of all the other three put together. So after due consideration I changed his name to The 'Humorist' in recognition of the fact that his chief characteristic now turned out to be a subtle and ironic humour of a peculiarly distinctive quality.

Discovery No. III. The Newcomer.

As has been explained under the heading "Link-Sonnet" above, three 'three-poet' series—Absence, Estrangement and Intrigue—had been established at an early stage of my investigations. These added to the original nine-sonnet Dark Lady series (subsequently enlarged to twelve sonnets) and the original four-sonnet 'Will' series made up a total of fifty-two sonnets for the Dramatic section. Now Shakespeare had been eliminated from the Absence series, tentatively at first for reasons noted above, and quite definitely later on when on being analysed the series was found to divide up very easily and satisfactorily into three connected sequences which exhibited even more clearly than usual the 'Characteristics' of The Minor Poet, The Lawyer and The Humorist respectively. From the remaining three three-poet series The Humorist had been excluded at an early stage owing to the absence of any sonnet exhibiting his peculiar humour and super-subtlety of thought; and I assumed as a matter of course that in these three series the competitors were the other three, viz., Shakespeare, The Minor Poet, and The Lawyer. But though Shakespeare's and The Lawyer's contributions gave no trouble, I was much puzzled by the change which seemed to have come over the spirit of The Minor Poet's effusions. Though the versification of the ten sonnets—all patently the work of the same hand—continued to be smooth and melodious, they appeared to me to lack both the merits and the defects of The Minor Poet's Muse, their

most obvious characteristic being a rather colourless correctness. Now correctness is the last quality that can be predicated of The Minor Poet's contributions to the eight Personal series and the Absence series, and I was forced to the conclusion that in these series he, too, had dropped out and his place had been taken by another poet. This poet I christened, provisionally, 'The Newcomer.'

Many other interesting items of more or less importance to The Theory were discovered as the analysis proceeded, such as the identification one after the other of the four poets—the 'unknown quantities,' The Minor Poet, The Lawyer, The Humorist, and The Newcomer—with real flesh-and-blood literary contemporaries of Shakespeare, the 'Palinodes' of the Moribund Poet Series, and the 'Shakespearizing' of the Absence series. But these are subsidiary points which, I think, I should not attempt to explain at this stage. I shall, therefore, bring this history—a rather 'scrappy' one, I fear—of the genesis of my Theory to an end, and proceed to state The Theory itself in its final and complete form as follows:

THE 'COMPETITIVE SONNETTEERING' THEORY.

Proposition I.

The 154 Sonnets consist of 140 *serial* sonnets divided into thirteen series, plus a group of 14 *non-serial* or 'occasional' sonnets.

Proposition II.

Each of the thirteen series of serial sonnets has for its subject one dominant theme with which all the sonnets in the series deal directly or indirectly. This invests each series with an 'atmosphere' so distinctive that practically every one of the one hundred-and-forty serial sonnets can be assigned to its proper series at sight.

List of Series and Themes.

Series No. 1 (19 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet urges The Patron to marry in his own and posterity's interest. *Short Title:* Matrimony Advocated. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 126.

Series No. 2. (12 Sonnets) *Theme:* The Poet promises to enshrine The Patron's gifts and graces in immortal verse. *Short Title:* Beauty Immortalized. Nos. 18, 19, 21, 53, 54, 55, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 81.

Series No. 3 (4 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet sunk in dejection comforts himself by thinking of The Patron. *Short Title:* Despondency Dispelled. Nos. 29, 30, 31, 37.

Series No. 4 (4 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet modestly commends to The Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets. *Short Title:* Epistle Dedicatory. Nos. 23, 26, 38, 105.

Series No. 5 (16 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet proffers his excuses for delaying to send a second batch of adulatory sonnets. *Short Title:* Poet's Excuses. Nos. 59, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106, 108.

Series No. 6 (8 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet mildly reproves The Patron for deserting him and getting into bad company. *Short Title:* Patron's Peccadilloes. Nos. 33, 34, 35, 69, 70, 94, 95, 96.

Sonnet 121. The Patron makes a "*tu quoque*" reply to No. 6. *Short Title:* Link Sonnet.

Series No. 7 (16 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet contritely recognises the truth of The Patron's counter-charges, and asks to be forgiven. *Short Title:* Poet's Repentance. Nos. 25, 36, 56, 109, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 123, 124, 125.

Series No. 8 (8 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Poet in anticipation of immediate death commends to the Patron his completed tale of adulatory sonnets. *Short Title:* Moribund Poet. Nos. 22, 32, 39, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76.

Series No. 9 (21 Sonnets). *Theme:* The Lover absent from his Mistress describes his feelings. *Short Title:* Absence. Nos. 24, 27, 28, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 75, 97, 98, 99, 113, 114.

Series No. 10 (9 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover sadly anticipates the loss of his Mistress's affection. *Short Title :* Estrangement Anticipated. Nos. 49, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 149.

Series No. 11 (6 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover is annoyed at discovering an intrigue between his Mistress and his best friend. *Short Title :* Intrigue. Nos. 40, 41, 42, 133, 134, 144.

Series No. 12 (12 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover deplores his infatuation for a frail and fickle brunette. *Short Title :* Dark Lady. Nos. 127, 130, 131, 132, 137, 139, 140, 141, 147, 148, 150, 152.

Series No. 13 (4 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover solicits a second place in the favours of a light woman in love with another man. *Short Title :* Will. Nos. 135, 136, 142, 143.

Proposition III.

The first eight series form the *Personal* Section of the *Sonnets*. They are addressed to a *man*, and are the work of Shakespeare and three other poets writing in their own persons as competitors in a more or less serious literary contest, in which the Earl of Southampton combined the functions of addressee, umpire, and prize-giver. The eight series form a connected whole, and were all written between 1594 and 1596. The three poets may be provisionally styled (1) **The Minor Poet,** (2) **The Lawyer,** (3) **The Humorist.**

Proposition IV.

This literary contest was conducted on the following lines : Shakespeare first writes a ' batch ' of sonnets on one or more of the Themes noted in Proposition II. above ; this batch is then sent to The Minor Poet for imitation ; The Minor Poet then forwards it with his ' imitation ' to The Lawyer, who forwards both contributions along with *his* imitation to The Humorist, who then writes *his* imitation, and forwards the lot to The Patron for judgment. These imitations are written in strict conformity with certain well-understood conventions, which may be styled the ' Rules of the Contest.'

Rules of the Contest.

(1). Each theme shall be imitated separately.
(2). Each such imitation shall contain the same number of sonnets as the ' copy.'
(3). The competitor shall follow generally the main ' thoughts ' of the copy. He may also follow any new thought introduced by a predecessor.
(4). The competitor is expected to display his skill in composing variations on words and phrases used in the copy and in any of the imitations thereof that may be available to him.
(5). Extra marks will be awarded for discreetly-veiled personal allusions to other competitors and parodies of their style and language.

Proposition V.

The remaining five series form the *Dramatic* Section of the Sonnets, and were written later than the Personal Sonnets—probably before 1599. The addressee is in each case a *woman*, and they are the work of Shakespeare and four other poets, *viz.*, the three poets of the Personal Section, plus one other who may be provisionally styled **The Newcomer,** writing in competition as in that section but under altered conditions.

Differences between the Personal Series and the Dramatic Series.

The Dramatic Series differ from the Personal Series in four respects :
(1). The Poets are speaking *not* in their own persons, but in that of a patron or employer (possibly, as before, the Earl of Southampton).
(2). With the exception of the last series (Will), in which the number is four, the number of competitors in each series is *three* only, viz., in Series No. 9, The Minor Poet, The Lawyer, and The Humorist; and in Series Nos. 10, 11 and 12, Shakespeare, The Lawyer, and The Newcomer. In Series No. 13, the four *are* the three last-mentioned *plus* The Humorist.
(3). The five series are *not* historically connected ; each series constitutes a self-contained whole.
(4). Rule No. 5 of the Rules of the Contest is abrogated, no personal allusions being allowed, and parody being discountenanced.

Proposition VI.

In each of these thirteen series it is possible to assign each sonnet to its proper author by collating with the results of the working of the ' Rules of the Contest ' given in Proposition IV. above, exemplifications of certain idiosyncrasies or characteristics which mark the work of each of the five poets.

Proposition VII.

These ' characteristics ' may be stated shortly as follows :

Shakespeare. (1) *Clear Thinking,* (2) *Clear Writing,* (3) *Perfect Versification,* (4) *Accurate Simile and Metaphor,* (5) *Balance and Restraint,* (6) *Self-respect.* Keynote : MASTERY.

The Minor Poet. (1) *Confused Thinking,* (2) *Slovenly Phrasing,* (3) *Smooth Versification,* (4) *Sound not Sense,* (5) *Forcing the Note,* (6) *The Flunkey.* Keynote : SLOPPINESS.

The Lawyer. (1) *Pedestrian Style,* (2) *The Attorney,* (3) *The Accountant,* (4) *Clumsy Humour.* (5) *The Candid Friend,* (6) *The Old Dog.* Keynote : MATTER-OF-FACTNESS.

The Humorist. (1) *Compressed Thought,* (2) *Super-Concettism,* (3) *Deliberate Dissonance,* (4) *Subtle Humour,* (5) *Personal Allusion,* (6) *The Polite Shirker.* Keynote : BURLESQUE.

The Newcomer. (1) *Correct Versification,* (2) *Shallowness.* Keynote : CONVENTIONALITY.

Explanation.

These ' characteristics ' require a certain amount of explanation.

Shakespeare. Many of Shakespeare's sonnets are masterpieces—recognizable as such immediately, and, of course, immeasurably superior to the work of his fellow-competitors. Many others, though not so plainly hall-marked, contain lines and passages so fine that only Shakespeare could have written them. The rest attain a high standard, but not too high a one for The Humorist or The Newcomer to touch at the top of their form. But *all* Shakespeare's sonnets without exception are musical, effortless, and entirely clear in thought and expression, and sustain their flight smoothly and uninterruptedly throughout—even in the final couplet which is the weak spot of the ' Shakespearean ' form of sonnet. His attitude towards his noble Patron is eminently correct, and contrasts favourably with the flunkeyism of The Minor Poet on the one hand, and the rather uncouth self-assertion of The Lawyer on the other.

The Minor Poet. Though his work is full of glaring faults The Minor Poet *is* a poet. He has imagination and a feeling for natural beauty, and his versification is smooth and melodious. But he thinks confusedly, he often writes in a very slovenly fashion, and as long as he gets his musical effect (usually by alliteration of which he is inordinately fond), or his rhyme, he does not bother much about the sense. He is lacking in judgment, and his many *gaffes* argue a defective sense of humour. He is given to exaggeration and ' forcing the note,' and his compliments to The Patron are often unnecessarily servile.

The Lawyer. The Lawyer's literary qualities are more those of a prose-writer than a poet. He thinks logically, and as a rule expresses himself clearly. But though the technique of his versification is good, he has little imagination, and displays a constant tendency to drop into prose. His most prominent characteristic is a pronounced fondness for dragging in on every possible occasion words, phrases, and metaphors drawn from the special vocabularies of the Law and Accountancy. He has humour of a rough and primitive sort, and is giving to making bad puns. He cultivates two poses : (1) That of The Patron's candid friend who will not stoop to flattery, and tells him the exact truth about himself ; and (2) the veteran poet of the old school contemptuous of the new-fangled fashions of the younger generation—the old dog who cannot be taught new tricks.

The Humorist. The outstanding feature of the Humorist's contributions is a subtle and sardonic humour, manifesting itself in parody, irony and personal allusion. He writes in a spirit of mockery throughout. His thought is vigorous and logical, but very often appears obscure owing to excessive compression. He is fond of ' conceits '—especially the Neoplatonic kind—and pushes them as far as they will go, and farther. He goes out of his way to write unrhythmically, several of his lines being as harsh and cacophonous as any in the language. He preserves his self-respect as successfully as Shakespeare, and in particular displays very great ingenuity in shirking his duty of praising The Patron in the fulsome fashion demanded by sonnetteering etiquette.

The Newcomer. In the matter of sheer technique The Newcomer is the best of Shakespeare's fellow-competitors. His versification is smooth and his thoughts are clear and clearly expressed. But his verse lacks character and gives one an impression of shallowness. He is responsible for ten sonnets only—all in the Dramatic Section.

Proposition VIII.

The Minor Poet may be identified with Barnabe Barnes (with absolute certainty); **The Lawyer** with William Warner (with practical certainty); **The Humorist** with John Donne (with great probability); and **The Newcomer** with Samuel Daniel (probably).

Proposition IX.

The fourteen non-serial sonnets are in the nature of occasional verse, and except in the case of two sonnets—one written by Southampton and the other probably by The Lawyer—have no relation to the competitive part of the collection. The remaining twelve sonnets are of uncertain authorship—two or three probably by Shakespeare. Approximate dates of composition can be given in the case of four only out of the fourteen.

List. Nos. 66, 67, 68, 77, 107, 122, 128, 129, 138, 145, 146, 151, 153, 154.

Proposition X.

The first editor (Thomas Thorpe or another) had before him a MS. of the *Sonnets* arranged in their original series as they are arranged in this work. For reasons of his own he wished to disguise the *competitive* character of the collection, and to give it the appearance of being the work of a single author—Shakespeare. He rearranged the collection accordingly on an ingenious 'catchword' system, which all the critics who have attacked the problem of the 'Order of the *Sonnets*' have misunderstood, owing to their not being in possession of the key supplied by Propositions I. and II. above.

. . . . . .

Here then is the New Theory set forth in ten formal propositions which I have endeavoured to make as precise and uncompromising as possible. In the next five chapters I shall, with the double object of making my task of exposition easier and of saving the kind reader from being wearied by the constant repetition of qualifying words and phrases, assume *as a convention* that the first nine of these ten propositions have been proved and accepted as correct. When at the end of Chapter VI. this convention comes up before him for final judgment he will, of course, be justified in treating it with the utmost rigour of the law.

CHAPTER II.—THE PERSONAL SONNETS.—FIRST BATCH.

The sonnetteering craze which raged in England in the last decade of the sixteenth century is one of the most curious phenomena in the history of English literature. Indeed, for some of its features—the suddenness with which it began and ended, the shortness of its life, and the universality of its sway while it lasted—it would be difficult to find parallels in the history of any literary fashion of any age or country whatsoever. During the last quarter of a century its origins have been investigated, and its developments traced and analysed, by a number of writers among whom two Elizabethan scholars, the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson and Sir Sidney Lee—both, one need hardly say, Shakespeareans of unimpeachable orthodoxy—stand out with special prominence. From each of these two authorities a short extract will now be quoted which summarizes his conclusions more or less satisfactorily. Taken together, these two passages show how greatly modern scholarship has discounted the almost purely autobiographical interpretations of the *Sonnets* which satisfied the earlier generations of Shakespearean critics.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON says :—

The first sonnets published in this sequence were quite the worst. Watson avowedly copies French and other models, and he does it unmelodiously, infelicitously, and cheaply. But when he published his first set, many others had been penned and privately circulated for years past. Sidney in particular had already done many of his series to Stella ; and in 1591 these were posthumously published, with the effect of eliciting a perfect hubbub of imitation. The Astrophel and Stella title set the fashion of poetic names for such series. Samuel Daniel came out next year with his batch to Delia, and Henry Constable with his consignment to Diana. In 1593 appeared Barnabe Barnes' Parthenophil and Parthenophe, Lodge's Phillis, Giles Fletcher's Licia, and another posthumous bundle from Watson, as dead as their diligent author. Next year came revisions of Delia and Diana, accompanied by William Percy's Cælia, somebody's Zepheria, and Drayton's Idea (first form) ; in 1595, Richard Barnfield's Cynthia, Spenser's Amoretti, and E.C.'s Emaricdulfe—an effort at originality in choice of title at least, but only by way of an anagram on the name of one Marie Cufeld. In 1596 high-water mark as to quantity was reached with Griffin's Fidessa, Linch's Diella, and William Smith's Chloris. A Laura, by Robert Tofte, arrived in 1597. Shakespeare by this time had written a number of his sonnets, but was not minded to join the aviary in print, though an average sample of his has more charm and spontaneity than any save the best in the swarm.

Never had there been such an outburst of lyricism in England ; and, despite the facility of much of the output, never, perhaps, was there in proportion so little of satisfying result to garner for posterity. The poets at first sight seem a very nest of singing birds, singing because they must, on the ancient, the primal impulse. A perusal soon arouses a cold suspicion, fully confirmed by exact modern research, that the nest of singing birds is a cage of parrots. They translate the French and the Italians, and they imitate each other. Spenser and Sidney alone seem to have had a sincere motive ; Sidney's precept,[1] finishing the first sonnet in the posthumous collection, was the one thing to which none of the imitators seems to have paid any attention. Daniel, Drayton, Constable, and Lodge copied their very titles ; and the three last-named include in their series direct but unavowed translations from the French ; as does even Spenser at times. Lodge is perhaps the most hardened—and not the least skilful—plagiarist of all : half his sonnets are translations. If ever the sonnet is personal, in the hands of any of the lesser practitioners, it is impossible to divine the fact with certainty from any superior vitality in the product. (*Elizabethan Literature*—pp.143–145.)

SIR SIDNEY LEE says :—

But it was not until 1591, when Sir Philip Sidney's collection of sonnets entitled ' Astrophel and Stella ' was first published, that the sonnet enjoyed in England any conspicuous or continuous favour. For the half-dozen years following the appearance of Sir Philip Sidney's volume the writing of sonnets, both singly and in

[1] " Fool," said my Muse, " look in thy heart and write."

connected sequences, engaged more literary activity in this country than it engaged at any period here or elsewhere. Men and women of the cultivated Elizabethan nobility encouraged poets to celebrate in single sonnets or in short series their virtues and graces, and under the same patronage there were produced multitude of long sonnet-sequences which more or less fancifully narrated, after the manner of Petrarch and his successors, the pleasures and pains of love. Between 1591 and 1597 no aspirant to poetic fame in the country failed to court a patron's ears by a trial of skill on the popular poetic instrument . . . we find that between 1591 and 1597 there had been printed nearly twelve hundred sonnets of the amorous kind. . . . Thus in the total of sonnets published between 1591 and 1597 must be included at least five hundred sonnets addressed to patrons, and as many on philosophy and religion. The aggregate far exceeds two thousand. . . . Elizabethan sonnets of all degrees of merit were commonly the artificial products of the poet's fancy. A strain of personal emotion is discernible in a detached effort, and is vaguely traceable in a few sequences; but autobiographical confessions were not the stuff of which the Elizabethan sonnet was made. The typical collection of Elizabethan sonnets was a mosaic of plagiarisms, a medley of imitative or assimilative studies. Echoes of the French or of the Italian sonnetteers, with their Platonic idealisms, are usually the dominant notes. . . . As soon as the collection of Shakespeare's sonnets is studied comparatively with the many thousand poems of cognate theme and form that the printing-presses of England, France and Italy poured forth during the last years of the sixteenth century, a vast number of Shakespeare's performances prove to be little more than trials of skill, often of superlative merit, to which he deemed himself challenged by the poetic effort of his own or of past ages at home and abroad. (*Life of William Shakespeare*, Chaps. X., XI., and App. V.)

It was when the craze was at its height—1594 or early in 1595, according to The Theory—that Shakespeare first entered the lists as a sonnetteer by inditing and sending to his "private friend" and patron Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton, a sequence of nine 'adulatory' sonnets. What happened to these sonnets The Theory will now proceed to explain.

. . . . .

This chapter deals with the 39 sonnets of Series Nos. I., II., III., and IV., which make up the first batch of the Personal Section. As noted in the last paragraph, the Contest was started by Shakespeare sending to Southampton the nine sonnets which constitute his contribution to the four Series. His motive in writing these sonnets cannot be inferred with certainty. They may have been "commanded" by Southampton, though this supposition is rather out of harmony with their general tone, especially the tone of his Epistle Dedicatory (No. 26); or they may have been the outcome of a hint from Southampton's mother, who was anxious to see him married and settled; or again they may have been a spontaneous offering sent to "witness duty" as Shakespeare himself says, *i.e.*, as a compliment in the fashion of the day to the kind patron of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*. But whatever Shakespeare's motive may have been, the tone of his contribution to Series No. 5 (Poet's Excuses) makes it clear that he did not anticipate that his sonnets would be set as a 'copy' for three other poets to imitate. This happy thought probably originated with Southampton himself, gratified by Shakespeare's magnificent compliment, and desirous of seeing what could be done by three other poets of his acquaintance writing in competition on the same noble theme——.

Que son mérite est extrême!
Que de grâces, que de grandeur
Ah! combien monseigneur
Doit être content de lui-même!

For convenience of reference, the five rules which govern the competitions in the Personal Section, as set forth under Proposition IV. in the previous chapter, are reproduced here:

Rules of the Contest.

(1). Each 'theme' shall be imitated separately.
(2). Each such 'imitation' shall contain the same number of sonnets as the 'copy.'
(3). The competitor shall follow generally the main 'thoughts' of the copy. He may also follow any new thought introduced by a predecessor.

(4). The competitor is expected to display his skill in composing variations on words and phrases used in the copy and in any of the imitations thereof that may be available to him.

(5). Extra marks will be awarded for discreetly-veiled personal allusions to other competitors and parodies of their style and language.

The four series will now be taken up in numerical order, and dealt with by a procedure which will be applied uniformly to all the thirteen series in the collection. It is as follows :

First. The contributions of the competitors will be set out side by side, (in four or three columns, according as the series is a ' four-poet ' or ' three-poet ' one) *across the double-page;* verbal parallelisms (v. Rule 4) *within* the series being indicated by italics, and verbal parallelisms *outside* the series, *i.e.*, between passages in the series and passages in another series, being indicated by underlining.

Secondly. Shakespeare's treatment of the theme will be analysed, and the other competitors' imitations of his ' thoughts ' will be pointed out by reference to sonnet and line.

Thirdly. The main ' inside ' verbal parallelisms will be collected and quoted in full. Minor ' inside ' parallelisms will be pointed out by reference to sonnet and line.

Fourthly. The sonnets will be dealt with individually under the heading ' Notes.' In these ' Notes ' examples of the ' Characteristics ' of the several poets will be pointed out, personal allusions, parodies, etc., explained, and points bearing directly or indirectly on The Theme discussed.

N.B.—' Outside ' verbal parallelisms will be dealt with in the Notes on the series on which the *imitations* occur. The *originals, i.e.*, the ' copy ' lines imitated in subsequent series will (as noted above) be underlined for the convenience of subsequent reference, but no attempt to explain them will be made in the Notes on their own series.

SERIES No. 1.—Matrimony Advocated.

The Theme.—The Poet urges The Patron to marry in his own and posterity's interest.

THE FIVE AUTHORS OF SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS

SERIES NO. I—

The Theme—The Poet urges The Patron to marry,

SHAKESPEARE

1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to *thine* own *bright eyes*,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to *thy sweet self* too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, *tender churl*, makest *waste* in *niggarding*.
Pity *the world*, or else this glutton be,
To eat *the world's* due, by the grave and thee.

2

When forty *winters* shall besiege thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy *youth's* proud livery, so *gazed on* now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the *treasure* of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an ill-eating shame and *thriftless* praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's *use*
If thou couldst *answer* 'This fair child of mine
Shall *sum my count* and make my old excuse,'
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

11

As fast as thou shalt *wane*, so fast thou *grow'st*
In one of thine, from that which thou departest;
And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestow'st
Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth *convertest*.
Herein lies wisdom, beauty and increase;
Without this, folly, age and *cold decay*:
If all were minded so, the times should cease
And threescore year would make the world away.
Let those whom *Nature* hath not *made* for *store*,
Harsh, featureless and rude, barrenly perish:
Look, whom *she best endow'd she gave thee* more;
Which *bounteous gift* thou shouldst in *bounty* cherish:
She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

3

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh *repair* if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy *husbandry*?
Or who is he so fond will be the *tomb*
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.
But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

THE MINOR POET

12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave *day* sunk in *hideous night*;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
And *die as fast as they see others grow*;
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

9

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumest thyself in single life?
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;
The world will be thy widow, and still weep
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,
When every private widow well may keep
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an *unthrift* in *the world* doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still *the world* enjoys it;
But *beauty's waste* hath in *the world* an end,
And kept *unused*, the *user* so destroys it.
No love towards others in that bosom sits
That on himself such murderous shame commits.

8

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with *sweets* war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear
They do but *sweetly* chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, *sweet* husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Resembling sire and child and happy mother,
Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: 'Thou single wilt prove none.'

7

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract, and look another way:
So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.

MATRIMONY ADVOCATED. (M.A.)
in his own and posterity's interest.

THE LAWYER

4

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou *spend*
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy ?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank, she lends to those are free.
Then, *beauteous niggard*, why dost thou abuse
The *bounteous largess given thee* to give ?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great *a sum of sums*, yet canst not live ?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of *thyself thy sweet self* dost deceive.
Then how, when *nature calls thee* to be gone,
What acceptable *audit* canst thou leave ?
Thy unused beauty must be *tomb'd* with thee,
Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

5

Those hours that with gentle work did frame
The lovely *gaze* where *every eye* doth dwell,
Will play the tyrants to the very same
And that unfair which fairly doth excel :
For never-resting time leads summer on
To hideous *winter* and confounds him there ;
Sap check'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where :
Then, were not summer's distillation left,
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it, nor no remembrance what it was :
But flowers distill'd, though they with *winter* meet,
Leese but their show; their substance still lives sweet.

6

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd :
Make sweet some vial ; *treasure* thou some place
With beauty's *treasure*, ere it be self-kill'd.
That *use* is not forbidden *usury*,
Which happies those that pay the willing loan ;
That's for thyself to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one ;
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee :
Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,
Leaving thee living in posterity ?
Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir.

10

For shame ! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant, if thou wilt, thou are beloved of many,
But that thou none lovest is most evident ;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to *repair* should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind !
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love ?
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove :
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

THE HUMORIST

15

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment ;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory ;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in *youth before my sight*,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your *day* of youth to *sullied night* ;
And all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

16

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time ?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme ?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers
Much liker than your painted counterfeit :
So should the lines of life that life *repair*,
Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself keeps yourself still ;
And you must live, drawn by your own *sweet* skill.

13

O, that you were yourself ! but, love, you are
No longer yours than you yourself here live :
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your *sweet* semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination ; then you were
Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
When your *sweet* issue your *sweet* form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to *decay*,
Which *husbandry* in honour might uphold
Against the stormy gusts of *winter's day*,
And barren rage of death's eternal *cold* ?
O, none but *unthrifts* : dear my love, you know
You had a father ; let your son say so.

17

Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts ?
Though yet, heaven knows, it is but a *tomb*
Which hides your life and shows not half your parts.
If I could write the *beauty of your eyes*
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say ' This poet lies ;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces.'
So should my papers, yellowed with their age,
Be scorn's, like old men of less truth than tongue,
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage
And stretched metre of an antique song :
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it and in my rhyme.

NOTE.

In this and all the remaining seven series of the Personal Section—

(1) *Italics* indicate an 'inside' Verbal Parallelism' i.e., a parallelism between a passage in the series and another passage in the same series.

(2) Underlining indicates an 'outside' Verbal Parallelism, i.e., a parallelism between a passage in the series and a passage in another series.

THE MINOR POET *—continued.*

20

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An *eye* more *bright* than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it *gazeth;*
A man in hue, all 'hues' in his controlling,
Which steals *men's eyes* and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till *Nature*, as she *wrought thee*, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's *pleasure*,
Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their *treasure*.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

In this series the central thought 'Marry and beget a son' swamps all the others. It predominates in all four of Shakespeare's sonnets, and appears more or less prominently in all except three (Nos. 15, 20 and 126) of the rest. A detailed analysis of the passages in which S.'s three rivals imitate his treatment of this central thought would be a very lengthy business; and, as the remarkable faithfulness of their imitations is apparent on the most casual inspection, it will be enough to note that it *is* remarkable, and pass on at once to certain other 'subordinate' thoughts of S.'s which they reproduce with creditable exactness.

They are six in number:

(a). The Patron's beauty a flower doomed to die. (1.2, 1-11.)
(b). The Patron's beauty should be used, not hoarded or wasted. (1.12, 2.8-9, 11.11-12.)
(c). The Patron's beauty an object of special interest to Nature. (11.9-14.)
(d). Time and Death the Patron's enemies. (1.3-4, 3.13-14.)
(e). The Patron his own enemy. (1.8.)
(f). Winter the enemy of Spring. (2.1, 3.10.)

The Minor Poet follows S. in all six, namely: (a) (12.3, 11-12); (b) (9.9-12, 20.14); (c) (20.1, 10); (d) (12.13-14); (e) (9.14); and (substituting Summer for Spring) (f) (12.7-8). He introduces three new thoughts of his own, namely: (g) Meditation on the mutability of things terrestrial (12 *passim*); (h) Night the enemy of Day (12.2, 7 *passim*); and (i) A family compared to a well-tuned harp (8 *passim*).

The Lawyer also follows S. in all six, namely: (a) (5.13-14); (b) (4 *passim*, 6.5-6); (c) (4.11-12); (d) (4.11-12, 6.11-14); (e) (4.10, 6.4, 10.5-6); and (f) (5.5-9, 6.1-2). He introduces two new thoughts of his own, namely: (j) The Patron's hypothetical progeny regarded as the distilled essence of his beauty (5.9-14, 6.1-3); and (k) The Patron's beauty a house to be kept in repair (10.7-8).

The Humorist follows S. in five only of the six, namely: (a) (15.14, 16.6-8); (b) (13.13); (c) (126.5-14); (d) (15.11-13, 16.1-2); and (f) (13.11). He omits (e). He follows M.P. in his (g) (15 *passim*) and (h) (15.12). He follows L. in his (j) (13.9-10). And he introduces one new thought of his own which he treats very fully, namely: (l) The inadequacy of his (The Humorist's) verse as a means of immortalizing The Patron's beauty (15.14, 16.4, 16.10-12, 17 *passim*).

THE LAWYER—*continued.*

14

Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck;
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality;
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well,
By oft predict that I in heaven find:
But from *thine eyes* my knowledge I derive,
And, constant *stars*, in them I read such art,
As truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself to *store* thou wouldst *convert*;
Or else of thee this I prognosticate:
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

THE HUMORIST—*continued.*

126

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast *by waning grown*, and therein show'st
Thy lovers withering as thy sweet self grow'st:
If *Nature*, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her *pleasure!*
She may detain, but not still keep, her *treasure*:
Her audit, though delay'd, *answer'd* must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

The new thoughts introduced by S.'s three rivals do not reflect much credit on their originality. M.P.'s (g) is borrowed directly from S.'s No. 64 in the next series; his (h) is a fairly obvious variant on S.'s (f), and his (i) is merely an expansion of a metaphor in Sidney's *Arcadia*. L.'s (j) is adapted from a hackneyed conceit of Sidney's, and his (k) was probably suggested by the third line of S.'s No. 3 in this series. H.'s (l) is merely a contradiction in terms of the central thought of the next series (Beauty Immortalized).

The reader is invited to note in this series *the only example* in the whole collection of an infringement of Rule I. of the 'Rules of the Contest', in the shape of the three 'extra' sonnets, Nos. 20, 14 and 126 added to their contributions by M.P., L. and H. respectively. These sonnets are in the nature of 'envoys,' and two of them (Nos. 20 and 126) exhibit metrical peculiarities which are not paralleled elsewhere in the serial sonnets. This attempt to depart from the 'copy' was apparently disapproved of by Shakespeare, or Southampton, or both: at any rate nothing of the sort occurs again.

Verbal Parallelisms.

The most cursory inspection of the sonnets of this series reveals a great many obvious parallelisms based on the dominant thought 'Marry and get a son,' but it is not until one tries to collect them that one realises that to make a full list one would have to quote about a quarter of the lines in the series. So, in accordance with the precedent set in the 'Treatment of The Theme,' they will be omitted altogether, and only 'subordinate' parallelisms collected and quoted. They make up quite a respectable list. To take them in the order in which they occur.

S. But thou contracted to *thine* own *bright eyes*,
M.P. An *eye* more *bright* than theirs, less false in rolling,
L. But from *thine eyes* my knowledge I derive,
And, constant *stars*, in them I read such art,
H. If I could write the *beauty* of *your eyes*

S. *Thyself* thy foe, to *thy sweet self* too cruel.
L. Thou of *thyself*, *thy sweet self* dost deceive.
H. Thy lovers withering as *thy sweet self* grow'st;

S. And, *tender churl*, makest *waste* in *niggarding*.
Pity *the world* . . .

M.P. But *beauty's waste* hath in *the world* an end,
L. Then, *beauteous niggard*, why dost thou abuse

S. *When* forty winters shall besiege thy brow
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
M.P. *When I* do count the clock that tells the time,
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
H. *When I* consider every thing that grows
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay

Note how in each of the two 'corresponding' sonnets 12 (M.P.) and 15 (H.) the first and fifth lines begin with 'When' and the ninth with 'Then.'

S. Thy *youth's* proud livery, so *gazed on* now,
M.P. Gilding the object whereupon it *gazeth*;
Which steals *men's eyes* . . .
L. That lovely *gaze* where *every eye* doth dwell,
H. Sets you most rich in *youth before my sight*,

S. Where all the *treasure* of thy lusty days,
M.P. Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their *treasure*.
L. . . . *treasure* thou some place
With beauty's *treasure* . . .
H. She may detain, but not still keep, her *treasure*.

S. Were an ill-eating shame and *thriftless* praise.
M.P. Look, what an *unthrift* in the world doth *spend*
L. *Unthrifty* loveliness, why dost thou *spend*
H. O, none but *unthrifts*: dear my love, you know

S. How much more praise deserved thy beauty's *use*,
M.P And kept *unused*, the *user* so destroys it.
L. That *use* is not forbidden *usury*,

S. If thou could'st *answer* 'This fair child of mine
Shall *sum my count* and make my old excuse,'
L. So great a *sum of sums*, yet canst not live?
Then how, when *nature calls thee* to be gone,
What acceptable *audit* canst thou leave?
H. Her [*Nature's*] *audit* though delayed, *answer'd* must be,

S. *As fast as* thou shalt *wane*, so fast thou *grow'st*
M.P. And *die as fast as* they see others *grow*;
H. Who hast by *waning grown*, and therein show'st
Thy lovers *withering* as thy sweet self *grow'st*;

S. Let those whom *Nature* hath not *made* for store,
M.P. Till *Nature*, as she *wrought* thee, fell a-doting,
L. *Nature's* bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
H. If *Nature*, sovereign mistress over wrack,

S. Look, whom she [*Nature*] best *endow'd* she *gave thee* more;
Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in *bounty* cherish:
L. *Nature's bequest gives* nothing, but doth lend,
The *bounteous largess given thee* to give?

S. Whose fresh *repair* if now thou not renewest,
L. Which to *repair* should be thy chief desire,
H. So should the lines of life that life *repair*.

M.P. And see the brave *day* sunk in *hideous night*:
H. To change your *day* of youth to *sullied night*;

M.P. But since she prick'd thee out for women's *pleasure*,
Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their *treasure*.
H. Yet fear her, O thou minion of her *pleasure!*
She may detain, but not still keep, her *treasure*.

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *Winter*, 2.1, 5.6, 5.13, 13.11 ; (2) *Convert*, 11.4, 14.12 ; (3) *Cold decay*, 11.6, 13.9, 13.12 ; (4) *Store*, 11.9, 14.12 ; (5) *Husbandry*, (pun) 3.6, 13.10 ; (6) *Tomb*, 3.7, 4.13, 17.3—and many others. Note particularly M.P.'s four 'sweets' in No. 8 copied by H.'s three ditto in No. 13 and one ditto in the last line of the immediately preceding No. 16.

NOTES.

Shakespeare in writing his four sonnets obviously had his eye on a well-known passage in Sidney's *Arcadia*, in which Cecropia, in conversation with her niece Philoclea, expatiates on the blessedness of the married state. His three imitators, of course, consider themselves in duty bound to exhibit their own acquaintance with the passage. It would be tedious to point out all the allusions. An extract is quoted, and the reader is invited to trace them himself.

"No, no, my dear niece (said Cecropia), Nature when you were first born, vowed you a woman, and as she made you child of a mother, so to do your best to be the mother of a child. She gave you beauty to move love, she gave you wit to know love ; she gave you an excellent body to reward love ; which kind of liberal rewarding is crowned with an unspeakable felicity. For this, as it bindeth the receiver, so it makes happy the bestower. This doth not impoverish, but enrich the giver. O the comfort of comforts, to see your children grow up, in whom you are, as it were eternised ! If you could conceive what a heart-tickling joy it is to see your own little ones, with awful love come running to your lap, and like little models of yourself still carry you about them, you would think unkindness in your thoughts, that ever they did rebel against the measure to it. . . . Have you ever seen a pure rose-water kept in a crystal glass ? How fine it looks ! how sweet it smells while the beautiful glass imprisons it ! Break the prison, and let the water take his own course, doth it not embrace the dust, and lose all his former sweetness and fairness ? . . . And is a solitary life as good as this ? Then, can one string make as good music as a consort ?"

Shakespeare. (Nos. 1, 2, 11, 3.)

One may say about all four of Shakespeare's sonnets in this series what has been said in the previous chapter about his sonnets generally, namely, that they are "musical, effortless, and entirely clear in thought and expression ; they contain a wealth of just metaphor and imagery ; and they sustain their flight smoothly and uninterruptedly throughout—even in the final couplet." The reader is invited to compare them with the contributions of the other three competitors, and note their manifest superiority in design and execution.

Shakespeare's allusions to The Patron's beauty, eligibility as a *parti*, and reluctance to marry are fully justified by the known facts of Southampton's early life. His good looks were notorious ; in his eighteenth year he accompanied Elizabeth on a progress to Oxford, and in a Latin poem published by the University Press in honour of the occasion he was described as the handsomest youth in the royal train—"Quo non formosior alter, Affuit." Besides being good-looking, Southampton was cultured, accomplished in manly exercises, *persona grata* at Court, and an only child of parents who "came of the new nobility and enjoyed vast wealth" (LEE). Of his reluctance to marry, LEE writes : "Early marriages—child-marriages were in vogue in all ranks of society, and Southampton's mother and guardian regarded matrimony at a tender age as especially incumbent on him in view of his rich heritage. . . Southampton declined to marry to order, and, to the confusion of his friends, was still a bachelor when he came of age in 1594."

The reference to The Patron's mother *only* (No. 3.9-10) would be very odd if his father had been alive at the time. Southampton's father died in 1581.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 12, 9, 8, 7, 20.)

In Prop. No. VII. in the preceding chapter The Minor Poet's characteristics were noted as follows: (1) *Confused Thinking*, (2) *Slovenly Phrasing*, (3) *Smooth Versification*, (4) *Sound not Sense*, (5) *Forcing the Note*, (6) *The Flunkey*. Keynote: SLOPPINESS. The first four are exemplified in this series, viz.: *Confused Thinking*, 8.3-4, 8.9-13; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 12.1, 12.11, 9.14; *Smooth Versification* throughout, 12.5-12 and 9.9-12, being particularly pleasing passages; *Sound not Sense*, 12.14, 8.2.

12.

1. Note the pleonastic "do," and the worse than pleonastic "that tells the time."

11. The commentators say that "themselves forsake" = 'change for the worse.' No doubt the words *ought* to mean this, but can they be forced to do so?

9.

4-5. Note his characteristic abuse of "alliteration's artful aid."

14. "Murderous shame" = shameful murder, apparently.

8.

This sonnet was suggested by a sentence in the *Arcadia*: "Then can one string make as good music as a consort?" (*v.* extract quoted above). There is also (in lines 7-8 and 12-14) an allusion to Southampton's motto, "*Ung par tout, tout par ung.*"

3-4. According to the commentators the meaning of these two rather feeble lines is, "Is it not inconsistent to be saddened by what you like or to like what saddens you" (POOLER).

7.

5. *et seq.* Note the anacoluthon.

10-12. It is *not* a fact that the sun totters senilely when it sets—it goes down as steadily as it goes up: and it is *not* a fact that people decline to look at a sunset and gaze fixedly at some other quarter of the heavens instead.

14. Why should the existence of a son make people more inclined to "look on" a moribund Patron?

20.

This is rather a daring sonnet to be addressed by a poetical client to his patron, but apparently Southampton appreciated ribaldry of this kind; it was to him that Nash dedicated his outrageous *Choise of Valentines*. POOLER remarks: "This sonnet, if Shakespeare's, sounds as if he had been furnished with a set of rimes and challenged to bombast them out into a poem. It is not pleasing in rhythm, and it differs from all other sonnets in having no single rimes, and from its companions here in containing neither a promise of immortality nor a declaration of his love for his friend." It is an 'Envoy' sonnet—a parergon—and M.P. therefore allows himself a little latitude.

7. In the Quarto the line is printed:—

A man in hew, all *Hews* in his controwling.

Cf. 104.11. in the P. E. series, and Notes on the Will series.

12. Cf. 136.12., and Notes on the Will series.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 4, 5, 6, 10, 14.)

In Prop. No. VII. in the preceding chapter The Lawyer's characteristics were noted as follows: (1) *Pedestrian Style*, (2) *The Attorney*, (3) *The Accountant*, (4) *Clumsy Humour*, (5) *The Candid Friend*, (6) *The Old Dog*. Keynote: MATTER-OF-FACTNESS. Two of these characteristics are exemplified in this series, viz.: *The Accountant* and *The Attorney*, 4 *passim*, 6.5-10. His contribution is of average quality; he rises to no heights and sinks to no depths.

4.

In this sonnet honours are divided pretty evenly between *The Attorney* and *The Accountant*. There is not room for much else. POOLER explains as follows:—

Here the subject, beauty, suffers protean changes. It is regarded as transmitted and transmissible. As derived (from parents) it is a legacy, and as it come into being in the course of Nature, it is "Nature's bequest." As transmissible, it is a loan or trust intended for those only who fulfil the condition of transmitting it unimpaired. It is therefore capital to be invested not income to be spent, and its possessor, if he fails to invest it, acts as a money-lender who reduces himself to beggary by spending instead of lending his capital. Rightly used it produces its equivalent in the beauty of a child, i.e., it reproduces itself. This new beauty (the beauty of the child) is the repayment to Nature of the sum lent, viz. the beauty of the father, and so the account is squared. But as the new beauty *ex hypothesi* survives the old it becomes the executor of the will made by the father, for the executor survives the testator.

Shakespeare must have been amused to find his four straightforward lines—

> How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
> If thou could'st answer "This fair child of mine,"
> Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,"
> Proving his beauty by succession thine!

transmogrified into this mass of recondite technicalities. Note, too, the legal "frank" and "free."

5.

3-4. A prosy rendering of S.'s—

> And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field.

8. A fine line remarkable for exhibiting a feeling for natural beauty pure and simple, which is extremely rare in L.'s contributions.

13-14. In this couplet L. imitates the language, though not the imagery, of M.P.'s lines in No. 54 of the next series, which was before him when he wrote—

> But for their virtue only is their *show*.
> . . . . *sweet roses* do not so
> When that [*sc.* your beauty] shall fade, by verse *distills* your truth.

and echoes both the language and the imagery of the line in *Midsummer Night's Dream*

> But earthlier happy is the *rose distilled*,

And, of course, all three derive from a passage in the *Arcadia* (*v.* extract quoted above).

6.

Again *The Attorney* and *The Accountant* divide the honours. POOLER explains 3-8 as follows:—

Usury was first openly permitted in England by 37 Hen. VIII. cap. 9. It was forbidden by 5 and 6 Edw. VI. cap 20, which states that 'usury is by the word of God utterly prohibited as a vice most odious and de-

testable.' The sonnet was probably written between 13 Eliz. cap 8, which revised the statute of Hen. VIII. while inconsistently condemning usury as sinful, and 39 Eliz. cap 18, which admitted usury to be very necessary and profitable . . . 8. *ten for one* Perhaps because 10 per cent was the highest interest allowed by the statute of Hen. VIII.

10.

3-4. Two typically matter-of-fact lines with a touch of *The Attorney*.

14.

In this 'Envoy' sonnet L. deliberately sets himself to parody Shakespeare.

In the first two quatrains he satirizes certain thoughts and phrases in S.'s E. D. sonnet (No. 26) which seem to him to lend themselves to ridicule.

1. A satirical reference to the first of S.'s two *gaffes*—"The *star* which guides my moving" (l.9).

3. A reference to the change in S.'s fortunes which the aforesaid star is expected to bring about (l.10).

6. "Pointing," *i.e.*, 'appointing.' A satirical reference to S.'s use of the word in an unusual sense (l.10).

8. "By oft predict" is a decidedly uncouth expression. It is probably a reminiscence of Sidney's lines:

> Though dusty wits dare scorn astrology
> . . . proof makes me sure
> Who *oft-prejudge* my after-following race
> By only those two stars in Stella's face.

The last six lines are an amalgam of 'echoes' from three separate Shakespearean sources:

(1). *Love's Labour's Lost*. IV. iii. 350–3.
> From women's *eyes* this *doctrine I derive*
> They sparkle still the right Promethean fire.
> They are the books, *the arts*, the Academes.

(2). S.'s sonnet No. 11. in this series
> Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth *convertest*
> Let those whom Nature hath not made for *store*,

(3). *Venus and Adonis*. 1080 (of the dead Adonis).
> But *true*-sweet *beauty lived and died with him*.

Note. (a). The pun on the two meanings of 'constant.'
(b). The satirical reference to S.'s use of the words "store" and "convert" (intransitive) in unusual senses.
(c) The implication that The Patron = Adonis.

The Humorist. (Nos. 15, 16, 13, 17, 126.)

The Humorist's contribution differs entirely from the others in character, and must be considered from an entirely different point of view. However greatly Shakespeare's original 'copy' and The Minor Poet's and The Lawyer's imitations thereof may differ among themselves in scope and quality, they all agree in one respect—they treat the main theme quite seriously. Now The Humorist does not—as in the rest of the series of this batch (and indeed in nearly all the series of the other batches) he is 'ragging' the whole time. Although he makes use of much the same thoughts as the other three, and does so ostensibly in the same spirit, a careful examination of his contribution shows the keynote of the whole performance to be a subtle burlesquing of such thoughts, phrases, and words occurring in the compositions of his fellow-competitors as struck

him as being unusual or ridiculous—this burlesquing being varied by a little *very* discreet pulling of the leg of The Patron himself. The reader will kindly remember in this connection that in his choice of material he was not limited to the sonnets of his three colleagues in *this* series only; the whole of their work in the four series of this batch—twenty-nine sonnets altogether—was before him when he wrote.

In Prop. VII. in the preceding chapter The Humorist's characteristics were noted as follows: (1) *Compressed Thought*, (2) *Super-concettist*, (3) *Deliberate Dissonance*, (4) *Subtle Humour*, (5) *Personal Allusion*, and (6) *The Polite Shirker*. Keynote: BURLESQUE. Four of these are exemplified in this series, viz.: *Compressed Thought*, 15 *passim*; *Super-concettist*, 16.13; *Subtle Humour* throughout; *Personal Allusion*, 16.8, 17.9-10.

15.

This sonnet imitates M.P.'s No. 12 very closely. It is constructed on precisely similar lines throughout, and conforms faithfully to its sentiment and general tone. M.P.'s references to the natural changes undergone by violets, trees, and cornfields are reproduced in

> . . . everything that grows
> Holds in perfection but a little moment,
> . . . men as plants increase,
> Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,

His "brave day sunk in hideous night," is echoed by

> To change your day of youth to sullied night;

and his "waste of time" by "wasteful" Time; while the thought embodied in M.P.'s final couplet of a defensive war against Time appears in an expanded form in the final couplet and the first three lines of the succeeding sonnet. But, of course, imitation is not necessarily parody: that it is so in this case now remains to be shown.

The first hint of burlesque is given in the third line, where one finds H., after starting off (in the first two lines) with a rural metaphor which promises to work out naturally on the lines of M.P.'s metaphors in No. 12, suddenly switching off into the wholly incongruous metaphor of a stage performance, and then proceeding to mix up the two metaphors so thoroughly as to produce an effect of hopeless confusion of thought and language. In the case of so vigorous and logical a thinker as H. later on proves himself to be, such confusion must have been produced deliberately and of set purpose; and it is difficult to see what this purpose could have been except that of satirizing the slovenly thinking and muddling of metaphors which characterises M.P.'s four sonnets in this series—especially No. 12, the sonnet particularly imitated.

POOLER'S note on the first eight lines of this sonnet runs as follows:—

> The relation of the stars to life is compared to the relation of an audience to a play. The words 'influence' and 'comment' seem to be used to obscure the difference between these relations, and to enable the metaphor to pass muster. Stars *ex hypothesi* influence human life, but they do not comment: spectators may comment but do not influence; at any rate their influence does not affect the course of the action. Its effect on the success of the play is another matter. Otherwise we might say that as the reception of a play is indicative of its success or failure, the comments might stand for the omens and portents gathered by astrologers from the stars. The words 'cheer'd and check'd' seem due to the previous image of spectators of a play. 'Sky' is ambiguous; it includes the stars which affect men's lives and characters, and weather which affects the growth of vegetation.[1]

[1] After giving this admirable exposition of the complicated absurdities of this passage, Pooler goes on to observe: "What is marvellous is that Shakespeare by means of these inexplicable lines and glimpses succeeds in turning the solid earth into a scene of illusion and change." Truly the most prudent course for an orthodox editor to take, when confronted with this and many other sonnets which exhibit the Humorist in his favourite rôle of clown to the troupe, is to follow Sir Thomas Browne's example and "pursue his Reason to an O altitudo!"

But even stronger indications of H.'s intention to burlesque are given by his choice of the stage for his second metaphor, and the theatrical terms he employs. There is nothing about the stage in the sonnets of any of his competitors in *this* series, but an examination of the *other* series of the first batch shows where he got his materials from, namely: *firstly*, the following lines of S.'s sonnet No. 26 in the E. D. series:

> Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
> Points on me graciously with a fair aspect,
> And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,

secondly, two lines in L.'s sonnet No. 21 in the B. I. series:

> That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
> As those gold candles fixed in heaven's air.

This explanation is not so far-fetched as it looks at first sight. The connecting link is supplied by four lines from one of Ronsard's most famous sonnets:

> La Mode est le théâtre et les hommes acteurs,
> La Fortune qui est maîtresse de la scène
> Apprête les habits, et de la vie humaine
> Les cieux et les Destins en sont les spectateurs.

Now H., searching his fellow-competitors' contributions for burlesquable material, could not fail to be struck by the resemblance between Ronsard's well-known lines and those of the *actor*-poet, or to see how easily L.'s two lines fitted into the idea of an evening performance at the theatre. To the Elizabethans 'the house' was commonly known as 'the round,' and 'the flies' as 'the heavens' (from which candles would have to be suspended if the performance took place after dark). 'Present' and 'show' appear to have borne their modern theatrical meanings, and it is a not impossible supposition that 'the stars' and 'the sky' were slang names for the occupants of the galleries or 'roomes'—the aristocratic part of the house.

14. This line exhibits a grotesque combination of two images used by his confrères, viz.: (1) S.'s "As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st," and (2) M.P.'s line in the D. D. series, "I make my love ingrafted to this store," with (3) the central thought of the next series, 'You shall remain ever young and beautiful in my verse.'

16.

5. POOLER notes—"cf. VII. 13 'in thy noon' perhaps with a reference to the position of the number XII. on a vertical dial." But the vertical dial belongs to M.P.'s remarkable clock "that tells the time," and there is also, possibly, a hint of S.'s "This thy golden time" (3.12).

6-7. An amusing but immoral perversion of S.'s perfectly respectable 3.5-6. "Virtuous" is good.

8-10. A satirical hit at The Patron. The "painted counterfeit" (which has a side allusion to M.P.'s line in this series, "a woman's face by Nature's own hand painted") refers, like L.'s "painted beauty" (No. 21) in the next series, to a portrait of Southampton—probably the one at Welbeck Abbey, described in detail in Lee's *Life* (p. 225). "This time's pencil" (as it surely ought to be punctuated) = the fashionable painter of the day. Apparently the portrait was a flattering one; and it may be confidently assumed that H., in anticipating that Southampton's progeny would be more like their father than the portrait was, did not *really* intend to suggest that they would be *better*-looking than that work of art.

10-12. On the same lines. Neither the flattering portrait nor my poetical eulogies will give posterity a *true* idea of your personal appearance and character—hit number two. POOLER says that " pupil " means ' immature and unskilful,' but it may well be that H. is here referring to the obligation laid on him to follow the lead of S. and the other two competitors in their praise of The Patron, and is thereby adding another effective touch to his satire.

14. Here we have the first of the four " sweets " which, with the three others in lines 4 and 8 of the next sonnet (13), patently burlesque the excessive sugariness of M.P.'s No. 8 in this series and No. 54 in the next. " Sweet skill " is good. It is an ingenious perversion of a line in Sidney's *Arcadia*

> With his sweet skill my skilless youth he drew.

13.

The general intention of the first 8 lines of this sonnet is to burlesque L.'s rather tiresome insistence on his conceit of the identity between a father and his son :

> Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive. (4.10)
> Then what could Death do, if thou should'st depart,
> Leaving thee living in posterity ? (6.11–12)
> Make thee another self for love of me, (10.13)

In H.'s line " To give yourself away keeps yourself still ; " the contradiction may pass for epigram ; and in " then you were yourself again after yourself's decease," the conceit though frigid is intelligible. But when the idea is carried into such nonsensical phrases as " O, that you were yourself," and " you are no longer yours than you yourself here live," the satiric intention is clearly revealed.

13-14. Parodied from the line in *Venus and Adonis* :

> Thou wast begot : to get it is thy duty

17.

The whole of this sonnet is devoted to a deliberate contradiction of the thoughts and sentiments of the next series, in which all the four poets expatiate on The Patron's beauty, and express in the most confident terms their belief that his gifts and graces will be immortalized in their verse. H., as usual, is not so enthusiastic as the three others, and this sonnet may be regarded as a sort of satirical protest against the adulatory strains which his " pupil pen " will have to indite in that series.

9-10. This may be an unkind allusion to L.—the veteran of the party. L. had in the next (B. I.) series laid great emphasis on his ' truth ' (21), and had alluded to himself as a broken-down and wrinkled old man (63).

12. As the commentators point out, Keats took this line as the motto of his *Endymion*. One does not know what meaning he attached to the words " stretched metre," but it scarcely seems likely that it was the correct one, *viz.*, " poetical exaggeration." As POOLER observes : " The expression seems similar to ' swift extremity ' (51.6), where the noun and the adjective have changed places ; it is not the metre that is stretched, but the stretching which is metrical."

13-14. An intentionally absurd and flat-sounding couplet. A man may be said to live twice, once in his natural life and once in that of his child, or once in his natural life and once in the verse of a poet ; but it is straining poetic license to breaking-point to make him live *three times* in all, as here.

126.

This sonnet parodies impartially the work of all the three other competitors in this series; for details *v.* under heading " Verbal Parallelisms " *supra*. It is remarkable chiefly for not being a sonnet at all—the only one of the whole 140 serial sonnets which is irregular in form. H., like M.P., allows himself a little latitude in his ' Envoy ' sonnet.

2. This line has puzzled the commentators a good deal, and various emendations have been proposed. No one, however, appears to have suggested—

Dost hold Time's fickle glass, *his sickle mower.*

This would parody M.P.'s line in his first sonnet (No. 60) in the next series—

And nothing stands but for *his scythe* to *mow.*

where " mow " is rhymed with " brow." " Sickle " would be used as an adjective = ' curved ' (cf. the sickle moon), and mower would = " scythe." The " hour " of the text is spelt " hower " in Q., so one letter only would have to be changed.

SERIES No. 2.—Beauty Immortalized.

The Theme. The Poet promises to enshrine The Patron's gifts and graces in immortal verse.

This theme is one of the most hackneyed of all the many hackneyed conceits of the sonnet-mongers. LEE notes:

> In the numerous sonnets in which he [Shakespeare] boasted that his verse was so certain of immortality that it was capable of immortalizing the person to whom it was addressed, the poet therefore gave voice to no conviction that was peculiar to his mental constitution. He was merely proving his supreme mastery of a theme which Ronsard, Du Bellay, and Desportes, emulating Pindar, Horace, Ovid, and other classical poets, had lately made a commonplace of the poetry of Europe. . . . Drayton and Daniel developed the conceit with unblushing iteration. Drayton, who spoke of his efforts as ' my immortal song ' (*Idea*, vi. 14) and ' my world-out-wearing rhymes ' (xliv. 7), embodied the vaunt in such lines as:
>
> While thus my pen strives to eternize thee (*Idea*, xliv. 1).
> Ensuing ages yet my rhymes shall cherish (*ib.* xliv. 11).
> My name shall mount unto eternity (*ib.* xliv. 14).
> All that I see is to eternize thee (*ib.* xlvii. 14)
>
> Daniel was no less explicit:
>
> This (*sc.* verse) may remain thy lasting monument (*Delia*, xxxvii. 9).
> Thou mayest in after ages live esteemed,
> Unburied in these lines (*ib.* xxix. 9–10).
> These (*sc.* my verses) are the arks, the trophies I erect
> That fortify thy name against old age;
> And these (*sc.* verses) thy sacred virtues must protect
> Against the dark and time's consuming rage (*ib.* 1.9–12). (*Life*—pp. 186-8.)

Daniel published his *Delia* in 1592 (re-issued 1594), and Drayton his *Ideas Mirrour* in June, 1594. Both these collections, especially Daniel's, were evidently well-known to our four poets; and the reader is invited to observe for himself how many of the phrases quoted in this extract are echoed in the sonnets of this series

SERIES No. 2—BEAUTY

The Theme—The Poet promises to enshrine The

SHAKESPEARE

64

When I have seen by *Time's fell hand* defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age ;
When sometime lofty *towers* I see *down-razed*,
And *brass* eternal slave to *mortal rage* ;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore
And the *firm soil* win of the *watery main*,
Increasing store with loss and loss with store ;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself *confounded* to decay ;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

19

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood ;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phœnix in her blood ;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do whate'er thou wilt, *swift-footed* Time,
To the wide world and all her fading sweets ;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime :
O, *carve* not with thy *hours* my love's *fair brow*,
Nor draw no *lines* there with thine *antique* pen ;
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
Yet do thy worst, old *Time* : *despite* thy wrong,
My love shall in *my verse* ever live young.

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day ?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate :
Rough winds do *shake* the darling *buds of May*,
And *summer's* lease hath all too short a date :
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often in his gold complexion dimm'd ;
And every fair from *fair* sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd ;
But thy eternal summer shall not *fade*,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest ;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal *lines* to time thou grow'st :
So long as *men* can *breathe*, or *eyes* can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

THE MINOR POET

60

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end ;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift *confound*.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And *delves* the *parallels* in *beauty's brow*,
Feeds on the *rarities* of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow :
And *yet* to *times* in hope *my verse* shall stand,
Praising thy worth, *despite his cruel hand*.

54

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet *ornament* which truth doth give !
The rose looks *fair*, but *fairer* we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and *play* as wantonly
When *summer's breath* their masked *buds* discloses :
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected *fade* ;
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so ;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made :
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall vade, by verse distills your truth.

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme ?
But you shall *shine* more *bright in these contents*
Than unswept *stone*, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall *statues overturn*,
And broils *root out* the *work of masonry*,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of *your memory*.
'Gainst *death* and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth ; your praise shall still find room
Even in the *eyes* of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in *lovers' eyes*.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Shakespeare's contribution contains the following four leading thoughts :

(a). My love is as fair as summer and summer's flowers. (18.1-10).
(b). Time and Death destroy all things terrestrial. (64.1-10).
(c). Therefore my love must die. (64.11-12).
(d). Nevertheless he shall live for ever in my verse. (19.13-14, 18.11-14).

IMMORTALIZED. (B.I.)

Patron's gifts and graces in immortal verse.

THE LAWYER

65

Since *brass*, nor *stone*, nor *earth*, nor *boundless sea*,
But sad *mortality* o'er-sways their power,
How with this *rage* shall beauty hold a plea
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall *summer's honey breath* hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his *swift foot* back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That *in black ink* my love may still *shine bright*.

21

So is it not with me as with that Muse
Stirr'd by a *painted beauty* to his *verse*,
Who heaven itself for ornament doth use
And every fair with his *fair* doth *rehearse*,
Making a couplement of proud compare,
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems,
With *April's first-born flowers*, and all things *rare*
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
O, let me, true in love, but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair
As any mother's child, though not so bright
As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air:
Let them say more that like of hearsay well;
I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

63

Against my love shall be, as I am now,
With *Time's injurious hand* crush'd and o'erworn;
When *hours* have drain'd his blood and fill'd *his brow*
With *lines* and *wrinkles*; when his youthful morn
Hath travell'd on to age's steepy night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's king
Are vanishing or vanish'd out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;
For such a time do I now fortify
Against *confounding* age's cruel knife,
That *he* shall *never cut from memory*
My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life:
His beauty shall *in these black lines* be seen,
And they shall *live*, and he *in them still* green.

THE HUMORIST

62

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and *chopp'd* with tann'd *antiquity*,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

53

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's cheek all art of *beauty* set,
And you in Grecian tires are *painted* new:
Speak of the spring and foison of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

81

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
From hence *your memory death cannot take*,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die:
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed *in men's eyes* shall lie.
Your *monument* shall be my gentle *verse*,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
And tongues to be your being shall *rehearse*,
When all the breathers of this world are dead;
You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where *breath* most *breathes*, *even* in the mouths of *men*.

The Minor Poet follows S. in all four, *viz.*: (a) (54 *passim*); (b) (60.9-12); (c,) (54.11-12); (d) (60.13-14, 54.13-14, 55 *passim*). He introduces one new thought, namely (e) Beauty's value is enhanced by constancy. (54.1-4.14).

The Lawyer also follows S. in all four, *viz.*: (a) (65.4-5, 21.7); (b) (65 *passim*); (c) (63.10-12); and (d) (65.14, 63.13-14).

The Humorist follows S. in (a) (53.9-10); he omits (b) (already dealt with in No. 15

of the previous series); he follows him in (c) (81.1, and 7-8); and in (d) (81 *passim*). He also follows M.P. in (e) (53.13-14). He introduces two new thoughts, *viz.*: (f) his identity with The Patron (63 *passim*); and (g) The Patron the divine substance of which worldly phenomena are shadows (53 *passim*).

Four points deserve attention:

1. The really remarkable closeness with which M.P. and L. follow S.'s lead in their treatments of the theme. H.'s imitation is not so faithful, but it is as close as is consistent with his main object, which (as in the first series) is to burlesque the contributions of his fellow-competitors.

2. H.'s two new thoughts (f) and (g) are taken (in order to be burlesqued) from M.P.'s Sonnet No. 37 in the next series of the batch—Despondency Dispelled.

3. S.'s deliberate design of adapting the thoughts and even the language of the couplets of the first series in which the Poet expresses the confident opinion that the preservation of The Patron's memory depends on his marrying and getting a son, to the corresponding couplets of this series, which express his equally confident opinion that it depends on his being mentioned in his (The Poet's) immortal verse. All three of S.'s fellow-competitors faithfully copy him in employing this device, which, inartistic as it seems to us, is nevertheless thoroughly in keeping with the conventions of Elizabethan sonnetteering, and affords further evidence (if such evidence were needed) of the utter unreality of the sentiments professed by the fashionable sonnet-mongers. The reader is particularly requested to compare carefully S.'s 2.12-14, and 11.12 read with 3.13-14 in the M. A. series with his 19.12-14, and 18.12-14 in this series: M.P.'s 12.13-14, and 7.11-14 in the M. A. series with his 60.12-14, and 55.10-14 in this series: L.'s 5.11-14, and 10.13-14 in the M. A. series with his 65.12-14, and 63.13-14 in this series; and H.'s 16.12-14 in the M. A. series with his 81.10, and 81.13-14 in this series.

4. The close connection between this series and the preceding one (M. A.). Note:

(a). M.P.'s carrying on of the imagery of his last sonnet in the first series (No. 7) into the first of this series (No. 60).

(b). L.'s borrowings from these two last-named sonnets for his No. 63 in this series. Compare his "youthful morn," "age's steepy night," and "king" with M.P.'s "strong youth," "steep-up," "feeble age," "sacred majesty" (No. 7) and "crown'd" (No. 60).

(c). The carrying on into this series by M.P. and L. of thought (e) of the first series—The Patron's waging defensive war against Time and Death. Compare M.P.'s—

> *Time* doth transfix the flourish set on youth
> *And delves the parallels in Beauty's brow,*

and L.'s—

> Against the wreckful *siege* of battering *days*

in this series with S.'s—

> When forty *winters* shall *besiege thy brow*
> *And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field*

in the first series.

Verbal Parallelisms.

S. . . . by *Time's fell hand* defaced
M.P. . . . despite his [*Time's*] *cruel hand.*
L. With *Time's injurious hand* crush'd and o'erworn ;

S. *When* sometime lofty *towers* I see *down-razed,*
And *brass* eternal slave to *mortal rage ;*
And the *firm soil* win of the *watery main,*
M.P. Than unswept *stone* besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall *statues overturn,*
And broils *root out* the *work of masonry,*
L. Since *brass,* nor *stone,* nor *earth,* nor *boundless sea,*
But sad *mortality* o'ersways their power,
How with this *rage* shall beauty hold a plea

S. Or state itself *confounded* to decay ;
M.P. And Time that gave doth now his gift *confound.*
L. Against *confounding* age's cruel knife,

S. O ! *carve* not with thy *hours* my love's *fair brow,*
Nor draw no *lines* there with thy *antique* pen ;
M.P. And *delves* the *parallels* in *beauty's brow,*
L. When *hours* have drained his blood, and filled *his brow*
With *lines* and *wrinkles* . . .
H. Beated and *chopped* with tanned *antiquity,*

S. *Yet* do thy worst, old *Time ; despite* thy wrong,
My love shall in *my verse* ever live young.
M.P. And *yet* to *times* in hope *my verse* shall stand,
Praising thy worth, *despite* his cruel hand.

S. Rough winds do *shake* the darling *buds of May,*
And *summer's* lease hath all too short a date :
M.P. Hang on such thorns and *play* as wantonly
When *summer's breath* their masked *buds* discloses :
L. O, how shall *summer's honey breath* hold out
With *April's first-born flowers* . . .

S. *And every fair* from *fair* sometimes declines,
M.P. The rose looks *fair,* but *fairer* we it deem
L. *And every fair* with his *fair* doth rehearse,

S. *When* in eternal *lines* to time thou grow'st :
So long as *men* can *breathe,* or *eyes* can see,
So long *lives this,* and this gives life to thee
M.P. *Even* in the *eyes* of all posterity
You live in these and dwell *in lovers' eyes.*
L. His beauty shall *in these black lines* be seen,
And they shall *live,* and he *in them still* green.
H. *When* you entombed *in men's eyes* shall lie.
You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where *breath* most *breathes, even* in the mouths of *men.*

M.P. But you shall *shine* more *bright in these contents*
L. That *in black ink* my love may still *shine bright.*

M.P. The living record of *your memory.*
'Gainst *death* and all-oblivious enmity
L. That he [Age, *i.e., Death*] shall never cut from *memory*
H. From hence *your memory death* cannot take,

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *Swift-footed,* 19.6, 65.11 ; (2) *Fade,* 18.9, 54.10 ; (3) *Monuments.* 55.1, 81.9 ; (4) *Painted beauty,* 21.2, 53.7-8 ; (5) *Verse* . . . *rehearse,* 21.2-4, 81.9-11.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 64, 19, 18.)

The first two of Shakespeare's sonnets in this series are characteristically clear in thought and expression, and run very musically, but otherwise are not particularly noteworthy. But the third sonnet (18) belongs to a different category altogether. It is magnificent throughout,—from the perfect beauty of the opening quatrain to the sweep and rush of the triumphant final couplet. The rhythms are varied with the subtlest skill, and the majestic ninth line—

> But *thy* eternal summer shall not fade,

reverberates like a stroke on a gong. One of the great sonnets of the language, fit to stand beside that most lovely of 'Shakespearean' sonnets—

> Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art.

The first sonnet owes a good deal to a passage in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*—or rather perhaps to Golding's translation thereof (XV. 288-90):

> Even so have places oftentimes exchanged theyr estate,
> For I have seene it sea which was substantial ground alate.
> Ageine where sea was, I have seene the same become dry land.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 60, 54, 55.)

The quality of M.P.'s contributions to this series is decidedly above his average. The first quatrains of Nos. 60 and 55, are really fine, and the versification is flowing and easy throughout. Four of his 'characteristics' are exemplified in this series: *Confused Thinking*, 60.11, 54.5-6, 55.7; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 60.11, 54.13-14, 55.9, 55.10 and 14; *Smooth Versification* throughout, esp. 60.1-4, 55.1-4; *Sound not Sense*, 60.11. 54.11, 55.4.

60.

1-4. In this quatrain M.P. follows S.'s example (in No. 64) and paraphrases a passage in Golding's translation of the *Metamorphoses*. M.P.'s passage (XV. 199-203) occurs some 80 lines earlier than S.'s:

> . . . But looke
> As every wave dryves other foorth and that that commes behynd
> Both thrusteth and is thrust itself. Even so the tymes by kynd
> Doo fly and follow both at once, and evermore renew.

M.P. was apparently determined to show that he could turn Golding's uncouth verses into poetry as well as S.

5-8. These four lines provide some fine confused reading; and, as is very often the case with M.P., the key to the confusion of thought and language is his inordinate fondness for alliteration—

> *C*rawls to maturity, wherewith being *c*rowned,
> *C*rooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
> And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.

DOWDEN explains: "The entrance of a child into the world at birth is an entrance into the main or ocean of light; the image is suggested by l.1 where our minutes are compared to waves." But was the crawl-stroke known in Shakespeare's day?

10. A close imitation of S.'s lines in the M. A. series (2.1-2):

> When forty winters shall besiege thy *brow*
> And *dig* deep *trenches* in thy *beauty's* field.

11. What is the meaning of this well-sounding line?

54.

Another saccharine sonnet like his No. 8 in the M. A. series. Here we have no less than five 'sweets'—one more than in No. 8. Both these sonnets are parodied (as already pointed out) by H. in his Nos. 16 and 13 in the M. A. series.

5-6. A typically inaccurate statement of fact. STEEVENS notes [my italics]: "*Shakespeare has not yet begun to observe the productions of nature with accuracy*, or his eyes would have convinced him that the cynorhodon is by no means of as deep a colour as the rose."

The last half of this sonnet is reminiscent of three well-known lines in Theseus' speech to Hermia in the opening scene of *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

> But earthlier happy is *the rose distilled*,
> Than that which *withering* on the virgin *thorn*,
> Grows, *lives*, and *dies* in single blessedness.

(*v.* note on L.'s No. 5 in the M. A. series).

11-12. POOLER notes: "Perhaps it were to enquire too curiously whether this means 'dead sweets' as 'swift extremity' means 'extreme speed': or whether 'deaths' may be used lightly for the ghosts of the flowers; see Wülckner Wrights' *gloss.*, p. 447*b*: 'manes'= dea*th*as, dea*th*godas: or for their corpses, 'death' being commonly used for death's head, and skeleton." A pity to waste so much erudition on M.P., who had a vague idea of what he wanted to say, but whose chief concern was to say it musically, *i.e.*, *alliteratively*. These two lines, in fact, furnish one of the most flagrant examples of his abuse of alliteration:

> *D*ie to themselves: *s*weet roses *d*o not so;
> Of their *s*weet *d*eaths are *s*weetest o*d*ours ma*d*e.

13-14. "that" in line 14 apparently refers to "beauty" 13 lines higher up with several full stops between! "Distill," like "show" in line 9, is copied by L. in his No. 5 in the M. A. series, as already noted.

55.

1-4. This quatrain echoes *Lucrece* 944-6:—

> To ruinate proud buildings with thy hours,
> And *smear* with *dust* their *glittering golden* towers,
> To fill with worm-holes stately *monuments*.

On "unswept stone" POOLER notes, "*i.e.*, than in unswept stone 'in' being understood from 'in these contents'; my verse will be a better memorial than the inscription on your tomb. If a change is to be made I would rather read *Than on wept stone*, where *wept*=bewept, than with Stengel, *Than in swept stone*." Again the butterfly is broken on the wheel! M.P. got his alliterative effect—five s's and four t's, which was all he cared about.

8. "All-oblivious enmity" apparently means oblivion which is the enemy of all—a really outrageous inversion made with the object of providing a rhyme for "posterity."

10-14. Slovenly, far-fetched, and tautologous verses which would be mercilessly criticized if they appeared as the handiwork of the minutest of the minor poets of to-day. Why "even"? To talk of printed matter "finding room" in people's eyes is not a little ridiculous. In line 11 the poet's verses are going to be looked upon by the *whole* of posterity, but in line 14 only by the 'lovers' section thereof. And line 13 is hopelessly ungrammatical, even if we accept Beeching's explanation that "that"=when.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 65, 21, 63.)

The Lawyer's contribution to this series is, like M.P.'s, a very characteristic one. Five 'characteristics' are exemplified: *Pedestrian Style*, 21.9-14; *The Attorney*, 65.3-4; *Clumsy Humour*, 65.14, 21.11, 63.13-14; *The Candid Friend*, 21.9-14, 63.1-2; *The Old Dog*, 21.1-8.

65.

4. "action." The commentators take this as equivalent to force or vigour, and quote *Julius Cæsar* I. iii. 77:

> A man no mightier than thyself or me
> In personal action . . .

but this misses the legal technicalities 'plea' and 'action.

13-14. A not very exhilarating *jeu d'esprit*.

21.

"That Muse" is M.P.; throughout this sonnet L. is poking fun at him, and parodying his sonnets. The reader is invited to check the following references to M.P.'s efforts.

(a). How can my *Muse* want subject to invent,
When thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my *verse*
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to *rehearse*. (E. D., 38).
(b). A woman's face with Nature's own hand *painted*. (M. A., 20).
(c). O, how much more doth *beauty* beauteous seem
By that sweet *ornament* which truth doth give!
The *rose* looks *fair*, but *fairer* we it deem (B. I., 54).
(d). When *summer's* breath their masked *buds* discloses: (B. I., 54).
(e). Feeds on the *rarities* of nature's truth, (B. I., 60).
(f). Vouchsafe, right virtuous lord, with gracious eyes,
Those *heavenly lamps* which give the Muses light.

This quotation is from Barnes' dedicatory sonnet to Southampton prefixed to his *Parthenophe and Parthenophil* collection of sonnets published in 1593.

(g). . . . . Your *praise* shall still find room. (B. I., 55).
(h). Sonnet No. 7 in the M. A. Series, in which M. P. compares The Patron to the *sun*.

The only difficulty is line 6, "and moon with earth's and sea's rich gems." There are no full-moon faces, ruby lips, or pearly teeth in the *Sonnets*.

1-4. L.'s first reference to himself as the veteran of the party. When these lines were written Warner was thirty-six or thirty-seven—a man of late middle age according to the reckoning of those hard-living times—and so six years older than Shakespeare, eleven years older than Barnes, and fifteen years older than Donne and Southampton.

13-14. This couplet contains two gibes: (1) Barnes had printed and *sold* a volume containing his sonnet in praise of Southampton; (2) L. insinuates that Barnes had no *personal* acquaintance with Southampton—the "painted beauty" of 12 is the "painted counterfeit" of H.'s 16 in the M. A. series, and may be identified with the Welbeck Abbey portrait of Southampton at the age of twenty-one.

63.

4-6. An echo from M.P.'s sonnet No. 7 in the previous series:

> Serving with looks his sacred *majesty*;
> And having climbed the *steep-up* heavenly hill,
> Resembling strong *youth* in his middle age,

10. A reference to M.P.'s 60.12 in this series:

> And nothing stands but for *his scythe* to mow.

13-14. A humorous effort of the same type as the couplet of 65, but rather worse.

The Humorist. (Nos. 62, 53, 81.)

In this series H. continues very successfully to carry out his twofold plan of burlesquing the efforts of his fellow-competitors and of poking fun at The Patron. His three sonnets do not contain one serious line. His 'characteristic' of *Subtle Humour* is well exhibited throughout his contribution; *Compressed Thought*, 53.1-4; *Super-Concettist*, 62.13-14, 53.1-4; *The Polite Shirker*, 62 *passim*, 53.14.

62.

The 'argument' is as follows: "I am sinfully in love with myself, and consider myself superior to the rest of mankind in good looks and everything else. But when I see my weather-beaten face in the looking glass, I realise that I am quite wrong, and that owing to the simple little fact that I am identical with you, I have been flattering myself that I possess a youthful beauty which is really *yours*." One would not suppose that this sort of thing could be taken seriously. But DOWDEN apparently does so. He notes "Perhaps the thought of jealousy in 61 suggests this: 'How self-loving to suppose my friend could be jealous of such an one as I—beated and chopped with tanned antiquity. My apology for supposing that others could make love to me is that my friend's beauty is mine by right of friendship.'" The fact is that this sonnet is not, as POOLER describes it, "A compliment in the form of a confession of vanity," but rather a profession of vanity in the form of a compliment. Donne was born in the same year as Southampton, and (as his portraits shew) was a handsome man of a dark, virile type. Southampton was fair and effeminate-looking. So Donne in pursuance of his fixed policy of shirking whenever he possibly can the task of plastering the Noble Patron with fulsome praise in the manner of his professional confrères, has hit on the device of devoting the greater part of his first sonnet to a half-serious proclamation of his satisfaction with his *own* personal appearance, and then abruptly pretending to conform to the rules of the game by offering the intentionally absurd explanation that his good looks really belong not to an ugly old man like himself, but to the youthful Southampton, of whom M.P. had in the M. A. series sung—

> And for a woman wert thou first created.

This is H.'s first reference to his 'self-love,' which, as the kind reader will discover in due course, is one of the most important factors in *The Polite Shirker's* tactical scheme of co-operation with his three colleagues. Whenever in the course of the Contest (four separate occasions altogether) they bring into action the Love-for-The-Patron sections of their forces, H. conforms to the movement by advancing his Self-Love section, either supported by Identity-with-The-Patron (as here), or else alone, in which latter case it is skilfully camouflaged as the real thing.

4. Taken from the Prayer-book phrase "grafted inwardly in our hearts."

5-9. In these lines H. makes sarcastic reference to S.'s line in his No. 3 in the M. A. series—

> Look in thy glass and tell the face thou viewest,

which seems to have struck his fellow-competitors as particularly funny; also to M.P.'s "truth" (54), and L.'s "true" and "truly" (21) in this series; and to M.P.'s "worth" (*passim*).

11. H. ironically applies to himself L.'s description of *himself* (63.2). "Tanned antiquity", like 'yellow'd with his age' in H.'s 17 in the previous series, is probably a reference to L.'s complexion.

13. Here we have the first appearance of the Identity-with-The-Patron formula.

14. The "praise" and "days" of the couplet, like the "verse" and "rehearse" of No. 81, is an echo from M.P.'s E. D. sonnet No. 38; and both M.P.'s and L.'s lines echo Constable's lines:

> That former poets praise the beauty of their *days*
> But all these beauties were but figures of thy *praise*.

53.

In this sonnet The Patron is the principal target of H.'s satire. He rags him first by affecting to regard him as divine, and secondly by eulogising him as an epicene beauty. POOLER'S note on the first eight lines are as follows:

> *What is your substance* perhaps implying that it is divine, you are the ἰδέα of which your shadows are εἴδωλα. Platonism is often introduced by poets into strange surroundings, as if in revenge. . . *That . . . tend.* The sonnet is based on a pun: shadow (shade, 1.3.) is (1) the silhouette formed by a body that intercepts the sun's rays; (2) a picture, reflection, or symbol. 'Tend' means attend, follow as a servant, and is strictly appropriate to 'shadow' only in the first sense, though shadows is here used in the second; . . . *Since . . . lend.* All men have one shadow each, in the first sense; you being only one can yet cast many shadows in the second sense; for everything good and beautiful is either a representation of you or a symbol of your merits . . . *set.* With this use of the imperative compare 89.1,3. The meaning seems to be if to Helen's loveliness were added all the charms that the art of beauty (whatever that may be) can compass, she would then be an image of yourself in foreign clothes. Without addition to her native beauty she would be only a bad likeness, like Adonis.

It seems odd that so competent a critic should have written so sound a note without (apparently) entertaining a suspicion that 'Shake-speare' was pulling the gentleman's leg.

The first quatrain ridicules M.P.'s absurd D. D. sonnet No. 37, in which he congratulates himself on making up his personal deficiencies by substantial borrowings from *the shadow* of The Patron's manifold excellencies:

> Whilst that this *shadow* doth such *substance* give.

H. wonders what stuff Southampton is made of which can vitalize people like Barnes by its mere reflections or emanations in this remarkable fashion. He is forced to conclude that he must be To Kalon itself, as L. had hinted in the rather absurd final couplet of his 'idolatrous' sonnet No. 105 in the E. D. series—

> Fair, kind, and true, have often lived alone,
> Which three till now never kept seat in one.

Note too (as in that sonnet) an allusion to Southampton's motto, *Ung par tout, tout par ung.*

The second quatrain gibes at Southampton's effeminate appearance. There are three allusions:

(1). To the description of "rose-cheeked Adonis" in *V. and A.*

'Thrice fairer than myself,' thus she began,
'The field's chief flower, sweet above compare
Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
More white and red than doves and roses are.'

One infers that the hero of *Venus and Adonis* was intended to be a portrait of the dedicatee. Southampton was under twenty when S.'s poem was published.

(2). To M.P.'s indelicate sonnet No. 20 in the M. A. series, beginning:

A woman's face with nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion.

(3). To a *recently-painted* portrait of The Patron—the "painted counterfeit" of H.'s No. 16 in the M. A. series. It may be identified almost certainly with the Welbeck Abbey portrait of Southampton at the age of twenty-one. This depicts a beardless, pink-cheeked youth, arrayed in an extravagantly variegated kit, and with a thick lock of hair brought forward over the left shoulder and hanging half-way down to his waist, crimped and curled like a cart-horse's tail at a show.[1]

9. An allusion to M.P.'s No. 12 in the M. A. series.

14. An intentionally ambiguous line which echoes ironically the irreproachable sentiments of M.P.'s 54.1-2, and 13-14.

81.

1-2. These two seemingly pointless lines possibly veil a subtle gibe. If I predecease you, your name will live as long as you survive in your proper person; if you predecease me, it will live as long as the epitaph I shall write for you is remembered.

4. Here is another of H.'s ambiguous reference to 'part' and 'parts,' *cf.* 17.4, 53.13, 31.11.

7-14. S. in the final couplet of his contribution to this series had said hyperbolically but quite intelligibly:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

M.P. at the end of his contribution had taken the first or *eyes* part of S.'s vaunt and elaborated and spoilt it; and now H. at the end of *his* contribution takes up the second or *breath* part of S.'s couplet, and burlesques M.P.'s feeble performance by claiming that if he (M.P.) can provide The Patron with a permanent billet in posterity's *eyes*—

When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie,

he (H.) can promise him one in posterity's *mouth*—

You still shall live—such virtue has my pen—
Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

—a patently comic last line. Note how H. works in M.P.'s "still" and "even."

SERIES No. 3.—Despondency Dispelled.

The Theme. The Poet, sunk in dejection, comforts himself by thinking of The Patron. This one-sonnet series probably stood last in the first batch as a sort of Envoy, the Epistle Dedicatory series standing first.

[1] LEE notes:—Southampton's singularly long hair procured him at times unwelcome attentions. When, in January, 1598, he struck Ambrose Willoughby, an esquire of the body, for asking him to break off, owing to the lateness of the hour, a game of primero that he was playing in the royal chamber at Whitehall, the esquire Willoughby is stated to have retaliated by 'pulling off some of the Earl's locks.' On the incident being reported to the Queen, she 'gave Willoughby thanks for what he did, in the presence.'—(*Sydney Papers*, ii. 83).

SERIES NO. 3—DESPONDENCY

The Theme—The Poet sunk in dejection

SHAKESPEARE

29

When, *in disgrace with fortune* and men's eyes,
I all alone *beweep* my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with *friends* possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost *despising*,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet *love* remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with *kings*.

THE MINOR POET

37

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, *made lame by fortune's dearest spite*,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth;
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled in thy *parts* do *crowned* sit,
I make my *love* engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor *despised*,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance *give*
That I in thy abundance am sufficed
And by a part of all thy glory *live*.
Look, what is best, that best I wish *in thee*:
This wish I have; then ten times happy *me!*

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

S.'s treatment of The Theme is very simple and consists of two thoughts only:

(a). A description of the causes of his despondency.

(b). The thought of The Patron's perfections dispels this despondency.

All the others follow him very closely. The *causes* of the despondency differ, but the *remedy* is the same in each of the four contributions.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

For a one-sonnet series the verbal parallelisms are remarkably close and numerous

S. When *in disgrace with Fortune* and men's eyes,
M.P. So I *made lame by fortune's dearest spite*,

S. I all alone *beweep* my outcast state,
L. Then can I *drown an eye* unused to flow,
And *weep* afresh *Love's* long since cancell'd woe,
H. How many a holy and obsequious *tear*
Hath dear religious *love* stol'n from *mine eye*,

S. Featur'd like him, like him with *friends* possess'd
L. For precious *friends hid* in *death's* dateless night,
H. And all those *friends*, which I thought buried.
As interest of the *dead* which now appear
But things removed which *hidden in* thee lie!

S. *Haply I think on thee*, and then my state,
L. But *if the while, I think on thee*, dear friend,

S. For thy sweet *love* remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with *kings*.
M.P. Entitled in thy *parts* do *crowned* sit,
I make my *love* engrafted to that store:
H. And there *reigns love*, and all *love's* loving *parts*,
Who all their *parts* of me to thee did give.

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *despise*, 29.9, 37.9; (2) *wealth*, 29.13, 37.5; (3) *give* . . . *live*, 37.10 and 12, 31.9 and 11; (4) *in thee* . . . *me*, 37.13-14, 31.13-14; (5) *lack*, 30.3, 31.2.

DISPELLED. (D.D.)

comforts himself by thinking of The Patron.

THE LAWYER

30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the *lack* of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my *dear* time's waste:
Then can I *drown an eye*, unused to flow,
For precious *friends hid* in *death's* dateless night,
And *weep* afresh *love's* long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But *if the while I think on thee*, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

THE HUMORIST

31

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by *lacking* have supposed dead;
And there *reigns love*, and all *love's* loving *parts*,
And all those *friends* which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious *tear*
Hath *dear* religious *love* stol'n from *mine eye*,
As interest of the *dead*, which now appear
But things removed that *hidden* in thee lie!
Thou art the grave where buried love doth *live*,
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their *parts* of me to thee did *give*:
That due of many now is thine alone:
Their images I loved I view *in thee*,
And thou, all they, hast all the all of *me*.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (No. 29)

A good example of the 'Shakespearean' form of sonnet—clearly and forcibly expressed, and beautifully balanced throughout.

1-9. It is possible that in these lines we get one of the very few glimpses of Shakespeare's real feelings to be found in the *Sonnets*. It is interesting to compare this *personal* sonnet, in which the poet (S.) is speaking in his own person, with the *dramatic* sonnet 91 (in the E. A. series), in which the poet (N.) is speaking in the person of a gilded youth of the day.

The Minor Poet. (No. 37.)

M.P.'s characteristics of *Confused Thinking* and *Slovenly Phrasing* are well displayed in this sonnet (4-7). It is a wholly unoriginal production—an amalgam of the ideas and language of S.'s 'copy' sonnet with the ideas and language of a certain sonnet in Sidney's *Arcadia*. From S. he gets: (1) the harshness of fortune, (2) his lack of beauty, (3) his lack of wit, (4) his being despised, and (5) his love for The Patron his only wealth. From Sidney's lines, which run as follows:

> Since in *sweet you all goods so richly reign*,
> That where you are no *wished* good can want.
> . . . . . .
> How can you then *unworthie* him decree,
> In whose *chief parts* your *worths implanted* bee.

he gets: (1) the royal state of The Patron's gifts and graces, (2) the wishing of all good things to him, (3) the conceit of his gifts and graces being displayed on a shield, and (4) the conceit of his own qualities being incorporated with them.

He very characteristically gets tangled up in his heraldic metaphor in lines 7 and 8, and has thereby caused a lot of trouble to the commentators. POOLER writes:

Entitled . . . sit. Perhaps—sit as rightful kings among your other good qualities; *cf.* "part" in lxxiv. 6, and lxxxi. 4. I doubt if "crowned" implies predominance over his other gifts and graces, it may mean merely that those named are princely in kind or degree. Sometimes to analyse a phrase of Shakespeare's into its ingredients is to lose the flavour. Entitled seems to mean "by a just title."

What he was, apparently, *trying* to say was that he was comforted by the thought that The Patron was not only full of "worth" but also "true," *i.e.*, constant to his love for him (M.P.). Therefore he was certain of having a share in all the ingredients that went to make up the aforesaid worth, *i.e.*, "beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit," et cetera—l. 6 being merely a poetical periphrasis for "et cetera."

Note his favourite "worth" again.

The Lawyer. (No. 30.)

The first four lines of this sonnet (which *in form* is very closely imitated from the first four of S.'s sonnet) are very finely expressed, and are as well known, perhaps, as any passage in the *Sonnets*—his predilection for legal terminology having in this instance served him well indeed. But the rest of the sonnet is on a much lower plane; here we have presented to us the image of a tradesman dolefully looking over his last year's books—cancelled, expense, tell over, accounts, pay, losses—and the effect is unpoetical to a degree. The characteristics exemplified are: *Pedestrian Style*, 5-14; *The Attorney*, 1-2; *The Accountant*, 5-14.

The Humorist. (No. 31.)

The Humorist, as usual, treats the theme in a vein of burlesque. His "special idea" is to take L.'s rather absurd declaration that when he thinks of The Patron "all losses are restored and sorrows end," *i.e.*, his "precious friends hid in death's dateless night" are brought back to life again, and to push it to the extreme of absurdity by saying, 'How foolish of me to bewail the death of my friends. I see now that they did not really die, but were merely incorporated in you, and so you are entitled to receive from me in one conglomerated lump the affection I felt for each of them singly.' This "special idea" is worked out according to the familiar formula of his "general idea," *i.e.*, to burlesque everything that seems to him burlesquable in the efforts of his fellow-competitors. Taking his lines in order, note "lacking" (L. 3), "reigns" and "parts" (M.P., 5 and 6); "dear" (L. 4, where it is used merely to eke out the line); "interest" (L.'s accountancy metaphor); "dead" and "hidden" (L. 6); "trophies" and "parts" (M.P.'s heraldic metaphor); "due" (L.'s accountancy as before); and compare the "live" and "give" of lines 9 and 11 with M.P.'s "give" and "live" in lines 10 and 12, and his "I view in thee" rhyming with "me" in his final couplet with the "I wish in thee" rhyming with "me" in M.P.'s final couplet.

Another advantage of this "special idea" is that it enables him to expatiate on his love for The Patron without incurring the reproach of servility—*The Polite Shirker* again. Other characteristics exemplified are, *Subtle Humour* (*passim*), and *Super-Concettist* (*passim*).

SERIES No. 4. Epistle Dedicatory.

The Theme. The Poet modestly commends to The Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets.

As noted above, this series probably stood first in the first batch, series No. 3 standing last as the Envoy.

SERIES NO. 4—EPISTLE

The Theme—The Poet modestly commends to The

SHAKESPEARE

26

Lord of *my love*, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this *written* ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in *wanting words* to show it
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee:
Till then not show my head where thou mayst
prove me.

THE MINOR POET

38

How can my Muse want subject to *invent*
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into *my verse*
Thine own sweet *argument*, too *excellent*
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
For who's so *dumb* that cannot *write to thee*,
When thou thyself dost give *invention* light;
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invocate;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

In this series S.'s three rivals give themselves a much freer hand than usual; each follows his own line without much regard to S.'s treatment of The Theme. S. protests affection for The Patron, apologizes for the inadequacy of his poetical offering, hopes that it will be received with favour, and promises, if Fortune smiles, to present something better later on. M.P. assures The Patron that inasmuch as he is both the subject and the inspiration of *his* offering, he is entitled to the credit of any success that may attend it. L. alleges The Patron's unique personality as his excuse for making him the sole theme of *his* offering. And H. explains that the overwhelming intensity of his affection for The Patron prevents him from prefixing to *his* offering any dedication at all.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

As a natural consequence of the divergencies in treatment verbal parallelisms are much fewer than usual.[1] Two good examples, however, occur:

S. Lord of my *love* to whom in vassalage
To thee I send this *written* ambassage,
May make seem bare in *wanting words* to show it,
M.P. For who's so *dumb* that cannot *write to thee*,
H. O, learn to read what *silent love* hath *writ*:
And *dumb* presagers of my speaking breast;

M.P While thou dost breathe that pour'st into *my verse*
Thine own sweet *argument*, too *excellent*
L. Therefore *my verse* to constancy confin'd,
Still constant in a wondrous *excellence*;
Fair, kind, and true is all my *argument*,

[1] On the other hand, the thoughts and phraseology of this one-sonnet series are imitated and parodied in the sonnets of *subsequent* series to a far greater extent than in the case of any other series—long or short.

DEDICATORY. (E.D.)

Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets.

THE LAWYER.

105

Let not love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind
Still constant in a wondrous *excellence ;*
Therefore *my verse* to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
'Fair, kind, and true,' is all my *argument,*
'Fair, kind, and true,' varying to other words ;
And in this change is my *invention* spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
'Fair, kind, and true,' have often lived alone,
Which three till now never kept seat in one.

THE HUMORIST.

23

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart ;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And *dumb* presagers of my speaking breast ;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more express'd
O, learn to read what *silent love* hath *writ :*
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (No. 26.)

This is a straight-forward. self-respecting dedication modelled on the prose dedication of *Lucrece.*

4. Note the reference to the two recognized motives for inditing a sonnet-sequence : (a) to compliment one's Patron (or Patroness), (b) to shew that one can do it as well as other people. To " unlock his heart " formed no part of the scheme of the Elizabethan sonnetteer.

9. Here S. commits the first of his two *gaffes* to which his fellow-competitors make satirical allusion.[1] The stars rule the destinies of the noble and the great, not *canaille* like player-poets.

The Minor Poet. (No. 38.)

This sonnet contrasts strongly with S.'s in all respects, and is a shockingly bad effort—even for M.P. It exhibits his worst characteristics in an exaggerated form : *Confused Thinking*, 1, 7, 11-14 ; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 12 ; *Forcing the Note, The Flunkey.* 9-14. Nevertheless it is commended to the very special attention of the reader. From the point of view of personal allusion and parody, it is the most important of all the Personal sonnets, because the three other competitors have (not unnaturally) singled it out as the chief peg on which to hang their ridicule of Barnes and his poetry. It is conceived very much on the same lines as his dedicatory sonnet to Southampton in his *Parthenophe and Parthenophil* collection of sonnets (published in 1593). This effusion

[1] The references are L. 14.1 and 10, and H. 15.4 in the M. A. Series, and H. 25.1 in the P. R. Series.