Hold our enemies still at advantage.
Gosson, *Schoole of Abuse*, Arber's rep. p. 46.

Upon a good and a military advantage.
Middleton, *Blurt, Master-Constable* (1602) i, 1.

Backward he bears for more advantage now.
Daniel, *Civil Wars*, B. iii, St. 77.

Make imperfections their advantages.
Id. B. iii, St. Sh.

In extremes advantage hath no time.
Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, iii, 13.

Watch you 'vantages ?
Id. Soliman and Perseda, 1, 2.

At his best advantage stole away.
Id. i, 3.

For if the wife her at advantage take . . .
Higgins' add. to *Mirrour for Magistrates*, 1575.
Rep. of 1810, p. 68.

38. "The curious expression *play prizes* occurs once in Shakespeare," says Dr. Theobald, citing TITUS, I, i, 399. And it occurs thrice in Bacon ! I know nothing more "curious" in the Elizabethan age than Dr. Theobald's untiring acclamation of its household words when he chances to find them in both Bacon and "Shakespeare," never dreaming of looking further. "Play his prize," which is found only in TITUS among the plays ascribed to Shakespeare, occurs a score of times in the plays and tales of Shakespeare's day :

Getting up and down like the usher of a fence school about to play his prize.
Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, Works, xi, 221.

Why should not we, ladies, play our prizes, I pray ?
Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels*, v, 2.

If I play not my prize.
Massinger, *A New Way to pay Old Debts*, iv, 2.

When I do play my prizes in print.
Nashe, *Have with you to Saffron Walden* ; Works, iii, 128.

Room, let my prize be played.
Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, Pt. II, v, 2.

Nay, let me alone to play my master's prize.
Id. Pt. I, iv, 3.

To play at the wooden rapier and dagger at the end of a maister's prize.

Id. Seven Deadly Sins, Arber's rep. p. 2.

Not so nimble at their prizes of wit.

The Witch of Edmonton, i, 2.

As may be learned from Steevens' note to the MERRY WIVES, I, i, 295, the *practice* was as familiar in the London of that day as cricket in ours. Thus illustrated, the argument attains to "curious'st," as the Elizabethans would say. As TITUS is non-Shakespearean, it would appear in this connection that Bacon wrote pretty well all the Elizabethan plays *but* Shakespeare's.

39. "Starting holes is another curious phrase," continues Dr. Theobald. "Curiouser and curiouser." *See above*, p. 277.

40. Bacon has the phrase "as we now say, putting tricks upon them." Essay OF CUNNING (1612). On this passage Dr. Abbott remarked that "The word 'now' seems to apologize for the new-fashioned colloquial phrase, *put tricks on*." It is used by Stephano in the TEMPEST (II, ii, 62), and by the clown in ALL'S WELL, IV, v, 63. "As neither of these plays were known till 1623," comments Dr. Theobald, "there is no reason for giving the phrase an earlier date than the Essay."

We are thus asked to believe that Bacon invented in 1612 the trivial phrase "put tricks on," and introduced it with the formula "*as we now say*,"—putting it at the same time into a play, to bear out his remark! The literary *fact* is, as Mr. Crawford points out, that Jonson uses the expression in both versions of his EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR, so that it was already current in 1596. And Jonson further uses it twice in CATILINE, again in THE NEW INN, and also in BARTHOLOMEW FAIR.

. . . .

I have now followed Dr. Theobald *seriatim* through forty of his eighty "Echoes and Correspondencies." The remainder I shall merely sample.

41. "Bacon more than once uses the curious verb *stage*" (*e.g.* Letter to Buckingham, LIFE, vii, 151). So Shakespeare, M. FOR M., I, i, 68, ANTHONY, V, ii, 216.

The word is a perfectly normal formation of early English and the Tudor period, like "horsed," "housed," "shipped." It is used by Stow in his SURVEY OF LONDON, 1598:

> To stay and behold the disguisings and other disports . . showed in the great hall, which was richly hanged with arras, and staged about on both sides.
>
> Morley's rep. p. 419.

and by Hall in his Chronicle (p. 596):

> The Kyng . . . caused his great chambre at Greenwiche to be staged.

43.[1] In the light of the foregoing comparisons, there is a special piquancy in Dr. Theobald's proclamation that the phrase "gross and palpable" "is one of Bacon's many contributions to verbal currency. It was a new coin when it issued from his affluent mint." *See above*, p. 276, as to its newness.

45. An instance is actually made of the title "Narcissus, or Self-Love," in Bacon's WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS, and the reference to Narcissus and self-love in LUCRECE, 264. Narcissus *was* "Self-Love" for all who knew anything of mythology. It never occurs to a Baconian to wonder why the plays always make the ordinary use of mythological names and tales, and never hint at those interpretations or allegorisings of them which make up the bulk of Bacon's WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS.

48. Bacon notes the observation of "some of the ancients" that "marigolds, tulippas, pimpernel, *and indeed most flowers* do open or spread their leaves abroad when the sun shineth serene and fair; and again (in some part) close . . . when the sky is overcast" (SYL. SYL. 493). Shakespeare refers thrice to this property *in the*

[1] I follow Dr. Theobald's numbers. His instances grow more and more futile as they proceed.

marigolds only. And we are asked to infer identity of authorship! On this principle, Bacon wrote Greene's MENAPHON, where the relation of the marigold to the sun is the theme of a whole paragraph (Arber's rep. p. 59).

50. Shakespeare has "out of tune and harsh" (HAMLET, III, i, 166); and Bacon has "*duras et absonas*" (NOVUM ORGANUM, i, 28). Dr. Theobald does not say whether he thinks Bacon invented this phrase. As Mr. Crawford points out, "out of tune," in the moral sense, occurs in Roye's REDE ME AND BE NOT WROTHE (1528). It must have been an extremely common trope. In Sidney and Golding's translation of De Mornay (1587) we have

> Our minde [must] bee brought from . . . jarring into right tune. Which is a token that our mind is out of tune even of its own accord, seeing that it needeth so many precepts to set it in tune agayne.
>
> Ed. 1604, p. 282.

And in the drama:

> Whose voice, if it should utter her thoughts, would make the tune of a heart out of tune.
>
> Lilly, *Midas*, iii, 3.

52. Bacon quotes Martial to the effect "that accident is many times more subtle than foresight, and overreacheth expectation" (LIFE, v, 276), which corresponds to Hamlet's "praised be rashness for it" speech (HAMLET, V, ii, 6).

As I have elsewhere shown (MONTAIGNE AND SHAKESPEARE, 2nd ed. p. 42 *sq.*), Shakespeare found this and much other matter lying to his hand in Florio's translation of Montaigne.

54. Dr. Theobald seriously argues that these lines in ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA (V, ii, 172):

> Or I shall show the cinders of my spirit
> Through the ashes of my chance,

were not written till the issue of the folio in 1623, because Bacon wrote "the sparks of my affection . . . under the ashes of my fortune" in a letter in 1621! The figure was

in common use. In Sidney and Golding's translation of De Mornay we have :

> Drawen some small sparkes of truth and wisdome of them as out of some little fire raked under a great heap of ashes.
>
> Pref. To the Reader.

Greene has :

> Having the sparks of honour fresh under the cinders of poverty.
>
> *Menaphon*, Arber's rep. p. 82.

The figure is as old as Chaucer :

> Looke how that fire of smale gleedes, that been almoost deede under ashen, wollen quike agayn when they been touched with brymstoon. Right so ire wol evermo quyken agayn when it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte.
>
> *Parson's Tale : Sequitur de Ira.*

> Yet in our asshen olde is fyr y-reke.
>
> *Prologue to the Reeve's Tale.*

55. Bacon and Shakespeare both speak of money and worldly goods as "trash." *Ergo— !* Fifty preachers and playwrights had done so before them. *E.g.* :

> Therefore must I bid him provide trash, for my master is no friend without money.
>
> Greene, *James IV*, iii, 1.

> Kneel hinds to trash : me let bright Phœbus swell
> With cups full flowing from the Muses' well.
>
> Jonson, *Poetaster*, I. i. (Rendering of the Ovidian motto of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*).

59. Bacon writes hyberbolically to the King that unless his Majesty works a miracle "I shall still be a lame man to do your service" if others are "put in before me." And Shakespeare has :

> So I, made lame by fortune's dearest spite. (Son. 37.)

and again :

> Speak of my lameness and I straight will halt. (Son. 89.)

Therefore Bacon wrote the Sonnets !

61. Bacon speaks of "the wrong of time" (ADVANCEMENT, I, viii, 6) ; and so does Shakespeare (Sonnet 19). It was a current trope :

Books, tractations, and monuments, which hitherto, by iniquity of time, could not be contrived.

Foxe, Ep. Ded. to 2nd ed. of *Acts and Monuments*, 1570.

Time's despight.

Daniel, *Musophilus*, 1603, l. 380.

Wicked Tyme.

Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, III, vi, 39.

Wicked Time.

Id. ib. IV, ii, 33.

63 and 64. Bacon speaks of Cæsar as a stag at bay; Antony says, "How wast thou bay'd"; and Bacon speaks of the *Revenge* in the sea-fight as "like a stag among hounds at the bay" (LIFE, vii, 491). Again, Bacon has "Truth prints Goodness"; and Prospero in the TEMPEST calls Caliban a slave "which any *print* of goodness will not take." I spare the reader comment and confutation.

66. Bacon and Shakespeare both use the expression "pray in aid." They well might! As the commentator Hanmer pointed out a hundred and fifty years ago, "*Praying in aid* is a term used for a petition made in a court of justice for the calling in of help from another that hath no interest in the cause in question."

67. Bacon uses the expression "to be retrograde" (LIFE, i, 357), as does Shakespeare (HAMLET, I, ii, 114; ALL'S WELL, I, i, 210). An "unusual expression" Dr. Theobald calls it, as usual. It was a common term in astrology, current in general literature:

Ramp up thy genius; be not retrograde.

Jonson, *Poetaster*, 1601 (parodying Marston, who had used the word).

Let's be retrograde.

Id. Cynthia's Revels, 1600, v. 2.

You must be retrograde.

Id. ib.

Till all religion become retrograde.

Daniel, *Civil Wars*, B. vi, st. 36.

Or in our birth the stars were retrograde.

The Play of Stucley, 1605, l. 2098.

70. Bacon and Shakespeare both use the expression "*stand in* (or *within*) *his danger*" (HISTORY OF HENRY VII; Works, vi, 36; MERCHANT OF VENICE, IV, i, 180). *Ergo*—!

This is one of the most futile of Dr. Theobald's many futile citations. The phrase, to begin with, is as old as Chaucer.

> In daunger hadde he at his ownë gyse
> The yongë girlës of the diocyse.
>
> *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, 663–4 (665–6).

The old French word meant "power, dominion"; and this is its sense in the lines:

> Narcisus was a bachelere
> That Love had caught in his daungere.
>
> *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1469–70.
>
> This world is all in his daungere.
>
> *Id.* 1049.

We find it in the MORTE DARTHUR:

> Then said the knight unto Arthur, thou art in my danger whether me list to save thee or slay thee.
>
> B. I, ch. xxi;

in Fabyan's CHRONICLE, Hen. III, ann. 38:

> How they passed out of the Kynges dannger, I finde not;

in the Interlude of CALISTO AND MELEBEA (*circa* 1530):

> Out of his daunger will I be at lyberte.
>
> Malone Soc. rep. l. 33;

in Tyndale's PATHWAY UNTO THE HOLY SCRIPTURE (Parker Soc. ed. p. 9):

> In sin, and in danger to death and hell;[1]

and in Bale's Interlude of JOHN THE BAPTIST (1538):

> If ye mynde therefor, of God to avoyde the daunger.
>
> Rep. in Harl. Misc. ed. 1808, i, 208.

It continued to be common:

> Betray his fame and safety
> To the law's danger and your father's justice.
>
> Chapman, *Revenge for Honour*, iii, 1.

[1] The Parker Soc. editor notes that Bishop Fisher has:—"What suppose ye that Luther would do, if he had the Pope's holiness in his danger?"

Had brought herself in danger of lawe through ignorance.

Brief Discourse of the Murder of Saunders, 1573, in Simpson's *School of Shakespeare*, ii, 225.

Against the pride of Tarquin, from whose danger
None great in love, in counsel, or opinion,
Can be kept safe.

Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece*, ii, 1.

Not to run
Within the danger of the Gods.

Chapman, trans. of *Iliad*, B. vi, 161.

71. "Bacon has a trick of using the word *twenty* to express a large and indefinite number"; and so has Shakespeare. It is most true! And the trick was in universal use. It was ordinary in Chaucer's time:

In twenty manere coude he tripp and daunce.

The Miller's Tale, l. 142.

And let me slepe, a twenty devel way.

Id. l. 527.

It was normal on the stage:

Comparing it to twenty gracious things.

Kyd, *Soliman and Perseda*, i, 2.

I open Bishop Hooper at random and find:

It is a ceremony instituted by bishops more than twenty.

Answer to the Bishop of Winchester (1546) Parker Soc. rep. p. 176.

The expletive given in Chaucer was current in Tudor times:

Come on, in twenty devils' way.

Gammer Gurton's Needle, i, 3, end.

Dr. Theobald would presumably assign to Bacon the pseudo-Shakespearean play THE PURITAN, where (i, 2) Mary says:

Where I spend one tear for a dead father, I could give twenty kisses for a live husband;

and likewise Chapman's continuation of Marlowe's HERO AND LEANDER:

A tender twenty-coloured eye.
A light of twenty hues.

Third Sestiad.

Freckled with twenty colours.

Fourth Sestiad.

Wanton Air in twenty sweet forms.

Fifth Sestiad.

But there would still remain the problem of the Interlude of THE TRIAL OF TREASURE, printed in 1567 :

I holde twenty pounde it is Baalam's asse.
I holde twenty pounde the knave is lousy.

Percy Soc. rep. pp. 6, 23 ;

and of the older Interlude, NATURE (*c.* 1490) :

It would have done me more good
Than twenty shillings of fee.

Farmer's *Lost Tudor Plays*, p. 110 ;

and of the Interlude REPUBLICA (1553) :

Each one, twenty and twenty score
Of that ye most long for.

Id. p. 182 ;

Any time within these years twice twenty.

Ib. p. 214 ;

to say nothing of Ben Jonson's

Ere you can call twenty.

Bartholomew Fair, Induc. 2nd sentence.

76. Dr. Theobald turns directly to Baconian account the fact that Shakespeare makes Ford (MERRY WIVES, II, ii, 223) speak of "a fair house built on another man's ground," with a legalist application, while Bacon writes of "another man's ground" *without* that application. (*See above*, p. 40.) Be it noted that here the lawyer does not talk law.

78. Bacon tells the hackneyed story of the ancient musician [often, an artist] who said to a meddling king, "God forbid that your fortune should be so bad as to know these things better than I"; and Shakespeare partially reproduces the idea in dialogue (L. L. L. V, ii, 493). The story told by Bacon had been told *ad nauseam* by previous sixteenth century writers.

Dr. Theobald actually alleges a "correspondency" between Bacon's advice to a traveller to frequent good

company "of the nation where he travelleth" and Rosalind's satirical advice to Jaques to "disable all the benefits of your own country"!

. . . .

In conclusion, after justly observing that "all these" illustrations of his "might be almost indefinitely multiplied," Dr. Theobald undertakes to show that such every-day colloquialisms as "it is strange," "it is wonderful," "it is certain," "I am very sure," "surely," "out of question," "to say the truth," "questionless," "out of doubt," are peculiar to Bacon and Shakespeare. "So far as my reading of Elizabethan literature goes," he declares, doubtless with perfect truth, "the same phrases, habitually employed, are not to be found in any other writer."

This thesis is perhaps the uttermost mark of Dr. Theobald's aberration. It stands for an amount of inattention to pre-Shakespearean English literature that seems impossible of attainment by an educated man. Even in reading Shakespeare, Dr. Theobald must have seen Falstaff's phrase, "A rascally yea-forsooth knave"; and in reading the New Testament he must have noted the expression "Verily." Any excursion into Elizabethan drama would have revealed to him that "forsooth" and "verily" are types of a number of terms of asseveration in constant use in common talk. If he had begun his investigation with Chaucer, he might have noted the perpetual use of "certes," "trewely," "soothly," "forsothe," "certeyn," "in good sothe," "verrayment," and so on. In verse, such terms might conceivably be line-padding; but in Chaucer's prose translation of Boethius they occur to the number of at least twenty in the first book; and in the prose TALE OF MELIBEUS they are still more frequent—eleven times in two paragraphs (§§ 14, 15). The usage is continuous. In the old REVELATION OF THE MONK OF EVESHAM, first printed about 1482, "sothly" and "trewly" occur eight times in the three short

opening chapters. Thus in English as in other tongues the habit of emphasis, exclamation, and asseveration was established in literature as in talk long before the age of Bacon and Shakespeare. And in their day it remained normal; one can hardly open a Tudor book without seeing a multitude of such instances as these:

And Plato verily was of this opinion . . .
Holland's trans. of Plutarch's *Moralia* (Dent's Selection, p. 4).

And verily Aristotle used these principles and grounds.
Id. ib.

And verily the poet Homer most excellently expresseth.
Id. p. 5.

And yet verily it is reported also of Zeno.
Id. p. 6.

(Four instances in three successive pages.)

This verily is the chief cause that hath encouraged me . . .
Ralph Robinson, Ep. Ded. to trans. of More's *Utopia*, Dent's rep. p. 4.

Of a surety that thing could I [not] have performed.
Id. More's pref. epist. p. 7.

If you cannot remember the thing, then surely I will write.
Id. ib. p. 9.

And I think verily it shall be well done.
Id. ib.

Howbeit, to say the very truth, I am not yet fully determined . . .
Id. ib. p. 10.

Cuthbert Tunstall, a man doubtless out of comparison.
Id. Utopia, p. 13.

What by his natural wit, and what by daily exercise, surely he had few fellows.
Id. pp. 12–13.

(Seven instances in seven successive pages.)

As I suppose. As God judge me.
Sir Thomas Elyot, "Proheme" to the *Governour*.

Wherefore undoubtedly. . . . Id. B. i, c. 2.

And I verily do suppose. *Id.* c. iv.

And yet no man will deny. *Id. ib.*

I dare affirm. . . . As I might say. . . . But verily mine intent. . . . c. 8.

And surely. . . . c. 9. And what doubt is there. . . . c. 10.

And surely. . . . c. 11. Surely if a nobleman do thus. . . . c. 11. Surely, as I have diligently marked. . . . c.12. Verily. c.12, c.13. Verily. . . . Undoubtedly. . . . To say the truth. . . . Undoubtedly. . . . As I might frankly say. . . . (The last five instances in two pages.)

Dr. Theobald's argument on this head is of a piece with Mrs. Pott's amazing attribution to Bacon of the invention of the most ordinary forms of accost in Elizabethan England. As to that see Mr. Crawford's essay on "The Bacon-Shakespeare Question."

. . . .

In other chapters, going about to connect Bacon with Shakespeare by other "echoes and correspondencies," Dr. Theobald claims to find proofs of community of authorship by bringing together ideas which in his opinion are complementary. For instance (ch. x, p. 179) he notes how Bacon harps on the idea that "money is like muck, not good except it be spread," and then cites from Shakespeare (COR. II, ii, 128) the phrase, "As they were the common muck of the world." Whereon we have this gloss :—"The only comment on this which I have been able to find is a suggestion that muck is equivalent to *vilia rerum*. The poet certainly intended to suggest a good deal more than this, but the rich suggestiveness of the passage cannot be easily brought out if Bacon's use of the word is not remembered." This is of course sheer fiction : the phrase of Cominius simply means, "as if they were dirt." But supposing Shakespeare *had* meant to convey an implication about muck = manure, what ground is there for bringing in Bacon ? As Mr. Crawford has remarked, the rustic saw about muck being good only when spread abroad was already current in ballad poetry (GERNUTUS, in Percy's Reliques) and on the stage (Jonson, EVERY MAN OUT, iii, 2) ; and "muck," for "money" or "riches," was a universal figure :

Worldly muck.

Wiclif, *Against the Order of Friars*, c. 48.

To get falsely muck to Antichrist's convent. *Id. ib.* c. 19.

Winning of stinking muck.

Id. ib. c. 26.

The people give them [the friars] more dirt than is needful or profitable.

Id. ib. c. 29.

Worldly muck.

J. Redford, Interlude of *Wit and Science*, Farmer's *Lost Tudor Plays*, p. 138.

Our mucky money.

Editorial pref. to Latimer's Second Sermon before King Edward, end.

The wicked muck and mammon of the world.

Hooper, *Declaration of Christ and his Office*, Works, Parker Soc. ed. p. 43.

For glory vain, nor yet for muck.

Bauldwin, *Treatise of Moral Philosophy*, ed. 1600, B. i, c. 19.

Shakespeare uses the Baconian simile neither in the case of money nor in that of manure. Jonson uses the proverb about manure; the balladist partly applies it to things moral. Surely Dr. Theobald's proper conclusion is that Bacon wrote the ballad of GERNUTUS THE JEW, and Jonson's plays!

As to Dr. Theobald's wonder over finding in LUCRECE and elsewhere the ancient sentiment about griefs being lightened by the knowledge that they are shared, I refer the reader to Mr. Crawford's comments. Dr. Theobald, proceeding by the method of ignorance, announces that the Latin proverb *Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris* [or *malorum*], which is found in Marlowe's FAUSTUS, *published* in 1604, "was probably invented by the author of FAUSTUS"—that is, in Dr. Theobald's system of mythology, Bacon. "How it came to appear in LUCRECE," he adds, "is an enigma which awaits its solution." The enigma is of Dr. Theobald's own making. As his previous extracts show, the sentiment occurs in a whole series of the Shakespearean plays; and if he had but had a little knowledge of previous literature, he would

have known it to be an established moral commonplace. Not only is the idea expressed in Kyd's CORNELIA (ii, 226–7) in 1594, but, as Mr. Crawford notes, the Latin line occurs in Greene's MENAPHON, 1589, and in Lodge's ROSALIND, 1590; and the English equivalent is given in EUPHUES, 1579 (Arber's rep. p. 96). It is apparently a line of Renaissance poetry, in part contradiction of Cicero's *Levis est consolatio ex miseria aliorum* (AD. FAM., VI, iii, 4) and Seneca's *Malevoli solacii genus est turba miserorum* (DE CONSOL. AD MARC., xii, 5). But in the Senecan tragedy we have *Dulce mœrenti populus dolentum* (TROADES, 1014); and an old SYNOPSIS COMMUNIUM LOCORUM (1742, c. 70) gives under the head of the *Solamen miseris* phrase a series of other approximations. The line is given as a standing quotation by M. Neander, ETHICE VETUS ET SAPIENS VETERUM LATINORUM, Lipsiae, 1590, p. 411.[1] Only a Baconian could for a moment suppose that such a saying had been left for Bacon to invent. The *English* form of the saying was already a current proverb in the time of Chaucer, who reproduces it again and again:

> For wel sit it, the sothë for to seyne
> A woful night to han a drery fere.
>
> *Troilus and Criseyde*, i, 2.
>
> *Men seyn*, to wrecche is consolacioun
> To have an-other felawe in his peyne.
>
> *Id.* i, 102.
>
> For unto shrewes Ioye it is and ese
> To have hir felawes in peyne and disese.
>
> *Chanoun Yemannes Tale*, 193–4.

Latimer in turn has:

> It is *consolatio miserorum*: it is comfort of the wretched to have company.
>
> *Third Sermon before Edward VI*, Dent's rep. p. 116.

And Dr. Theobald finds it an "enigma" that the sentiment should occur in LUCRECE!

[1] See W. F. H. King's *Classical and Foreign Quotations*, 1904. Mr. King gives a substantially equivalent passage from Thucydides, vii, 75.

I will not carry the " quest " further. It has its distressing as well as its ridiculous side. These divagations of men utterly possessed by a foregone conclusion, blind to all countervailing evidence, hypnotised by a hallucination, tell of an " expense of spirit " in error that is not to be contemplated without discomfort. It is the desire to minimise the amount of such aberration in future that has sustained me, as I trust it may do some readers, through the tedium of a detailed confutation.

CHAPTER XI

PROSE STYLE IN SHAKESPEARE AND BACON

IT is perhaps unnecessary to argue, even as against Baconians, that every powerful or original writer, in any long series of writings, must betray some peculiarities of diction, phraseology, clause formation, and so on, which are as special to him as are the technical methods of any artist to his work, or the gait, accent, or intonation of each of us to himself. The Baconians actually subsume this, however vaguely, in their attempts, hereinbefore discussed, to detect Baconian phraseology in the plays. But, of course, they have attempted no deeper investigation.[1] The idea of comparing the general movement and rhythm of the abundant prose in the plays with those of Bacon's signed writings is not one which would naturally occur to critics conscious of no initial difficulty in supposing that the Plays and the Essays came from the same hand.

Let the open-minded reader, however, take the trouble to compare the way of the prose in the plays with that of the prose of Bacon, and he will realise one more vital and irreducible divergence between the two bodies of work. In the course of the inquiry he may or may not detect such differences in the *verse* movement of certain of the plays as will make clear to him why some critics deny that those plays are wholly, or it may be at all,

[1] Mr. Appleton Morgan, of New York, who had a "New Theory" of his own about the authorship of the Plays (an adaptation of Delia Bacon's, that of a group of young nobles collaborating), avowed that "experts have proved that the styles of Bacon and Shakespeare are as far apart as the poles." (Cited by Mrs. Stopes, *The Bacon-Shakespeare Question Answered*, 2nd ed. 1889, p. 187.)

the work of the author of OTHELLO and MACBETH and LEAR and CORIOLANUS. But this is another issue. What is here proposed is a comparison of the prose of the unchallenged plays with that of the undisputed work of Bacon.

The first general proposition to be put in this connection is that Shakespeare's prose is neither so masterly nor so variously rhythmical as his blank verse. To put the matter bluntly I would say, *pace* certain panegyrists, that Shakespeare is not a great writer of prose. Greatness in any mode of art is imputable only to exceptional power or exceptional variety of execution. Shakespeare's prose, compared with that of great prose writers, cannot be said to exhibit either. And if any reader, before scanning the data, be hastily moved to dispute the thesis, let him first bethink himself how rarely, in literary history, have men acquired enduring fame in both orders of expression.

Dryden was in his day reputed a great poet and a good writer of prose: in the latter regard he stands higher to-day than in the former; but no one would to-day put him in the highest rank of either art. Dante wrote both prose and verse; no one ever ranked him with the great prosists. Milton has as high a twofold fame as any; but criticism to-day leans more and more to the opinion that his finest English tractate, which is practically all that men read of his large prose output is rather "a splendid example of mistaken prose," a rhetorical *tour de force*, than a triumph of prose art comparable with his poetry. Wordsworth and Coleridge both wrote some excellent prose and some perfect verse: both would to-day be admitted by almost any good critic to have produced much more of inferior verse than of good. Shelley's prose never won much laud, though it has fine qualities, and some warm admirers. Byron and Keats wrote letters and notes which certainly exhibit plenty of prose power; but neither ever attempted a prose work. Tennyson and Browning—Tennyson in particular—hardly attempted to write prose save by way of jottings.

In all literature we shall find but some half-dozen great or fine poets (apart from Milton, Wordsworth and Coleridge, dealt with above) whose prose notably competes in fame with their verse. They are: Goethe, Heine, Poe, Leopardi, Hugo, and Arnold; and in not one of these cases, I think, is the poet's prose style, *as* style—matter apart—such as to win him rank as a great prose artist. Goethe's fame on that side is understood to be latterly in occultation among his countrymen. Hugo and Poe are (diversely) famous rather as writers of prose romances than as writers of prose; Leopardi certainly lives less in his prose than in his poetry; and even Arnold and Heine, charming prosists both—if we may so speak of Arnold, who strove with success to be something more than charming—are less eminent as prose artists than as poets.

But all this is perhaps an unnecessary if not a useless preamble to the demonstration that the prose of Shakespeare lacks the distinction, the artistic mastery, of his incomparable blank verse. His supremacy in that is unchallenged and unchallengeable. To read him beside his predecessors is to perceive a new departure in rhythmic progression. They rarely exceed the chance adventure of a single run-on line; and it is at that stage that we see him begin, if we can be sure of seeing his handiwork in the opening scene of the COMEDY OF ERRORS, a work which he almost certainly did but elaborate or collaborate-in or re-fashion. Of verse as a continuous rhythm they had hardly a conception: they write verses rather than verse, matching unrhymed lines as they had been wont to match rhymed, and measuring lengths, at best, like men pacing a cage or a ship's deck. With Shakespeare there begins a new species of motion, differing from theirs almost as does that of the bird on the wing from its little runs of hops upon the sward. For an inorganic series of self-contained lines, we have a prolonged organic pulsation in which sense-pauses and clause-pauses can

occur anywhere, the rhythm or measure becoming but as the bars in music, cognised only by the rhythmic sense. There is nothing to compare with it in previous English verse: only alongside of Shakespeare, in some of the best verse of Jonson, do we see the perception of the new possibilities beginning; and what in Shakespeare seems to have been an effortless evolution is for Jonson visibly a matter of laborious construction. But there are compensations. As Ben notes in his DISCOVERIES: "Virgil's felicity left him in prose, as Tully's forsook him in verse." There is no such absolute cleavage in the case of either Shakespeare or Jonson, but there is a certain approximation to it.

As in ancient, so in modern literature, the possibilities of prose were discovered later than those of verse. As a purposely artistic instrument, it discernibly begins to act in English in the BOECE of Chaucer, a solitary performance no more improved upon, æsthetically speaking, than his verse, down to the Tudor age. Chaucer is in fact almost more noteworthy as a prose-writer, in respect of that performance, than as a writer of verse. As a poet he belongs to the age of simple and marked measures, which he handles with a skill that distinguishes him from his English contemporaries, but with a facility and fluency that as a rule exclude greatness of cadence. With his measures, the grand style was practically incompatible. But in his rendering of Boethius, albeit he draws on the French version to eke out his Latin,[1] he is visibly awake to the æsthetic effects of classic prose, and goes about, however experimentally, to produce in English something independently beautiful.

This judgment ostensibly conflicts with that of Ten Brink, who is quoted as saying that in the BOECE "we

[1] The inaccuracy of the translation, remarks a close student of Boethius, "is not that of an inexperienced Latin scholar, but rather of one who was no Latin scholar at all." H. F. Stewart, *Boethius: An Essay*, 1891, p. 226.

can see as clearly as in any work of the middle ages what a high cultivation is requisite for the production of a good prose."[1] This is most true, as is Ten Brink's remark that the translation, "in the undeveloped state of prose composition so characteristic of that age," is "often quite unwieldy."[2] But when Ten Brink goes on to grant that "there is no lack of warmth, and even of a certain colouring," and to quote a passage in illustration, he seems to me to have partly missed sight of the æsthetic success to which Chaucer does attain. The passage he cites does not at all fully reveal it. Where Chaucer was not clear as to the meaning of the original, and had to deal with complicated constructions, he naturally produces unwieldy sentences. But at times even in following the prose, and often when he is rendering or, rather, abundantly paraphrasing the "metres"—from his version of one of which Ten Brink rightly quotes—he attains to a charm of cadence, of balanced movement, and of harmonious diction, which is in itself a new and specific enjoyment for those who read. Richard Rolle of Hampole, his predecessor, who writes with the eager sincerity that counts for so much in good prose, never aimed at such æsthetic ends as these. Let the lover of good prose—not necessarily identical with the lover of books and literary studies—compare with the following passages any English prose before the age of Shakespeare, and say whether they can be matched for beauty. I modernise one or two words, and the spelling of some of the particles, in the interest of the slothful reader:

Blissful was the first age of men. They held them apayed[3] with the meats that the true fields broughten forth. They ne destroyed ne deceived not themselves with outrage.[4] They were wont lightly to slake their hunger at even with acorns of oaks. They could not mingle[5] the gift of Bacchus with the

[1] *Chaucer Studien*, p. 141, cited by Stewart, pp. 226-7.
[2] *History of English Literature*, Eng. trans. ii, 78–9.
[3] Contented. [4] Excess.
[5] *Medle* in orig.

clear honey, nor could they mingle [1] the bright fleeces of the country of Syria with the venom of Tyre. . . . They slepen wholesome sleeps upon the grass, and dranken of the running waters, and layen under the shadows of the high pine trees. No guest or stranger carved yet the high sea with oars or ships; nor had they yet seen new strands to leden merchandise into diverse countries. Then were the cruel clarions full hushed and full still.[2]

Here we have the successful use of the short sentence: brief pausation without haste or jolting: a quality not soon reached in prose, though it began in some such way, like verse. In the next book comes a good sample of a larger and more canorous movement:

It liketh me to show by subtle song, with slack [3] and delightable sound of strings, how that Nature, mighty, inclineth and flitteth [4] the governments of things; and by which laws she, purveyable, keepeth the great world; and how she, binding, restraineth all things by a bond that may not be unbound. . . . And the jangling bird that singeth on the high branches, and after is enclosed in a strait cage, although that the playing busy-ness of men giveth them honeyed drinks and large meets with sweet studies, yet natheless if thilke bird skipping out of her strait cage seeth the agreeable shadow of the woods, she defouleth [5] with her feet her shed meats, and seeketh mourning only the wood, and twittereth desiring the wood with her sweet voice.[6]

This is prose written with a new perception of the possibilities of cadence, of gracious movement without metre, of long breathing and restful fall. In yet another passage the quest for beauty is still more intent. It tells the tale of Orpheus:

The poet of Thrace, that whilom had right great sorrow for the death of his wife, after that he had maked by his weeply songs the woods moveable to run, and had maked the river to standen still, and had maked the harts and the hinds to join dreadless their sides to cruel lions, for to hearkenen his song, and had maked that the bear was not aghast of the hound which was pleased with his song, so when the most ardent love of his wife burned the entrails of his breast, not even the songs which

[1] *Medle* in orig.
[2] B. ii, met. 5.
[3] Probably a copyist's error.
[4] ? Fitteth.
[5] N.B. Not defileth. Defouleth = treadeth under foot.
[6] B. iii, met. 2.

had overcomen all things might assuage his lord. He plained him of the heaven gods that were cruel to him. He went him to the houses of hell, and there he tempered his blandishing songs with resounding strings, and spake and sung in weeping all that ever he had received and laved out of the noble wells of his mother Calliope, the goddess. . . . Cerberus, the porter of hell with his three heads, was caught and all abashed for the new song. And the three goddesses, furies and vengeresses of felony, that tormenten and aghasten the souls by annoy, woxen sorrowful and sorry, and wepen tears for pity. Then was not the head of Ixion tormented by the overthrowing wheel. And Tantalus, that was destroyed by the madness [1] of long thirst, despiseth the floods to drinken.[2]

The mere alternation of short sentences with long is æsthetically calculated, with a sense of the repose it lends to the whole movement. Chaucer had had vision of what Whitman was later to call "the diviner heaven of prose," in which freedom from rhymed metre could mean a sweep and flow of speech that such verse could not compass. Only an artist could have written so; and few were the artists who could so weave words even in the sixteenth century. Bishop Hooper, in his DECLARATION OF CHRIST AND HIS OFFICE, shows some of the instinctive gift for balanced prose movement, being one of the writers who prove that the controlled sentence was not a discovery of the eighteenth century, but merely a rediscovery, after an age of devotion to "voluble" construction; but only in Nashe, perhaps, among the bellettrists of Shakespeare's day—Nashe, so wooden in his verse—do we find a born writer of prose *as* prose; and only in his CHRIST'S TEARS OVER JERUSALEM, perhaps, does he deliberately endeavour after a large and grave harmony of artistic diction—in a not very sincere treatise.

In this endeavour, I repeat, Shakespeare did not share. Master of the freest of verse-forms, he had not Chaucer's motive to seek for beauty in prose; but there is no reason to suppose that his genius could there have attained supremacy if he had sought it. Jonson's dramatic prose

[1] *Woodness* in orig.

[2] B. iii, met. 12.

often, and his non-dramatic prose always, is more true to the laws of prose-form, more easeful, more balanced, larger-limbed, than that of Shakespeare, yet felicitous and spontaneous.[1] True, the very purpose of writing prose for reading means a different technique: the prose of dramatic speech would miss its purpose if it ran to spacious or cadenced composition: even the crisp antitheses of Lilly defeat illusion. But Jonson's feeling for prose frequently asserts itself even in his plays, and Shakespeare in his dedications and in the "Argument" to LUCRECE shows no more concern for prose artistry, as apart from mere pointed statement, than in the prose of the plays. His faculty is first and last for verse.

And herein he differs radically from Bacon, whose scanty verse, *as* verse, is without spontaneity, but whose prose, though hardly ever written, so to speak, for prose's sake, is always magistral, long-breathed even when most expressly concise, easily spacious, effortless in its opulence. As an Elizabethan would say, it is *cothurnate*, yet it is always instinct with nervous strength. There is no æsthetic kinship or community between any of Shakespeare's prose and that of the ESSAYS, early or late, the ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING, and the HISTORY OF HENRY SEVENTH. Let us take first a representative selection of prose passages from the plays, grave and gay, didactic and impassioned, philosophic and narrative. We shall find infinite verve and vivacity, fluency and fire; an endless fecundity of phrase, image, and epithet; but we shall not find a great architectonic prose.

Falstaff. Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn: I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow, Nym; or else you had looked through the grate, like a geminy of baboons. I am damned in hell for swearing to gentlemen my friends you were good soldiers and tall fellows: and when

[1] "For his prose I must confess a deep and reverent partiality." J. A. Symonds, *Ben Jonson*, 1886, p. 61.

mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honour thou hadst it not.

Pistol. Didst thou not share ? hadst thou not fifteen pence ?

Falstaff. Reason, you rogue, reason : think'st thou I'll endanger my soul *gratis* ? At a word, hang no more about me, I am no gibbet for you :—go.—A short knife and a thong ;—to your manor of Pickt-hatch, go.—You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue !—You stand upon your honour !—Why, thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do to keep the terms of my honour precise. I, I, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of heaven on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch ; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour ! You will not do it, you ?

Merry Wives, Act II, Scene 2.

. . . .

Provost. A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully but as a drunken sleep ; careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come ; insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal.

Duke. He wants advice.

Provost. He will hear none ; he hath evermore had the liberty of the prison ; give him leave to escape hence, he would not : drunk many times a day, if not many days entirely drunk. We have very oft awaked him, as if to carry him to execution, and showed him a seeming warrant for it : it hath not moved him at all.

Duke. More of him anon. There is written in your brow, provost, honesty and constancy : if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me ; but in the boldness of my cunning, I will lay myself in hazard. Claudio, whom here you have warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law than Angelo who hath sentenced him. To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days' respite ; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

Measure for Measure, Act IV, Scene 2.

. . . .

Beatrice. What should I do with him ? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting-gentlewoman ? He that hath a beard is more than a youth ; and he that hath no beard is less than a man : and he that is more than a youth is not for me ; and he that is less than a man I am not for him. Therefore, I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bearward, and lead his apes into hell.

Much Ado, Act II, Scene 1.

Beatrice. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be over-mastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and truly I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Beatrice. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero; wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

Id. Act. II, Scene 1.

. . . .

Orlando. Why, how now, Adam! no greater heart in thee? Live a little; comfort a little; cheer thyself a little: if this uncouth forest yield anything savage, I will either be food for it, or bring it for food to thee. Thy conceit is nearer death than thy powers. For my sake, be comfortable; hold death awhile at the arm's end: I will here be with thee presently; and if I bring thee not something to eat I will give thee leave to die: but if thou diest before I come thou art a mocker of my labour. Well said! thou look'st cheerly: I'll be with thee quickly.—Yet thou liest in the bleak air: come, I will bear thee to some shelter; and thou shalt not die for lack of a dinner, if there live anything in this desert. Cheerly, good Adam!

As You Like It, Act II, Scene 6.

Rosalind. No; I will not cast away my physic but on those that are sick. There is a man haunts the forest that abuses our young plants with carving *Rosalind* on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth, deifying the name of Rosalind: if I could meet that fancymonger I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

Id. Act III, Scene 2.

Rosalind. A lean cheek; which you have not: a blue eye, sunken; which you have not: an unquestionable spirit; which you have not: a beard neglected; which you have not:—but I pardon you for that; for, simply, your having in beard is a younger brother's revenue.—Then your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a

careless desolation. But you are no such man ; you are rather point-device in your accoutrements, as loving yourself, than seeming the lover of any other.

Id. Act III, Scene 2.

Rosalind. Yes, one ; and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress ; and I set him every day to woo me ; at which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing, and liking ; proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles ; for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything, as boys and women are for the most part cattle of this colour : would now like him, now loathe him ; then entertain him, then forswear him ; now weep for him, then spit at him ; that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love, to a living humour of madness; which was, to forswear the full stream of the world, and to live in a nook merely monastic. And thus I cured him ; and this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in't.

Id. Act III, Scene 2.

Jaques. I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation ; nor the musician's, which is fantastical ; nor the courtier's, which is proud ; nor the soldier's, which is ambitious ; nor the lawyer's, which is politic ; nor the lady's, which is nice ; nor the lover's, which is all these ; but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and, indeed, the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness.

Id. Act IV, Scene 1.

. . . .

Fabian. She did show favour to the youth in your sight, only to exasperate you, to awaken your dormouse valour, to put fire in your heart, and brimstone in your liver. You should then have accosted her ; and with some excellent jests, fire-new from the mint, you should have banged the youth into dumbness. This was looked for at your hand, and this was baulked ; the double gilt of this opportunity you let time wash off, and you are now sailed into the north of my lady's opinion ; where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard, unless you do redeem it by some laudable attempt, either of valour or policy.

Twelfth Night, Act III, Scene 2.

Sir Toby. Now will I not deliver his letter : for the behaviour of the young gentleman gives him out to be of good capacity

and breeding ; his employment between his lord and my niece confirms no less ; therefore this letter, being so excellently ignorant, will breed no terror in the youth,—he will find it comes from a clodpole. But, sir, I will deliver his challenge by word of mouth ; set upon Aguecheek a notable report of valour ; and drive the gentleman (as I know his youth will aptly receive it) into a most hideous opinion of his rage, skill, fury, and impetuosity. This will so fright them both, that they will kill one another by the look, like cockatrices.

Id. Act III, Scene 4.

. . . . .

Enobarbus. Under a compelling occasion, let women die : it were pity to cast them away for nothing ; though, between them and a great cause, they should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies instantly ; I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment : I do think there is mettle in death which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying.

Antony and Cleopatra, Act I, Scene 2.

Enobarbus. Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it pleases their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth ; comforting therein, that when old robes are worn out there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented ; this grief is crowned with consolation ; your old smock brings forth a new petticoat :—and, indeed, the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.

Id. Act I, Scene 2.

. . . . .

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus.—Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you : and though we have had there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a more sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you : you must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Othello, Act I, Scene 3.

. . . . .

Edmund. This is the excellent foppery of the world ! that, when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeit of our own behaviour), we make guilty of our disasters the sun, moon, and stars : as if we were villains on necessity ; fools by heavenly compulsion ; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance ; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of

planetary influence ; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition on the charge of a star !

. . . .

Gloster. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us : though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects : love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide : in cities, mutinies ; in countries, discord ; in palaces, treason ; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction ; there's son against father : the king falls from bias of nature ; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time : machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves !—Find out this villain, Edmund ; it shall lose thee nothing ; do it carefully.—And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished ! his offence honesty !—'Tis strange !

King Lear, Act I, Scene 2.

. . . .

Letter of Macbeth. They met me in the day of success ; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me, *Thane of Cawdor* ; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with, *Hail, king that shall be !* This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness ; that thou mightest not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.

Macbeth, Act I, Scene 5.

. . . .

Camillo. Sicilia cannot show himself over-kind to Bohemia. They were trained together in their childhoods ; and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection which cannot choose but branch now. Since their more mature dignities and royal necessities made separation of their society, their encounters; though not personal, have been royally attorneyed, with interchange of gifts, letters, loving embassies ; that they have seemed to be together, though absent ; shook hands, as over a vast ; and embraced, as it were, from the ends of opposed winds. The heavens continue their loves !

The Winter's Tale, Act I, Scene 1.

Polixenes. As thou lovest me, Camillo, wipe not out the rest of thy services, by leaving me now: the need I have of thee thine own goodness hath made; better not to have had thee than thus to want thee. Thou, having made me businesses which none without thee can sufficiently manage, must either stay to execute them thyself, or take away with thee the very services thou hast done: which if I have not enough considered, (as too much I cannot,) to be more thankful to thee shall be my study; and my profit therein, the heaping friendships. Of that fatal country, Sicilia, pr'ythee speak no more: whose very name punishes me with the remembrance of that penitent, as thou callest him, and reconciled king, my brother; whose loss of his most precious queen and children are even now to be afresh lamented. Say to me, when sawest thou the prince Florizel, my son? Kings are no less unhappy, their issue not being gracious, than they are in losing them when they have approved their virtues.

Id. Act IV, Scene 1.

1 *Gentleman.* I make a broken delivery of the business.—But the changes I perceived in the king and Camillo were very notes of admiration: they seemed almost, with staring on one another, to tear the cases of their eyes; there was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture; they looked as they had heard of a world ransomed, or one destroyed: a notable passion of wonder appeared in them: but the wisest beholder, that knew no more but seeing, could not say if the importance were joy or sorrow; but in the extremity of the one it must needs be. Here comes a gentleman, that happily, knows more. The news, Rogero?

Id. Act V, Scene 2.

. . . .

Lafeu. They say, miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern and familiar, things spiritual and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors; ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

All's Well, Act II, Scene 3.

1 *Lord.* I, with a troop of Florentines, will suddenly surprise him; such I will have whom I am sure he knows not from the enemy: we will bind and hoodwink him, so that he shall suppose no other but that he is carried into the leaguer of the adversaries, when we bring him to our own tents. Be but your lordship present at his examination: if he do not, for the promise of his life, and in the highest compulsion of base fear, offer to betray you, and deliver all the intelligence in his power against

you, and that with the divine forfeit of his soul upon oath, never trust my judgment in anything.

Id. Act III, Scene 6.

. . . .

Falstaff. No, I'll be sworn: I make as good a use of it as many a man doth of a death's head, or a *memento mori*: I never see thy face but I think upon hell-fire, and Dives that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be, *By this fire*: but thou art altogether given over; and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou rannest up Gadshill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst been an *ignis fatuus*, or a ball of wildfire, there's no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern: but the sack that thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire, any time this two and thirty years; Heaven reward me for it!

King Henry IV. Pt. I, Act III, Scene 3.

Falstaff. If I be not ashamed of my soldiers I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons: inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns; such a commodity of warm slaves as had as lief hear the devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl, or a hurt wild duck. I pressed me none but such toasts and butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads, and they have bought out their services; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores: and such as, indeed, were never soldiers; but discarded unjust serving men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen; the cankers of a calm world and a long peace; ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old-faced ancient: and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals, lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way, and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets, and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not

march through Coventry with them, that's flat.—Nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on; for indeed I had the most of them out of prison. There's but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half-shirt is two napkins tacked together, and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host of Saint Albans, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry: but that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.

Id. Act IV, Scene 2.

. . . .

1 *Citizen.* We are accounted poor citizens; the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us. If they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is an inventory to particularise their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them.—Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know, I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

Coriolanus, Act I, Scene 1.

Menenius. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto purpose, it is not worth the wagging of you beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion; though, peradventure, some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. Good den to your worships; more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you.

Id. Act II, Scene 1.

2 *Officer.* He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to have them all into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

Id. Act II, Scene 2.

. . . .

Hamlet. I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late, (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises : and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o'erhanging firmament—this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man ! How noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable ! in action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me, nor woman neither ; though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Hamlet, Act II, Scene 2.

Hamlet. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once ; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million ; 'twas caviare to the general : but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top of mine,) an excellent play : well digested in the scenes ; set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets in the lines, to make the matter savoury ; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affectation ; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One chief speech in it I chiefly loved : 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido ; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter : if it live in your memory, begin at this line ; let me see, let me see ; . . .

Hamlet. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue : but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier had spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus : but use all gently : for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings ; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise : I could have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant : it out-herods Herod : Pray you, avoid it.

Id. Act III, Scene 2.

Hamlet. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor : suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature ; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was, and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve ; the censure of the which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

Id. Act III, Scene 2.

In all these extracts, serious and humorous alike, there is a similarity of movement which cannot be overlooked. All alike are vivacious, crisp, incomplex, proceeding by clear sequences of short clauses, lacking in fugal breadth. There is no indication of what prose may be made by exfoliation, no large progression, no polyphony. It is true, once more, that even if he would, the dramatist cannot often put *reading* prose in the mouths of his characters ; and that the greatest prose must always be that penned for reading. But oratory is spoken prose ; and there is no sign that Shakespeare could have made a character deliver a prose speech comparable in sonority and sweep with any of the blank-verse speeches in the plays, addressed to audiences of more than one or two. Let us take the only two pieces of non-dramatic prose which Shakespeare has left us—the dedications to his two long poems. I do not cite the "Argument" to LUCRECE, which follows usage in being bald and compressed in diction : the dedications yield the better test :

DEDICATION TO 'VENUS AND ADONIS'

To The

Right Hon. Henry Wriothesly,

Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Titchfield.

Right Honourable.

I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your Lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden : only, if your Honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your Honour to your heart's content ; which I wish may always answer your own wish, and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your Honour's in all duty.

DEDICATION TO THE 'RAPE OF LUCRECE'

To The

Right Hon. Henry Wriothesly,

Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Titchfield.

The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end ; whereof this pamphlet, without beginning, is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours ; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater : meantime, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship : to whom I wish long life, still lengthened with all happiness.

Your Lordship's in all duty,

There is finally no escape from the conclusion before reached. He who in blank verse commands so many styles, and in all is easily spacious and organically continuous—master of an ever-evolving roll of cadenced utterance of every order, from the rippling flow of Mercutio, the large discourse of Ulysses, and the eager torrential thought of Hamlet, to the noble andante of Macbeth and the thunder of Coriolanus—the master poet is in his prose style (wit and wisdom apart) an ordinary Elizabethan dramatist, rather more staccato than most of the rest.

Compare any of those quick-stepping runs of prose with the swing of the verse, going as a great bird wheeling on mighty wings. See how the movement lifts and soars when the poet touches his true instrument :

> Wouldst thou be window'd in great Rome and see
> Thy master thus, with pleached arms, bending down
> His corrigible neck ; his face subdued
> To penetrative shame ; whilst the wheeled seat
> Of fortunate Cæsar, drawn before him, branded
> His baseness that ensued ?
>
> *Antony and Cleopatra.*

> Whether it be
> Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
> Of thinking too precisely on the event,
> A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,
> And ever three parts coward, I do not know,
> Why yet I live to say, ' This thing's to do ' ;
> Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
> To do it.
>
> *Hamlet.*

> You common cry of curs, whose breath I hate
> As reek o' the rotten fens ; whose loves I prize
> As the dead carcases of unburied men
> That do corrupt my air, *I* banish *you,*
> And here remain with your uncertainty.
>
> *Coriolanus.*

> O Proserpina !
> For the flowers now, that frighted thou let'st fall
> From Dis's waggon ! Daffodils
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty ; violets dim,
> But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
> Or Cytherea's breath.
>
> *Winter's Tale.*

The remarkable thing is that the primary movement or clause formation here is broadly the same as in the prose : it is from the same mint, so to speak. The progression is as it were linear, by short clauses, the images being added to each other without involution. There is the same " bright speed," as of a vivacious talker, with no more approach to long or large constructions than

in any of the prose we have just scrutinised. A subtle physiologist might perhaps divine from either the poet's rate of breathing. Let us turn Antony's speech into prose, and, reading by the comma pauses, note its structural identity with the purposed prose of other speeches :

> Wouldst thou be windowed in great Rome, and see thy master, thus, with pleached arms, bending down his corrigible neck, his face subdued to penetrative shame, whilst fortunate Cæsar's wheeled seat, drawn before him, branded his baseness following ?

What has effected the profound difference ? Obviously, the magic of rhythm, which lays a transfiguring unity upon the whole, at once creating a new æsthetic fact and force. First and last, once more, this man is a master of *metrical rhythm*, the very genius of blank verse, a fundamentally different thing from prose, whereof the rhythm goes by clause and sentence, not by metre, and wherein the relation of clauses is one of balance rather than of sequence.

Turn we now to the prose which was Bacon's instrument, as verse was Shakespeare's. Like every good prosist, Bacon can vary his tempo ; and we have from him alternately curt and stately, simple and ornate diction. But in every kind there is a pulsation, a progression, a stride that is not Shakespeare's. Let us first sample him from the ESSAYS :

> Examine thy customs of diet, sleep, exercise, and the like ; and try, in anything thou shalt judge hurtful, to discontinue it by little and little ; but so as if thou dost find any inconvenience by the change thou come back to it again ; for it is hard to distinguish that which is generally held good and wholesome from that which is good particularly, and fit for thine own body. . . . As for the passions and studies of the mind : avoid envy ; anxious fears, anger fretting inwards ; subtle and knotty inquisitions ; joys and exhilarations in success ; sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes ; mirth rather than joy ; variety of delights, rather than surfeit of them ; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties ; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature.[1]

[1] Essay XXX, *Of Regiment of Health.*

Observe, first, the deliberation and balance of the exposition, the fore-planned arrangement of the thoughts, in contrast with the kindling process of the poet; next the instinctive balancing of the clauses in point of rhythm; and thirdly, the climaxing movement to a full and polyphonous closing phrase—the natural method of prose, and the exact opposite of the practice of Shakespeare, whose typical period-endings are sudden or vehement arrests of speech in mid-line, as of a horse reined back on his haunches:

> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.
>
> Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
> Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
> Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
> Himself the primrose path to dalliance treads,
> And recks not his own rede.
>
> Rather a ditch in Egypt
> Be gentle grave unto me! rather on Nilus' mud
> Lay me stark nak'd, and let the water-flies
> Blow me into abhorring! rather make
> My country's high pyramides, my gibbet
> And hang me up in chains!

There are hundreds of these speech-endings in the plays; and in the prose there is the same habit of the quick stop, which is as alien to Bacon's way of writing as it would have been to his way of walking, in court or garden. In the essay before us, the very preoccupation about health and diet is a mark of Bacon, absent from Shakespeare, who did not smoke, but never discussed tobacco even to gratify James! And in that single extract of three sentences there are seven words and phrases never used by Shakespeare: "*little by little*," "fretting inwards," "studies of the mind," "inquisition*s*," "*exhilarations*," "contemplations"; "novelt*ies*." Observe the Baconian plurals, much seldomer found in Shakespeare's

prose. The word "exhilaration" never occurs in the plays at all, in any flexion: "splendid," a common word with Bacon, is found only once, in the dubious 2 HENRY VI; "knotty" occurs only twice; "discontinue" only once; "inconvenience" only once in a homogeneous play.

Another piece of Baconian prose, from the essay preceding that just cited, will convey the same lessons:

> There may be now, for martial encouragement, some degrees and orders of chivalry, which nevertheless are conferred promiscuously upon soldiers and no-soldiers; and some remembrance perhaps upon the scutcheon; and some hospitals for maimed soldiers; and such-like things. But in ancient times, the trophies erected upon the place of the victory; the funeral laudatives and monuments for those that died in the wars; the crowns and garlands personal; the style of Emperor, which the great kings of the world after borrowed; the triumphs of the generals upon their return; the great donatives and largesses upon the disbanding of the armies, were things able to inflame all men's courages. But of all, that of the triumph amongst the Romans, was not pageants or gaudery, but one of the wisest and noblest institutions that ever was.

Again we have a handful of words and phrases never found in the plays: "*promiscuously*," "soldiers and no-soldiers," "orders of chivalry," "hospitals" (the word "hospital" occurs only once in Shakespeare), the position of the adjective in "crowns and garlands personal," "*laudatives*," "*donatives*," "largesses," "*disbanding*," "courages," "*gaudery*"—in the course of a dozen lines, five words and three plurals never found in the plays. This habitual use of the plural is a specialty of Bacon, not of Shakespeare; and by small peculiarities of that kind the idiosyncrasy of a writer is much more truly to be traced than by merely occasional use of current saws and formulas. Even "institutions," common in Bacon, occurs only once in Shakespeare. And always the style of Bacon is radically different from that of the dramatist —reflective rather than impassioned, deliberate rather

but this is it's prose, not verse. Such prose is

than eager ; calm, not quick, measured in quite another sense than is the poet's verse.

Not a single essay, I believe, will fail to yield the same order of proofs. We have dipped into Essays XXX and XXIX : let us turn to XXXI, OF SUSPICION. It opens with a series of short " sententious " sentences :

> Suspicions amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds, they ever fly by twilight. Certainly they are to be repressed, or at the least well guarded ; for they cloud the mind ; they lose friends ; and they check with business, whereby business cannot go on currently and constantly. They dispose kings to tyranny, husbands to jealousy ; wise men to irresolution and melancholy.

Here, in three sentences, we have three non-Shakespearean words : " *repressed,*" " *currently,*" " *irresolution,*" and the form " check with," never found in the plays ; to say nothing of the opening string of Baconian plurals. " Suspicion*s* " occurs only once in Shakespeare. In the two short essays OF REGIMENT OF HEALTH and OF SUSPICION may be found several more words never found in the plays : " excess*es,*" the name Celsus, " benign," which in Shakespeare occurs only in the non-Shakespearean prologue of Gower in PERICLES (ii), " *masteries,*" " buz*zes,*" the phrase " of a middle temper," " stout*est,*" the phrase " discern *of,*" and the peculiar form " owing to " in the sense of " accruing to "— " strength of nature in youth passeth over many excesses, which are *owing to* a man till his age." (" Owing " occurs only once in Shakespeare.)

But the question of vocabulary calls for separate treatment ; and our immediate business is with prose style. If the reader be not convinced by our few selections from the Essays, let him turn to the ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING. Here will be found a multitude of sonorous and long-breathed sentences in a style never to be found in Shakespeare's prose. The second paragraph begins with a sentence of nearly two hundred words—a paragraph in itself. The third paragraph consists of one such sentence :

Therefore did I conclude with myself that I could not make unto your Majesty a better oblation than of some treatise tending to that end ; whereof the sum will consist of these two parts : the former consisting of the excellency of learning and knowledge, and the excellency of the merit and true glory in the augmentation and propagation thereof ; the latter, what the particular acts and works are which have been embraced and undertaken for the advancement of learning, and again what defects and undervalues I find in such particular acts ; to the end that though I cannot positively or affirmatively advise your Majesty, or propound unto you framed particulars, yet I may excite your princely cogitation to visit the excellent treasure of your own mind, and thence to extract particulars for this purpose agreeable to your magnanimity and wisdom.

There is no such interwoven, periodic writing as this in the whole range of Shakespeare. One more sentence will suffice to illustrate the stately and architectonic style which is normal in Bacon, and of which the plays afford no sample :

And as for those particular seducements or indispositions of the mind for policy and government, which learning is pretended to insinuate, if it be granted that any such thing be, it must be remembered withal, that learning ministereth in every of them greater strength of medicine or remedy than it offereth cause of indisposition or infirmity.

If anywhere Bacon might be expected to approximate to the prose style of the plays, it would be in the CONFERENCE OF PLEASURE or in the HENRY VII. But there we have the same measured utterance, the same enchaining of clauses. In the former, " The Praise of Fortitude " sets out with half a dozen short and crisp " sententious " sentences ; then comes one of eighty words, marked by the Baconian enchainment of clauses. The History begins :

After that Richard, the third of that name, king in fact only, but tyrant both in title and regiment, and so commonly termed and reputed in all times since, was by the Divine Revenge, favouring the design of an exiled man, overthrown and slain at Bosworth Field, there succeeded in the kingdom by the Earl of Richmond thenceforth styled Henry the Seventh.

This is a type of the style of the book—interlocked and jointed, not merely sequent clauses, with a periodic rise and fall. And in the second sentence occurs the word "militar," *always* Bacon's form of the adjective (though sometimes spelt *militare*"), and *never* found in the plays, whether in prose or verse. There the word is *always* "militarie" or "military." Thus in the most truly significant details of style, verbal and structural alike, the prose writer is once for all marked off from the poet, even as he is in a hundred points of doctrine, certainly not always to his advantage. But as a writer, he is all the more clearly differentiated; and as a teacher turned man of letters to fulfil a mission, he belongs to another world. Bacon, indeed, is not the supreme master of prose that Shakespeare is of blank verse. He has not the signally elastic movement of Nashe, the magical cadence of Browne, or the endless flow of Jeremy Taylor. With all his professed contempt for rhetorical artifice, too, he was capable at times, by the avowal of Spedding, of "a certain affectation and rhetorical cadence . . . agreeable to the taste of the time."[1] But this, as the same critic goes on to claim, was "so alien to his own individual taste and natural manner, that there is no single feature by which his style is more specially distinguished, wherever he speaks in his own person, whether formally or familiarly, whether in the way of narrative, argument, or oration, than the total absence of it." In short, he could fault, as Shakespeare faulted; but he stands to the prose as Shakespeare stood to the verse of his time, as a witness for the root truth in regard to all writing, that to be great it must be sincere. And this, with his large faculty for phrase, cadence, and diction, makes him one of the great writers, inasmuch as he habitually makes style a vesture for thought, and not a decoration of it. But he was an artist in spite of himself. To dislike and reject bad rhetoric is to crave for

[1] *Letters and Life of Bacon*, i, 119.

good ; to detect false ornament is to cherish the true ; and Bacon is spontaneously an artist in his handling of prose. With a burden of thought such as was never given to Nashe or Browne or Taylor, and a range of reason far wider than that of Hooker, he far outweighs all three as a contributor to the store of human wisdom.

And with all this it is the more wildly incredible that he should have been the greatest master of verse as well as the chief master of philosophic prose in his age. Monstrous as is the thesis that he, taking all *knowledge* as his province, and tied by destiny to the vocations of law and politics, yet secretly supplied during twenty years of his crowded life the main stock of the new plays of a London theatre, and penned VENUS AND ADONIS and LUCRECE and the SONNETS—monstrous in every respect as is that fantasy, it is hardly more incredible at bottom than would be, for those who can realise the conditions of artistic genius, the conception of the combination in one man of a faculty not far short of supreme for prose and for prose themes with a quite supreme faculty for impassioned verse. The thesis has arisen and won vogue, in fact, among men as little wont to consider the psychology of genius as to study the literary facts by which any theory of authorship is to be tested. And even that is not the end of the purely literary demonstration of the folly of the Baconian creed.

Note this and examine.

Note.

It is not to be expected that Baconians will be moved by the argument from prose style. All these years, they have gone on comparing Bacon and the Plays without detecting any difference of style or manner of sentence, any more than they can discern the antipodal difference of preoccupation and habit of mind. Being wholly occupied in looking for resemblances in the trees, they never get a view of the woods ; and having always stated their case mainly on illusory "correspondencies," "echoes," and "classical" and "legal" mares' nests; they are not likely to consent to any other kind of test.

For the hitherto perplexed but open-minded reader, however, the argument from style form will doubtless carry its due weight ; and it has here accordingly been presented, after strict examination of the three orders of Baconian argument specified.

The further argument from constant disparities in the two writers, introduced in our incidental citation of Baconian words and phrases *not* found in the plays, may possibly make some appeal even to some Baconians, seeing that it turns their own method of particular comparison against their own thesis. To that, then, we shall devote a separate chapter, before we deal in conclusion with some of the fundamental considerations which ought to have vetoed the Baconian theory from the first.

CHAPTER XII

THE VOCABULARIES OF SHAKESPEARE AND BACON

THE range of Shakespeare's vocabulary is an old theme among his admirers; and on the strength of some very loose statistical guessing and plainly inadequate statistical comparison he has been credited with supremacy in this as in other literary aspects. Even careful comparisons between the plays of Shakespeare and the verse, say, of Milton, the bulk of whose output is prose, could not carry the conclusions founded on the hand-to-mouth statistics in question. For a just estimate of a writer's verbal range we require, it would seem, comparison of his work with an approximately equal quantity of matter by another writer; and it might have been expected that the Baconians would give some special attention to the respective vocabularies of the two writers they identify. Significantly enough, however, there has been almost no attempt among them to compare the general use of words in the two writers, apart from such wholly nugatory undertakings as that of Mr. Donnelly and Dr. Theobald, above discussed, to find special identities in the use of the commonest terms, phrases and figures of the period. When, seeking a rational test, we compare the vocabularies in general, we find, instead of any noticeable similarity or uncommon measure of coincidence, a much wider divergence than could well have been reckoned on. So clear is this divergence that a little careful study of this one point might open the eyes of any reasonable student to the nullity of the Baconian hypothesis.

Not only does Bacon, as we have seen, employ fre-

quently in particular works, as the NATURAL HISTORY, a large number of special terms such as Shakespeare very rarely uses, and many which he never uses at all: the language of Bacon's philosophic and general works diverges no less signally from that of the Plays in respect of the use of a multitude of words which never occur there.

Of Bacon, unfortunately, there is no concordance: the Baconians have done nothing so useful as that. But a sufficiently fair test may be set up by taking any unbiased selection of pages from Bacon and noting the words therein which do not occur in the Shakespeare concordance. The result will perhaps be found surprising by non-Baconians as well as by the Baconians who will make the experiment. In dealing with the question of prose style I have already shown that a few passages from the Essays yield a handful of words, phrases, and plurals, which are not to be found in the Plays—the three opening sentences of one essay presenting three non-Shakespearean words, though the words in question are not at all out of the way (save as regards the crucial case of "militar," which is worth a hundred), and the phrases are more or less idiomatic. But it may be suspected by some that the essays and passages in question are exceptional, and have been selected for that reason. In order, therefore, to secure an indisputably fair comparison, I have taken (1) the first two pages (in Routledge's edition) of the ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING; (2) the last page of Book First and the first of Book Second; (3) the last two pages of Book Second; (4) a sequence, taken at random, of four pages in the same book; (5) the first and the last of the ESSAYS; (6) the first page of THE NEW ATLANTIS; and (7) the first two and the last two pages of the HISTORY OF HENRY VII. The result is the following set of lists of mostly common Baconian words which either do not occur at all in the Plays or occur there only in the rare instances specified.

FIRST PAGE OF "ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING"
(Routledge's ed. of Works, p. 42)

branching [1]
elocution
oblation [2]
penetration (mental)
proficience
propriety (= property = quality)
tabernacle

SECOND PAGE

affirmatively
amplification
compendious
extraction(s)
illumination
oblation
politiques
propagation [3]
propound [4]
propriety (= property = quality [5])
signature
tacit
triplicity
undervalues sb.)
universality
veneration

LAST PAGE OF B. I. (Ed. cited, p. 74) (Short page)

barleycorn
benign
consociate
demolish(ed)
generate
illumination
immersed
incorruptible
knowledges (twice)
magnified
renovation

FIRST PAGE OF B. II (Ed. cited, p. 75) (Short page)

amplitude
benign
foresight
overcomen
proficience
renovation(s)
transitory
transmit

SECOND LAST FULL PAGE OF B. II (Ed. cited, p. 174)

commonplace(s)
concordance(s)
conservation
dispersedly
edition (=giving out)
effectually
harmonies (literary) [6]
liturgy
privatively
prolix
summary (adj.) [7]

[1] "Branching *itself*." Shakespeare only once has "branch" as a verb.

[2] Occurs in the Shakespeare plays only in a clearly non-Shakespearean part of *Pericles*.

[3] Used by Shakespeare once only, and then in another and peculiar sense, "propagation of a dower" (*M. for M.*, I, ii, 154).

[4] Shakespeare has only "propound*ed*," and that only once, in the doubtful 2 *Henry VI*. The word is very common in Bacon.

[5] Often used by Bacon in this sense. Shakespeare has the word only twice, and both times in the modern sense.

[6] Shakespeare often has "harmony" in the ordinary sense; never in this.

[7] "The works of God summary." Shakespeare has the noun twice, in the ordinary sense, never the adjective.

LAST FULL PAGE OF B. II. (p. 175)

atheism	elevation	proficience
compatible	libertine (adj.)	receded
confutation (twice)	liturgy	receding
declination(s)	occupate	retribution
deducing	preoccupate	tares
deficience	privative	unsown

FOUR PAGES IN SEQUENCE TAKEN AT RANDOM FROM B.II (Ed. cited, p. 166)

animation	emergent	multiplicity
animosities	futility	preamble(s)
aphorisms	intelligence (= mind) [2]	propound
certificate [1]	judicially	response(s)
contrariwise	lawmaker (twice)	rigorously
deficience		

P. 167 (short)

peregrinations [3]	reprehension
propriety (= property = quality)	Sabaoth
	vivacity

P. 168 (short)

idiom	participant	theology
libertine (adj.)	reluctation (twice)	
mystical	righteousness	

P. 169

analogy	enucleating	medium
chess	examinable	nonsignificants
contradictories	grift (= graft)	relatively
deduce(th)	imposture	surd
deficience	interdicteth [4]	ward (of a lock)
dialectic	latitude	
draughts (=written rules)	(Mahomet)	
	mediocrity [5]	

[1] Occurs in Shakespeare only in the doubtful 2 *Henry VI.*
[2] Shakespeare always uses this word in the sense of information.
[3] Shakespeare has only "peregrinate," and that only once.
[4] Shakespeare has only "interdiction," and that only once.
[5] Bacon has "golden mediocrity." So has Jonson. Shakespeare has not even "mediocrity."

FIRST ESSAY (whole)

allay (= alloy) [1]
comparable
discoursing
embaseth
illumination
mummeries
poles (of truth—metaph.)
shrunken [2]
theological

Phrase "at a stand."

LAST ESSAY (whole)

abstruse
accurate
arietations
astrologer
computing [3]
concurrence
conflagration
degenerating
desolated (vb.)
dispeople
enervate
exhaust (= exhausted)
generate
hemisphere
luxuriant
magnitude
(Mahomet)
martyrdom
mountainous (= living in the mountains)
over-power (sb.) [4]
philology
populate
sanguinary
schism
suit (= sequence)
sustentation
version (= direction)
vicissitude (7 times)
voluptuous

These lists, it should be explained, mostly cover flexions of words, in the senses in which they are used by Bacon. That is to say, Shakespeare never uses "extraction" or "undervalue" (sb.) or "immerse" or "magnify" or "commonplace" or "concordance" or "declination" or "tare" or "draught" (= writing) or "recede," &c. Two of the Bacon words, "Mahomet" [5] and "confutation," do occur in 1 HENRY VI, and are here included on the confident assumption that that is a non-Shakespearean play. Its presumed authors, Marlowe, Greene, and Peele, all use the name Mahomet frequently: "Shakespeare" uses it in no other play. "Certificate" I have noted as occurring in the doubtful 2 HENRY VI. "Effectually," again, occurs in TITUS

[1] Shakespeare often has the verb "allay": the noun only once, and then in the sense of alleviation.

[2] Shakespeare has "shrunk," never "shrunken."

[3] Shakespeare has only "computation."

[4] Shakespeare has neither the noun nor the verb.

[5] I note a proper name in this case, because its use has a moral significance.

ANDRONICUS, but in no other play ascribed to Shakespeare; and here again the word is included on the confident assumption that the play in question is non-Shakespearean. "Benign," again, as already noted, occurs in the Plays only in Gower's prologue to Act II of PERICLES—generally admitted to be non-Shakespearean matter. In no other case in these lists does this question arise, unless it be specified. "Inferring," used by Bacon (p. 174), occurs in Shakespeare only in the doubtful 3 HENRY VI, but is not here included. "Edition" Shakespeare uses once, and once only, in the now normal sense; in the sense in which it is used by Bacon, as above cited, he never uses it at all. "Shrunken" I include, as the fact that Shakespeare always has "shrunk" is in its degree significant.

It will be observed that the lists under notice include both common and uncommon words, terms seldom used even by Bacon, and terms often used by him and by many other writers. "Benign," for instance, is a favourite word of his. The remarkable thing is the number of quite ordinary words used by Bacon that are never found in the Plays. This appears from the lists before us, and can be further proved *ad libitum*. Thus Shakespeare never uses words so common in Bacon and in Elizabethan literature as: abstruse, accurate, animate, animation, animosity, atheist, atheism, astrology, astrologer, analogy, amplitude, alloy, allegory, architecture, benign, commonplace, conflagration, compendious, comparable, compatible, compression, chess, concurrence, condense, contrariwise, contexture, collectively, compacted,[1] delicacy, deficience, or deficiency, deduce, or deducing, disbanding, dialectic, elocution, extraction, elementary, elevation,

[1] Twice in one page in the *Advancement*, with "compaction." Shakespeare has "compacted" once in *Lucrece*; never in the Plays. Of course, he often has *compact* = compacted. Both forms were current: the dramatist takes one; the prosist the other

generate, geometrical, geometry, imposture, illumination, immerse, intelligence (= mind), knowledges, latitude, liturgy, libertine (adj. — Shakespeare has the noun), luxuriant, magnitude, martyrdom, medium, mediocrity, magnify, mystical, multiplicity, oblation, overpower, prolix, proficience or proficiency,[1] physics, physical (general sense [2]), recede, renovation, relatively, repress, resplendent, retribution, righteousness, signature, sanguinary, subdivide, similitude, tacit, tabernacle, theology, theological, transmit, transmission, transitory, version (in any sense), voluptuous, veneration, vicissitude, &c. &c. Hardly less remarkable is the number of common words that occur only once. In the first few pages of the Concordance I note :—abashed (*abash* does not occur at all), abet, abetting, abjectly, abler, abominably, abomination, abounding, abrogate, abrupt, abruptly, abstains (*abstain* does not occur), abstemious, abundantly, accessible, acclamation (pl.), accommodate, accompanying, accomplice (pl.), accomplishing, accomplishment, accrue, accumulate, accumulated, accumulation—twenty-five from "ab" to "acc." The full list, which would run to thousands, includes such words as freewill, apostles, apostle (both in doubtful plays), immortality, indisposition, magnificence (so common in Bacon), maxim, inference, syllogism, reciprocal, navigation. Note.

Such facts raise various questions as to the alleged range of the Shakespearean vocabulary. For instance, of the 15,000 words said to be found in the Plays,[3] how

[1] *Proficient* occurs once in the Plays.

[2] Shakespeare has the word twice in the sense of "medicinal," never in the general sense.

[3] Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, 6th ed. i, 309, citing—of all authorities—Renan's *Histoire des Langues Semitiques!* I cannot find the passage in my copy (2nd ed.) of Renan. Mr. G. C. Bompas (*Problem of the Shakespeare Plays*, 1902, p. iv) characteristically asserts that the "estimate" is Max Muller's own. Marsh (*Student's English Language*, 8th ed. pp. 126, 180) makes the same statement as Müller cites from Renan, giving no authority. Elze (*William Shakespeare*, Eng.

many are mere plurals and verb-flexions? how many occur only in the doubtful or non-genuine plays? and how many are proper names? And how does the Shakespearean vocabulary compare with, say, that of Ben Jonson? The question involved is, broadly, whether the vocabulary of the Plays is or is not that of a scholarly man, of very wide reading and far-gathered vocabulary, or that of a poet with immense power of poetic expression in the range of words of an ordinary cultured man.

note this

Leaving the question of comparative range of vocabulary to fuller statistical inquiry, we may note the bearing on the Bacon-Shakespeare theory of the evidence before us. Putting aside for separate discussion the problem of the intellectual interests involved or suggested, let us ask how it could come about that the same man, repeatedly using in his non-dramatic writings such familiar terms as atheism, theology, theological, knowledges, illumination, renovation, magnify, magnitude, amplitude, deficience, proficience, tacit, transitory, signature, chess, analogy, medium, mystical, imposture, commonplace, recede, tares, deduce, mediocrity, immersed, benign, righteousness, alloy, generate, magnet, superlative—and many hundreds more, equally common—could contrive to write (as the Baconians hold) thirty-seven plays, covering a productive period of some twenty years, without once using any of them dramatically? How should he chance to avoid, in all his play-writing, the use of two such common idioms as "at a stand" and

N.B.

trans. p. 389) copies Müller *verbatim*, and cites him, Renan, and Marsh! Mr. Grant White (*Studies in Shakespeare*, p. 300) cites the 15,000 estimate with an "it is said," avowing that it seems to him excessive. I know not who made the estimate, or whether it has ever been checked. Mrs. Cowden Clarke and Mr. Bartlett offer no estimate in their Concordances. An allowance of 8000 words for Milton has the same loose currency. Mr. Morton Luce (*Handbook to Shakespeare's Works*, 1906, p. 435) writes that "*Of course* the range of his [Shakespeare's] vocabulary is far greater than that of any other writer." No evidence is offered.

"at a stay," when these came to him quite naturally in his other writings? How should Bacon use the terms "theory" and "theoretic" freely in his didactic works, and only "theorick" (and that only thrice) in the thirty-seven plays? How, after writing often of "politiques" in his avowed works, should he always write "politicians" in his alleged plays, when other dramatists (*e.g.* Ben Jonson) used "politiques"? Using the metaphor of "oblation" so frequently in his signed works, how could he abstain from using it once in the plays? Or will the Baconians insist on giving him one of the worst-written scenes in PERICLES because it there occurs in the plural, and in the literal sense? Why should he write "overcomen" and "holpen" in his prose and never in his poetry? Why should he always use the spelling "drought" in his signed works, and "drouth" when writing dramatically? How should it be possible to him to write of "vicissitude" seven times in one essay and never once in thirty-seven plays? How should he chance frequently to use the word "voluptuous" in didactic writings, and never once in so many plays in which the *notion* is so often suggested?[1] And, having a habit of speaking of "knowledges" in his books, how should he abstain from using that plural in twenty years of play-writing?

N.B.

Once more, why should he always use the spelling and scansion "militarie" or "military" in the Plays, and invariably "militar" or "militare" in the books? How, yet again, should it come about that, while in his books he often employs the word regiment = rule, which at the time was in universal English use, in all the thirty-seven plays he uses it only once, though it is there seven times employed in the special sense which has latterly become the sole one—that of a body of soldiers? Naming Solomon as he does, with seriousness, thirty or forty

[1] Shakespeare has "voluptuously" once, and "voluptuousness" twice; but "voluptuous" never.

times in his signed works, how came he to name him only twice in the plays, and that with levity, in the LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST? Why, using the word "temporary" so constantly in his serious writing, did he use it only once in the thirty-seven plays, and then frivolously, in the phrase "a temporary meddler"? How came he in all the Plays to use only once each such words as "erudition," "rigorously" [in a non-Shakespearean play], "totally," which he uses so often in his didactic writings?

To put these questions is to point to the answer. Of all the coincidences of diction and phrase claimed by the Baconians, there are not half a dozen worth serious discussion; ninety-nine out of a hundred, as we have seen, are normal uses of every-day language; while the divergences are innumerable and overwhelming in their evidential force. The vocabularies of Shakespeare and Bacon are markedly and decisively distinct. Words frequent in one are wholly absent from the other. Of two synonyms, the first habitually uses one; the second the other. Bacon uses a number of participles in "ate," as "occupate," "preoccupate," which are not to be found in the Plays. Whereas he uses "lawmaker" twice in one page, the Plays not only have not "lawmaker," they have not even "lawgiver." He uses such verbs as "to desolate," which Shakespeare never employs. He has the locutions "evading from," "chasing after," "conlude with myself," and many more, all unknown in the Plays. Here we are considering not the special employment of sets of terms proper to particular researches or topics, but differences in the habitual use of a common language. We are contemplating two different verbal outfits, so to speak; two largely different selections from the store of words common to all for all purposes; two diverging sets of preferences—in a word, the output of two differently cultured men.[1]

[1] Mr. G. C. Bompas (*The Problem of the Shakespeare Plays*, 1902, p. iv) alleges—here merely following an old statement by

Incidentally it appears that the man of special culture has, as might be expected, the larger vocabulary in a given space. None of the computators seems to have sought to estimate quantitatively Bacon's vocabulary; and I can only give my own impression. But it is founded on the above-noted facts. In every thousand consecutive words of Bacon's text as above sampled, roughly speaking, there are from ten to thirty words not to be found in the Plays. With due allowance made for repetitions, this would soon, I think, give us over a thousand ordinary words which occur in Bacon and not in Shakespeare; and a collation of the SYLVA SYLVARUM would greatly swell the list. In no similar set of selections of sequent words from Shakespeare, I think, will there be found any such proportion of words not to be found in Bacon, though in some single pages there may be. This, of course, is not an issue that affects our conclusion as to the non identity of the two writers. If it be found that the Plays contain as large a number of terms not to be found in Bacon as we have found *vice versa*, the inference as to non-identity will in fact be *pro tanto* strengthened. I mention my own view of the proportions by way of suggesting that the playwright was really not a man of

Mrs. Pott—that "Bacon's vocabulary is practically the same as that of the Shakespeare plays." The assertion is repeated at p. 25. I know no more flagrant instance of the levity of assertion with which the Baconian case is put. Mr. Bompas sticks at nothing. He alleges (p. 39) that "there seems scarcely a sentiment or opinion expressed in the plays which has not its counterpart in the acknowledged works of Bacon." Without blenching, he adopts the monumental nonsense put forth by Mrs. Pott as to there being only three instances before 1594 of the salutation "good morrow," "good day," etc. (Upon this particular deliration, see Mr. Crawford's "Bacon-Shakespeare Question" in his *Collectanea*.) As illustrative of Mr. Bompas's first-hand knowledge may be noted his assertion (p. 51) that Thomas Kyd "is not known to have translated from the Italian." He cannot even have looked into Professor Boas's edition of Kyd's Works. I am told, however, that he is an esteemed exponent of Baconics.

supremely large vocabulary for his time : the impression set up by a long scrutiny of the concordance is rather one of surprise at the large number of words familiar to educated men which do not appear in it, and the large number which appear only once. Multitudes of them, of course, he must have known ; and it is fairly arguable that for the purposes of a dramatist, the expression of human passions and the narrative of common human actions, there is needed a much narrower range of vocabulary than is required for the ratiocinative purposes of such a thinker as Bacon. This granted, the resulting critical conclusion is that the kind of æsthetic effect produced by Shakespeare is one of the inspired use of an ordinarily fecund writer's vocabulary, and not, as the idolaters have assumed, one of abnormal command of variety of terms. True, he has always an *abundant* diction ; and in some plays, as TROILUS, he resorts so much to literate terms as to convey an impression of special largeness of vocabulary. But the literate diction of TROILUS, however it is to be accounted for, is not that of his purest poetry or his intensest feeling. His most thrilling effects are commonly produced by the exquisite collocation and *cadenced* flow of familiar words. Such lines as :

Note

Finish, good lady, the bright day is done ;
And we are for the dark.

Unarm, Eros : the long day's work is done.

Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon.

Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange.

The prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come.

And Beauty making beautiful old rhyme.

Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty.

Give me my robe, put on my crown : I have
Immortal longings in me : now no more
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.

As she would take another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more.

Spirits are not finely touched
But to fine issues.

In thrilling region of thick-ribbèd ice.

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep——

these and a hundred more immortal touches of rhythmic diction are not the yields of a great vocabulary : they are the masterstrokes of a poet working in the eternal and universal stuff of human feeling and passion, distilling their quintessences by his own alchemy. To assume that they were possible only or specially to a man of learning, a "courtier," a trained lawyer, a methodically practised reasoner, is an exorbitance of misconception that remains revolting alike to the literary sense and to common sense after any amount of reflection. Sidney the courtier, Davies the lawyer and the dialectician in verse, have no such jewels as these. And if there were any general conclusion rightly to be drawn either *a priori* or *a posteriori* it would be that those starry points of song *could not* be the creation of the learned lawyer and would-be renovator of the sciences, great as was his literary gift in his own large province. Not in all literature is there a known instance of a literary prodigy that could be remotely compared with such a miracle as the production of the NOVUM ORGANUM and LEAR, the NEW ATLANTIS and TWELFTH NIGHT, ROMEO AND JULIET and the essay on LOVE, by the same man, even if we consider them solely as forms of literary output, without

reference to the intellectual predilections involved. Lawyers have written on philosophy; men of science have penned verse; and historians have produced poetic dramas; but where in the whole roll of human achievement is there such a confounding combination of such utterly disparate forms of gift for mere utterance as would be the writing of HAMLET and the DE AUGMENTIS, MACBETH and the NATURAL HISTORY, HENRY IV and the HISTORY OF KING HENRY THE SEVENTH by the same pen in the same period?

Those who are not repelled by the "fierce impossibility" of such a conjuncture have thus far had set before them a number of the concrete proofs that it did not take place. But the proofs are not even yet all specified. After dealing with the claims founded on false assumptions, we have considered the rebutting evidence of style and vocabulary. It remains to consider that which is furnished by (1) a contrast of the intellectual interests obtruded by Bacon's whole work with the whole tone, aim, and content of the Plays, and (2) a notation of the circumstantial facts of the history of the Plays and the personal positions of the two men.

CHAPTER XIII

THE INTELLECTUAL INTERESTS OF SHAKESPEARE AND BACON

IF we survey the written life's work of Bacon, we find it broadly dividing into three main masses, of which one intellectually if not quantitatively outbulks the others. As a lawyer, he did a certain amount of purely professional writing, marked by the customary composure and ease of his style. To a layman's eye these papers indicate plenty of legal learning; and indeed, whatever Coke might say, Bacon's competence as a lawyer and a judge was never doubted among his unprejudiced contemporaries. But Bacon, be it observed, does not lard with law his writings on other subjects,[1] as the Baconians make him out to have done in the Plays—a circumstance which alone might have served to guard careful readers against the notion that the law tags in the Plays come from his pen.

Note

important

Much more keenly was he interested in the political problems which pressed upon the governments of Elizabeth and James; and to these he devoted an amount of earnest and sagacious thought which makes his political writings still the most interesting of their kind in his period. Only in Hooker's ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY, in that age, is there any such union of thought and style, insight and power of speech; and Hooker, in the less rational world of the church, is not more bent than Bacon on the right guidance of contemporary life. But the

[1] The express claim of Mr. G. C. Bompas is that of 250 law terms occurring in the Plays "200 are treated with more or less fulness *in Bacon's law tracts.*" (*The Problem of the Shakespeare Plays*, 1902, p. 29.)

greatest of all Bacon's preoccupations is that to which he gave the bulk of his published matter—the comprehensive revision and reconstruction of scientific lore of all kinds, naturalist and humanist.

To this, his master-purpose, he directed the ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING (expanding it from two books in English into seven in Latin), the NOVUM ORGANUM, and the series of short treatises which lead up to and anticipate that; striving further to accumulate scientific material in the NATURAL HISTORY, the HISTORIA VENTORUM, the HISTORIA VITÆ ET MORTIS, and the HISTORIA DENSI ET RARI. The WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS, written in Latin like the NOVUM ORGANUM, was penned to the same general end of reforming men's habits of thought; and THE NEW ATLANTIS heads in the like direction. All are parts of a high-aiming and high-hoping propaganda, impelled by a devouring aspiration, which overrode all the engrossing preoccupations of professional and political life. His few excursions into pure *belles lettres*, apart from the ESSAYS, are but passing diversions: the CONFERENCE OF PLEASURE, the version of a few of the Psalms, tell of small predilection to pure literature for literature's sake. Of the ESSAYS and the HISTORY OF HENRY THE SEVENTH alone among his larger undertakings could it be said that they are in any large measure outside the social and philosophical purposes which mainly swayed their author; and even these, partly written as they were with an eye to getting an audience for the other works, are so far concurrents. Wide as it is, then, the mental outlook of Bacon has one prevailing bent. Persistently he strove and hoped to lead the mind of his time in matters of natural science by better paths than those it appeared to him to be treading. Of the merits and demerits of his lead, we are not here concerned to speak: the matter in hand is the nature of his intellectual ambition. The fact stands out so clearly that no one has ever questioned it save by way of those imputations of sheer self-seeking

which still to some extent darken critical counsel concerning Bacon; and for our purpose these are irrelevant. Even if we should subscribe to the sophism that Bacon's intellectual ambition was wholly of a piece with that of a Cecil or an Essex—a purely self-regarding impulse—the fact would still emerge that his master passion was one of edification, of propaganda, of persuasion. And the full perversity of the theory which identifies him with the author of the Shakespearean plays is to be realised only when we reflect on the absolute obstacle to the overpowering preoccupation of his avowed intellectual life that would be involved in the devotion of an incalculable amount of its space and energy to the production of the dramas in question.

Note.

Unless they deny it, the Baconians must be presumed to see that Bacon throughout the mass of his avowed writings has an end in view; that he is profoundly concerned to influence opinion. Yet they impute to him the deliberate assumption of the time-devouring task of writing dozens of stage plays, in not one of which are his intellectual purposes so much as hinted at.[1] They conceive him writing LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST and the MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM and the COMEDY OF ERRORS and VENUS AND ADONIS and the RAPE OF LUCRECE at one end of the task, and THE TEMPEST and CYMBELINE and HENRY VIII and the WINTER'S TALE at the other, with all his life's ambition still unfulfilled; with the sciences all in his opinion still misdirected; with the "idols" of the tribe and the cave, the theatre and the market-place, all along in command of the general allegiance. Possessed as he was by the vision of a world to reform, both on the intellectual and on the political side, we are to conceive

[1] Mr. Harold Bayley, in his Baconian mood (*The Shakespeare Symphony*, 1906, p. 356), pictures Bacon as penning plays, not only the Shakespearean but others, in order to forward "the New Philosophy." Neither he nor any one else has pointed to one clear enunciation in the Plays of one of Bacon's leading ideas. Dr. Theobald's theses on that head are idle.

him bending his powers year after year to the entertainment of the audiences at the Globe Theatre.

As the Baconians cannot see the incredibility of this in the mass, it behoves us to indicate it in some detail. To give the slightest primary plausibility to their thesis on this side they must assume one of two contrary positions which they may be defied to defend. Either they must stand to the old German theorem of some profound didactic purpose that inspires all the Plays, from TITUS ANDRONICUS to PERICLES, thus crediting the dramatist with a moralising aim in writing alike the Falstaff scenes and the First Part of HENRY VI and ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL—an extravagance of fable which almost competes with the Baconian theory itself—or they must make the assumption that Bacon wrote the Plays in order to get away mentally from all his didactic ideals. As the didactic ideals of his works are specific and reiterated, while any implied in the plays are simply those of normal and accepted ethics, they can have no refuge save in the second alternative. They must imagine Bacon striving to drown his scientific cares in drama as other men seek to drown pecuniary cares in drink. Whatever they may say about his doctrine of dramatic teaching in the ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING, they can find no trace in the plays of any attempt to further the aims of that treatise. They must picture Bacon as a literary Jekyll-and-Hyde, alternately absorbed in an immense philosophic ambition and in a nerve-wearing career of theatrical craftsmanship from which every thought of Baconian propaganda was expelled.

Yet compare Bacon's philosophic with his political life.

At times, by way of proving that the same hand wrote HAMLET and the NOVUM ORGANUM, they dwell on such coincidences as Hamlet's phrase about the stars being fire and the handling of that very thesis in several of Bacon's writings. There is here a real point of coincident interest or contact ; as again in the speech of Polixenes to Perdita about the art that adds to nature being an art

that nature makes.[1] Those two topics, and some others, had undoubtedly occupied, in however different degrees, the thought of both writers. But on the theory that the two were one, why have we only these few coincidences of subject-matter? If it were worth Bacon's while to raise didactically the issue of Art *versus* Nature in THE WINTER'S TALE, why should he restrict himself to a single brief discussion of that and a bare mention of the problem about the physics of the stars in HAMLET? Were these alike uncontrollable aberrations from the policy pursued (on the Baconian theory) throughout all the other plays, of saying nothing whatever about the main aims to which Bacon devoted the mass of his signed writing? And was it by way of self-mortification that the publicist, who in his publications quotes and discusses Aristotle over a hundred times, makes but two jejune allusions to him in the Plays? If so, why even these two, seeing that Plato, quoted or criticised over fifty times in Bacon's prose, is never named in the Plays at all?

Even to a Baconian there must surely be something baffling in the contrariness which excludes from the Plays all mention of Copernicus, about whose theory Bacon was so much concerned, and whose doctrine was so interesting a topic for so many Elizabethans. To a student, the crudely conventional and ignorant references to Machiavelli in 1 and 3 HENRY VI are no matter for surprise, the passages being so plainly non-Shakespearean; but to the Baconian, for whom all "Shakespeare" is Bacon, it must at times, one thinks, seem odd that a writer who in his prose makes so many intelligent allusions to Machiavelli should write of him so obtusely in blank verse. The playwright of the Baconians is a mere miracle

[1] In *Montaigne and Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. pp. 203–211, I have traced the development and vacillation of Bacon's thought on this problem, and noted its final divergence from Shakespeare's. It may well be that both writers had talked on the theme with Ben Jonson, the friend of both.

of self-renunciation. He will not allow himself a word in promotion of his dearest scheme. In the ESSAYS and in his State Papers concerning Ireland he is deeply concerned about "plantations": in all the Plays the word occurs but once, in the line:

> Had I plantation of this isle, my lord.
>
> *Tempest*, II, i, 143.

In his traceable literary life, Bacon stands confessed a lover of Virgil, quoting him at least fifty times. In the Plays, there are barely three palpable Virgilian echoes, and these of the most hackneyed kind, made in English; while there are many, also in English, from Ovid, for whom the prose-writing Bacon shows much less liking. But passing strange above all this, on the Baconian theory, is the fact that the essayist and propagandist who was so concerned about atheism and theology never mentions either word in the Plays; that he who in so many philosophical writings speaks of "the light of nature" should never use the phrase in his alleged work in drama; and that, after devoting so many critical pages to philosophy, he there uses the term "philosophical" only once, in pure levity!

It is all too blankly unplausible for more detailed discussion. The Plays are, in a word, the composition of a man not at all preoccupied with problems of scientific reform, though in one passage he disposes unanswerably, once for all, of an old theoretic confusion over which Bacon wavered, seeing now clearly and now cloudily. The author of THE TEMPEST and THE WINTER'S TALE had indeed brooded intensely over some of the great riddles of existence, but he was not the schemer of a "New Instauration" of the sciences; and as little did he aspire to reconstruct the life of Ireland. He was in no wise zealous either to vindicate dogmatic orthodoxy or to persuade dogmatists to change their hearts and study Nature with open minds: it is with a smile that he makes

Perdita propound their Polynesian principles. Echoing Montaigne, he will put in the mouth of a person in a drama a proposition flouting naturalist speculation; which Bacon would have repugned with emphasis; yet he is pervadingly non-religious in his outlook. He was no fulminator against atheism, no zealous flatterer of King James, no striver against Aristotelian scholasticism. Despite all that has been loosely said of his observation of Nature, he was no watchful student of her processes: like Bacon, he loved flowers, but not with his botanical bias.[1] Of the Latin classics he knew little, else he must have quoted Virgil as lovingly as Bacon does: his Ovid he knew mainly from translation, partly by reminiscence from his school-days. To realise the futility of the pretence that the playwright was a good classical scholar, and therefore was Bacon, we have but to turn from the few scraps of Latin which here and there dot the Plays, —chiefly three or four which are not of his making— to the pages of the ADVANCEMENT and the ESSAYS, where, for many pages together, Latin enters into almost every other sentence, and classical allusion is omnipresent.

One of the standing theses of the Baconians, not thus far considered in our survey, is that Bacon's proclivity to drama is manifested not only by his share in the planning of the masques at Gray's Inn, but by his allusions to dramatic poetry and the theatre in the Latin version of the ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING,[2] and at the close of the sixth book of the expanded treatise.[3] It would be difficult to cite a better proof of Bacon's aloofness from the contemporary theatre. He expressly complains that though "the stage is capable of no small influence both of discipline and corruption," "Now of corruptions of this

[1] Mr. Bayley notes (*Shakespeare Symphony*, p. 320) that "A knowledge and love of flowers as great as that of Bacon and Shakespeare is exhibited by the minor dramatists."

[2] *De Augmentis*, ii, 13.

[3] Mr. G. C. Bompas (*Problem of the Shakespeare Plays*, 1902, p. 22) puts *this* passage (vi, 4, end) "in the second book."

kind we have enough, but the discipline has in our times been plainly neglected." The DE AUGMENTIS was published in 1623, the very year of the publication of the Shakespeare Folio. What then is the Baconian position here? That Bacon meant his sweeping dispraise to apply only to other people's plays, he having for his part been carrying on for twenty years the discipline which he declared to have been "in our times plainly neglected"? The procedure could be fitly described only in the vernacular—as "crying stinking fish." If Bacon had taken the pains to write seven-and-thirty plays, he must be supposed to have intended them to be witnessed. Here he is warning all men off. The disparagement of the whole Elizabethan drama can mean only one thing, that it did not at all realise Bacon's ideal of moral propaganda. In his blame he included perforce much if not all of the work of his sworn admirer, Ben Jonson. Would the man who blamed that for lack of moral purpose, and who saw nothing but lack of discipline in Dekker and Webster and Heywood, no less than in Beaumont and Fletcher, eulogise in the mass the Plays of Shakespeare? Bacon, in a word, had not the playgoing temperament. He was all for moral and intellectual improvement, not for spontaneous life, the pell-mell of poetry and ribaldry, tragedy and farce, that crowded the Elizabethan boards. It does not follow that before his official advancement he had not from time to time seen a play and carried away with him a line or two; but he was verily no haunter of theatres.

ex.

The passage at the end of the sixth book is equally a confutation of the Baconian claim founded on it. Recommending, in his admiration of the Jesuit methods of pedagogy, the teaching of the art of acting in the schools, he pronounces stage-playing (*actio theatralis*) "a thing indeed, if practised professionally, of low repute; but, *if it be made a part of discipline*, . . . of excellent use." This is not a recommendation of the theatre: it is a recommendation to avoid it, and to promote the acting

of didactic plays in the schools under pedagogic auspices. And there is on record even a more pronounced expression of Bacon's substantial antipathy to the theatre of his day. When, in 1614, the Thames watermen, led by John Taylor, the Water-Poet, presented their petition to the King to put a stop to the removal of the playhouses from the south to the north side of the river, a change which, they said, took away half their livelihood, it was referred by James to his "Commissioners for Suits," who then included Sir Francis Bacon. The King's Players (Shakespeare's company) put in a counter petition. But, says Taylor,

> our extremities and cause being judiciously pondered by the Honourable and Worshipfull Commissioners, Sir Francis Bacon very worthily said that so farre forth as the Publike weale was to be regarded before pastimes, or a serviceable decaying multitude before a handful of particular men, or profit before pleasure, so far was our suite to be preferred before theirs.

Before any decision was come to, the Commission was dissolved, and the matter dropped, poor Taylor being in due course accused by his fellow watermen of taking bribes from the players to let the suit fall.[1]

The Baconians, no doubt, are honestly ignorant of the existence of this record; and now that it is cited they will probably seek to explain it away. Bacon had declared against the cause of the very company of players who, according to the Baconians, were acting his plays; disparaging their work as "pastime," even as he later disparaged the theatre in general as devoid of the "discipline" he cared about. We shall be told, doubtless, that he had to conceal his connection with the players—that connection which, according to the same theorists, was actually known all the while to Ben Jonson and many others! Thus does the Baconian theory proceed from inconsequence to inconsequence.

Note

[1] *The True Cause of the Watermen's Suit concerning Players*, in Taylor's *Workes*, 1630, Section Second, pp. 172–3.