THE

PASSIONATE

PILGRIME.

By W. Shakespeare.

AT LONDON
Printed for W. Jaggard, and are
to be sold by W. Leake, at the Grey-
hound in Paul's Churchyard.

1599.
were made the basis of piratical issues, a noteworthy instance being Tottel's Miscellany.

When Jaggard realized that he had two sonnets from Shakespeare's famous cycle, he decided to make capital of the fact. For his volume he devised the title *The Passionate Pilgrimage* (using "Pilgrimage" in the well-known sense of "Lover"), added the statement "by W. Shakespeare," and carefully put in the display-window his two prize poems. Apparently he hoped to deceive the unwary into supposing that here at last they were able to purchase the "sugared sonnets" which the master had so long allowed to circulate among his "private friends." With the two authentic sonnets from that cycle Jaggard associated the two sonnets from *Love's Labour's Lost*, and certain other poems which he thought might with some show of plausibility be attributed to Shakespeare, namely: four sonnets on the theme of Venus and Adonis, almost certainly by Griffin, who had already printed one of them in his *Fidessa*; four short love-poems (the author of which has not been identified), written in the six-line stanza familiar in *Venus and Adonis*; the sonnet "If music and sweet poetry agree," printed by Barnfield in his *Poems in Divers Humours*; and a song, "Cradled age and youth," often found in early anthologies. These fourteen poems made up what Jaggard was pleased to call "The Passionate Pilgrimage, by W. Shakespeare." Then he slyly inserted a second title-page, *Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music*, without any author's name, following which he printed verses by Barnfield, Marlowe, and other writers. Obviously he intended the book-

1 As used, for example, by Romeo in addressing Juliet. The lady beloved was commonly called "saint." In this connection it is interesting to observe that Thomas Nashe, in *Jack Wilton*, describes sonneteers as "passionate lovers."

2 It is curious that the second section contained, doubtless unsuspected by Jaggard, a genuine poem by Shakespeare, Biron's address to Rosaline, extracted from *Love's Labour's Lost*. 
buying public to suppose that the whole volume was by Shakespeare; only on closer inspection would the purchasers discover that merely the first section actually was attributed to the master.

Jaggard had but twenty short poems. In order to make this slender collection into a sizable volume he used a diminutive type-page with wide margins of paper, he inserted at the top and bottom large ornamental devices, and, finally, he resorted to the unusual scheme of printing on only one side of each leaf. By these clumsy expedients he managed to stretch his material into a book of sixty pages.

Because of the presence, no doubt, of Shakespeare's name on the title-page, the volume met with a ready sale. A second edition was called for, of which no copy has come down to us, and a third edition appeared in 1612. In this third edition, Jaggard, still embarrassed by his scanty material, added two long amorous poems, the epistles of Paris to Helen, and of Helen to Paris, impudently extracting them from Thomas Heywood's *Troia Britania*, a work he had himself published in 1609. Since this enlarged edition bore on the title-page the assertion "newly corrected and augmented, by W. Shakespeare," Heywood felt called upon to defend himself against the possible charge of having plagiarized from that more distinguished author a portion of his *Troia Britania*. Accordingly, in the same year, 1612, he added to his *Apology for Actors* an explanation to the reading public:

Here, likewise, I must necessarily insert a manifest injury done me in that work [*Troia Britania*] by taking the two epistles of Paris to Helen, and Helen to Paris, and printing them in a less volume [*The Passionate Pilgrimage*] under the name of another [William Shakespeare], which may put the world in opinion I might steal them from him, and he, to do himself right, hath since published them in his own name: but, as I must
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acknowledge my lines not worth his [Shakespeare's] patronage, under whom he [Jaggard] hath published them, so the author [Shakespeare], I know, much offended with Mr. Jaggard, that altogether unknown to him presumed to make so bold with his name.

Shakespeare may have gone further than merely expressing his resentment privately to Heywood. At any rate Jaggard at once canceled the objectionable title-page, and issued the remainder of the sheets with a new title-page from which the name of Shakespeare was omitted.

The second work with which the dramatist's name was associated is interesting in an entirely different way. In the latter months of 1601 there appeared a volume by an obscure provincial writer, Robert Chester, entitled Love's Martyr: or Rosalin's Complaint. Allegorically shadowing the truth of Love, in the constant Fate of the Phœnix and Turtle, at the end of which Shakespeare affixed a poem — the only time he is known to have contributed to the published work of another author.

Chester in all probability was a domestic retainer — a chaplain or a tutor — in the household of a wealthy country gentleman, John Salisbury, Esq., of Llewени, County Denbigh, Wales. Since Love's Martyr was dedicated to Salisbury, and solely designed to celebrate him, and since Shakespeare contributed his poem not as a compliment to Chester, or to Chester's work, but as an expression of his personal esteem for Salisbury, we must glance for a moment at this man who won for himself a place among the dramatist's London friends.

Salisbury was born in December or January, 1566–67, and thus was approximately of the same age as Shake-
speare. On one side he came of royal blood, though with
the bend sinister, for his mother, the famous Cather-
ine of Berain, was the granddaughter of Sir Roland Vel-
ville, illegitimate son of King Henry VII. In 1581 he
entered Oxford University. In 1586, upon the execution
of his elder brother for complicity in the Babington plot,
he became the heir of Lleweni. A few months later he
married Ursula Stanley, illegitimate daughter of Henry
Stanley, Earl of Derby and King of Man, and at Lleweni
established a home that was noted for its hospitality to
men of letters. Salisbury, himself a poet, was conspicu-
ous for his generous patronage of the native poets,
among whom was Robert Chester. Numerous verses
by various local bards are extant celebrating his liberality
and his kindly interest in their work.

In 1595, at the age of twenty-eight, he left his country
estate in Wales, came to London, and entered the In-
ner Temple of Law; and he spent the greater part of the
next ten years in the metropolis, frequenting the thea-
tres and the Court. He won the friendship of the Earl
of Pembroke, Sir Robert Cecil, and other noblemen of
power, and enjoyed the favor of the Queen herself, who
made him one of her Esquires.

Moreover, in London he continued to show his deep in-
terest in literature, and became the patron of several play-
wrights, numbering among his friends not only Shake-
speare but also Chapman, Marston, and Jonson. In a
collection of his manuscripts now preserved at Christ
Church, Oxford, there is a poem entirely in Jonson’s auto-
graph, signed in full by the great dramatist. Presumably
Jonson lent the poem to Salisbury to read, and Salisbury
forgot to return it. After Jonson’s death it was dis-
covered, and printed in the folio of 1640 with the statement:
“Writ in Queen Elizabeth’s time, since lost, and recov-
ered.” If Salisbury had the privilege of looking over
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Jonson's poems in manuscript, we may suppose that he was one of those choice "friends" who had the privilege of reading Shakespeare's Sonnets in manuscript.

In 1597 he was appointed, on Pembroke's recommendation, Privy Council Deputy for the County of Denbigh; and in June, 1601, at the age of thirty-four, he was knighted by the Queen's own hand. Shortly after this event, and possibly to some extent in celebration of it, the volume entitled Love's Martyr was issued.

For years Chester, under the stimulus of his master's kindly interest, had been composing verse at Lleweni, and in 1601 he sought, we may infer, to have some of his work published in London. Apparently Sir John encouraged him in this ambition, and offered to see a volume of his poems through the press. In gratitude Chester not only dedicated the volume to Sir John, but attempted to fuse all the poems (originally composed at various times on unrelated subjects) into a single long poem celebrating the marriage of his patron and patroness. At the beginning of the volume he placed a eulogy, written about 1587, on the union of Salisbury, described as the Turtle, to Ursula Stanley, described as the Phoenix. Dame Nature comes weeping to a parliament of the gods on Olympus, expressing her fear that the beautiful Phoenix will decay,—

And from her ashes never will arise
Another bird her wings for to display.

The gods are astounded at the description of the Phoenix (as they well might be 1), and Jove orders Dame Nature

1 Her teeth are hewed from rich crystal rocks....
When the least whistling wind begins to sing
And gently blows her hair about her neck,
Like to a chime of bells it soft doth ring.

It is obvious that this whole description of a beautiful woman — a good example of that "descending description" so popular with Elizabethan writers — was an inset poem, originally composed as a separate exercise; note
to "leave Britania," cross "over the mountain tops", to Paphos Isle (Wales), and there, in a vale (Lleweni), "environed with a high steepie mountain," find Salisbury, "true honor's lovely squire," who will be a suitable match for "such beauty that all beauty was excelling." The gods and goddesses loudly applaud this decree from thundering Jove, and Dame Nature hastens away to put it into effect. The "allegory" thus developed Chester determined to use for the purpose of giving unity to the whole volume. Accordingly, the poems that follow, on miscellaneous and often incongruous subjects, he linked by clumsy devices to the Phœnix-Turtle and Dame Nature theme, with a resultant hotch-potch that is, to say the least, astonishing.

At the end of the first poem we suddenly descend from the heights of Greek Olympus and the immediate presence of all the pagan deities to hear the poet in his humble capacity as the family chaplain utter a pious prayer — strangely put into the mouth of Venus — to Jehovah, Christ, God of Israel, for his mistress, who now is described as "a silver dove" instead of a phœnix. Next, in order to enable him to introduce various other unrelated poems, he devised a long dialogue between Dame Nature and the Phœnix, interweaving therein a metrical history of early England, then a description of certain famous cities, then an account of the nine female worthies, then, with a special apology to the indulgent reader — much needed by that long-suffering individual — a narrative of the "Birth, Life, and Death of King Arthur," followed by miscellaneous epistles, orations, and epitaphs dealing with that sovereign, and a tedious pedigree of Arthur, all of which in spirit and in con-

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tent are totally out of keeping with the Phœnix-Turtle motif. Immediately after this digression into the field of English history, we come upon some love-ditties, supposedly sung by Dame Nature and the Phœnix, likewise quite out of harmony with all that precedes. But our astonishment reaches a climax when the author next drags in, as if by the ears, a long metrical treatise on herbs, trees, fishes, stones, beasts, insects, reptiles, and birds, with their respective "virtues" and "secrets." The discussion of birds happily enables him to return to the original Phœnix-Turtle story, and he narrates the marriage of his patron and patroness, which, with the Arabian Phœnix in mind, he curiously represents as a death. The Pelican then advances to sing the glory of their unparalleled love; and in a Conclusion the author himself makes the announcement that from the matrimonial ashes of the two birds has arisen a new Phœnix. The reference, presumably, is to the birth of Salisbury's first child, Jane. The Conclusion, one might think, should end the volume. But Chester could not resist the temptation to add two more long poems, of which he was doubtless proud because of their ingenuity, the first a series of "Cantoes" on the letters of the alphabet, the second a collection of fifty-eight poems of varying length built up on short love posies such as were then used in rings. By slightly altering these, he was able to hitch them also to the Phœnix-Turtle allegory.

It is hard to imagine a more incongruous or ridiculous compilation. Yet apparently Sir John, in order to please Chester, as well, we may suspect, as to see himself celebrated in verse, was resolved to have it published. Furthermore, he seems to have called upon his distinguished

1 How incongruous the volume is may be illustrated by the fact that the publisher, not readily disposing of the work, offered the unsold copies in 1611 under the new title The Annals of Great Britaine, or A Most Excellent Monument, wherein may be seen all the antiquities of this Kingdom.
literary friends in London to honor the volume with some verses of their own. This they agreed to do; but instead of complimenting the author, Chester, they wholly ignored that impossible creature, and celebrated Sir John himself. In this respect the volume is unique, so far as I know, in Elizabethan literature.

Following the long and tedious poem by Chester, which fills no fewer than 167 pages, comes a blank page, and then a new and formal title, running thus: "Hereafter Follow Diverse Poeticall Essaies on the Former Subject; viz. The Turtle and Phœnix, Done by the Best and Chiefest of our Moderne Writers, with their Names Subscribed to their Particular Works: Never before Extant. And (now first) Consecrated by them all Generally to the Love and Merite of the True-Noble Knight, Sir John Salisbury." The contributors were; the four eminent playwrights, William Shakespeare, John Marston, George Chapman, and Benjamin Jonson, and a writer who signed himself "Ignoto."

The first poem, called Invocatio, and signed "Vatum Chorus" (i.e., "Chorus of the Poets," meaning all the poets contributing the following verses), explains the purpose they have in writing, namely to celebrate the generosity and nobility of Sir John Salisbury:

That we may give a round to him
In a Castalian bowl crown'd to the brim.

The second poem, likewise signed "Vatum Chorus," and addressed To the Worthily Honor'd Knight, Sir John Salisbury, requests him to accept the following verses for their sincerity:

No mercenary hope did bring them forth,
They tread not in that servile gate,
But a true zeal, born in our spirits,
Responsible to your high merits.

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The first poem, very brief, is signed "Ignoto." The second is signed "William Shake-speare." Then follow in succession poems signed "John Marston," "George Chapman," and "Ben Jonson."

Ignoto, in fourteen lines, vaguely observed that only from the death of one phoenix is another phoenix born. Marston described in grandiloquent terms the beauty of that offspring, "which now is grown unto maturity" (Jane Salisbury would be fourteen years old in 1601), "a most exact, wondrous creature, arising out of the Phoenix and Turtle Dove's ashes." Chapman praised Salisbury's constancy to his mate:

She was to him the animis'd world of pleasure,
Her firmness cloth'd him in variety.

Jonson, after a humorous invocation, celebrated likewise Sir John's fidelity to his wife:

O, so divine a creature,
Who could be false to?

And in an Ode ἐνθουσιαστικὴ he described in extravagant terms the "illustrate brightness" of Lady Salisbury.

The verses Shakespeare contributed, though ostensibly on the theme of the Phoenix and the Turtle, are not closely related to that theme as Chester had developed it. Indeed Shakespeare seems not to have read Chester's tedious poem far enough to have unraveled its cryptic meaning, or to have discovered that from the ashes of the dead birds, whose death was merely an allegorical representation of matrimony,¹ there came noble offspring. Accordingly, in his haste jumping to the conclusion that the two birds died in reality "leaving no posterity," he wrote a graceful funeral song, in which, in the meta-

¹ I cannot accept Sir Sidney Lee's opinion (Life, p. 272) that Shakespeare's poem was not penned for Chester's book, but was "either devised in an idle hour with merely abstract intention, or it was suggested by the death within the poet's own circle of a pair of devoted lovers."
physical style of John Donne, he played with the ideas
that marriage makes two into one and that “one is no
number.” The concluding lines of the "Threnos" may
be slyly humorous when the poet calls upon his readers
to repair to the urn and —

For these dead birds sigh a prayer.

The whole undertaking on the part of these distin-
guished London poets reminds one, at least in a way,
of the commendatory poems which many writers con-
tributed to Coryat’s Crudities. Jonson begins jocularly:
“We must sing too?” and all the poets seem to try in a sly
way to be as obscure as Chester himself. But, of course,
the contributors restrained themselves in order rightly
“to gratulate an honorable friend.”

The episode may be taken as illustrating Shakespeare’s
good nature in humoring the vanity of a country knight
who had been a generous friend to the theatres and the
London playwrights. And Sir John’s abiding affection
for the poet is indicated in lines recently found among
papers belonging to the Salisbury family.¹ Addressing
Heminges and Condell as “my good friends,” the writer
declares that in publishing the First Folio they have
given to England a treasure more glorious than “Cor-
tés, with all his Castelyne associates,” dug from the
richest mines of Mexico. Though the lines could not
have been written by Sir John, who died in 1612, they
were produced by some member of his family, proba-
bly by his son, Sir Henry, who, being admitted to the
Middle Temple in 1607, was no doubt familiar with his
father’s distinguished friend, and so came to be num-
bered among those who, as he puts it, “loved the dead”
playwright.

¹ See Sir Israel Gollancz, “Contemporary Lines to Heminges and Con-
dell,” in The Times Literary Supplement, Thursday, January 26, 1922, p. 56.
CHAPTER XVIII

WORCESTER'S MEN; TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

For many years the Chamberlain's and the Admiral's companies were the only adult troupes "allowed" by the Privy Council to perform regularly in London. But in the spring of 1602 the Earl of Worcester's Men and the Earl of Oxford's Men, who had been "joined by agreement together in one company," thereafter called Worcester's Men, secured through the "suit of the Earl of Oxford" the permission of the Queen likewise to play in the city.\(^1\) On March 31, 1602, the Privy Council, under special orders from the Queen, wrote to notify the Lord Mayor of the "allowance" of the new company, adding: "And, as the other companies that are allowed, namely, of me, the Lord Admiral, and the Lord Chamberlain, be appointed their certain houses, and one and no more to each company, so we do straitly require that this third company be likewise [appointed] to one place. And because we are informed the house called the Boar's Head [an inn situated in Whitechapel without Aldgate] is the place they have especially used, and do best like of, we do pray and require you that the said house, namely the Boar's Head, may be assigned unto them."

This new company was in part composed of actors who had seceded from the Chamberlain's Men soon after the Globe was erected — William Kempe, Christopher Beeston, John Duke, and Robert Pallant, all excellent actors, favorably known to the public. With them were

\(^1\) For the history of this company see my Shakespearean Playhouses, pp. 157-59, 294-309.
associated Robert Lee, who had as early as 1593 belonged to the Chamberlain's Company, and who now was ranked among the best players of the day, Thomas Greene, whose fame as a comedian was not much inferior to that of William Kempe, John Lowin, whose ability later made him one of the leading members of the Globe Company, and Richard Perkins, whose fine acting was praised by John Webster. As their playwright they secured Thomas Heywood, called by Charles Lamb "a prose Shakespeare," who for many years had been industriously writing for the Admiral's Men. As the chief dramatist for this new company he was destined to produce some of his most successful plays, for example his Ages, which, we are told, thronged the theatre "with numerous and mighty auditories." To secure his services the actors gave him a position among them as a full-sharer, so that he bore to his company much the same relation that Shakespeare did to the Chamberlain's organization. In addition to Heywood, who was their regular playwright, they occasionally employed the well-known dramatists Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, John Day, Wentworth Smith, Richard Hathaway, and John Webster.

After securing their license as a city company, Worcester's Men occupied, in accordance with the order of the Privy Council, the Boar's Head in Whitechapel; but an inn-yard remote from the centre of population put them at a serious disadvantage, and six months later they

1 See Greene's Tu Quoque. Heywood wrote: "There was not an actor of his nature [i.e., a comedian] of better ability, ... more applauded by the audience, of greater grace at Court, or of more general love in the city."

2 Webster, in publishing The White Devil, affixed at the end an expression of his appreciation to the company for its excellent performance of the play: "Whereof, as I make a general acknowledgment, so in particular I must remember the well approved industry of my friend Master Perkins, and confess the worth of his action did crown both the beginning and end." A portrait of Perkins now hangs in the Dulwich Picture Gallery.
secured the use of the Rose playhouse recently abandoned by the Admiral's Men. At the same time they engaged Henslowe, with all his experience, to serve as their business-manager.

The Chamberlain's Men could hardly have welcomed the competition of this excellent troupe housed so near them. Its organization, too, followed close on the appearance of the two child-companies at St. Paul's and Blackfriars. Thus before the end of Elizabeth's reign there were no fewer than five troupes of actors, at five several playhouses, all catering to the patronage of London audiences. Yet the Globe had little difficulty in maintaining its sovereignty over theatre-goers, largely through the prestige of Shakespeare. In 1609 we have printed testimony to the superior drawing-power of "this author's comedies, that are so fram'd to the life that they serve for the most common commentaries of all the actions of our lives, shewing such a dexterity and power of wit that the most displeased with plays are pleased with his comedies. And all such dull and heavy-witted worldlings as were never capable of the wit of a comedy, coming, by report of them, to his representations, have found that wit there that they never found in themselves, and have parted better-witted than they came, feeling an edge of wit set upon them more than ever they dreamed they had brain to grind it on. So much and such savored salt of wit is in his comedies that they seem, for their height of pleasure, to be born in that sea that brought forth Venus."

The same writer adds that "amongst all there is none more witty than" *Troilus and Cressida*. This play, we may feel reasonably sure, was composed in 1602. Shake-

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1 Within a few years they moved to a new and larger playhouse, the Red Bull, erected for them to the north of the city.

2 "A never writer to an ever reader," prefixed to the 1609 quarto of *Troilus and Cressida*. 

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A LIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare had long been interested in the story of Troy, which he first met in Virgil and Ovid. Even so early as Lucrece the fascination it had for him is apparent, and innumerable references in his plays — in Hamlet, for example — show how deeply it had stirred his imagination. It would be strange were it otherwise; for the beauty of Helen, the bravery of Hector, the craft of Ulysses, the treachery of Sinon, the fickleness of Cressida, and the woes of old Hecuba are without parallel in literary annals. The story had gripped the heart of the world from the days of Homer, and had graced the pens of many poets — Euripides and Sophocles, Ovid and Virgil, Chaucer and Lydgate, to mention only a few. On the Elizabethan stage, too, it had proved astonishingly popular. Between the years 1559 and 1599 our records, which are far from complete, show that it had received dramatic handling at least twenty-nine times. And the appearance of two volumes of Chapman's translation of Homer in 1598 greatly increased this popularity with theatre-goers. In 1599 the Admiral's Men produced Brute (apparently a two-part play dealing with Brutus), Troy's Revenge, Agamemnon, Orestes Furies, and Troilus and Cressida (by Dekker and Chettle). And we have much other evidence of the extraordinary interest in the Troy story at the close of the century.

At last Shakespeare turned his hand to the theme, working, apparently, from some earlier play on the subject, portions of which he embodied in his later scenes with very slight alteration. Some scholars think that he

1 The passages in Lucrece and Hamlet are adaptations from the second book of Virgil's Æneid.
2 This play is not extant, but the stage "plot" is preserved; see W. W. Greg, Henslowe Papers, pp. 142, 144. Some scholars think that about this same time the Admiral's Men produced Heywood's two plays called The Iron Age dealing with the siege of Troy.
3 See the able article by J. S. P. Tatlock, "The Siege of Troy in Eliza-
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was merely seeking to take advantage of the vulgar popularity of the subject, and felt no deep interest in his task; yet it cannot be doubted that he put his heart into much of the play, and one is tempted to believe that he wrote many scenes not to agitate the "clapper-claws" of the "hard-handed multitude," but rather to please himself. Troilus and Cressida could hardly be expected to succeed on the stage, and there is grave doubt whether the Chamberlain's Men ever put it on the boards. How unsuitable it is for representation is indicated by the fact that it is known to have been performed only three times, in Munich (1898), in Berlin (1904), and in London, (1907). Even as a closet drama it has few admirers. It is not loved, as Lear and Cymbeline are loved; some critics even find it repulsive. Yet, coming as it did from Shakespeare at the mature age of forty, it is in some respects one of the most remarkable works we have from his versatile pen.

Our first reference to the play is in February, 1603, when the Chamberlain's Men took steps to prevent its publication. This action may have been due to the imminent danger of a pirated edition; but the danger of piracy would in large measure depend on the success of the play, and Troilus and Cressida could hardly tempt any one to run the risks involved in stealing it; moreover, the troupe, after its recent experience with Hamlet, would guard the manuscript with redoubled precautions. It seems more likely that since the play was not then to be staged, the author had allowed private transcripts to be made for circulation among his friends, and that the actors, in view of a possible future presentation of the play, desired to prevent any one of these transcripts from falling into the hands of a publisher. Whatever the


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cause, on February 7, 1603, their printer friend, James Roberts, took the playhouse copy to the Stationers' Hall, and secured a blocking license: "7 Februarii. Master Roberts. Entred for his copy, in full court holden this day, to print, when he hath gotten sufficient authority for it, the book of Troilus and Cressida, as it is acted by my Lord Chamberlain's Men." Roberts' purpose, of course, was merely to prevent any one else from publishing the work. The phrase "as it is acted by my Lord Chamberlain's Men" may be simply a glance at the future, or a conventional tag inserted to identify the play by mention of the troupe that owned it.¹ The phrase "when he hath gotten sufficient authority for it" may indicate that the Stationers' Company understood the arrangement between Roberts and the actors, or it may indicate that the manuscript had not yet been submitted to the Master of the Revels, and did not bear the signature of that official, which it must have before it could be printed.²

Our next reference to the play is in 1609. On January 28 of this year two young publishers, Bonian and Walley, secured from the wardens of the Stationers' Company (who seem to have forgotten Roberts' entry) a new license to print "a booke called the history of Troylus and Cressida," and shortly afterwards they issued it with the stereotyped phrase on the title-page, "as it was acted . . . at the Globe." It may be that, since the play was by Shakespeare, they assumed, as was natural, that it had been acted by his company. But after publishing it they were informed that in reality Troilus and Cressida never had been presented on the stage; and they hurried to

¹ A play with the same title was owned by the Admiral's Men.
² On this point see my edition of The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, pp. 39–42. It would cost the actors £1 to have the manuscript licensed for acting, an expense they would hardly incur unless they intended to put the play on the stage at once.
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make capital of so remarkable a fact. They cut out the title-page as originally issued, pasted in a double sheet with the signature ¶, containing a fresh title-page, and a notice to the public announcing their astonishing discovery. The second title-page omitted the former statement that Troilus and Cressida had been acted; and the notice, with the flamboyant heading "A never writer to an ever reader, News," literally shouted to the book-buyers: "You have here a new play, never stal'd with the stage, never clapper-clawed with the palms of the vulgar, . . . not . . . sullied with the smoaky breath of the multitude."

The publishers then congratulated the reader on the great privilege of acquiring a copy of the play, "since by the grand possessors' wills I believe you should have prayed for them, rather than been prayed." The allusion is commonly supposed to be to the actors, but "grand" is a strange adjective to apply to them; and the reference may be to the poet's friends—gentlemen of fashion interested in the theatre—who had been allowed to make transcripts for their private examination. The copy that Bonian and Walley sent to the printer was not the actors' manuscript (which later became the basis of the Folio text), but was an accurate transcript of what Shakespeare wrote. The evidence is not decisive, yet the presumption clearly favors the theory that the play, as the publishers declared, never was acted, that in view of this fact it was allowed to circulate in transcripts among certain "grand possessors," and that in 1609 one of these transcripts fell into the hands of Bonian and Walley.

Critics have found few plays of Shakespeare so puzzling as Troilus and Cressida, mainly because they ignore its literary pedigree, and approach it with the point of view of the Greeks. Furnivall calls it "a deliberate debasing of that Homer Chapman englisht"; and Lloyd, in a similar tone, describes it as "a profanation of Homeric
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poetry,” adding: “It is difficult at first to restrain a feeling of indignation at the travesty he thus commits himself to. . . . The change was deliberate. Was it malicious?” And the assumption that the play is a deliberate travesty of the Homeric story has led many scholars to attempt to interpret it as “an important biographical document.” Some have advanced the theory that Shakespeare was at enmity with Chapman, and wrote in savage antagonism to his highly-praised translation of Homer; others have connected the play with the “War of the Theatres,” and suggested that the author was bent on lashing the insolent Jonson; still others hold that he was giving vent to his personal resentment at womankind in general resulting from his experiences with the Dark Lady of the Sonnets.

But all difficulty vanishes when we realize that Shakespeare is handling the Troy story, not as told by Homer, but as told by mediæval writers, who had transformed it both in substance and in kind.¹ For this transformation there was an obvious reason. The Romans traced their establishment as a nation to the Trojans; so did other peoples of western Europe, including the French and the British—the descent of the latter from Brutus, the great-grandson of Æneas, who supposedly founded Troynovant (i.e., London) on the banks of the Thames, constituted one of the proudest chapters in the history of England as accepted in Shakespeare’s time. Thus it was only natural for mediæval writers to glorify not the Greeks but the Trojans; and in doing so they represented the Trojan heroes as superior to the Greeks both in loftiness of soul and in military prowess; the Greeks— as the old proverb contemptuously declared — were all

liars, or at least deceitful, who triumphed over the nobler and more chivalrous Trojans through craft rather than valor. This biased view led to an early modification of the Homeric account of the siege of Troy, and the production of such versions as Dictys’ *Ephemeris Belli Troiani*, of the second century of the Christian era, and Dares’ *Historia de Excidio Troiae*, of the sixth century, which became the chief authorities for mediaeval writers. Moreover, in order further to glorify the exploits of a race destined to found the nations of western Europe, the legend was greatly expanded. For example, the Troilus and Cressida episode was added by the Frenchman Benoit de Sainte-More in his *Le Roman de Troie*, about 1184. At the same time the story underwent a profound transformation in character. The supernatural element, with the machinery of the gods from Olympus, was omitted, and for the atmosphere of classical times was substituted the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. The heroes of Troy became knights of chivalry, gleaming in mediaeval armor, fighting in the service of their ladies, and observing the elaborate code of honor celebrated in romances.

Shakespeare, it should be remembered, was dealing with the legend as it was conceived by writers sympathetic with the Trojans, and as it was altered in character under the influence of chivalric romance. The sources of his play make this clear. The Troilus and Cressida episode, created by Benoit in the twelfth century, and retold by Guido della Colonna in his *Historia Destructionis Troiae* (1287), had been selected for special treatment by Boccaccio in *Il Filostrato* (1341–46), whence it passed directly to Chaucer (1377–85). Shakespeare found it ready to his hand in Chaucer’s telling; and for the details of the siege he made use of Caxton’s translation (1475) of Raoul Lefevre’s *Recueil des Histoires de Troie*, a work
based on Guido, and ultimately on Dictys and Dares. It is true that he—or it may be the author of the old play he was using—was familiar with Homer,¹ whence he drew Thersites; yet Shakespeare was not at all concerned with the classical treatment of the theme; instead he was attempting to dramatize a mediæval story well known to his age.²

The bitterest criticism has been aimed at his supposed debasement of the character of Cressida. But here again he was merely following a well-established literary tradition. In the sixteenth-century editions of Chaucer, which he naturally would use, there was added to *Troilus and Creseyde* a sixth book written by Robert Henryson, entitled *Testament of Creseid*, dealing with Cressida’s life after her infidelity to Troilus. Though not unsympathetically treated, she is represented as having at last degenerated into a common prostitute in the Greek camp, finally stricken with a loathsome disease, and dying amid miserable surroundings. And to the Elizabethans Cressida became the very type not only of fickleness in woman but of absolute moral depravity.³ The phrase “Cressid’s kind” was proverbial for a woman of ill fame. The traditional opinion of her may be illustrated by a passage from the university poem, *Willobie his Avisa* (1594):

> Though shameless callets may be found
> That soil themselves in common field
> And can carry the whore’s rebound,
> Yet here are none of Cressid’s kind.

Pistol in *Henry V*, surely no scholar, merely echoes the common opinion when he exclaims: “To the spital go,

¹ Not in Chapman’s English rendering, for some details are drawn from books of Homer not yet translated by Chapman.
² Heywood does the same thing in his *Iron Age*, which should be read by every student of *Troilus and Cressida*.
³ See, for example, Gascoigne’s *Posies*, 1575. Chaucer prophesied as much; see Book V, stanzas 151–52.
and from the powdering tub of infamy fetch forth the lazar kite of Cressid’s kind.”

Such, then, was the story as Shakespeare found it outlined for him by tradition. And he used his material as he used the old chronicles in producing his historical plays; his task as a dramatist was merely to breathe into the personages the breath of life, and give to the incidents a logical motivation from character. Thus it is unnecessary to think with some scholars that he is attacking Chapman; or with others that he is satirizing Jonson under the name of Ajax—he found Ajax the comic character that he left him.¹ Still less need we suppose that in Cressida he is giving venomous expression to his disillusionment at womankind; for we make of the drama a poor thing indeed if we do not allow a great literary artist to portray so well-known and conventionalized a story without accusing him of dragging before the public his own more sordid experiences. We may be sure that the play has no more significance for the student of Shakespeare’s life than his other plays.

When we turn from shallow hypotheses like these to the veritable records of his private life we discover that in May, 1602, he purchased from William and John Combe one hundred and seven acres of valuable arable land near Stratford, for which he paid the goodly sum of £320.² And a few months later, in September, 1602, he purchased a house with about a quarter of an acre of land, in the heart of the village and adjoining his estate of New Place. These purchases, together with his recent

¹ In the play Ajax is notable for corpulence; Jonson was at this time equally notable for the opposite. Dekker, in Satiromastix (1601), calls him a “pigmy,” twice applies to him the adjective “little,” and declares that the Roman poet “Horace was a goodly corpulent gentleman, and not so lean a hollow-cheek’d scrag as thou art.”

² In his absence the transaction was effected by his brother Gilbert: “Sealed and delivered to Gilbert Shakespeare, to the use of the within-named William Shakespeare.”
inheritance from his father of two houses in Henley Street, made him now one of the largest property-owners in Stratford.

The inference from all this is plain. One cannot say enough in condemnation of that specious type of scholarship which seeks to disclose the life of so practical, a man and objective a poet as Shakespeare by a closet examination of his plays. No doubt he put much of himself into his work, as every artist must do, and especially the dramatist; but he drew from his great store of wisdom and sympathy, not from his temporary moods and petty troubles. To say that when he set himself to the task of writing a tragedy he was necessarily in a misanthropic, or pessimistic, or melancholy state of soul, or ready to lay bare his private experiences, is as foolish as it is unjust. Yet the insistence of writers upon the "autobiographical importance" of Troilus and Cressida will not down; some have even declared that the interpretation of the play constitutes "the chief problem in Shakespeare." This common error alone justifies so long a discussion here of a relatively inconspicuous play.
CHAPTER XIX
THE COMING OF JAMES; ROYAL FAVOR

The rapidly failing health of the aged Queen caused most of the Court festivities to be omitted during the Christmas season of 1602–03. Elizabeth, indeed, had withdrawn from London to her palace at Richmond in search of quiet; yet on February 2, 1603, she summoned thither her favorite troupe, the Chamberlain’s Men, to entertain her with a play. This proved to be the last time she was to call upon them. On March 19 the Privy Council, in view of her sinking condition, ordered the discontinuance of dramatic performances in the city; and on the morning of March 24, she quietly passed away at Richmond.

Many poets wrote tributes suitable to the memory of so great a Queen; but Shakespeare, in spite of the obvious favor she had always shown him and his troupe, maintained a complete silence. The fact did not escape comment. Henry Chettle, whom we met at the outset of the poet’s career in London, now again crossing his path, expressed regret that the dramatist had forborne to—

Drop from his honied Muse one sable tear
To mourn her death that gracèd his desert,
And to his laies opened her royal ear;

and with an obvious allusion to Lucrece he added the injunction:

Shepherd, remember our Elizabeth,
And sing her rape done by that Tarquin, Death.

A second writer, who remains anonymous, likewise reproved Shakespeare for his silence:

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You Poets all, brave Shakespeare, Jonson, Greene,¹
Bestow your time to write for England’s Queene.
Lament, lament, lament, you English Peeres.

A third writer, “I. C., gent.,” refers to the author of the poem just quoted:

As he that calle to Shakespeare, Jonson, Greene,
To write of their dead noble Queene.²

Shakespeare, however, refused to invoke his Muse, and allowed the death of the Queen who had so “gracèd his deserts” to pass, not only without the sable tear of a formal elegy, but without a single reference to her of any kind.³ Perhaps, as has been suggested, he felt estranged from her as a result of her heartless treatment of Essex, and her long imprisonment of Southampton. If such were the case, his sincerity would keep him from any expression of pretended grief. And in justice to him it should be added that if he failed to lament the death of Elizabeth, he had the good taste to refrain from celebrating, as did so many ambitious poets, the accession of James.

The advent of James, however, was an event of the greatest moment to him and his fellows. The new sovereign arrived in London on May 7; ten days later he issued an order taking the Chamberlain’s Men under his own patronage, and bestowing upon them the new title, “The King’s Men.” On May 19 he furnished them with a

¹ Since Robert Greene died in 1592, the writer must be referring to Thomas Greene, the leading comedian of the Earl of Worcester’s Men, and a poet. He was, for example, the author of A Poet’s Vision and a Prince’s Glorie, 1603, a congratulatory poem to King James.

² The writer of this poem refers, not to Chettle, as Sir Sidney Lee thinks (Life, p. 374), but to the anonymous writer whose lines I have quoted. The anonymous writer was clearly referring to Thomas Greene, as I have indicated; but “I. C., gent.,” not understanding this, supposed that he was referring to Robert Greene, long dead. Hence his jeer at the anonymous writer for craving “helpe of Spirits in their sleeping graves.”

³ There is no good reason for supposing that in Sonnet 107 he refers to her death. But even if he does, the reference is colorless. See above, p. 164.
formal Patent licensing them to act henceforth under his royal protection, "as well within their now usual house called the Globe, within our County of Surrey, as also within any town-halls, moot-halls, or other convenient places within the liberties and freedom of any other city, university town, or borough whatsoever within our said realms and dominions," and significantly declaring to all officers and others concerned: "What further favor you shall shew to these, our servants, for our sake, we shall take kindly at your hands." The Patent singled out nine players for special mention, and merely referred to the others as "the rest of their associates." The nine persons mentioned are noted in the following order:

Lawrence Fletcher  
William Shakespeare  
Richard Burbage  
Augustine Phillips  
John Heminges  
Henry Condell  
William Slye  
Robert Armin  
Richard Cowley

Fletcher’s name was placed first, not because he was the most distinguished actor, or occupied the highest position in the Globe company, but, it would seem, because he happened to be a favorite with King James, before whom he had often acted in Scotland, and under whose patronage he had recently served as leader of "His Majesty’s Players";¹ James doubtless brought him to London, and added him to the new royal troupe. Thus the position of Shakespeare second in the list, above Burbage, Heminges, and the rest of the company, evinces his recognized importance in the Globe organization. By way of emolument, to each player there was granted an annual

¹ See J. T. Murray, English Dramatic Companies, i, 104, note 3; and Dibdin, Annals of the Edinburgh Stage, p. 21.

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stipend of £3 6s. 8d., which was supplemented, of course, by the usual payments and "rewards" when the company acted at Court.¹

Thus from now on Shakespeare and his fellows are known, not as The Chamberlain’s Men, but as The King’s Men, or His Majesty’s Servants. They had the right to wear, and probably on all formal occasions did wear, the royal livery, consisting of scarlet doublet, hose, and cloak, with the King’s arms and cognizance embroidered on the sleeve. Warrants were issued at regular intervals ordering such liveries "to be delivered unto His Majesty’s Players...to each of them the several allowances of four yards of bastard scarlet for a

¹ This fact is revealed by a folio manuscript entitled “The Officers of England, Collected in Anno 1608,” sold at the Anderson Galleries in New York, 1921. Under the entry "Players of Enterludes" we read: "The fee to every of them £3.6.8." That this fee prevailed in the days of Mary and Elizabeth we know from other records; see J. T. Murray, English Dramatic Companies, i, 3, and 4 (note 1).
THE COMING OF JAMES; ROYAL FAVOR

cloak, and a quarter of a yard for crimson velvet for the capes,” the total cost of each livery being £5 13s. 4d.¹

Somewhat later, three other London troupes were likewise taken under the protection of the royal family. The Admiral’s Men, who long had been the chief rivals of the Chamberlain’s Men, were placed under the patronage of the youthful Prince Henry, then ten years of age, and received the new title The Prince’s Men; the Worcester’s organization was assigned to Her Majesty, and designated The Queen’s Men;² and, finally, the child-actors at Blackfriars were put under the care of the Queen also, with the title The Children of Her Majesty’s Revels. The Paul’s Boys alone were not honored with royal favor.

Furthermore, King James, following a precedent established by Elizabeth, appointed the leading members of the King’s Company, the Prince’s Company, and the Queen’s Company, to the honorary rank of Grooms of the Royal Chamber. This was a title of courtesy that carried some distinction for the holders; and on one occasion at least, as we shall see, the post required Shakespeare and his fellows to assist in the official entertainment of foreign ambassadors. Thus with the beginning of the new reign the actors, who had long suffered under the legal designation of “rogues,” acquired a conspicuous, and we may suppose a grateful, recognition of the dignity of their profession.

On May 5, 1603, all the city companies had been ordered to cease playing “now at the King’s coming”; but on May 9 the inhibition was lifted, and they were allowed to resume their performances before the public. His Majesty’s Servants thereupon presented at the

¹ See Ernest Law, Shakespeare as a Groom of the Royal Chamber, 1910, pp. 39-40.
² This company had moved from the Rose to the Curtain; but, shortly after, it caused to be erected for itself a large new playhouse, The Red Bull, in keeping with its dignity as Her Majesty’s Players.
Globe as a new play Jonson's Roman tragedy, *Sejanus His Fall*. That in the performance Shakespeare took one of the principal rôles Jonson himself tells us. Affixed to the 1616 folio edition of the play is the statement:

This Tragoedie was first
acted, in the yeere
1603.
By the King's Maiesties
Servants.
The principall Tragoedians were,
Ric. Burbadge     Will. Shake-speare
Aug. Philips       Ioh. Heminges
Will. Sly          Hen. Condel
Ioh. Lowin         Alex. Cooke

By placing Shakespeare's name at the head of the second column Jonson gives it a significance almost equal to that of Burbage's. And it is just possible, though we cannot feel at all sure, that Shakespeare had a hand in the composition of some of the scenes.¹ When Jonson published the play he inserted a notice "To the Readers" saying: "I would inform you, that this book, in all numbers, is not the same with that which was acted on the public stage; wherein a second pen had good share: in place of which I have rather chosen to put weaker, and, no doubt, less pleasing, of mine own, than to defraud so happy a genius of his right by my loathed usurpation."

Perhaps one reason² why Jonson kept the name of his collaborator from being associated with the published work was the fact that the play on its presentation was unmercifully damned.³ As Jonson himself states, it

¹ Some scholars, on no better evidence, think that Chapman was the man who assisted Jonson. The truth is, we do not know.
² There may be a second reason. Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden that "he was called before the Council for his *Sejanus," but whether as a result of its performance or of its publication is not clear.
³ Not because it was poor as literature, for it is among Jonson's best tragedies, but, we may suspect, because its display of erudition made it caviar to the general.
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"suffered no less violence from our people here than the subject of it did from the rage of the people of Rome."
And Fennor wrote:

They screwed their scurvy jaws, and looked awry,
Like hissing snakes, adjudging it to die.

The failure of Sejanus must have meant a considerable pecuniary loss to the players. But they did not have long to concern themselves with either failure or success. The plague broke out in the city, and soon became so violent that on May 26, 1603, all theatres were closed, and the actors hurried into the country. We can trace the King's Men in their progress to Richmond, Bath, Coventry, Shrewsbury, and other towns.¹

Nor were the players the only ones affected; the King was forced to defer indefinitely his formal entry into London. For a time he took up his residence at Wilton, the beautiful country-seat of the Earl of Pembroke, Shakespeare's friend and patron, to whom the actors dedicated the First Folio in recognition of his having "prosecuted" the author while alive "with so much favour." Thither the King's Men were summoned, and on December 2 they acted a play before His Majesty, receiving therefor £30. Shortly after this, the plague still raging in London, James moved his Court to Hampton. The King's Men went with him, and there presented six plays, on December 26, 27, 28, January 1, February 2, and February 18, receiving in payment £53. In addition, on February 8 the King gave Burbage as a "free gift" £30, "for the maintenance of himself and the rest of his company."

The plague at last beginning to subside, James announced his purpose of making his royal entrance into

¹ By October 21 they were back in London: for a time; see W. W. Greg, Henslowe Papers, p. 59.
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London on March 15, 1604. Great preparations were made to render this a magnificent spectacle. Triumphant arches were erected in the streets, and people crowded the thoroughfares from the Tower to Whitehall. To each of the leading members of the King’s Company — Shakespeare’s name heads the list, and Fletcher’s is relegated to third place — were issued four-and-a-half yards of “red cloth” with which to make themselves suitable liveries “against His Majesties Royall Proceeding through the Citie.” Extant documents do not note the presence of any actors in the procession; but the grant of liveries to the players was made for that specific occasion, and Shakespeare and his eight fellows may have taken part in it under their more dignified title of Grooms of the Royal Chamber.¹

Three-and-a-half weeks later, on April 9, the Privy Council ordered the lifting of the ban against acting, and the King’s Men resumed their regular performances before the public.²

The death of Elizabeth, the inhibition of acting, the advent of James, the plague, the traveling of the troupe, the long stay at Wilton and Hampton, the royal entry of James, and other such distractions naturally interfered with Shakespeare’s production of new plays. Nevertheless, he seems to have found time to compose one comedy, Measure for Measure. For some reason, not easily comprehended, he had become interested in an early play by Whetstone, Promos and Cassandra, 1578, and had resolved to make use of its theme in a drama of his own. By way of preparation he studied both the ancient play and Whetstone’s prose rendering of the same story in his Heptameron of Civil Discourses, 1582; and he also went

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¹ In a document in the Record Office there are specially noted as present in the procession “Messengers of the Chamber,” and other such officials.
² See W. W. Greg, Henslowe Papers, p. 61.
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to Whetstone's original source and read the narrative in
Geraldi Cinthio's Hecatommithi. Not content even with
this, he seems to have examined Cinthio's untranslated
Latin play, Epita, from whence he drew the name Angelo.
Out of these scattered materials he wrought Measure for
Measure, delivering the manuscript to his actors in 1603
or early in 1604.1

Though technically a comedy, the play has none of
the bright and cheerful atmosphere that we find in As
You Like It, Much Ado, or Twelfth Night; and the genial
humor embodied in Touchstone, Dogberry, and Mal-
volio is entirely wanting. Instead, the tone is sombre,
and the plot concerns unpleasing, even sordid, aspects of
human nature. Coleridge declares that it is the only
play of Shakespeare's that we may actually call painful.
Yet, in spite of a disagreeable theme, it is, like Troilus and
Cressida, "a wonderful piece of work," which not to
have read discredits any traveler in Shakespeare's dra-
matic world. Dowden is of the opinion that nowhere
in Shakespeare "can greater speeches and scenes be
found"; and Pater has admirably set forth its beauties
in a glowing appreciation.

While reading Cinthio's Hecatommithi in preparation
for his Measure for Measure, Shakespeare came upon the
narrative of the Moor of Venice and Desdemona. Crude
and horrible as the story was, he saw in it great dramatic
possibilities, and he promptly worked it into his tragedy
of Othello. The material never had been dramatized,
and Shakespeare was thus able to mold the plot in ac-
cordance with his own theories of dramatic art. The
result is what we might expect; as a model of tragic com-
position Othello is almost without a flaw. Landor places

1 Allusions to James' dislike of crowds (I, i, 67-72; II, iv, 27-30), indi-
cate that it was completed after the coming of that sovereign, and we know
that it was performed at Court on December 26, 1604.
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it at the summit of all creations of man's imagination; and Macaulay, in his enthusiasm, declared that it was perhaps the most perfect work of art in existence. If Shakespeare reached the apex of his popularity with theatre-goers by the production of *Hamlet*, he may be said to have reached the apex of his dramatic art in the production of *Othello*. And if for several years he had been groping through sordid material for the true effect of tragedy, he at last found it in the sweetness of Desdemona and the nobility of Othello.

The play doubtless was offered to the London audiences at the Globe in the autumn of 1604; we know that it was presented at Court before His Majesty on November 1 of that year. At once it took a powerful hold on the public; and Burbage, through his emotional interpretation of "the grieved Moor" thronged the theatre with applauding audiences.

Shortly after this Shakespeare and his fellows were called upon to close the Globe for a time, and, in their capacity as Grooms of the Royal Chamber, to assist in extending the hospitality of the Government to certain distinguished foreign visitors. In August, 1604, there arrived in London an Ambassador Extraordinary from the Court of Spain, with the high-sounding title "Don John de Velasco, Constable of Castile and Legion, Duke of the Citie of Fryas, Earle of Haro, Lord of the Townes of Villapano and Pedraca de la Syerra, Lord of the House of Velasco, and of the Seven Infants of Lara, Great Chamberlain unto Philip III King of Spain, Councillor of State, and Warre, and President of Italy." With him came also a special Ambassador from Archduke Albert of Austria; and the two ambassadors, we are told, were "accompanied with Marquesses, Earles, Barons, Knights, and Gentlemen to the number of one hundred persons." This notable commission was empowered by King
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Philip III to negotiate a treaty of peace between Spain and the new English sovereign, a treaty much needed after years of animosity following the Armada, during which the two nations openly preyed on each other’s commerce.

The Ambassador from the Archduke of Austria, with his retinue, was entertained at Durham House, in the Strand. The far more important Spanish Ambassador, with his suite, was lodged in Somerset House, one of the royal residences, and, next to Whitehall, the most splendid palace in London. To do honor to the visitors, the house was specially furnished with some of the most beautiful tapestries and other treasures in the possession of the Crown.¹

To “wait and attend” on the Spanish guests, Shakespeare and eleven other members of the King’s Company were ordered to take up residence at Somerset House in their capacity as Grooms of the Chamber. They were not to appear as actors at all,² but as Court officials, and they were expected merely to furnish courteous attendance on the foreign visitors. They began their residence at Somerset House on August 9, assisted in the welcome to the Spanish Ambassador upon his arrival there after a triumphal progress up the river, and throughout the next two weeks acted as grooms in waiting to the guests of the nation. Mr. Ernest Law describes them as “a group of twelve gentlemen in red doublets and hose, with cloaks of the same, embroidered in gold with the King’s cypher crowned; and among these was one, more notable than the rest, who may well have been, then or later, pointed out to the Ambassador, a certain interesting individual, known to the King and all the Court,

¹ For an admirable account of the incidents briefly treated in this chapter, see Ernest Law, Shakespeare as a Groom of the Chamber, 1910.
² They gave no plays, nor was any attempt made to entertain the visitors with dramatic performances.
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the intimate associate of several prominent nobles, one of His Majesty’s Grooms of the Chamber, and the foremost poet and dramatist in England, no other, in fact, than William Shakespeare."

At the end of two weeks, the treaty having been completed and properly drawn up for the signatures of the contracting parties, the Ambassadors, with their followers, went in grand procession to Whitehall Palace, and there in the Chapel formally took oath with King James faithfully to observe all the articles agreed upon. This ceremony over, the King entertained the Ambassadors at a State dinner in the large Banqueting House.

Shakespeare, with his fellow Grooms of the Chamber, may — we cannot tell — have accompanied the Spanish Ambassador in the procession from Somerset House to Whitehall. He may, also, have been a witness to the signing of the treaty in the Chapel, and have helped in the service of the State dinner held with unusual splendor in the Banqueting House. This great structure, originally erected by Queen Elizabeth,¹ was admirably adapted to such spectacles as now took place there. Holinshed thus describes it in his Chronicle.

¹ On the south-west side of Her Majesty's palace of Whitehall, made in manner and form of a long square three hundred thirty and two foot in measure about... This house had two hundred ninety and two lights of glass. The sides within the same house were made with ten heights of degrees for people to stand upon; and in the top of this house was wrought most cunningly upon canvas works of ivy and holly, with pendants made of wicker rods, garnished with bay, rue, and all manner of strange flowers garnished with spangles of gold; as also beautified with hanging toseans made of holly and ivy, with all manner of strange fruits, as pomegranates, oranges, pompions, cucumbers, grapes, carrots, with such other like, spangled with gold, and most richly hanged. Betwixt these works of bays and

¹ See my Shakespearean Playhouses, pp. 385–87.

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THE SOMERSET HOUSE CONFERENCE, 1604

The English statesmen are seated at the right, the one nearest the window being Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, author of the first English tragedy; and next to him Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, long patron of the Lord Admiral's Company of players.
ivy were great spaces of canvas, which was most cunningly painted, the clouds with stars, the sun and sun-beams, with diverse other coats of sundry sorts belonging to the Queen’s Majesty, most richly garnished with gold.

A description of the ceremonies which on this occasion took place in the Banqueting House has been preserved in a Spanish pamphlet printed in 1604.¹ A few excerpts will help us to understand the pomp with which the diplomats were entertained in London, and to visualize the scenes among which Shakespeare was now moving.

The audience-chamber was elegantly furnished, having a buffet of several stages filled with various pieces of ancient and modern gilt plate of exquisite workmanship. A railing was placed on each side of the room in order to prevent the crowd from approaching too near the table. At the right hand, upon entering, was another buffet containing rich vessels of gold, agate, and other precious stones. The table might be about five yards in length, and more than one yard broad. The dishes were brought in by gentlemen and servants of the King, who were accompanied by the Lord Chamberlain; and before placing them on the table they made four or five obeisances. The Earls of Pembroke and of Southampton officiated as gentlemen-ushers.

Their Majesties [the King and Queen] with the Prince [of Wales] entered after the Constable [of Spain] and the others, and placed themselves at their throne, and all stood in a line to hear the grace said, the Constable being at the King’s side, the Count de Villamediana on the Queen’s.

Their Majesties washed their hands in the same basin, the Lord Treasurer handing the towel to the King, and the High Admiral to the Queen. The Prince washed in another basin, in which water was also taken to the Constable, who was waited upon by the same gentlemen. They took their seats... The principal noblemen of the Kingdom were likewise at the table.

... There was plenty of instrumental music, and the banquet was sumptuous and profuse.

The first thing the King did was to send the Constable a melon, and half a dozen of oranges on a very green branch, telling him that they were the fruit of Spain transplanted into England. To which the latter, kissing his hand, replied that he valued the gift more as coming from His Majesty than as being the fruit of his own country. He then divided the melon with Their Majesties, and Don Blasco de Aragon handed the plate to the Queen, who politely and graciously acknowledged the attention. Soon afterwards the King stood up, and, with his head uncovered, drank to the Constable the health of Their Spanish Majesties. . . .

Immediately afterwards, the Constable, seeing that another opportunity might not be afforded him, rose and drank to the King the health of the Queen, from the lid of a cup of agate of extraordinary beauty and richness, set with diamonds and rubies, praying His Majesty would condescend to drink the toast from the cup, which he did accordingly . . . and the Constable directed that the cup should remain in His Majesty’s buffet. At this period the people shouted out: Peace, peace, peace! God save the King! God save the King! . . . The Constable rose a second time, and drank to the Queen the health of the King, from a very beautiful dragon-shaped cup of crystal, garnished with gold, drinking from the cover; and the Queen standing up gave the pledge from the cup itself.

The dinner, prolonged in this fashion, lasted “about three hours,” with the drinking of many healths, and the making of speeches. At last —

The cloth having been removed, every one immediately rose up; the table was placed upon the ground, and Their Majesties standing upon it, proceeded to wash their hands.

The dinner was followed by a grand ball:

In the mean time dancing had begun in the said chamber . . . . There were present at this ball more than fifty ladies of honour, very richly and elegantly dressed, and extremely beautiful, besides many others who, with the noblemen and gentlemen that were present at the dinner, were already engaged in dancing. After a little while the Prince [Henry, aged ten] was commanded by his parents to dance a galliard, and they pointed
out to him the lady who was to be his partner; and this he did with much sprightliness and modesty, cutting several capers in the course of the dance. The Earl of Southampton then led out the Queen, and three other gentlemen their several partners, who all joined in dancing a brando. In another, Her Majesty danced with the Duke of Lennox. After this they began a galliard, which in Italy is called a planton; and in it a lady led out the Prince, who then led out another lady whom Their Majesties pointed out to him. After this a brando was danced; and that being over, the Prince stood up for a correnta, which he did very gracefully.

At the conclusion of the dancing, which followed immediately after dinner, certain outdoor entertainments were provided:

Hereupon the ball ended, and all then took their places at the windows of the room which looked out upon a square, where a platform was raised, and a vast crowd had assembled to see the King’s bears fight with greyhounds. This afforded great amusement. Presently a bull, tied to the end of a rope, was fiercely baited by dogs. After this certain tumblers came, who danced upon a rope, and performed various feats of agility and skill on horseback.

This concluded the entertainments provided for the guests of the nation:

Their Majesties now retired, being accompanied by the Constable and the other noblemen to their apartment; before entering which, many compliments passed on both sides, and Their Majesties and the Prince shook hands with the Constable and the Count; and the other Spanish cavaliers kissed hands and took their departure. The Constable and the others upon quitting the ball-room were accompanied by the Lord Chamberlain to the farthest room, and by the Earl of Devonshire and other gentlemen to their coaches; more than fifty halberdiers lighting them with torches until they reached home.

Shakespeare’s duties, however, were not yet over. The next morning “the Constable awoke with a slight attack of lumbago,” which kept him in bed several days, during
which time His Majesty called to see him. At last, on August 27, after James had bidden him a formal farewell, he took his departure for Spain; and Shakespeare and his fellows were able to return to their ordinary business of acting plays.

In return for their services the government paid them the sum of £21 12s. This, of course, was supplemented by various perquisites, and by the special gifts of the Spanish Constable. Stow in his Chronicle observes that the Constable upon his departure "gave very bountifully unto all that attended him." We should like to know what present the Spanish Ambassador bestowed on the most distinguished member of the little group that entertained him. Mr. Law has suggested that perhaps it was the "broad silver-gilt bowl" which the dramatist left in his will to his younger daughter Judith. It seems, however, quite as likely to have been the sword which he bequeathed to Thomas Combe, the wealthiest and most aristocratic gentleman he numbered among his friends in the later years of his retirement at Stratford. Apparently this weapon was one of the poet's finest and most cherished possessions, a genuine Toledo blade, we may suppose, with an ornate and jeweled hilt — as he writes in Othello (which he may even then have been composing),

A sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper.

On November 1, in the great Banqueting House just described, Shakespeare and his fellows presented Othello before His Majesty. This initiated for the King's Men a period of remarkable popularity at Court, unprecedented in theatrical history. During the Christmas season that followed they were called upon to present no fewer than eleven plays before the royal family; and from this time on their performances at Whitehall far
outnumbered those of all the other troupes combined. *Othello*, however, was the only play acted in the Banqueting House. That great building, though admirably suited for State functions, was entirely too large for private dramatic entertainments at which only the royal family and a limited number of invited guests were to be present. Accordingly, for subsequent plays James made use of the "Great Hall" of the palace, a room approximately ninety feet in length and forty feet in breadth. There, on November 4, the King’s Men gave *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, on December 26, *Measure for Measure*, and on December 28, *The Comedy of Errors*.

On New Year’s Day the King was to be entertained by the Children of the Queen’s Revels with Chapman’s *All Fools*, and on Twelfth Day with a grand masque. But at some date before the masque was to be held, that is "between New Year’s Day and Twelfth Day," the Queen expressed a desire to see a play, and Sir William Cope on short notice was charged with the duty of furnishing Her Majesty with a suitable performance. The elaborate preparations then being made for the production of the masque at Whitehall probably rendered a dramatic entertainment there impossible, so that Cope had to arrange for a performance in the private home of some nobleman. He sent for Burbage, and requested him to have the King’s Men present a "new play" before the Queen. Burbage, after informing him that the King’s Men had no new play which the Queen had not seen, recommended *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, which was just being revived, and which he felt sure would please Her Majesty. Cope took Burbage’s advice, and promptly dispatched him with a letter to Lord Cranborne, the King’s Secretary, for further directions. The letter is as follows:

>Sir, — I have sent and been all this morning hunting for players, jugglers, and such kind of creatures, but find them
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hard to find; wherefore, leaving notes for them to seek me, Burbage is come, and says there is no new play that the Queen hath not seen, but they have revived an old one called *Love's Labour's Lost*, which for wit and mirth, he says, will please her exceedingly. And this is appointed to be played to-morrow night at my Lord of Southampton's, unless you send a writ to remove the *corpus cum causa* to your house in Strand. Burbage is my messenger ready attending your pleasure.

Yours most humbly,
WALTER COPE.¹

Whether the play was acted at Southampton's house, or at Cranborne's house in the Strand, does not appear,² but that it was acted somewhere is shown by an entry (not hitherto understood) in the *Revells Booke An° 1605*:

"Between New Year's Day and Twelfth Day, a play of *Love's Labour's Lost*, by His Majesty's Players."


The superiority of the Globe company over the other London companies is demonstrated by the fact that, during this Christmas season of unusual Court revels, the Prince's Men were not called upon at all, and the Queen's Men and the Children of Blackfriars were called upon for but one play each, whereas the King's Men were called upon for no fewer than eleven performances. Furthermore, the supremacy of Shakespeare over all

¹ The letter is endorsed "1604" (i.e., 1604–05), but without month or day.
² Cope's letter is vague; perhaps we should not entirely ignore the possibility that the actors had been engaged by Southampton to entertain himself and his private guests on the very evening when the Queen desired a play, and that a writ from the King's Secretary was needed to cancel that engagement and remove the play to Cranborne's house. The probabilities, however, favor the interpretation I have given above.
other playwrights is shown by the choice of his plays for eight representations before the royal family, as compared with two by Jonson, one by Heywood, of the Queen’s Company, and one by Chapman, of the Blackfriars Company.

During the following Christmas season, the King’s Men presented ten plays before Their Majesties. And between 1603 and 1616, although our records are incomplete, we know of at least one hundred and eighty-seven occasions on which Shakespeare’s troupe was summoned to give performances at the Court.¹ This extraordinary popularity of the King’s Company was almost wholly due to Shakespeare, and constitutes a remarkable testimony to the reputation he enjoyed in his own lifetime. Well might Jonson write:

Sweet Swan of Avon, what a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames
That so did take Eliza and our James!

In Othello Shakespeare had worked with material never before cast into the dramatic mold; in his next effort he was content to revamp an old play that already had served its turn in entertaining London audiences. King Leir, for so the old play was called, was probably in existence before the plague of 1592–94; Henslowe records its performance by the Queen’s and Sussex’ Men in April, 1594, at which time it is not marked by him as new. As a result of the disastrous years of the plague the original manuscript, which belonged to the Queen’s Men, was sold to a publisher, who duly entered it in the Stationers’ Registers on May 14, 1594. So far as we know, however, it was not then printed, and it sinks out of view until May 8, 1605, when it was again entered in the

¹ I take the figures from an unpublished doctoral dissertation by Miss Mary Steele.
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Stationers' Registers, and shortly after was published with the title *The True Chronicle History of King Lear and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella.*¹ It seems likely that Shakespeare bought a copy of the old play, and, seeing in it possibilities of an effective tragedy, at once set about rewriting it for his company.² There is some evidence that he was engaged on the task in the autumn of 1605; for example, the allusion to the eclipses may refer to the eclipse of October, and certain passages are supposed to relate to the Gunpowder Plot in November of this year.

As was his custom, Shakespeare was not content with examining merely the old play, but went directly to the account of King Lear in Holinshed's *Chronicle*; and he also read the story as told by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene.* Moreover, in handling the theme he exercised much originality, as instanced by the facts that in spite of all his sources he gives to his tragedy an unhappy ending, that from his own creative imagination he drew the figure of the Fool, and that he added the important sub-plot of Gloucester, which he found in Sidney's *Arcadia.* Yet the old play seriously handicapped him, for its story was disjointed, its action rambling, and its theme, essentially epic in nature, ill-suited to dramatic treatment. It was indeed a poor bottle to contain the fine new vintage of Shakespeare's brain. But if *Lear* is defective in those qualities of technique which make *Othello* almost flawless, in other respects it is one of the noblest achievements of the poet's genius; indeed, it is so well loved that many scholars call it his greatest play.

¹ H. Dugdale Sykes, in *Sidelights on Shakespeare,* 1919, pp. 126-42, gives strong evidence for the belief that the author was George Peele.
² There is, of course, the other possibility, that the play had actually been printed in 1594, and that the republication in 1605 was occasioned by the appearance of Shakespeare's popular revision; but this seems the less likely, for if the play already existed in printed form, the publishers of 1605 would hardly have entered it again in the Stationers' Registers.
THE COMING OF JAMES; ROYAL FAVOR

In all probability it was acted before the public at the Globe throughout most of 1606; we know that it was performed at Whitehall on December 26 of that year to open a brilliant Christmas season in which the King’s Men were called upon to appear at Court many times.

The favor James so obviously showed to the Globe actors led Shakespeare next to write for them a play that would be a graceful compliment to their royal master, and at the same time familiarize Englishmen with the Scottish ancestors of the new sovereign. Accordingly, drawing his material from Holinshed’s *Chronicle of Scotch History*, he dramatized the reign of Macbeth, with special emphasis on the “noble Banquo,” founder of the Stuart dynasty. In one scene James himself is represented — in the vision of Kings descended from Banquo, carrying “two-fold balls and treble sceptres” as Kings of England and Scotland, and rulers of England, Scotland, and Ireland. In various other ways, too, Shakespeare paid deference to the tastes of the new sovereign, or flattered his idiosyncrasies; for example, in the representation of the evil power of witches, the description of the King’s ability to heal by touch, and the allusion to the Gunpowder Plot.

The evidence clearly points to the conclusion that *Macbeth* was put on the stage of the Globe in 1606; and it seems to have attained at once the popularity it now enjoys among playgoers. In 1610 the well-known astrologer, Dr. Simon Forman, attended a performance of it at the Globe, and made certain notes regarding it in his Diary:

In Mackbeth at the Glob, 1610, b the 20 of Aprill, ther was to be observed, firste howe Mackbeth and Bancko, 2 noble men

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1 In Kempe’s *Nine Days’ Wonder*, 1600, there is an allusion to an earlier play on this subject, but of this play nothing else is known.

2 The spelling “Bancko” probably indicates Shakespeare’s pronunciation of the name.
of Scotland, rideinge thorowe a wod, the[r] stode before them 3 women feiries or nimphes, and saluted Mackbeth, sayinge 3 tyms unto him, Haille Mackbeth, King of Codon; for thou shalt be a kinge, but shalt beget no kinge, &c. Then said Banko, What, all to Mackbeth and nothing to me? Yes, said the nimphes, Haille to thee, Banko, thou shalt beget kinges, yet be no kinge.

The statement that Macbeth and Banquo came upon the stage "riding through a wood" shows the way in which the play was then staged. No doubt there was an actual scenic representation of a forest; and it is quite likely that both men appeared on horseback.\textsuperscript{1} Forman also reveals the fact that Banquo's ghost had objective existence:

The next night, being at supper with his noblemen whom he had bid to a feaste, to the which also Banco should have com, he began to speake of Noble Banco, and to wish that he wer ther. And as he thus did, standing up to drincke a carouse to him, the ghoste of Banco came and sate down in his cheier behald him. And he turninge about to sit down again, sawe the goste of Banco, which fronted him so that he fell into a great passion of fear and fury.

Forman's minute details of the position and movement of the personages are of interest as indicating the Elizabethan mode of acting the scenes. In the course of his notes he gives a long and on the whole accurate summary of the plot, closing with the paragraph:

Observe also howe Mackbetes quen did rise in the night in her slepe, and walke and talked, and confessed all, and the doctor noted her wordes.

\textsuperscript{1} Middleton, in The Mayor of Queenborough, makes one of the players say: "We have a play wherein we use a horse." In Summer's Last Will and Testament occurs the stage-direction: "Enter Bacchus riding upon an ass." In The Witches of Lancashire appear the directions: "Enter drum beating before, Skimington and his wife on a horse... Parnell pulls Skipington off the horse." Illustrations might be multiplied. In some cases a hobby-horse of canvas might have been used, but not in all cases, nor is it likely to have been used in this case.
THE COMING OF JAMES; ROYAL FAVOR

No doubt the play was among those presented at Court during the Christmas season of 1606-07, if not on an earlier special occasion. Celebrating as it did James' ancestry, and catering to his tastes, it must have proved highly gratifying to that vain monarch. We should like to know the circumstances under which it was performed at Whitehall, but no record of the event has been preserved. Was it the subject of the letter which, according to a well-founded tradition, His Majesty is said to have addressed to the dramatist? In the Preface to Lintot's edition of Shakespeare's Poems, 1709, appears the statement: "King James the First was pleased, with his own hand, to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakespeare; which letter, though now lost, remained long in the hands of Sir William Davenant, as a credible person, now living, can testify." The "credible person" referred to was, in all probability, the Duke of Buckingham, who died in 1721. We find in his commonplace-book the following statement: "King James the First honoured Shakespeare with an epistolary correspondence, and I think Sir William Davenant had either seen or was possessed of His Majesty's letter to him." And Oldys, in a marginal note to his copy of Fuller's Worthies, states that the Duke of Buckingham told Lintot he had seen it in the possession of Davenant.
CHAPTER XX

PERSONAL AFFAIRS, 1602–07

When we think of the high position Shakespeare had now attained in theatrical, literary, and courtly circles, and call to mind the handsome country home he had provided for himself and his family in Stratford, we naturally wonder where he lived while in London. As we have already seen, in the nineties he was residing, possibly with his wife and children, in the Parish of St. Helen’s, where he supported an establishment of some dignity, if we are to judge by comparative assessments. In 1596, however, he seems to have sent his family back to Stratford, and to have taken lodgings on the Bankside, near his fellow-actors Pope and Phillips. In 1601 or 1602 he moved again, this time securing rooms in the home of a French Huguenot named Christopher Mountjoy in Silver Street.¹ One may indulge in the pleasant speculation that he was informed of this lodging by his printer friend Richard Field, who was closely associated with the French Huguenots in London. The Vautrollier printing house had a special license to employ six foreign printers, who most naturally would be Frenchmen. Moreover, Field had married a French widow, Jacqueline Vautrollier, who through her association with the Huguenot church would come to know the Mountjoys. And in or shortly before 1600 Field himself had moved to Wood Street, where he was living as a near neighbor to this French family.

¹ For this information we are indebted to the researches of Professor C. W. Wallace. See his article, “Shakespeare and His London Associates,” in University Studies, Lincoln, Nebraska, x, 261, where the significant documents are printed; and cf. his popular article in Harper’s Magazine for March, 1910.
PERSONAL AFFAIRS, 1602-07

Christopher Mountjoy was born at Cressy, France, and came to England with the flight of the Huguenots after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. He early settled in Silver Street, where he plied his trade as a tire-maker, or manufacturer of head-dress for women. His house was a large one—we are told that, after the death of his wife and the marriage of his only child, it was “divided into two tenements”—standing on the north-east corner of Mugwell (now Monkwell) and Silver Streets. On the opposite corner was Neville’s Inn, a “great house,” says Stow, “built of stone and timber, now called the Lord Windsor’s House, of old time belonging to the Nevilles.” Close by was the Barber-Surgeons’ Hall, and the Church of St. Olaf’s. Stow describes Silver Street as having “diverse fair houses”; and it was one of the more respectable residence sections of London. The hairdressing shop was on the ground floor, as was customary, and the lodgings on the upper floors.¹

Mountjoy seems to have done a thriving business. Not only were both he and his wife industrious in their craft, but they had at least two apprentices whose names we know, and may have employed others. Their only child, Mary, also, was required to work in the shop with the apprentices, by which means she was, in the words of her father, brought “to a good perfection” in the trade. The reputation the establishment enjoyed among women of fashion in London is possibly indicated by the following allusion in Jonson’s Silent Woman (IV,ii, 94–95):

All her teeth were made i’ the Blackfriars, both her eyebrows in the Strand, and her hair in Silver Street.

Mountjoy was thus a tradesman of means; we are in-

¹ Ben Jonson lived for a time “without Temple Barre, at a combemaker’s shop,” according to Aubrey.
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formed that he was "amongst his neighbors thought to be a sufficient man in estate, and ability." ¹

In one or more rooms on the upper floors of Mountjoy's house Shakespeare found lodgings, apparently from 1601-02 until 1606-07, or during the golden period of his career as playwright. In many ways the location was admirable for him. It was near the heart of the city, and within a short walk of St. Paul's Cathedral, the home of the book-trade, and the general meeting-place of all Londoners. He must have spent much time haunting Paul's Churchyard, where he could search out the newest books as they came fresh from the press or were imported from the Continent; and in the great "Mediterranean Isle" of the Cathedral, Duke Humphrey's Walk, as it was popularly called, he could greet his friends, or study human nature as it exhibited its foibles, from the lowest classes grouped about the servingmen's pillar, to the silken gulls strutting up and down in outlandish costumes.²

In still another way his residence with the Mountjoys may have proved advantageous to him. The entire establishment was made up of persons born in France, who spoke among themselves their native tongue. Since Shakespeare doubtless already possessed a fair reading knowledge of French, it seems likely that he availed himself of the chance to acquire some facility in speaking the language as well. Perhaps young Mary Mountjoy helped him, with the aid of some beginner's manual of conversation he had bought in Paul's Churchyard. In

¹ It may be of some interest to readers to know that in the Subsidy Rolls, 1599 and 1600, he was assessed £5 on his goods, the same sum that Shakespeare was assessed while a householder in the Parish of St. Helen's. But, as he was an alien, the rate of his assessment was double that applied to Shakespeare.

² For a vivid account of the stir of life in St. Paul's see Thomas Dekker, The Gul's Hornbook, 1609.
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*Henry V* there is an amusing scene which may be applied to his halting efforts:

*Kath.* Alice, tu as esté en Angleterre, et tu parles bien le langage.
*Alice.* Un peu, madame.
*Kath.* Je te prie, m'enseignez: il faut que j'apprenne à parler. Comment appellez-vous la main en Anglois?
*Alice.* La main? elle est appelée de hand.
*Kath.* De hand. Et les doigts?

We can easily imagine the great poet saying to Mary, "Je te prie, m'enseigne." And we may suppose that he learned rapidly, for with his quick wits, his retentive memory, and his earlier acquired ability to read the language, he might soon attain facility in conversing with members of the household in which he now was living.

Before long his kindly interest in the family led him to play the rôle of match-maker on behalf of Mary. The author of *Romeo and Juliet*, as we might expect, did not fail in his efforts; but the course of the love-affair he engineered not running smooth, he was later haled into court, and made to serve as a witness in the Mountjoy family quarrels.

This introduces to us another lodger in the Silver Street home, the none too romantic hero of the love-match, Stephen Belott. About 1594 an Englishman, Humphrey Fludd (in 1612 described as "one of the King's trumpeters"), while in France married a French widow named Belott. After his return to London, in 1597, he put his young stepson, Stephen Belott, to board with the Mountjoys; and a year later, in 1598, signed him as an apprentice in the shop to learn the trade of timestaking. The young apprentice, as Shakespeare himself tells us, "did well and honestly behave himself," and proved to be "a very good and industrious servant"; indeed he became so excellent a workman that his service was said to be "to the great profit and advantage"
of Mountjoy. Moreover, he demeaned himself in such a way that his master bore towards him "great good will and affection."

At the end of six years, in 1604, having completed the term of his apprenticeship, and being "desirous" of seeing the world, he went "to travel into Spain." Returning in a short time from this journey, he began to work again in the Silver Street establishment, but now with a fixed stipend. Mountjoy became so pleased with Stephen as a workman that he made up his mind that his only daughter, Mary, should marry him, and even went so far as vehemently to declare in Shakespeare's presence that if she refused to marry Stephen she "should not cost him, nor have a groat from him." ¹ Stephen tells us that he was "moved and earnestly solicited" by both Monsieur and Madame Mountjoy "to consent to his marriage of their daughter." But in spite of their earnest solicitations he held off, though, as a serving-woman then employed in the house testified, "there was a show of good-will between" the young people, which the mother "did give countenance unto." Matters halting thus, Madame Mountjoy, so the servant further declares, "did send and persuade one Mr. Shakespeare, that lay in the house, to persuade the plaintiff [Stephen] to the same marriage." Similar testimony was given by a near neighbor and friend, Daniel Nicholas, the son of Sir Ambrose Nicholas:

This deponent sayeth he heard one, William Shakespeare, say that the defendant [Mountjoy] did bear a good opinion of the plaintiff [Stephen], and affected him well when he served him; and did move the plaintiff by him, the said Shakespeare, to have a marriage between his daughter, Mary Mountjoy, and the plaintiff; and for that purpose sent him, the said Shake-

¹ For evidence that Shakespeare was responsible for this statement, see Wallace, "Shakespeare and His London Associates," pp. 286, 288.

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spearé, to the plaintiff to persuade the plaintiff to the same, as Shakespeare told him, this deponent.

Upon various promises of Mountjoy relating to the dowry, transmitted through Shakespeare, Stephen at last agreed to consider the match. But being a shrewd man of business, he requested Daniel Nicholas and Nicholas’ wife to interview Shakespeare, in order later, if necessary, to serve as witnesses to the details of the contract. The visit Nicholas and his wife made to Shakespeare is thus described by Nicholas himself:

This deponent sayeth that the plaintiff [Stephen] did request him, this deponent, to go with his wife to Shakespeare to understand the truth, how much and what the defendant [Mountjoy] did promise to bestow on his daughter in marriage with him the plaintiff; who did so. And asking Shakespeare thereof, he answered that he [Mountjoy] promised if the plaintiff [Stephen] would marry with Mary, his, the defendant’s, only daughter, he, the defendant, would, by his promise, as he [Nicholas] remembered, give the plaintiff with her in marriage about the sum of fifty pounds in money, and certain household stuff.

According to Stephen, however, Mountjoy promised to give him “threescore pounds, or thereabouts, for a portion,” and “would likewise, at the time of his decease, leave unto” Stephen and his wife “the sum of two hundred pounds more.” Shakespeare could not remember the precise sums of money Mountjoy had promised to pay. His account of what happened, as taken down by the court scribe in 1612, may be quoted in full.

William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the County of Warwick, gentleman, of the age of xlviii years, or thereabouts, sworn and examined the day and year abovesaid, deposeth and saith:

1. To the first interrogatory, this deponent sayeth he knoweth the parties, plaintiff and defendant, and hath known them
both, as he now remembereth, for the space of ten years or thereabouts.

2. To the second interrogatory this deponent sayeth he did know the complainant [Stephen] when he was servant with the defendant [Mountjoy], and that during the time of his, the complainant’s, service with the said defendant, he, the said complainant, to this deponent’s knowledge, did well and honestly behave himself; but to this deponent’s remembrance he hath not heard the defendant [Mountjoy] confess that he had got any great profit and commodity by the service of the said complainant. But this deponent sayeth he verily thinketh that the said complainant [Stephen] was a very good and industrious servant in the said service. And more he cannot depose to the said interrogatory.

3. To the third interrogatory this deponent sayeth that it did evidently appear that the said defendant [Mountjoy] did, all the time of the said complainant’s service with him, bear and show great good will and affection towards the said complainant [Stephen]; and that he hath heard the defendant [Mountjoy] and his wife diverse and sundry times say and report that the said complainant was a very honest fellow. And this deponent sayeth that the said defendant [Mountjoy] did make a motion unto the complainant [Stephen] of marriage with the said Mary in the bill mentioned, being the said defendant’s sole child and daughter, and willingly offered to perform the same if the said complainant should seem to be content and well like thereof. And further this deponent sayeth that the said defendant’s wife did solicit and entreat this deponent to move and persuade the said complainant [Stephen] to effect the said marriage; and accordingly this deponent did move and persuade the complainant thereunto. And more to this interrogatory he cannot depose.

4. To the fourth interrogatory this deponent sayeth that the defendant [Mountjoy] promised to give the said complainant [Stephen] a portion ¹ in marriage with Mary his daughter, but what certain portion he remembereth not, nor when to be paid,² nor knoweth that the defendant [Mountjoy] promised the

¹ After this word appears the phrase “of money and goods,” stricken out in the original. Possibly when Shakespeare looked over the clerk’s summary of his testimony before signing it, he caused this to be omitted.

² Following this word appears the phrase “if any sum were promised,” stricken out in the original, possibly at Shakespeare’s instigation.
plaintiff [Stephen] two hundred pounds with his daughter Mary at the time of his decease; but sayeth that the plaintiff [Stephen] was dwelling with the defendant in his house, and they had amongst themselves many conferences about their marriage,\(^1\) which afterwards was consummated and solemnized. And more he cannot depose.

5. To the fifth interrogatory this deponent sayeth he can say nothing touching any part or point of the same interrogatory, for he knoweth not what implements and necessaries of household stuff the defendant gave the plaintiff in marriage with his daughter Mary.

**WILLM SHAKP.\(^2\)**

Such were the preliminary negotiations, which, as it appears, proved satisfactory to both Stephen and Mary. "In regard Mr. Shakespeare had told them that they should have a sum of money for a portion from the father, they were made sure by Mr. Shakespeare, by giving their consent, and agreed to marry [giving each other's hand to the hand (stricken out in the original)], and did marry" — on November 19, 1604, in the adjacent Church of St. Olaf’s, in Silver Street. Shakespeare the matchmaker, we may suppose, was present, or at least took some part in the festivities of the day.

Shrewd old Mountjoy planned that Stephen and Mary should thereafter "continue and work in their trade to the benefit" of the paternal establishment. He later declared that he made the payment of the dowry dependent upon two years of service by both the groom and the bride. But to his distress, at the end of "half a year or thereabouts," Stephen and his wife left the Silver Street house, engaged an apprentice of their own, and started a rival tire-shop to their "better preferment." Mountjoy thereupon bestowed upon the young married

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\(^1\) Obviously at some of these Shakespeare was present. French was probably used.

\(^2\) Shakespeare was required to sign the clerk's summary of his testimony after reading it over for possible errors.
people certain "household stuff," indifferently valued by outsiders at £5, and scornfully itemized by Stephen as follows: "One old featherbed; one old feather bolster; a flock bolster; a thin green rug;\textsuperscript{1} two ordinary blankets, woven; two pairs of sheets; a dozen of napkins of coarse diaper; two short table-cloths; six short towels, and one long one; an old drawing-table; two old joined stools; one wainscot cubbard; one twisting wheel of wood; two pairs of little scissors; one old trunk, and a like old trunk; one bobbin box." Mountjoy also presented them with "ten pounds of ready money to put into their purse."

Beyond this, however, the father, though a man of some means, was not disposed to be generous to the young couple, either then or later. One witness testified that "he hath often heard Mary, the defendant's wife, often in her life time urge her husband, the defendant; to give something more unto the plaintiff [Stephen] and his wife than he had done before; whereunto the defendant, Mountjoy, would commonly answer her that he would not promise them anything, because he knew not what he should need himself."

Stephen and his young wife, thus abandoning the parental roof, moved to the parish of St. Sepulchre's, and secured lodgings in the house of one George Wilkins. It is quite possible that this was the playwright\textsuperscript{2} who wrote for the Globe actors *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, and who, it is almost certain, was the main author of *Pericles* and, as some scholars think, the collaborator in *Timon of Athens*. The evidence is too doubtful to warrant any conclusion, yet we should like to believe that the poet, still taking an interest in the wel-

\textsuperscript{1} I.e., a table-cover.

\textsuperscript{2} In the legal document Wilkins is described as victualer, or innkeeper, which may have been then, or earlier, his chief occupation. Such legal descriptions mean little; for example, the great Globe actor, John Heminges, describes himself in his will as "citizen and grocer of London."
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fare of the young people he had induced to marry, directed them to the home of one of his friends.

In May of this year, 1605, Shakespeare and the other members of his troupe suffered a great personal loss in the death of Augustine Phillips, who had been associated with the company since its organization, and was one of the original builders of the Globe. He enjoyed an enviable reputation as an actor,¹ and seems also to have been a musician of some accomplishment (in his will he disposes of his “base viall, citterne, bandore, and lute”). In official records he was dignified with the title “gentleman,” and, as we have already seen, he had secured from the College of Heralds a coat of arms. For many years his home had been on the Bankside just a few steps from the Globe, where, no doubt, Shakespeare often enjoyed his hospitality. Like most of the King’s Men he acquired considerable wealth.² Shortly before he died he purchased an estate at Mortlake, in Surrey, more in keeping with his dignity, and directed that his body be buried there, “in the chauncell of the parish church.” In his will, of which Heminges and Burbage were the executors, he left sums of money to several of his friends for the purpose of buying memorial rings. It is significant that he mentions Shakespeare first: “Item, I give and bequeathe to my fellow, William Shakespeare, a thirty shilling piece in gold.” He left the same sums to Christopher Beeston, now a member of the Queen’s Company, and to Henry Condell, and lesser sums to the other full-sharers in the Globe organization. Nor did he forget even the hirelings, to whom he gave £5, “to be equally distributed amongst them.” His will is an interesting document, revealing a

¹ See Thomas Heywood, Apology for Actors, 1612, edition of 1841, p. 43.

² See his will, reproduced in full by J. P. Collier, Memoirs of the Principal Actors in the Plays of Shakespeare, 1846, pp. 85–88.
generous and high-minded character that compels our admiration.

Two months later, on July 24, 1605, Shakespeare executed the most important business transaction of his life: for the sum of £440 he purchased the lease of a large portion of the tithes of Stratford, Old Stratford, Bishopston, and Welcombe. Abraham Sturley had suggested a purchase of this nature as early as 1598, with the significant comment, "It obtained would advance him indeed." The tithes were originally the property of the ecclesiastical members of the College at Stratford. In 1544 they had been leased for a period of ninety-two years to a certain William Barker. After the dissolution of the College in 1553 King Edward had granted the tithes to the Corporation of Stratford, subject, however, to the ninety-two year lease just mentioned. Barker had disposed of the lease to other parties, so that by the time Shakespeare made his purchase the tithes were distributed among approximately forty owners. Shakespeare's portion—it was relatively large, consisting of more than a quarter of the whole—was estimated to bring him in annually the sum of £60; but out of this sum he was required to pay to the Corporation of Stratford £17, and to one John Barker £5, so that his net annual income was reduced to £38. On the other hand, there was a fair expectation that this income would increase with time; and that it did increase is revealed by the fact that in 1624 the Corporation purchased from his heirs the tithes of that year for £90.

In October, 1605, the King's Men were at Oxford. Apparently their frequent visits to the university towns.

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1 The history of the tithes will be found embodied in the deeds of sale to Shakespeare and in the bill of complaint, printed in Halliwell-Phillipps, Outlines, ii, 19 and 25.

2 They were at Oxford, so far as our imperfect records show, in 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1610, 1613; but no doubt their visits were more frequent than the records indicate.
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were welcome to both faculty and students, who must have been glad of the opportunity to see the great Globe actors present the plays which the Court and the literary circles of London so loudly acclaimed. During the visits of the King's Men to Oxford, as well as on his frequent pilgrimages to and from Stratford, Shakespeare is said to have lodged at the Crown Inn, kept by John Davenant and his wife Jane. Davenant was a man of property who occupied various civic offices including those of Bailiff and Mayor. Aubrey tells us that “he was exceedingly respected,” and that he was “a very grave and discreet citizen.” Anthony à Wood states that he “was seldom or never seen to laugh,” yet, he adds, he was “an admirer and lover of plays.” Aubrey describes Davenant’s wife as “a very beautiful woman, and of very good wit, and of conversation extremely agreeable.” We know on contemporary evidence that husband and wife were devoted to each other; and this mutual affection, combined with comfortable means, must have made their home a happy one.

This home, it would seem, became for Shakespeare a pleasant retreat, where he often lingered as a welcome guest. The Oxford antiquarian already cited, Anthony à Wood, states that Davenant was “an admirer” of Shakespeare, and that Shakespeare “frequented his house in his journeys between Warwickshire and London.” Aubrey writes: “Mr. William Shakespeare was wont to go into Warwickshire once a year, and did commonly in his journey lie at this house in Oxon., where he was exceedingly respected.”

In the Davenant family there were five sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Robert, was born in 1604. Later he became a fellow of St. John’s, Oxford, a Doctor of Divinity, and a well-known clergyman. The second son, born in March, 1606, was named by his parents
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William in honor of their illustrious friend, who is said to have acted as the boy's godfather. We may believe that after this event Shakespeare was more often than before an honored guest in the Davenant home. An interesting glimpse of the poet among the children of the family is furnished by a brief note in Aubrey's manuscript jottings: "I have heard Robert [Davenant, the eminent divine,] say that Mr. W. Shakespeare has given him a hundred kisses." Could we ask for better evidence of the sort of man the dramatist was in private life? Or can we be surprised that young William, at the age of twelve, wrote a tender "Ode in Remembrance of Master William Shakespeare"?

It is pleasing to contemplate this happy relationship between the poet and the family that gave him so delightful a harborage on his travels. Yet an unfortunate result was the springing up — though not until many years later — of a bit of gossip reflecting on the moral character of Shakespeare and Mrs. Davenant. The scandal, one needs hardly say, took the form of insinuating that Shakespeare was not only the godfather of young William but the real father as well. The origin of such a rumor can readily be understood. William Davenant came to be an eminent dramatist, knighted by King Charles, and created Poet Laureate of England. Thus it was natural for idle gossips to whisper jestingly among themselves that for his dramatic and poetic gifts he was indebted to no less a person than his immortal godfather.

Moreover, Sir William himself, in his vanity to be thought a second Shakespeare, seems to have been not unwilling to have the story believed — at least according to Aubrey, who is the first to record the gossip:

Now Sir William would sometimes when he was pleasant over a glass of wine with his most intimate friends — e.g. Sam
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- Butler (author of *Hudibras*), &c. — say that it seemed to him that he writ with the very spirit that Shakespeare [did], and seemed contented enough to be thought his son.¹

Aubrey originally added, "He would tell them the story as above, in which way his mother had a very light report," but crossed the passage out. Perhaps his conscience checked him, and made him realize that this was merely his own invention tagged on to render his story more effective;² for it is hard to believe that Sir William would give to his own mother a "light report."

The story was doubtless gathered by Aubrey from the gossipy tables of that convivial circle in London which he haunted in search of biographical items. Anthony à Wood, the Oxford antiquarian, to whom Aubrey supplied his manuscript notes in 1680, entirely rejected the story. Gerard Langbaine, another resident of Oxford, who devoted years to a close study of the English dramatic poets, makes no mention of it in his lives of either Davenant or Shakespeare. Early in the eighteenth century, however, it was developed into a tradition,³ with certain amusing anecdotes added which can easily be traced to other sources. Thus, so far as we can discover, the scandal was of late origin, first appearing long after the death of both Shakespeare and Mrs. Davenant, and rejected by those earlier writers best qualified to judge of its accuracy.⁴

¹ Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, i, 216, and C. I. Elton, *William Shakespeare, his Family and Friends*, p. 47, independently suggest that Davenant had in mind merely that literary sonship which Jonson made so real and valuable to young poets. If so, the story may have grown from this by misinterpretation.

² Such was the natural bent of his mind; for example he writes: "Ben Jonson had one eye lower than the other and bigger, like Clun the player; perhaps he begot Clun."

³ Gildon, in his revised edition of Langbaine, 1699, seems to glance at it. Hearne noted it in his commonplace-book, 1709. It reappears in Jacob’s *Poetical Register*, 1719, in Joseph Spence’s *Anecdotes*, 1728-30, in Oldys’ manuscripts, and in other places.

⁴ It is significant that the scandal is not remotely glanced at by any of the

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We have still further reason for giving little credence to the story. Mrs. Davenant, it appears, enjoyed an excellent reputation in Oxford, and she and her husband lived happily together with singular devotion to each other. It is noteworthy that John Davenant ordered in his will that he should be "buried in the parish of St. Martin's, in Oxford, as near my wife as the place will give leave where she lieth." An anonymous eulogist thus celebrated husband and wife:

He had choice gifts of nature and of art;
Neither was Fortune wanting on her part
To him, in honors, wealth, or progeny;
He was on all sides blest. Why should he die?
And yet, why should he live, his mate being gone,
And turtle-like sigh out an endless moon?
No, no; he loved her better, and would not
So easily lose what he so hardly got.
He liv'd to pay the last rites to his bride,
That done, he pin'd out fourteen days and died.
Thrice happy pair! Oh could my simple verse
Rear you a lasting trophy o'er your hearse,
You should vie years with Time. Had you your due,
Eternity were as short-liv'd as you.
Farewell, and in one grave, now you are dead,
Sleep undisturb'd, as in your marriage bed.

Still another elegy bears witness to the undisturbed happiness of this marriage:

If to be great, or good, deserve the bays,
What merits he whom great and good doth praise?
What merits he? Why a contented life,
A happy issue of a virtuous wife,
The choice of friends, a quiet honor'd grave.
All these he had; what more could Dav'nant have? ¹

The evidence cited above should not lightly be ignored in favor of a late tradition which obviously owes its

¹ I quote these poems from Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, ii, 49.
origin to gossip and its vogue to salacious fancy. That the story might arise in the taverns of Caroline London when cups were flowing too freely can readily be understood; but that in the face of all the facts which discredit the scandal it should be naïvely accepted passes comprehension.

In 1606 Shakespeare’s residence with the Mountjoys — for presumably he still maintained lodgings there — was disturbed by domestic troubles affecting that unhappy family. Madame Mountjoy — who seems to have been an admirable woman — died in October, and Stephen and Mary were persuaded to return to keep house for the widower, and join with him “as partners in their said trade of tireing.” But their return soon led to further quarrels, for Mountjoy was self-seeking, and Stephen, perhaps, too exacting. Stephen lent his father-in-law £2, who, instead of repaying the sum, claimed to have paid for him a brewer’s bill amounting to £3. There followed other quarrels over the expenses of transacting the tire-making business, with the result that at the end of half a year, in the spring of 1607, Stephen and Mary again moved away to open up a shop of their own. This apparently disrupted Mountjoy’s home, and he made his house into two tenements, letting one half to other persons. Shakespeare doubtless left at this time, if he had not already departed.

Yet he maintained an interest in Stephen and Mary, and was sometimes a visitor at their newly-established shop; for Stephen’s young apprentice, William Eaton, aged nineteen (who declared that he first met Stephen about June, 1607), testified as to certain conversations he had subsequently heard Shakespeare hold with his master. Stephen’s family rapidly increasing — he tells us that he and Mary had “lived together by the space of these five years, and have had diverse children betwixt
them, to the great increase of their charge, and are likely to have many more”—he naturally desired a settlement of the dowry which Mountjoy never had paid. Nor was this all that distressed him. Old Mountjoy, now freed from the restraining influence of his wife, began rapidly to dissipate his property in immoral living. He borrowed much money, and even went so far as to sell “his plate, and some household stuff.” Stephen, therefore, began to worry, not only about the payment of the dowry of £50, but also about the special settlement of £200 payable at his father-in-law’s death.¹ Both these payments were further jeopardized by Mountjoy’s increasing estrangement; diverse persons had heard him declare that he intended to leave his daughter and her husband not “the value of one penny.”

At last, Stephen brought suit against his father-in-law for the immediate payment of the dowry long overdue, or for a bond guaranteeing the ultimate payment of the £200. The suit dragged along until 1612, when Shakespeare was haled into court as a witness, and made to recount his share in the marriage arrangements.

The case was finally referred to the “reverend and grave overseers and elders of the French Church in London,” to which the contending parties belonged. The church authorities, after due investigation, reproved Mountjoy for his dissipated life, and rendered a decision in favor of Belott. But Mountjoy, scorning their decision,

¹ There may be in Timon of Athens, I, i, 111–52, an echo of this Mountjoy episode. The Old Athenian declares:

One only daughter have I, no kin else...
If in her marriage my consent be missing,
I call the gods to witness, I will choose
Mine heir from forth the beggars of the world,
And dispossess her all.

And when Timon asks “How shall she be endowed?” the father replies:

Three talents on the present, in future, all.
continued his profligate career. The subsequent history of the case is unknown to us.

Shakespeare, as has been suggested, had probably moved away from the Mountjoy house in 1606 or 1607. Whither he moved we do not know; but Malone states that he had in his possession a document which gave "the strongest presumptive evidence" that in and before 1608 the dramatist was living on the Bankside in Southwark, near the Globe.¹ And evidence tending to confirm Malone's inference may be found in the circumstance that on December 31, 1607, Shakespeare's youngest brother, Edmund, who had joined him in London and entered the profession of acting, was buried in St. Saviour's Church, Southwark, in a place of honor within the chancel.

The poet was also, no doubt, spending much of his time at Stratford. His two daughters were now grown women, both somewhat past the age at which it was then customary for young ladies to marry. Of these, the elder, Susanna, seems to have been the father's favorite; and with good reason, for she was clearly the more tractable and stable of the two. How well-educated she was we do not know, but at least she was able to sign her name to legal documents, whereas her younger sister, Judith, was forced to make use of a mark. Moreover, according to the epitaph on her tomb in the Stratford Church, she inherited some of her father's intellectual power, and was generally regarded by those who knew her as "witty above her sex." She was also charitable by nature. We are told that she "wept with all — that wept, yet set herself to cheer them up with comforts cordiall"; and we are assured that "her love shall live, her mercy spread" long after her death.

On June 5, 1607, this favorite daughter, Susanna, [395]

¹ Inquiry, p. 215.
being then twenty-four years of age, was married to John Hall, thirty-two years of age, who had recently settled in Stratford to practise medicine. The groom was in every respect worthy of alliance with the Shakespeares. He came of a family enjoying heraldic honors, and himself bore arms, sable three talbots' heads erased or. Not only did he hold the degree of Master of Arts, but he had traveled on the Continent, and, it seems, had secured his medical training at foreign universities. He had an excellent knowledge of French, and he kept his diary and his medical notes in Latin. As a practising physician he soon acquired a wide reputation throughout Warwickshire and the adjacent counties. Dr. Bird, Linacre Professor at Cambridge University, referred to him as being "in great fame for his skill far and near"; the Stratford clerk in entering his name in the burial register of the church adds the comment "medicus peritissimus"; and his epitaph declares that he was "medica celeberrimus arte." Among his patients he numbered virtually all the families of distinction in Warwickshire, being summoned even to Ludlow Castle, forty miles distant, to attend the Earl and Countess of Northampton. In his treatment of diseases he was credited with displaying considerable originality. Dr. James Cooke wrote: "Mr. John Hall had the happiness to lead the way to that practice, almost generally used now by the most knowing, of mixing scorbutics to most remedies. It was then, and I know for some time after, thought so strange that it was cast as a reproach upon him by those most famous in the profession." In 1677 his medical notes were published in London with the title: Select Observations on English Bodies, or Cures Both Empiricall and Historicall, Per-
formed upon Very Eminent Persons, in Desperate Diseases,
First Written in Latine by Mr. John Hall, Physician,
Living at Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, Where
He Was Very Famous, as Also in the Counties Adjacent.
The volume must have been well received by the medical
profession, for new editions appeared in 1679 and 1683.

After their marriage, Susanna and her husband estab-
lished an attractive little home not far from New
Place. The house they occupied, known as Hall’s Croft,
is still preserved in Stratford, where it is an object of
interest to tourists. We may suppose that this “famous”
physician, with his intellectual curiosity, his Coninen-
tal experiences, and his enthusiasm for science, proved a
congenial soul to Shakespeare. And Susanna, with her
ready wit and her charitable heart, must have made
Hall’s Croft a pleasant haven of refuge to her father
from the noise and stir of London theatres. Shortly, too,
there was added to the home another attraction for the
dramatist: on February 8, 1608, a daughter was born to
the Halls, later christened Elizabeth. This was the only
grandchild Shakespeare lived to know, and his fondness
for her is clearly revealed in his will.
CHAPTER XXI

DRAMATIC LABORS, 1607–09; ACQUISITION OF BLACKFRIARS

But we must return to Shakespeare’s labors as a dramatist for His Majesty’s Servants at the Globe. In 1607 he produced for them his second Roman tragedy, *Antony and Cleopatra*. Having already handled the youthful career of Mark Antony in one of his most successful plays, *Julius Caesar*, it was natural for him to complete the story, and show the hero in his decline and fall. Yet his interest was not altogether in the noble Roman; the Egyptian Cleopatra shares titular honors with Antony, and is reserved alone for the glorious finale of the fifth act. Indeed, the greatness of the play lies mainly in the subtle portraiture of “the serpent of old Nile.” The material Shakespeare found in North’s Plutarch, whence he had drawn the plot of *Julius Caesar*. It has often been observed that he follows the episodic narrative closely, with unusual care for historical accuracy. This fact indicates, as Professor Bradley points out in his admirable study,¹ that the play, though ranked among the tragedies, belongs in technique to that peculiarly Elizabethan type known as the chronicle. It is not designed so much to produce in us the emotions of pity and fear, as to excite our wonder; and hence we do not find ourselves constantly exclaiming with the broken-hearted Othello, “The pity of it, Iago! O Iago! The pity of it, Iago!” but rather declaring with the smiling Enobarbus that not to have seen it would have “left unseen a wonderful piece of work.” It is in truth a splendid historical pag-

DRAMATIC LABORS, 1607-09

eant, full of moving armies, of battles on land and sea, of varied action rapidly shifting from Italy to Greece and to Egypt — and in the midst of it all, "staged to the view," two of the most amazing personages the world has ever seen.

To this same year, 1607, we may assign Pericles and Timon of Athens. Neither play, however, was written by Shakespeare alone, nor was his share in them relatively large. In Pericles his task seems to have been merely to touch up a purchased manuscript — to add passages here and there, and insert a few scenes, especially near the end — in order to make the piece more suitable for presentation by his company. The early Shakespearean editor, George Steevens, thus happily puts the case: "The play of Pericles was in all probability the composition of some friend whose interest the 'gentle Shakespeare' was industrious to promote. He therefore improved his dialogue in many places; and, knowing by experience that the strength of a dramatic piece should be augmented towards its catastrophe, was most liberal of his aid in the last act."

It seems well-nigh certain that the original author was George Wilkins; and Professor Wallace would have us believe that Wilkins, as Steevens surmised, was a friend of the poet, by identifying him with the "George Wilkins, victualer," to whose house Stephen Belott and his wife Mary moved in 1604.1 Of Wilkins, the playwright, we know little, save that in 1607 he suddenly appears as a dramatist for the King's Men, and a hack-writer for the printers. His first work, it seems, was Three Miseries of Barbary, Plague, Famine, Civill Warre, a pamphlet of

1 There are no grounds for this identification beyond the similarity of the name, Shakespeare's known friendship for Belott and Mary, and the probable association of Wilkins with Pericles. It is strange that Wilkins disappears as a writer after 1607–08, whereas the victualer gave testimony at the Mountjoy trial in 1612.
fifteen leaves printed without date. In 1607 he issued in collaboration with Thomas Dekker *Jests to Make You Merry*, a pamphlet of thirty-one leaves. In the same year he published two plays, each described on the title-page as then being acted by the King’s Men at the Globe, *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, and *The Travailes of Three English Brothers* (in which he was assisted by John Day and William Rowley). The following year, 1608, he issued the story of *Pericles* made into a prose romance. From now on we hear nothing of him either in connection with the stage or the press.¹

The attribution of *Pericles* to Wilkins rests on the following facts: he was writing for the King’s Men in 1607; the play bears a general resemblance in versification to *The Miseries*; certain of its odd jests, and many unusual turns of thought or expression find close parallels in his known works; and, finally, in 1608 he issued under his own name the story of the play in the form of a prose novel, claiming the plot as “a poor infant” of his brain. The evidence, cumulative in force, seems to place the matter beyond a reasonable doubt.²

The play, as carefully revised by Shakespeare, won a sensational popularity. An anonymous poet in 1609 thus alludes to the crowds that thronged the Globe to see its performance:

¹ H. Dugdale Sykes, in *Sidelights on Shakespeare*, 1919, gives reasons, little short of conclusive, for attributing to Wilkins *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, 1608, a share in *Law Tricks*, 1608, and the first section of the prose tract, *Two Most Unnatural Murders*, 1605, telling the story of *A Yorkshire Tragedy*. Was Wilkins also responsible for the prose novel, *The Historie of Hamblet*, 1608, issued by Thomas Pavier, who in the same year published *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and printed the prose novel of *Pericles*?

² See N. Delius, "Über Shakespeare’s *Pericles,*," *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, iii, 175-204; Robert Boyle, "On Wilkins' Share in the Play called Shakespeare’s *Pericles,*" *The New Shakspeare Society’s Transactions*, 1882, pp. 323-40; and *The Nation and Athenæum*, xxix, 298; cf. also H. T. Baker, "The Relation of *Pericles* to George Wilkins' Novel," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 1908, xxiii, 100. The most thorough and convincing study, however, is that by Sykes, quoted above.
Amazed I stood to see a crowd
Of civil throats stretched out so loud;
(As at a new play) all the rooms
Did swarm with gentles mixed with grooms,
So that I truly thought all these
Came to see Shore, or Pericles.¹

And in the Prologue to Robert Tailor’s The Hog Hath Lost His Pearl, 1614, the actors express a hope that their comedy will prove a like success:

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And if it prove so happy as to please,
Wee’l say ’t is fortunate, like Pericles.²

So popular was the play that unscrupulous publishers made efforts to steal the text for a pirated issue. In order to prevent this the actors had their printer friend, Edward Blount, carry the manuscript to the Stationers’ Hall on May 20, 1608, and enter a blocking license. At the same time, as already stated, Wilkins took advantage of the great interest in the drama to prepare and issue in 1608 a prose novel giving to the public in this form the story which was creating such a sensation at the Globe. The title of the novel runs in part: The Painful Adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre. Being the True History of the Play of Pericles. But all efforts to forestall publication proved futile. In the following year, 1609, Henry Gosson secured a corrupt and mangled text, probably taken down in the theatre by shorthand, and issued it with the title The Late and Much Admired Play Called Pericles; Prince of Tyre.

In this, as well as in subsequent editions, the drama was attributed on the title-page solely to “William Shakespeare.” But when Shakespeare’s actor friends, Heminges and Condell, came to issue a “complete” —

¹ Pimlyco, or Runne Red-Cap, 1609.
² Ben Jonson, on the failure of his New Inn, 1629, took occasion to satirize the popularity of Pericles. For many other allusions to the play see The Shakespeare Allusion-Book.
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so they called it — and authentic collection of his works they rejected Pericles, even though one of the publisher's of the Folio owned the copyright. They knew that in the main it was not the composition of the master, and could not in fairness be attributed to him. Yet we cannot doubt that his hand appears in many scenes, and that much of its excellence is due to the magic skill of his pen. This is the conclusion not only of scholars but of modern poets as well. Dr. Furnivall records the opinion of Tennyson thus:

He asked me during our talk whether I had ever examined Pericles with any care. I had to confess that I'd never read it, as some friends of mine whom I considered good judges had told me it was very doubtful whether Shakespeare wrote any of it. Mr. Tennyson answered: "Oh, that won't do. He wrote all the part relating to the birth and recovery of Marina, and the recovery of Thaisa. I settled that long ago. Come up-stairs and I'll read it to you." Up-stairs to the smoking-room in Sea-more Place we went; and there I had the rare treat of hearing the poet read in his deep voice — with an occasional triumphant "Is n't that Shakespeare? What do you think of that?"

Timon of Athens, assigned to this same year, presents greater difficulty, for it is hard to understand the exact connection Shakespeare had with its production. The most plausible theory is that while he was reading the life of Antony in North's Plutarch he came upon the account of Timon, and started to work the story into a play. After sketching its main outlines, however, he realized that the material was unsuited to a great drama, and turned over what he had composed to some inferior writer,¹ who completed the tragedy by padding it out to the proper length.² It is true that Heminges and Con-dell included it in the First Folio; yet originally they seem

¹ Some scholars have suggested that this writer was George Wilkins. I can discover in the play no indication of Wilkins' hand.
to have intended to omit it, for the same reason that they omitted Pericles. When, however, they encountered an unexpected difficulty with Troilus and Cressida which compelled them to remove that play bodily from the section of "Tragedies" after a part of it had been set up and printed off, they inserted Timon of Athens to fill the awkward gap thus created in the pagination.\footnote{See the writer's article "Timon of Athens and the Irregularities in the First Folio," in The Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 1908, vii, 53–63.} For this purpose they could not use Pericles, which was a comedy rather than a tragedy, though they might well have felt that its extraordinary fame rendered its inclusion more desirable than that of the far less successful Timon of Athens.

Shakespeare, it is obvious, utilized the account of Timon which Plutarch parenthetically inserted in the Life of Mark Antony. He drew also, directly or indirectly, from the only other classical version of the story, Lucian's Misanthropos. And it is almost certain that by some means, not now clear, he was familiar with the plot of the unpublished play of Timon, which contained the figure of the loyal steward and the episode of the banquet, neither of which appears in the classical sources.\footnote{See the writer's article, "The Timon Plays," in The Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 1910, ix, 506–24.} The dramatist who expanded the plot as outlined by Shakespeare added nothing of significance.

If the play was acted — and we have no reason to suppose that it was not — it could hardly have attained any great popularity. To-day it is not a favorite with readers. Yet the scenes composed by Shakespeare, sketchy as they are, add to our conception of his versatile genius. As Verplanck writes:

To borrow an illustration from the often used parallel between the Shakespearean and the Greek drama, and the admir-
able architectural works of their respective ages, I would say that Timon is not, indeed, like one of the massive yet graceful columns which give support or solidity, as well as beauty and proportion, to the classic portico, but rather resembles one of those grand adjuncts — cloister, or chapel, or chapter-house — attached to the magnificent cathedrals of the Middle Ages; and like one of them, might be removed without impairing the solemn sublimity of the sacred edifice, or robbing it of many of its daring lighter graces; yet not without loss of the portion of the pile, majestic and striking in itself, and by its very contrast adding to the nobler and more impressive beauty of the rest an effect of indefinite and apparently boundless grandeur and extent.

Late in 1608 Shakespeare joined with others in securing for the King’s Men the use of the Blackfriars playhouse as a winter home. The acquisition of this excellent theatre was made possible by the indiscretions of the managers of the Children of the Queen’s Revels. In 1605 they allowed the boys to put on the stage a play which ridiculed the horde of Scotchmen who had followed James to London in search of political advancement, and satirized the King’s creation of innumerable Knights as a means of raising money. One of the little actors was actually made, it seems, to mimic the royal brogue: “I ken the man weel; he is one of my thirty-pound knights.” The King in his anger punished the managers, and closed the playhouse; and the Queen promptly took away her patronage from the troupe.

After a time the boys, now with the plain title The Children of Blackfriars, were allowed to reopen their theatre. But in 1608 they once more gave offense by acting a play in which they brought King James on the stage as drunk and swearing at his attendants. And a few days later they created an embarrassing diplomatic situation by presenting Chapman’s Conspiracy and Trag-

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1 For a more detailed account see my Shakespearean Playhouses, pp. 182-233.
eddy of Charles, Duke of Byron, introducing before the audience the French Queen, and representing her as boxing Madame de Verneuil on the ears. The French Ambassador made a vigorous complaint to the English government, with the result that James gave orders for the immediate and permanent suppression of the Blackfriars Children. This marked the end of the boy-troupe which had so long been a thorn in the flesh of the adult players.

Henry Evans, having leased the building from Burbage for a period of twenty-one years at an annual rental of £40, found himself in a serious predicament, with an expensive playhouse on his hands for which he had no possible use. He naturally was desirous of surrendering the lease, and for this purpose interviewed Burbage. It was then that Burbage conceived the brilliant idea of converting Blackfriars into a winter home for the King's Men. The Globe, though admirably adapted to summer performances, was uncomfortable and difficult of access during the bitterly cold months of the year. ¹ The luxury of a winter home, enclosed and heated, and situated in the very heart of the city, must have appealed to the members of the King's Company, who, now strongly entrenched in royal favor, felt no fear of the order of the Privy Council forbidding the use of Blackfriars for "public plays."

Burbage at once proceeded, as he had done in the case of the Globe, to organize a syndicate of "housekeepers," distinct from the "company of players," to secure the lease from Evans, and manage the building as a winter house for the King's Men. The new syndicate was made up of the following persons, sharing equally in the enter-

¹ The winter of 1607-08 was one of the severest on record. The Thames was frozen over, and long remained so. See Howes' continuation of Stow's Annals, p. 891.
prise: Richard Burbage, Cuthbert Burbage, William Shakespeare, John Heminges, Henry Condell, William Slye, and Henry Evans. The seven sharers took over the lease of Blackfriars in August, 1608, at the old rental of £40 per annum, each agreeing to pay the sum of £5 14s. 4d. annually. The building, we are told, had run "far into decay for want of reparations," and probably the housekeepers were called upon to spend a goodly sum in fitting it up for the more exacting demands of His Majesty's Players; but doubtless it was ready for occupancy during the winter of 1608–09. Henceforth the King's Men were accustomed to act at the Globe from about the last week in April until the first week in November, and at Blackfriars during the rest of the year.

The plan was designed to obviate the pecuniary losses often caused by a severe winter. Edward Kirkham, a man experienced in theatrical finances, offered to prove to the court in 1612 that the King's Men "got, and as yet doth, more in one winter in the said great hall [of Blackfriars] by a thousand pounds than they were used to get on the Bankside." And Kirkham's testimony to the popularity of the King's Men in their winter home is borne out by a petition to the city authorities made by "the constables and other officers and inhabitants of Blackfriars" in June, 1619. They declared that to the playhouse "there is daily such resort of people, and such multitudes of coaches (whereof many are hackney-coaches, bringing people of all sorts), that sometimes all our streets cannot contain them, but that they clog up Ludgate also, in such sort that both they endanger the one the other, break down stalls, throw down men's goods from their shops, and the inhabitants there cannot come to their houses, nor bring in their necessary provisions of beer, wood, coal, or hay, nor the tradesmen or shopkeepers utter their wares, nor the passengers