

THESIS

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Master of Arts

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Emily C. J. Folger, '79

THE TRUE TEXT OF SHAKESPEARE

Remember to peruse Shakespeare's plays,
and bee versed in them, yt I may not be ignorant
in yt matter.

Ward's Diary. 1663

ANALYSIS

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Preface - - -

In the study of Shakespeare, to know his meaning is the very "butt and sea-mark of our utmost sail".

The dominion of King Shakespeare extends over five continents, but his subject who speaks the tongue that he spoke is best qualified by that circumstance to learn what is his true text. What no foreigner could do, has been done for Shakespeare by editors and critics in English. We say, 'editors in English' and not 'English editors' for the last great critical edition in English is American.

English criticism of Shakespeare is verbal. We have had two hundred and fifty years of textual criticism. "Not what Shakespeare might, could, would, or should have written; but what according to the best evidence he did write, is its object". Without a knowledge of Shakespeare's words, the meaning will be lost. "His high thoughts he embodied in harmonious numbers".¹ "The feelings in his soul he put into words".² What is the true text of Shakespeare?

¹White.

²Hunter.

³Purnivall.

Introduction:- - Definition and limitation of subject.

When we say 'the true text of Shakespeare', Shakespeare means Shakespeare the poet. Shakespeare the man we do not here consider, could we describe him; which--in view of the only partial success claimed by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps and others--we shall not even attempt. Dickens says, "The life of Shakespeare is a fine mystery. (I tremble every day lest something come up)". Yet Emerson says, "He is the one person in modern history known to us" 'Shakespeare' may be Shakespeare himself, or Bacon, or "one of the most wondrous sources of creative poetry". If we know not the man, we know the poet. Shakespeare lives in his plays.

In his other poems written earlier than his dramas, Shakespeare was feeling his way. The best-known, Venus and Adonis and the Rape of Lucrece, dedicated to Southampton, are thought to have been suggested by him. They are more affected by the quaint conceits of the times than his plays. Hazlitt says that a beautiful thought in them is lost in endless commentary.

The significant point for us, is that "there is in them a strange attempt to substitute the language of painting for that of poetry, to make us see their feelings in the faces of the persons".

*Hazlitt.

Coleridge accounts for the peculiarity. "The great instinct which impelled the poet to the drama was secretly working in him, prompting him to provide a substitute for that visual language, that constant intervention and running comment by tone, look and gesture, which, in his dramatic works he was entitled to expect from the players".

Shakespeare of the Sonnets is next below Shakespeare of the plays. He was not, however, the Shakespeare of The Tempest and Henry VIII, "serenely victorious, infinitely charitable, wise with all wisdom of intellect and heart; but he is the Shakespeare of Romeo and Juliet on his way to acquire some of the dark experience of Measure for Measure and the bitter learning of Troilus and Cressida".

Of the doubtful plays--six especially--attributed to Shakespeare, a remark applies which Capell made in reference to one of them, that the answer to the question as to any one being the work of Shakespeare, "must be conjecture only and matter of opinion".

The love of Shakespeare is so great that from time to time dishonest men have forged documents relating to the poet. The fabrications of Ireland are the most important of this class. Malone exposed

Rolfe

the deception.

Ireland's play of Vortigern and Rowena was actually brought out as Shakespeare's in Drury Lane. Its production settled the question of the character of the author--already a very open question (Malone's Inquiry was announced). With the judicious aid of Kemble, who emphasized an unfortunate line--'And when this solemn mockery is o'er'--with unmistakable intention, it was hopelessly damned.

After Malone read certain lines in a volume relating to the Shakespeare fabrication, he said, "There is but one more document I wish to see respecting him (Ireland); his last dying speech and confession". Ireland made the confession.

Only a few Shakespearean scholars stood out against the authenticity of the manuscripts. Ireland professed to make his discoveries in the library of Shakespeare himself; whose books were then, Ireland said, in the possession of a gentleman who, to protect himself against impertinent questionings, gave the documents as literary curiosities to Ireland, and exacted from him a promise to conceal his name. The curiosities included quartos of Lear and Hamlet in the poet's own hand-writing and two copies of the first folio with uncut leaves; as well as the play of Vortigern and Rowena and others.

"A jest's prosperity lies in the ear of him that hears it". White says that

the success of the imposture of this boy of seventeen was due chiefly to the receptive disposition of those who were selected as its victims. Shakespeare had, in Ireland's time, first attained that pinnacle of fame, to which succeeding years have only confirmed his title. London was just in the mood to receive eagerly and credulously any plausible pretence of discovery in the field of Shakespearean research. It seems to have taken a Shakespearean scholar of Edmund Malone's acquirements and ability, in an octavo volume of four hundred pages and more, to prove that the "Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments under the hand and seal of William Shakespeare" (with the name of Ireland's father as author) were spurious.

'Shakespeare' then is the Shakespeare of the thirty-seven well-known plays which make the companion volume to the Bible in the closet of King Charles II of England and on the shelf of the sod-house of a dweller on an American prairie. Hundreds, even thousands, of dollars may be paid for a copy of Shakespeare, or it may be bought for a dime. This is the Shakespeare who "sits in crowned sovereignty over us all".

The plays of Shakespeare then are Shakespeare. Can we read them as he wrote them? May we have a true text? Can

we, as Capell says, hope to find our way through the wilderness of editions into the fair country, the poet's real habitation?

I. The First Folio the edition of authority.

No scrap of Shakespeare's manuscript has come down to us. Of most ancient authors, there are three or four copies at least; capable, therefore, of being employed as corrections. But Shakespeare's fairly-written manuscripts have vanished, no specimen of his hand-writing but his signature exists.

We have no edition of his works which he published. He wrote and issued under his own eye two poems as literature and nothing else. Copies of single plays appeared during his life-time, but there is no reason to suppose that they had his supervision in copy or proof; on the contrary, the testimony is that they had not.

The first edition of his plays, "a precious budget of blunders", was brought out in 1623, seven years after his death. "It is by courtesy alone", says a writer in Bentley's Quarterly, "that the first folio can be termed an edition. Edited in any proper sense it is not. It is palpable that when they could, the editors availed themselves of the quartos published in the poet's lifetime, the text for which was to all appearance obtained surreptitiously either from copy-

ists before the curtain or from prompters or the theatrical library behind it. The errors of the printer and the corruptions of the players are put down to Shakespeare's account. Verse is printed as prose, and prose as verse. Words are omitted or transposed (whence invincible blunders have arisen). The punctuation is so bad that it could hardly be worse.

Nevertheless, says Dr. Furness, (apart from the fact that it may be shown that editorial supervision in Shakespeare's time did not demand the accuracy which is demanded today), "the original text is to be found in the First edition, which was presumably printed from words written by Shakespeare's own hand or from stage copies adapted from his manuscripts. Although the first folio was issued in 1623, the printing must have been in hand long before that. Shakespeare's friends, the editors, vouched for the accuracy of the first folio, and no similar authority vouches for any other. In any claim for preference put forth by other texts, the burden of proof lies on the claimants, the presumption of authority is all in favor of the first folio. To read and enjoy Shakespeare, any text from a shilling edition upwards will suffice. But to study Shakespeare, we need a text as near as may be in point of time at least to the author's hand. In the majority of plays the first folio is freshest."

The plays were collected in a single volume by Heminge and Condell, friends, fellow-actors, and business partners of Shakespeare. The book is known as the First Folio. In their preface, Heminge and Condell regret that Shakespeare himself did not live to set forth and oversee his own writings. "As he by death departed from that right, it has been the office of their care and pain to collect and publish them." They "offer to view the copies cur'd and perfect of their limbes and absolute in numbers as Shakespeare conceived them."

Other editions in great numbers have succeeded the First Folio. Rather than any of its successors, however, this editio princeps, as the edition of authority, is Shakespeare.

I. Rather than the Second Folio, the Third Folio, the Fourth Folio, Collier's Second Folio.

Following the First Folio came three other editions in folio in 1632, 1664 (some copies, with slight difference, bearing the date 1663), and 1685, respectively. Each of the succeeding folios is founded upon its predecessor, so that all form practically one text. The third folio is next in market value to the first, as it contains the six best-known doubtful plays. It first prints Pericles, also; now included, on the authority of Dr. Farmer, in all editions of Shakespeare. (It is conjectured that the holders of the copyright of Pericles refused to part with it, or come into the enterprise of publishing the First Folio).

The later folios are not corrected editions of the first. The emendations are only conjectural. There is no more reason for the Second Folio conjectural emendations than for other guesses, except that the language and customs of Shakespeare's day, and possibly acted in the plays. A few typographical errors of the First Folio are corrected in the Second, others remain, and still others are added. Steevens professed latterly to give the Second Folio a preference to the First, upholding the superiority of the Second Folio to its "blundering predecessor"; but Furness is not sure that he did not profess the preference for the sake of annoying Malone.

Neither the Third Folio nor the Fourth, is of the slightest authority in determining the text.

A bookseller named Rodd sold Mr. Collier a copy of the Second Folio (called the Perkins Folio, from the name of a former owner), having Ms. emendations on the margins; which Mr. Collier held in high esteem, believing them of great authority as made by a contemporary who bought the book when newly published, and read it--making marginal notes as he read. Mr. Collier quotes with respect the Old Corrector. As the work of such, the notes would deserve consideration here, with editions of the same period: but there has been found no means of discovery by whom the corrections were made, and no testimony that the corrections are of value. Shakespearean scholars have not been convinced by them; therefore they have had no lasting effect, and are nearly put aside as useless.

The "affaire du Collier" made a literature for

itself. It is the history of a controversy hot and excited, in which the most able literary men engaged, defending Mr. Collier against most serious charges or bringing those charges with all the skill at their command.

For, it was declared, the corrections in the Perkins Folio are made in different hands and inks. Mr. Maskelyne, of the British Museum, for Mr. Hamilton, found the notes in sepia (to resemble faded ink?) over pencilled memoranda, therefore Mr. Collier was charged with literary fraud.

An inquest sat for two years, but failed to fix on Collier the guilt of literary imposture. Mr. Collier himself says: "What could have induced me to foist them (corrections) into an old folio, and to give anybody else the credit of them?" Later, he "frankly avowed that he was from the first disposed to attach more value to the whole body of alterations than not a few really merited" and was "indiscreet in claiming for admission so large a mass of alterations into the text."

2. Rather than Quartos.

The early "Quartos" are the copies of single plays of Shakespeare published during his lifetime. Gervinus and Collier reckon half of Shakespeare's plays in quarto. Corson says sixteen, some printed more than once in his lifetime: Shakespeare's name is on the title page of all but two.

White says that there were nineteen plays surreptitiously or carelessly printed before the publication of the First Folio (one--Othello--in quarto, after his death). The First Folio, rather than the Quartos, gives the true text of

Shakespeare.

This is the claim of the editors, Heminge and Condell. In the preface to the First Folio they say, "Where you were abused with diverse stolne and surreptitious copies (quartos) maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors, that exposed them: even those are now offered to your view, cur'd and perfect."

The value of the First Folio is inestimable from the circumstance of its being the earliest known edition of 22 (according to Halliwell) authentic plays of Shakespeare. (The Tempest, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Merry Wives of Windsor, Measure for Measure, Commedy of Errors, As You Like It, Taming of the Shrew, All's Well That Ends Well, Twelfth Night, Winter's Tale, King John, Henry Fifth, I Henry Sixth, II Henry Sixth, III Henry Sixth, Henry the Eighth, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Cymbeline). Of its value on other grounds it is fair to say that the critics differ. Capell thinks that the Quartos are the poet's own copies, however come by. Knight, on the other hand, is an uncompromising advocate for the First Folio, quoting the explicit declaration of the editors that they printed from manuscripts "absolute in numbers as Shakespeare conceived them." Craik thinks that there is no doubt that for the First Folio, Heminge and Condell had the use of Shakespeare's manuscripts, while it is doubtful if any of the Quartos was from one: Elze thinks it extremely doubtful that Shakespeare's manuscripts were used for printing the First Folio,

but that in some cases, quartos following earlier quartos, the First Folio follows them, and prints from the last and least authority.

Where such difference of opinion is expressed; we fall back in security, with Johnson, Halliwell, and Furness, upon the fact that the First Folio is the source of authority for the text of Shakespeare. Therefore its value is unequivocal. The office of the Quartos is auxiliary. When the First Folio is incompetent, we seek emendations in the Quartos, those "rare and precious morsels", the second great source of authority for the text of Shakespeare.

3. Rather than later editions.

When the First Folio is inadequate, and the Quarto, if there be one, cannot supplement; then conjectural emendation may have place. Its value is as great as the great insight and erudition of critics can make it; but its results should never obtrude themselves into the text: they should rest in footnotes, or "humbly wait a place in the margin." Conjectures, Fuller says, if mannerly observing their distance, and not impudently intruding themselves for certainties, deserve, if not to be received, to be considered. The text of the Folio and Quarto editions, of collected and separate plays, admits critical examination. "Words are used that have no apparent meaning in the form printed, and Quarto and Folio editions do not always agree. Successful excisions and additions have been made by commentators."*

*Jeremiah

Malone says: There is an idle notion that Shakespeare has been buried under his commentators, and Dr. Johnson quoted as saying "read every play with utter negligence of the commentators", but this was Johnson's advice to a young reader: to the greater and more enlightened part of the readers, he gives very different advice, "Let them attempt exactness, and read the commentators!"

Thimm says: The genius of Shakespeare and the stupidity of the commentators is a popular antithesis as trite as unjust. In the despised class are some of the most famous and most accomplished Englishmen of their time. It is a study of great interest to follow them as they exercise their varied talents on the noblest field which the literature of this country afforded.

Dyce sums up the services of commentators wise and great who have devoted their talents to the study of Shakespeare and the establishing of his text by saying:-- "I make no doubt that were the original manuscripts of Shakespeare to turn up, we should have proof that commentators and critics, from Rowe downward, had retrieved the genuine readings in a vast number of passages."

The tone of the best criticism of Shakespeare is expressed in the statement of Halliwell that "The elucidation of Shakespeare's text is the only really good use of Shakespearean criticism, and the true restoration of a single line in Shakespeare is well worth the best volume of any other English writer."

"No syllable that he whispers, no word let fall but is caught and pondered as no words have been except of Holy Writ."*

To say that Shakespeare was ever forgotten, even neglected, is an error. After the Restoration, however, through the influence of the French taste, he was measured by the French standards and found wanting. Shakespeare did not observe the dramatic unities of the classical drama approved by the French: and his verse was not regular; sometimes it is rhythmical only, not even metrical.

When Rowe and the succeeding editors found obvious errors innumerable in Shakespeare, they introduced into the text their conjectural emendations. By the time of Steevens, therefore, it became "a patchwork text" indeed, as it has been called; which was accepted upon his authority for fifty years. French taste was tyrannical to the time of Steevens and Malone. The oracle of the French taste was Voltaire.

Many editions followed Rowe, making a vast number (196 standard?) to the present day. From Coleridge's time (1814)--or a century after Rowe--through the influence of German aesthetic criticism finding its ready endorser in him, comment took on the reverential tone which prevails at the present day.

Lessing was the founder of the German aesthetic criticism of Shakespeare. He levelled Voltaire, and the French school of taste. Lessing is called the Englishman born in Germany; and Coleridge, the German born in England. When

*Furness

Lessing wrote and lectured on Shakespeare in Germany, Garrick was acting in Shakespeare in England, and such acting--Furness says-- was aesthetic criticism of a high order. The admiration of Garrick resulted in a Shakespeare "Jubilee." Kemble and Mrs. (Kemble) Siddons kept up the interest. Shakespeare was never treated with more care than at this period (1741). Men began to devote half a lifetime to the collection of Shakespearean tracts and manuscripts. Capell spend a whole life in the study of Shakespeare, and transcribed his works ten times with his own hand.

Knight divides the commentators of Shakespeare into (1) Not black letter and (2) Black letter, making the division before Capell: the first studied, and commented upon Shakespeare, with no very exact acquaintance with very early literature; the second did the same, with a more exact acquaintance with early literature. The first are more brilliant, the second more painstaking. Theobald is the best of the first.

The first edition of Shakespeare was small, 250 copies, and soon exhausted. (Halliwell thinks that a large number of copies were destroyed by the burning of the Globe Theatre). The second, third, and fourth editions followed; the form of all, however, was the same--a large, heavy folio volume. In 1709, therefore, Rowe brought out his edition in octavo; as being more convenient in form, and to supply an increasing demand.

Rowe, unhappily, for the basis of his text, took the Fourth Folio (1685)--the last and worst of the folio impressions.

He corrected the grossest mistakes only, and divided into acts and scenes the plays not divided. The best of his work is from his experience on the stage as a dramatic poet. He accidentally made emendations corresponding with the First Folio.*

Unlike Rowe, Pope (his successor) had at least seen the First Folio and some Quartos. From his preface one might infer that he had collated all; but that is a description of what he did not do. He made "innovations" "according to his own private sense and conjecture." Pope was the first to indicate the place of each new scene, as "On a ship at sea." His emendations are sometimes unquestionably true.

Theobald, as editor, was incomparably superior to his predecessors Rowe and Pope (though Pope reviled him in the Dunciad, calling him "poor, piddling Tibbald") and to his immediate successors. He recalled a multitude of First Folio readings.

When the university of Oxford undertook an edition, Sir Thomas Hanmer "thrust himself into their employment," Warburton says. Thimm says that his guesses are sometimes brilliant, often instructive, and never foolish.

There is no evidence that Warburton collated the Folios and Quartos. Malone says that he substituted his own chimerical conceits in place of Shakespeare's genuine text.

Defective eyesight incapacitated Johnson for minute collation. He studied the literature and language of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The preface to Johnson 1765, has, perhaps more than any other production, influenced

* Cambridge Shakespeare, (et seq.)

public opinion of Shakespeare up to this day.

Heath attempted the Revisal of Shakespeare's text, when "he was not so fortunate as to be furnished with any folio edition, much less any quarto."

Critical students must have Capell's books. He collected and compared the oldest and scarcest copies. Twenty-three years elapsed in collection, collation, compilation, and transposition between the compilation and production of his projected edition, and its effect was destroyed by other active spirits who went to work upon his plan, and laid his treasures prematurely before the public. Steevens, Malone, Farmer, Percy, Reed, and others were these.

"In an assembly of birds, it was proposed to offer a prize to the one able to soar to the loftiest elevation. The Eagle was winning, when a little wren which had nestled under one of his wings, darted out, flew a few yards higher, and from the weak and unjust judges carried off the prize."

At the end of forty years; the publication was posthumous, and the critic was no more. Thimm gives the above epitome, and calls Capell the most useful of all commentators, "whose conscientious diligence is untiring, whose minute accuracy is scarcely at fault." Mathias says that Capell is the father of all legitimate commentary on Shakespeare. His care of the punctuation of the First Folio was great and important.

On Dr. Farmer's authority, Pericles was admitted to the plays of Shakespeare.

Steevens and Malone have left a most enduring impression of their labors; "not because of any pre-eminent ability or fitness for their office, but because they were so early in the field as to glean the richest sheaves." Steevens brought great antiquarian knowledge. "The freedom, vigor, variety, sweetness, majesty of Shakespeare's verse, he sacrificed to what he called 'polished versification.'" Malone was his rival. Unless they had collected the great mass of materials, Furness says, no modern edition could have been properly undertaken.

Reed's was the first Variorum edition. The second Variorum was that of Reed, Johnson and Steevens. The principle of the "variorum edition" is to select from all existing commentators, various and conflicting opinions upon the same passage.

Besides Heath and Farmer, who were commentators, not editors, there were many -- Tyrwhitt, Ritson, Mason, Douce, Seymour (and Chedworth), Becket, Jackson--critics of Shakespeare, though not editors, and many minor editors; who made emendations which remain in the text.

Chalmers' text was not materially different from Malone's.

Boswell's Malone, 1821, is the third Variorum edition.

In Harness there are a few valuable corrections of the text.

Seymour tried to conform the language of Shakespeare's day to his own.

Becket's license of conjecture went to the length of inventing a word.

Jackson, a printer, thought to correct the sadly--printed First Folio. He made absurd and atrocious changes in the text.

Singer had too little reverence for the First Folio, though he made some plausible conjectural emendations.

Knight's sole desire was to preserve the integrity of the text.

Collier admitted the 'stolne and surreptitious' quartos to higher authority than that awarded by Knight, who deferred only to the first folio. Each did much to effect a nearer approximation to the "True Original." Mr. Collier had the advantage of a long devotion to the study of Old English Literature, especially of Shakespeare's age, but Mr. Knight brought to his task an intelligent veneration for Shakespeare and a sympathetic appreciation which has never been surpassed, perhaps never equalled.¹

Such was the condition of the text of Shakespeare which, upon the authority of Mr. Collier's newly discovered old anonymous corrector, we must change in more than a hundred important particulars. There is no testimony that the corrections are of more value than if made yesterday by Mr. Smith.² He may have had Shakespeare's manuscript or some transcript in the possession of the players. It may have been the same by which mainly the First Folio had been printed, perhaps thirty or forty

1. White

2. White

years before; possibly suffering more from time and neglect, still further defaced, or even rubbed and eaten away; but all in conjecture. He deciphered many words which had baffled or been misread by the printers, but passages gone he supplies without much poetical faculty or discernment.¹

Halliwell's text is from a new collation of the early editions.

Dyce's reading has thrown light on many passages.

The Cambridge Edition is the ripe result of Shakespeare textual editing. Thorough work has been done with the Quartos and Folios and with all emendations. Emendations are in foot-notes. In doubtful cases, the text of the First Folio is given.

"The tenth volume of Dr. Horace Howard Furness's New Variorum edition appeared in 1895. The tenth volume treats of the ninth play, in the noble series which now includes Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, Tempest, Midsummer Night's Dream, two volumes being given to Hamlet. The last Variorum was fifty years old, when Dr. Furness began to print; and his work garners all that has the permanence of worth, so that for a long century or two no other Variorum will be needed or desired. The indications are plain that there is now to be a suspension in the productiveness of the commentators and editors, and that the twentieth century will have leisure for the consumption and digestion of accumulated Shakespeare lore. It is not credible that many very important additions will for a long time be made to the present emendations and explanations of the text.²

1. Craik.

2. Editor Atlantic Monthly, August '95

In the last five volumes, Dr. Furness has adopted the text of the First Folio, "reproducing it," as he says, "with all the exactitude in his power." The editor's surest guide, he says, in the criticism of texts, is "*Durior lectio preferenda est.*"

The Tercentenary of Shakespeare called forth many works of Shakespeare lovers, each bringing a stone to be wrought into the monument which the literary age had to raise to pay the world's debt of gratitude to him.

"Whose words all ears took captive."

A. Shakespeare judged by French taste. Dryden et al.

"Shakespeare's genius is not related to the Romantic mind. It is ^a difficult task to translate Shakespeare into the Romantic languages particularly French, for there is a want, in the languages derived from the Latin, of all those elements which characterize the Teutonic tongues. The voice of nature speaking in her sympathy to man; the changeful emotions of the human heart; the mysteries of the poet's mind; the echo of the whispers of the soul; the very innermost movement of the thought in the brain--in the expression of which Shakespeare is so grand a master--all these are not rendered easily into French. They require the Teutonic tongue."*

Accordingly, it is no surprise that the contributions of France to the history of Shakespearean criticism are not many nor great; compared, for instance, with those of Germany. On the contrary, the reputation of Shakespeare was forced to outlive the age of depreciation when, after the Restoration,

*Thimm

he was censured for failing to reach the French standards. There was no verbal criticism of Shakespeare in the seventeenth century.

"Voltaire first recognized Shakespeare's 'barbar genius'; but disapproved him, when others put him above Corneille and Racine. Letourneur made the first translation. Diderot, opposing Voltaire in his later opinion, spoke of Shakespeare with knowledge and reverence: Bayle and Lucas followed Diderot. D'Alembert, Marmontel, La Harpe, like Voltaire, did not admit Shakespeare's genius. Of the Chenier brothers, one was for Shakespeare, and one against. Madame de Stael was enthusiastic over Shakespeare; as were Nodier, Guizot, Hugo, Taine, and others. La Roche translated him, as did Michel. The last effort to revive the old prejudice was made by M. Ponsard in 1856. M. Nisard made a final reply, 'Time has elevated Shakespeare above criticism probably because it has raised him above eulogium.'"

Fault-finding commentators, after the Restoration, English but of the French school, began to show how little they were qualified to judge the poet by their attempts to improve him. Their "improvements" are the best evidence of their disqualification as critics. Not satisfied with changing words and making the metre conform to a regular plan which Shakespeare never intended, new versions were given by them, in an attempt to meet the taste of the town by music and spectacle. Than Dryden's Version of the Tempest, there is, says Furness, "in the realm of literature no more flagrant

*Thimm

instance to be found of lese-majesty." "It is hard to decide," he continues, "whether or not Dryden's reputation be additionally damaged by the revelation lately made by an eminent German scholar that the additions for which Dryden took to himself the credit as author are a wholesale conveyance from a play of Calderon." "After all," Furness concludes, "it is doubtful if any tinct be hereby added to the grained spots in Dryden's conduct. Dryden's version is the fruitage of Dryden's times." "The drama's laws the drama's patrons give." Dryden said that, in Troilus and Cressida, he "had refined Shakespeare's language which before was obsolete." He complained that the town had become too skillful to be easily satisfied. Shakespeare says:-

"'tis a common proof, that lowliness is young
ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back;
Looks in the clouds."

The early editors did not recognize Shakespeare as their master, at whose feet they were to sit and learn. They did not go to their task in a humble, docile spirit. Shakespeare was regarded as an untutored genius sadly in need of pruning and training, whose exuberance was to be tamed down to the barrel-organ standard of the poetic fancies of the day. There was a continual effort to make him conform as much as

"It was Lessing who first proved to all thinking men--even to Shakespeare's country-men--the true nature of his apparent irregularities."

Schlegel delivered a series of lectures in which Shakespeare for the first time had the advantage of criticism at once acute and profound, discriminating and genial, learned and unpedantic. This is Coleridge's testimony. Schlegel translates seventeen of Shakespeare's dramas. Tieck's Schlegel was the first complete Shakespeare. Delius says that the first is, as it was, a piece of inimitable perfection: the latter reaches the soul of Shakespeare's language.

"The Germans know Shakespeare, however, not alone through translations. They have investigated the original writings themselves and by many erudite critiques have obtained a prominent place in Shakespearean literature: lately--best, Ulrici, Delius, Kreyssig, Gervinus (crowning!)."*

Delius published an exact and literal copy of Macbeth of the First Folio, to further a closer and more philological acquaintance with its text. Even Knight's edition, he says, has not shown sufficient deference to the text of the First Folio. Wieland said, "A Shakespeare must be faithfully copied or not at all." No one can fail to be impressed with the excellence of Shakespearean study in Germany. Under its influence, the later criticism in England, from Coleridge on, has been reverential in tone. Every word of the text, it becomes most important and interesting to determine. Emendation

*Thimm

is less thought of than formerly. The critics pray as did Cordelia:-

"restoration hang thy medicine on my lips."

C. Editors and critics speak for themselves.

Unquestionably it is the intention of all editors and commentators and critics "to defend the integrity of the text," "to vindicate Shakespeare," "to rescue Shakespeare from his corrupters." When, however, as White points out, men talk apprehensively about disturbing the text and of their veneration for the old text, they sometimes mean merely the text of the edition which they have been accustomed to use. White says that the old priest who read 'Mumpsimus Domine!' rejected the proposal to read 'Sumpsimus' &c., because he would not leave his old Mumpsimus (used thirty years) for their new Sumpsimus.

Likewise, the defence of Shakespeare's text against attack is sometimes a defence of the textus receptus and not of the editio princeps. Nevertheless, the spirit is that of those who would boldly support the readings of the text of Shakespeare although they may not always recognize the fact that Shakespeare is found, more than in any other book, in Heminge and Condell's folio.

a. General on Editors.

In the Republic of letters, Furness says, each person can speak but for himself alone, and the monarchical "we" is an assumption of authority without the substance. In taking the testimony following, we note this point.

Again, with Dr. Furness, we omit all expressions introduced to strengthen the speaker's position, which consist in vilifying all other critics who hold an opposite opinion: as Dr. Furness says, "To confound critics is one thing, to elucidate Shakespeare is another."

"The man who honestly and with some capacity for the task, undertakes to reform abuses and rectify errors, will generally end by apologizing for some of the very faults which at first he most strongly condemned."*

Shakespeare has suffered much by interpositions and additions, says Upton. It is a common observation, therefore perhaps not altogether untrue, that critics generally set out with these two maxims: one that an author must always dictate what is best, the other that the critic is to determine what best is. The misfortune seems to be that scarcely any one pays a regard to what Shakespeare does write, but is always guessing at what he should write.

"Surely," says John Bill, "if men by the blessed act of correcting old copies proceed to amend, and upon private fancie do presume thus to alter... shortly we shall have just cause generally to esteeme those copies most correct which least have been corrected."

Now what thanks, says Wall, such persons are worthie to have which dooe in this wyse slabre and defyle the books of famous autores, I will not at this time reason, but truely methynketh it a veraye sacrilege.

*White

Sentences in authors, says Donne, like haires in Horse-tails, concurre in one root of beauty and strength; but being pluckt out one by one serve only for sprindges and shares.

Pope: "For Shakespeare's magic could not
copied be,
For none durst in that circle move
but he."

"Enough for me great Shakespeare's words
to hear;

Though but in common with the vulgar ear;
Without one note, or horn-book in my hand."

Author, "Pursuits of Literature."

Holt, an early writer, calls his book,

"An Attempt to rescue Maistre William
Shakespeare from certain Wittes" (1749

1779). He says, "A sort of critics take the author
in hand, and bring his Ideas down to a level with their own,
and, instead of showing how weak he has exprest himself, give
Specimens how wretchedly they can perform on like occasion.
No author has suffered more than Shakespeare who has been
elucidated into Obscurity."

Heath says that Heminge and Condell were succeeded
by a race of critics who have treated Shakespeare still more
injuriously. Under the special pretense of re-establishing
the genuine text, they have given it us mangled and corrupted,
just as their own particular turn of imagination prompted or
the size and pitch of their own genius suggested; and, by

discarding the traditional reading and interpolating their own fanciful conjectures, they have, to their utmost power, endeavored to continue the corruption down to distant posterity.

Farmer says: How often are weeds and flowers torn up indiscriminately!

Steevens says: Joshua Barnes, editor of Euripides, thought every scrap of his author so sacred that he preserved with the name of one of his plays, the only remaining word of it. Why can we not have the same care exercised on the text of Shakespeare?

Johnson and Steevens refer to ... Many Marr-texts, through whose notes and ipse dixits, the text has suffered. Puerilities and inconsistencies set common sense at defiance, and according to Shakespeare's words, "mock the purpose while thus they cheer it." The text appears contrived for a peg for the notes to hang upon.

Ireland says: The works of our immortal bard are preferable to the farrago of idle doubts and probabilities of incapable commentators.

Chalmers says: Admirers of Shakespeare are constantly told that his text is now settled and that the late editions are at length immaculate.

Malone says: Shakespeare little thought when he wrote, "To blot old books and alter their contents," that his own compositions would afford a most striking example of this species of devastation.

Horne Tooke says: By the presumptuous license of dwarfish commentators, who are forever cutting down to their own size, we risk the loss of Shakespeare's genuine text which the First Folio assuredly contains. We believe, as they did not, that Shakespeare's judgment is entitled to more respect than that of any or all his critics.

Collier says: The editor who absurdly fancies that he can improve the ascertained language of Shakespeare is unfit for the office: He thinks better of himself than of the poet. Impossible it is to bestow too great pains on ascertaining and fixing the true reading of Shakespeare. The great purpose ought to be to permit the author to speak for himself; he usually speaks very intelligibly, and rarely needs any aid except where some corruption of the text may be established or suspected.

Coleridge says: Every critic fills his three-ounce phial at the waters of Niagara; and determines the greatness of the cataract to be neither more nor less than his three-ounce phial has been able to receive.

Charles Knight showed the fault in modern editions of each following its predecessor. A line was left out in all modern editions. It began with Reed. If there had been original inquiry, this would have been impossible after two hundred and fifty years that there should be found such a multitude of startling blunders.

Mitford says, "Each conjecture is supported by the single vote of the parent person who brings it forward".....

Nor can any one deeply jealous for the integrity of Shakespeare's text be led to approve the strange deviations from the original which have been made.

"We," Ingleby says, "say of Shakespeare's text, what De quincey said of Milton's: 'On any attempt to take liberties with passages of His, you feel as when coming in a forest upon what seems a Dead Lion: perhaps he may not be dead, but only sleeping; nay perhaps he may not be sleeping but only shamming.'"

No critic is licensed to exercise conjecture whose knowledge and culture do not guarantee (1) competent knowledge of the orthography, phraseology, and prosody, as well as the language, arts and customs prevailing in the time of Shakespeare: (2) a delicate ear for rhythm of verse and prose: (3) a reverential faith in the resources of Shakespeare's genius. Under the apparent nonsense of words and phrases often lurk sense and intelligence most express and admirable. There is an old 'geast' of a barber surgeon, who fell a cursing because he cut his thumb which he put into a patient's cheek to force it out tense and firm.

An alloy is interfused into the old text, and the unwary reader is deluded into the notion that he is reading Shakespeare, when he is reading "felicitous substitutes." Surnames of these torturers of Shakespeare may be generally determined by the initials C (or K) and B, and by a selection of dissyllables only. "Never" (London Times, Sept. 29, 1863)

"was an author who required less note or comment than Shakespeare." Aeschylus is lost by successive emendations.

Thimm says: We want the text of the early editions, however incorrectly they may have come down to us, with textual emendations in the form of notes.

Jeremiah says: The spread of Shakespearean literature and the growth of controversy have become matters of such magnitude that the student may stand aghast or fly the arena of Shakespearean criticism, and seek sweet solace in the simple but perhaps archaic text of the First Folio.

Gould says: No great author of the world has so little to be thankful for to his editors as Mr. Shakespeare. Hundreds of bantling editions are spoilt by reckless and foolish departures from the original.

Morgan says: It is a matter of very frequent complaint that critics and commentators read into Shakespeare more than they read out of him.

Fleay gives three canons for the conjectural critics:-

1. No emendation, however plausible, is to be admitted unless the passage is inexplicably absurd, or in direct violation of the author's metrical system.
2. No emendation is to be admitted unless the mode in which the reading of the old edition originated can be clearly explained. (This point, he says, is almost entirely disregarded by editors).

3. The character of the copy under consideration must be taken into account, as shown by known or admitted errors in other parts of it.

Irving says that before adopting any emendation, the fact that the words are to be spoken, and not read, is to be borne in mind.

One critic calls attention to the fact that Shakespeare uses words in their literal, at least six times as often as in their metaphorical meaning. Therefore, an emendation of the text, which, in clearing up an obscure passage, reduces a figurative expression to a literal one, is at least six times as probable as a different suggestion which does the reverse: he says.

Furness says: There is abroad a strange oblivion, to call it by no harsher name, among readers of Shakespeare, of the exquisite nicety demanded at the present day, in emending the text of Shakespeare--a nicety of judgment, a nicety of knowledge of Elizabethan literature, a nicety of ear which alone bars foreigners from the task, and, beyond all, a thorough mastery of Shakespeare's style and ways of thinking which alone should bar all the rest of us... If after all, in some unfortunate patient the insanabile cacoethes emendi still lurk in the system, let him sedulously conceal the products from all but his nearest friends, who are bound to bear a friend's infirmities. Should, however, concealment prove impossible, and naught but publication avail, no feelings must be hurt if we sigh under our breath, 'Why will you be talking, Master Benedict?

Nobody minds ye!"

When Fielding's hero met Shakespeare, in his Journey from this World to the Next: "Shakespeare was interrogated concerning some other ambiguous passage in his works; but he declined any satisfactory answer saying, 'If Mr. Theobald had not wrote about it sufficiently, there were three or four more new editions of his plays coming out, which he hoped would satisfy every one.'

b. Special "I" or "we" of editors.

Critics decry the corruptions of Shakespeare's text, for which commentators are responsible. They show the same respect for it when they announce their own purpose and intention with regard to it, in the suggestions which they offer for its elucidation.

Messrs. Porson, Boswell, Hunter, Reed and others express their preference for an annotated text, Hunter says, that those who say 'give us the old text' go too far; but Boswell cautions against "playing tyrants with the author's text", and Porson advocates only the emendations which are "discoveries" of the author's meaning. Reed favors an easy passage over a smooth pavement to a jolt over a rugged one only when "both conduct to the same object."

Johnson says: My first labor is always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice through which light can find way. I have adopted the Roman sentiment that it is more honorable to save a citizen than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to

attack...

.....After printing a few plays, I resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. I now congratulate myself, for every day increases my doubt of my emendations. Upton says: A notice of even the slightest deviation from the First Folio in this edition has seemed obligatory. I can see no reason for printing Shakespeare's text, either in this respect (grammatical forms) or in any other, as if it were written yesterday. An editor's function is to think, not for, but with, his author.

Holt says: What pretence to expect encouragement had I as commentator, when the Public has been already so teased and tired with commentators on Shakespeare? The answer is that if (Shakespeare's) own expressions can be proved to convey his own sentiments there is no Room to doubt but everybody would prefer those of the Poet to any happiest conjectures of the most sanguinary literal Critic.

Warburton says: I have religiously observed the severe canons of literal criticism.

Capell says: Without collation, nothing is done to any purpose--first of moderns with moderns, then of moderns with ancients, and afterwards of ancients with others more ancient till (8) hoped to find my way through the wilderness of these editions into the fair country, the poet's real habitation.

Hanmer says: (I) have noted obscurities and absurdities introduced into the text, and according to my best

judgment (I have tried) to restore the general sense and purity of it.

Steevens says: I would rather support old readings than introduce new ones.

Johnson and Steevens say of Verney, the translator of Spanish poetry, that when he comes to a dark, intricate, or obscure passage he puts asterisks with, "Either here the author did not understand his own meaning, or did not mean that I should understand him, for which reason I give him his way and pass it over."

(White's Scotchwoman "wad not hae the presoomtion to understand the meenister").

Colman says: The necessity of adhering to the old copies is established.

Malone says: In order to insure the genuine text (I) collate every word of every line of his (Shakespeare's) plays with the original and authentic copies.

Horne Tooke says: The First Folio in my opinion is the only edition worth regarding.

Caldecott says: One old text alone can under any just title, be received as an authenticated copy--the First Folio. A faithful editor can follow no other text.

Collier says: As to the order of the plays in my edition, I have thought we could not do better than adopt the course pursued in 1623.

Charles and Mary Clarke say: We have, of course, adopted the First Folio as the main guide in ascertaining the text.

Ingleby says: The text must be that of the First Folio... Of course the door is open to legitimate conjecture.. wherever the defective state of the text of the Quartos or the First Folio renders emendations expedient.

Nares says: The first Folio is of more authority as a text than any other.

Staunton says: I take the First Folio as the basis of my text throughout.

White says: The duty of an editor is performed when he puts the reader, as nearly as possible, in the same position for the apprehension of the author's meaning that he would have occupied if he had been contemporary with him and received from him a correct copy of his writings.

Corson says: In all cases where the original text has not been followed, reasons have been given.

Marshall says in his preface to Irving's Shakespeare:- The First Folio has been followed except in a few instances in the treatment of words in this edition.

The editors of the Cambridge Shakespeare say: We admit no corrections because better grammar, rhythm or sense, unless the First Folio is altogether impossible.

Furness says: Who am I that I should thrust myself in between the student and the text, as though in me resided the power to restore Shakespeare's words?

"If (I) should be mistaken in thinking that everybody would prefer Shakespeare's own expressions, proved to convey his own sentiments, 'tis presumed (my) Love and Esteem for

Shakespeare will procure (my) pardon."¹

4. Description of the First Folio.

Farmer says that Shakespeare had a full share in distressing the spirit of that restless man Prynne (author of *Histriomastix*, the Players Scourge), who writes, "Some play-books are grown from Quarto into Folio, which yet bear so good a price and sale that I cannot but with grief relate it-- Shakespeare's Plaies are printed in the best Crowne paper, far better than most Bibles."

The First Folio gives 36 plays--all but *Pericles*--of those now attributed by all to Shakespeare as author. These are classed as Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. Later editions usually follow the same order. Bulloch says, "The order of plays is as congenial to the student mind as the order of the Books of the Bible to the whole English people."

Troilus and Cressida is omitted from the Index. The date of the edition is 1623.²

A. Verses.

Of this volume, the notable features for us to consider are the Verses to the Reader by Ben Jonson; the Title-Page with the portrait, and the title itself; the "Fore-Words" of the editors, Heminge and Condell; and the irregularities of paging, the versification, and the printing: because these features have had significance in determining the genuineness and authenticity of the book.

Ben Jonson's Verses:--

"This Figure, that thou here seest put,

1. Holt

2. The Baker copy of the First Folio in the Lenox Library, New York, bears the date 1622. Shakespearean scholars judge the second "2" to be a "3" in broken type.

It was for gentle Shakespeare cut," &c., are the best authority for the Droeshout engraving opposite, as a portrait of Shakespeare. Collier calls attention to the fact that Jonson would have been careful how he applauded the likeness when so many persons living could have contradicted him. Its genuineness is also verified, of course, by Shakespeare's friends and partners at the Globe Theatre, the editors Heminge and Condell.

"who shall offer to point out any print of Shakespeare more like him than the rest?" asks Reed.

Of all the likenesses, the Droeshout print, the Stratford bust, the Chandos head only are generally considered genuine. The bust is doubtless the best-authenticated likeness.

Marshall's head is taken from the Droeshout, but smaller.

Zucchera's portrait has no authority. Jansen's portrait was painted by Cornelius Jansen, probably for the Earl of Southampton. The German death mask some believe in; more do not. During the great Shakespeare revival in Garrick's time, there appeared two portraits of Shakespeare--the Stace picture and the Bellows picture, which were denounced as spurious. Ireland promised a full-length, life-size portrait of Shakespeare in oils. The Boydell-Felton portrait was accepted by Ritson, Douce, Farmer, Boaden, and others. When Steevens approved it as authentic, giving it preference over the "abominable imitation of humanity," the Droeshout engraving,

having previously favored the latter, his excuse was Benedick's: 'When I said that I would die a bachelor, I did not think that I should live till I were married.'

Over Shakespeare's tomb in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford is a bust of Shakespeare on a monument, erected by his daughter within six or seven years after his death. Mr. Story, the sculptor, came to the conclusion that it was made from a death-mask.

The Chandos protrait, formerly owned by the Duke of Chandos, is painted on canvas, and to Sir Joshua Reynolds seemed incomplete. Some have supposed it was painted by Burbadge, but more are agreed that it was the work of one John Taylor, a possible relative of Joseph Taylor, the actor of Shakespeare's Hamlet. No likeness is better known, from it are taken most of the engravings of the poet's countenance now in circulation.

The Droeshout portrait is a coarse specimen of art. Its very defects, in Collier's opinion, are a recommendation, since they serve to show it genuine and faithful. Heminge and Condell, he says, would not have chosen an unskillful painting if it had not been a striking likeness.

C. Title-page.

The Title-page of the First Folio declares the author of the plays to be Mr. William Shakespeare.

"Glorious transcripts of the Age of Elizabeth," exclaims Morgan. "By what Immortal?"

Howells says that Shakespeare possessed that apparitional

quality of some great minds which kept him largely unknown to those who thought themselves his intimates, and has at last left him a sort of doubt.

Blades says: Shakespeare has been proved a Butcher, a School-master, a Woolman, a Skewer-Sharpener, a Farmer, a Street-arab, a Lawyer, a Surgeon, an Anatomist, a Chemist, a Physiologist, a Mad-doctor, a Prophet, a Soldier, a Sailor, a Musician, a Botanist, an Entomologist, an Ornithologist, a Zoologist, an Ethnologist, an Alchemist, a Sorcerer, a Roman Catholic, a Protestant, a Bible-reader, a Church-man, an Atheist, Lord Bacon, a Myth. (Blades himself proves him a printer).

Delia Bacon originated the theory that Bacon wrote the plays. W. H. Smith was the first Englishman to adopt her views. Lord Palmerston and others were converted.

Since, however, acute intellects have never been able to prove the contrary, the plays are believed to be, as the first editors declare, "Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, Tragedies."

Caldecott says: We call our author Shakespeare (not Shake-speare). Winsor asks, (the question being suggested by the three illegible signatures which are the only bits of Shakespeare's hand-writing, that have come down to us) "Was Shakespeare, Shapleigh?" Those same signatures, as is well-known, have been read by experts, "Shakespere," "Shaxpere," "Shakspeare," &c.

Halliwell sums up the question of the spelling of Shakespeare's name, by saying that Orthography was unsettled in Shakespeare's time. Shakespeare is sufficiently established upon the authority of Ben Jonson and Shakespeare's other contemporaries who were men of learning.

D. Forewords.

Heminge and Condell claim to print from Shakespeare's "True and Original Copies."

(Steevens thinks that their preface was written by Ben Jonson).

The careful study of the text of Romeo and Juliet, Dr. Furness says, will show how little we can rely upon having the true text as Shakespeare wrote it in those plays for which the First Folio is our earliest authority. The truth is, Craik says, that the passages are to be counted thousands, in which there is reason either more or less strongly to suspect, or unhesitatingly to condemn and reject the readings of the First Folio.

Condemn it as we may, 'still is its (the First Folio') name in great account, it still hath power to charm': says Hunter. Craik himself adds: The rare and precious old volume brings us while we read it into closer communion with Shakespeare. The glory of the poetry blazes out with added force from the very homeliness and rudeness of the material form the same as if one of the plays should be acted as at first. Colman says: In exhibiting Shakespeare's text purified from modern innovation, no injury will be done to his fame; while

a knowledge of our language, its progress, merits and defects, will be promoted by its faithful display in his writings by one who will ever be its greatest boast.

The publication of the First Folio, by Heminge and Condell, was, Collier says, a monument ot Shakespeare.

A printed copy of a play, as Furness points out, which has been used at the theatre for twenty years, and had changes in the text here and there, and stage directions added, might perhaps pass in the opinion of Shakespeare's fellow-actors (and editors) as quite adequately making good their assertion that they print from the "True Originall Copies." "This is our province," "who only gather his works, and give them you."

"It may be safely asserted that the First Folio is the most interesting and valuable book in English literature....

...Its value increases every day, for day by day it is more clearly ascertained that many of the subtler meanings of passages in the works of Shakespeare depend upon minute indications and peculiarities which are alone to be traced in the original printed text."*

E. Paging, Versification, Punctuation.

From irregularities in the paging of the First Folio; by different commentators, different conclusions and drawn. The opinion is general that Troilus and Cressida is paged out of order, for the same reason that its title is omitted from the table of Contents; namely because, for some rease, this play could not be secured by the editors until after the press work began. Knight thinks that Boman and Whalley,

*Halliwell

possessors of a single copy of Troilus and Cressida, may have refused to come to terms; so that the play was not printed in its order. Two pages numbered show where it was to have been placed.

Ignatius Donnelly sees a further significance in the irregularities of the paging. "The world has never seen, will never see, such another 'Great and noble token' as the First Folio. The paging--irregular--proves the secret. Signatures or 'tokens' of printers point to the same. The 371st word on page 53, Histories, is "Bacon",*&c, &c. In this way, the First Folio declares itself to be written by Bacon; as Donnelly says.

As to the irregularities in versification, Bowen denies that Shakespeare is a lawless versifier: irregularities, he says, are proof of corruption. Wright says that all attempts of commentators to give regularity to the metre (according to their own notion of what the regular verse should be) must be made with diffidence and received with doubt. To Shakespeare we must ascribe the praise, Colman says, "unless Spenser divide it," of having first discovered to how much sweetness and harmony the English language could be softened

He avoided the formal monotony of those who went before him, and the laxity of his contemporaries. His inexhaustible variety of modulation never palls upon the ear. The music of cadence is adapted to the character which he paints. In meter as in thought, he is to be the standard. He vindicates himself, "Catching

*Donnelly

all persons in his craft of will," they speak. And Shakespeare is lost by altering the meter which he has made so expressive.

Lettsom says: If we can thoroughly ascertain the laws of Shakespeare's versification, we shall acquire the most effective ally to detect corruptions, and to restrain the license of conjecture.

Corson is persuaded that whether the author in his manuscript, or the editors of the printer, did the pointing it was done with remarkable regard to spoken language. "?" and "!", he says, in the First Folio, are distinguished with remarkable uniformity. The First Folio, Collier says, is a credit to the age: changes for the better in typography were made even when it was going through the press.

Paton says that Emphasis-Capitals bring the meaning of the Text, as it were to a focus. Shakespeare's meaning is the "Heart of heart," and he claims that the Emphasis-Capitals in this are Confidential Servants, or body-guards. He says: Who could have placed these 40,000 special capital letters where they are, following all the subtleties of the Poet's thought, is a Shakespeare.

II. The First Folio not Shakespeare.

The errors in the First Folio are estimated at half a score to a page, or one to every ten lines. If in one scene, Hunter says, there are ten passages in which the text has suffered deterioration, is it not manifest that something

remains to be done before we can say that we fully enjoy our beloved Shakespeare and what he hath left us?

"We care not from what cause the abounding and pervading errors have arisen. If those who gave the First Folio to the world took all the pains that they could, so much the worse. Our business is to ascertain and assert the truth, we stand up for Shakespeare against the standing libels of the First Folio, and the incompetency, carelessness, and blundering of the persons by whom the dramatic works were originally given to the world through the press."*

1. On account of Shakespeare Himself.

Of all trustees to futurity, Warburton says, commend me to Shakespeare who not only left it to time to do him justice, as it would but to find him out as it could. Like an ostrich, Capell says, who drops its eggs at random, is Shakespeare who is at once the greatest instance of genius in producing noble things, and of negligence in providing for them.

He died without, so far as is known, having made an attempt to collect and print his works.

Various reasons are assigned. Capell and Furness think that his design to publish was formed too late to be put into execution. Dr. Johnson suggests that perhaps he was negligent of fame, or superior of mind-despising his own performances, when compared with his powers, and judging those works unworthy to be preserved, which critics of following ages were to contend for the fame of restoring and explaining. Modesty, according to Malone, made him set little value on

* Craik

his inimitable production, and made him patiently endure the miserable trash of others, imputed to him. Our belief is, says Knight, that Shakespeare derived profit from the publication of his works from 1596 to 1603; but that he then made the arrangement with the proprietors of the Globe Theatre--of whom he was chief--to give them absolute monopoly of his later and most important productions. Seymour declares him to have been unmindful of everything but his ease and profit, and wholly indifferent to the applause of posterity.

Though for what reason, among so many offered on authority, Shakespeare did not give his plays his supervision, we cannot determine; that he did not give them such supervision we know. In so far, then, the authorized edition of them is not what it might have been, had he edited them, and in that degree the plays fail to express him.

2. On account of Early Plays set in.

Whole passages from previous writings occur in the First Folio. From the Library of literary properties belonging to the theater, Shakespeare selected plays, which he adopted, assimilated and endowed with life.

Boswell says that it is almost certain that Shakespeare transcribed a whole scene almost verbatim from an old play of Taming the Shrew, and incorporated it into his own play on the same subject. Halliwell-Phillipps inclines to the conjecture that Titus Andronicus is an older play upon the same theme as one by Shakespeare and that the editors of the First Folio, finding

no other version in their collection of plays, through mistake or ignorance, inserted this one as Shakespeare's. Probably what occasioned some plays to be Shakespeare's--says Pope--was only this: that they were pieces produced by unknown authors, or fitted up for the theatre, while it was under his Administration; and no owner claiming them, they were adjudged to him, as they give strays to the Lord of the Manor.

Capell considers Hamlet, King John, Merry Wives of Windsor, Taming the Shrew, as first drafts of mutilated and surreptitious impressions, also II & III Henry VI (contentions of the Houses of York and Lancaster), Romeo and Juliet, and Othello, Knight affirms of Timon of Athens that it is a play of art inferior to Shakespeare not wholly--like Taming the Shrew and King John--rewritten, but so far remodelled that entire scenes of Shakespeare have been substituted for entire scenes of the elder play, almost wholly confined to the character of Timon--Shakespeare's conception of Greek Misanthropes.

I Henry VI, Halliwell-Phillipps says, could not possibly have been written by Shakespeare, though he may have added a few touches to it.

Touches of an inferior hand are seen by the quick minds of Shakespeare's commentators, even if they cannot--as they can in many cases--find the composition from which they came.

The First Folio is modified, as the product of Shakespeare's genius, by the passages of Early Plays set in.

3. On account of Managers and Prompters.

The works of Shakespeare in the First Folio came forth altered, amended, and degraded by the Managers and Prompters of the theatres. The edition was printed from the Prompter's Book, or piece-meal parts written out for the use of the actors: these, of course, cut or added to, arbitrarily; as might be done justly, as the manager might think, with manuscripts bought and paid for, and not copy-righted by the author. The plays were the property of the theater, and treated as such. Pope says that he has seen one quarto where several passages were added in a written had, which are afterwards to be found in the First Folio.

Scenes are transposed, and shuffled backward and forward. Many verses are omitted entirely, and others transposed. Some characters were confounded, or two put into one; for want of a competent number of actors, it is supposed. In the Quarto of Midsummer Night's Dream, Shakespeare introduces the Master of the Revels called Philostratus; all of whose part is given to another character (Algeus) in subsequent editions. Similar changes are made in Hamlet and King Lear. Sometimes, perhaps, where a speech is put into the mouth of the wrong person, and the Author seems chargeable with making him speak out of character, it is for the reason that a governing player is allowed to snatch it from the unworthy lips of an underling.

The names of actors are prefixed to speeches in Much Ado About Nothing.

Where they thought fit, managers made a breach

in the play, for the sake of Music, Masks, or Monsters.

Furness calls attention to Act III, Scene I, lines 168-170 of Midsummer Night's Dream, in the First Folio, where Titania's call is converted into a stage direction, with Enter before it, and the little fairies as they come in respond, 'Ready,' without having been summoned.

When, under the influence of the Puritans, Stat. 3 Jac. I c. 21 was passed, prohibiting the use of the sacred name in any plays or interludes (10 pounds penalty for every offence), the managers altered the play-house copies of Shakespeare in accordance. Someone has called attention to the fact that the name of God occurs sixty-two times in the First Folio, in spite of the statute, and offers as a reason that Shakespeare's company was indulged because it was the King's players. An additional reason, it is thought, is that Shakespeare was on intimate terms with some of the most powerful men at court. Authority to change and to retain, however, was arrogated to themselves by the managers.

The complete ownership of the plays of Shakespeare by the theatre in which they were brought out, made a very obvious source of errors in the text.

4. On account of Actors.

Steevens says that Shakespeare was originally an author correct in the utmost degree, but maimed and interpolated by the neglect or presumption of the players. Is it likely, Furness asks, that many leaves of legible manuscript

would survive a popular play, which had been handled over and over again by indifferent actors or by careless boys; like Midsummer Night's Dream, for twenty-five years? Johnson says that the plays were perhaps sometimes mutilated by the actors for the sake of shortening speeches.

Some of the stage copies were degraded by the alteration and butchery of the players. Dyce says that their ignorance and presumption conspired to ruin the genuine readings of a vast number of passages. Reed says that their suspected interpolations cannot be expelled.

The foisted in low stuff and poor witticisms and conceits for which, Hamner says, Shakespeare must not be condemned; for he "hath left upon record sequel proof of how much he despised them":--(Clown in Merchant of Venice), "I think the true grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none but parrots." Furness adds that it is extremely probable that French ribaldry was first inserted by a different hand. He quotes Nash, in Lenten Stuff, 1599, who assures us that in his play of Isle of Dogs, "foure acts, without his consent, or the least presse of his drift or scope, were supplied by players." In Hamlet, Shakespeare complains of the same usage, where he wishes that those who play the Clowns would speak no more than is set down for them.

An unusual word, we find changed for one more popular; which seems to have been the work of one who knew the audience of an illiterate age, rather than by the consent of the author. The works probably suffered presumptuous corrections of players,

after Shakespeare's death. In Macbeth, a "Show of eight kings is directed, and Banquo last, with a glass in his hand" (Act IV, Sc. I), in the First Folio. Malone says that this is proof that the very few stage directions are not taken from Shakespeare's manuscripts, but furnished by players; for, from the very words which Shakespeare has written for Macbeth, it is manifest that the glass ought to be borne by the eighth king, and not by Banquo.

Bowen says that the marginal notes in Collier's Second Folio, which public taste seemed to him all too ready to incorporate into the received text, were, in his opinion emendations made by poor players of the first half of the seventeenth century.

Walker gives preference to the early Quartos over the First Folio; because the quartos, he says, must have been more correct than the 'scraps and orts of mouthing players' found in the First Folio.

The transposition and shuffling of scenes previously mentioned as the work of the theater managers, Theobald says, was done to humor the caprice or supposed convenience of some particular actor.

Pope says that whatever had been added by actors, or had stolen from their mouths into the written parts, was from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all stands charged upon the author.

When, at length, Shakespeare's plays struggled into light, in the First Folio, Boswell says, they were so "disguised

and travestied, that no classick author, after having run ten secular stages through the blind cloisters of monks and canons, ever came out in so half maimed and mangled a condition."

5. On account of Transcribers and Printers.

"Such is the authority of the First Folio, that had it been printed with ordinary care, there would be no appeal from the text. Unfortunately the precious First Folio is one of the worst printed books ever issued from the press--with grossest possible errors in orthography, punctuation, arrangement."* There are 20,000 "minor errors" according to Collier. Pope instances the notes of direction to the property-men for their movables, "My queen is murdered. Ring the little bell." Words are transformed past recognition, lines transposed, sentences broken by a full point followed by a capital letter: sentences have members displaced and mingled in incomprehensible confusion. The punctuation is rude and negligent even when not palpably blundering. Verse is printed as prose, and prose as verse. All possible varieties of typographical derangement abound in the volume in the careful printing of which, more than all others, save one, the world was most interested.

We have, Ingleby says, imprefect copies at first, and a misprinted text at last. (Heath says that the Quartos are equally ill-printed). Though far from what would now be called a well-printed book, however, Craik says that the typography of the First Folio is better than the common run of English popular printing at that date. Knight and Collier say that, all things considered, no other dramatic production of the time was so

*White

well printed; except, Collier says, Ben Jonson's plays (1616), which he himself superintended.

It is certainly better than the religious work, of which Disraeli makes mention; which, consisting of only 172 pages, had an Errata of 15 pages at the end.

Furness says that the copies of the First Folio vary, and Winsor says that evidently the press was stopped from time to time to make unimportant changes. Clark and Wright, and Craik say that different plays in the First Folio are so unequal in point of correctness as in a great degree to excuse conflicting judgments.

To understand why the text of Shakespeare is and ever will be debatable ground, one must not be ignorant of the state of typographical art in the seventeenth century. It is in the nature of things that these mistakes should occur when probably reader, compositor, and pressman were all one person. "Newspapers have changed," says a recent newspaper, "since the time when Benjamin Franklin set his own words, and then printed them, using his foot to work the printing press."

Fleay distinguishes, in the text of Shakespeare:--

- a. Errors of writing (not corrected by the author or proof-reader, as now).
- b. Errors in reading (when the setter-up of type misreads the copy).
- c. Errors of hearing (when the "copy" has been taken down by dictation, or from notes in shorthand at the theater from recitations of actors in private).

- d. Errors of printing ("foul case," when the type-setter takes letters from the wrong font--C's and G's mixed, for instance; or "ductus literarum"--when the eye of type-setter is led off to another line, and he misplaces a word.)
- e. Errors of correction (the printer not understanding and not following marginal corrections).
- f. Errors of partial alteration (from author writing the second part of a sentence on a different plan from the first part, perhaps through the exigencies of rhyme; and then not altering the first part to correspond).
- g. Errors of accident (from destruction of manuscripts, falling out of type, obliteration of words and lines, &c.).

A vast number of errors in the First Folio, as has been said, which make it untrue to Shakespeare's manuscript, are due to the transcriber and the compositor. The author did not correct the copy, and there was no proof-reader. The manuscript was read to the transcriber, and the copy thus produced was sent immediately to the printer. That our author, because of this means, was doubly exposed to blunders, exclusive of those in the printing office, we need not be surprised to hear; for the person who read, if he had a bad articulation, and the transcriber

an unchaste ear, words most comprehensible to the latter would unquestionably be inserted. A favorite piece, Steevens says, only got into print when it was copied by ear "for a double sale would bring a suspicion of dishonesty." Craik says that even Shakespeare's manuscripts, if in service in the theaters for years, if not worn out, must have suffered injury and become illegible or legible with difficulty. Nor may his handwriting, even when not partially obliterated, have been easy to decipher.

Apropos of dictation, however, by which the transcriber at least very commonly received literary material from the stage; we have it upon the authority of Conrad Zeltner, a learned printer of the seventeenth century, that type was also set from dictation, a person dictating to several printers at once passages from different parts of a work.

Plays were not designed for reading; and, appearing in print, were, for the most part, fraudulently obtained, and regarded as an injury to the stage which was proprietor of the manuscript. Shakespeare's work were transcribed by those who may be supposed to have seldom understood them, and transmitted by copyers equally unskillful, who multiplied errors. "All such reading as was never read," is some one's comment upon the accomplished results of Shakespeare's printers.

Heywood says:--"Some by stenography drew
The plot, put it in print,
Scarce one word true."

6. On account of Editors Heminge and Condell.

No more, however, say his commentators, have the manuscripts of Shakespeare been vitiated by sleepy and ignorant copyists, than the editio princeps has been by its publishers.

How many faults, Pope remarks, may have been unjustly laid to Shakespeare's account, from the arbitrary Additions, Expunctions, Transpositions, and corruptions of innumerable passages by the Ignorance and wrong corrections of them again by the impertinence of his first Editors!

Printing his plays at all, was, in the opinion of some one, prejudicial to the renown of a poet; who not rarely invented scenes only to be spoken, not read. This was in imitation of the Commedia del Arte, introduced from Italy. In the latter, however, the whole dialogue was improvised.

Hunter, Gould, Craik, Heath, Dyce, and the Cowden Clarkes agree that the editors performed their duty in a very imperfect manner for the First Folio. Gould says that they rather pitchforked the plays through the press than in any proper sense edited them. Not a play, according to Craik, is well, or even passably printed. Heath laments the misfortune felt by all who have the least pretence to taste or sentiment, that the publication of the works of the amazing genius Shakespeare hath fallen to the lot of most illiterate and incapable editors. Dyce declares that their carelessness conspired to ruin the genuine readings. The reason is, say Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, that Heminge and Condell were fellow-actors

of Shakespeare and scarcely fitted to be editors, as they allowed the First Folio to go unrevised, and some errors are so wildly blundering as to throw at fault the most discriminating judges.

The errors of the First Folio, in the opinion of Craik, make manifest that the editor was the head-workman of the printing office. Malone expresses great dissatisfaction with the condition of the text, but makes one Thomas Randolph the person who examined the manuscripts for it.

Heminge and Condell seem to have furnished the publishers with copies of Shakespeare's plays, which had been in use at the Globe Theater, White says. He adds that though this assured a text of the highest authenticity attainable, in the absence of the author's hand, in the case of many plays it did not even secure an immaculate text for the printer. Placing such manuscripts in the printer's hands, and writing the Dedication and Preface to the Volume seems to have been the limit of their editing, he thinks. Ingleby, Clark and Wright, Craik, and Bulloch agree. Heminge and Condell describe themselves as collectors, not editors. The editors of the Cambridge Shakespeare suggest that Heminge and Condell may have wished to write a smart preface, not the simple truth. "Overseeing," they say, means correcting manuscripts, not proof; for it does not appear that proof was sent to author or editor in those days.

Gentle Capell says, "He who waited till the river should run dry has less reason than editors would do, who suspended publication in the vain hope of rendering their work free from

literary and typographical errors."

Manifest injustice, Arrowsmith calls it, to fasten upon the editors of the First Folio, the blunders for which printers are clearly accountable, yet many annotators visit the sins of Jaggard upon Heminge and Condell. Editors could not publish a work free from literary and typographical errors. "In their preface they thought that they were telling the substantial truth, in those days when an editor's duty, hardly to this hour fully recognized--of following the ipsissima verba of the author--was almost unknown, when they were giving us a copy of Shakespeare's own hand-writing, that which they knew was printed directly from it, and which well might have been used many a time and oft on the stage by Shakespeare himself. Doubtless in their eyes, autographs, transcripts to the third and fourth generation, and printed books were much on the same level..... Publishing the First Folio was a business venture, without the hope of undue profit or fame."* (Paton calls Heminge and Condell "lovingly vigilant").

With all its faults, Gould says the world are under the deepest debt of gratitude to the original editors for collecting and publishing the works of Shakespeare. Furness adds: "Had Heminge and Condell foreseen what even no poet of that day however compact of all imagination could foresee, the fierce light which centuries after was destined to break on every syllable of every line, it is possible that they might have 'shrunk blinded by the glare,' the world would have lacked

*Furness

the Folio, and the current of literature have been for all time turned away."

Arrowsmith concludes, they preserved in an assembled volume the scattered treasures which lay dispersed, and it formed a source where diligence and patient investigation might pursue their labors with the best chance of discovering Shakespeare's whole wealth of brain production.

Conclusion.

The First Folio is the source where diligent and patient investigation may pursue their labors with the best chance of discovering Shakespeare's whole wealth of brain production. If it is not Shakespeare's text, it is, as Furness says, the nearest possible approach to it; which, however stubborn it may seem at times, yet often opens its treasures to our importunity, and reveals charms before unheard of.

But, says Horne Tooke, the First Folio has become so scarce and dear that few persons can obtain it: it is much to be wished that an edition were given *literatim* according to it.

Such a copy is given. Howard Staunton brought out a facsimile reprint of the First Folio by a photographic process. After infinite labor, and loss of health as well as capital, he brought it to a successful issue. Messrs. Chatto and Windus issued a reduced reproduction of it. Staunton's facsimile is not however, free from inaccuracies. The most recent reprint, by Mr. Lionel Booth, is probably the most

correct. Dr. Furness says that the variation of copies of the First Folio, has been generally known since Mr. Booth published his reprint.

(The Ashbee facsimiles of the Quartos are from pen sketches by Ashbee's hand.).

Mr. Halliwell-Phillips' reprint of the First Folio, brings the "most valuable book in English literature" to the least expensive form in which it is offered to the public. Gould says, "I recommend every one who wishes to know the First Folio, to become acquainted with Halliwell-Phillips' photograph of it. As far as what is visible goes one is as good as the other. Mr. Halliwell says that a facsimile does not pretend to supersede the necessity of reference to copies of ancient impression, but for all usual practical objects of study a cheap reproduction will place its owner on a level with the envied possessor of the far-famed original. Mr. Marsh, in his Lectures on Language, could have quoted Shakespeare's use of a particular word, so he felt, had he had at hand a Staunton reproduction or a Booth reprint.

I have observed, says Mr. White, that those who read Shakespeare most and understand him best do not use even critical editions except for occasional reference but take the text by itself pure and simple. "Let him...who desires to feel the greatest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all commentators... Let him read on through brightness and obscurity,

through integrity and corruption; let him preserve the comprehension of dialogue and interest in fable,....it is not very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this author's power of pleasing."¹

"An acquaintance with the mass of commentary is indispensable, however, to the thorough study of Shakespeare, though not to enjoyment of his plays...the time comes when we would fain catch every ray of light flashing from the immortal plays, and pluck the heart out of every mystery there; then we listen respectfully and gratefully to every passing thought which obscure passages have stirred and awakened in minds far finer than our own."²

"The time may come when every reader of Shakespeare will be to a certain extent his own editor. If to ascertain is impossible, then examine and weigh. With the command of libraries and printing which we now enjoy, Shakespeare ought to be better understood than he ever has been since his fellows Heminge and Condell first enriched their country with the dearest heirloom that it owns."³

The foundation of a right understanding of Shakespeare, says Knight, is love. "To read Shakespeare superficially is entertainment, to linger lovingly is enjoyment, to study him profoundly is wisdom moral and intellectual."⁴

"To your divers capacities you will find enough to draw and hold you, for his wit can no more be hid, then it could be lost. Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe."⁵

1. Johnson	2. Furness	3. Arrowsmith
4. Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke	5. Heminge and Condell	in preference to First

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