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Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence**

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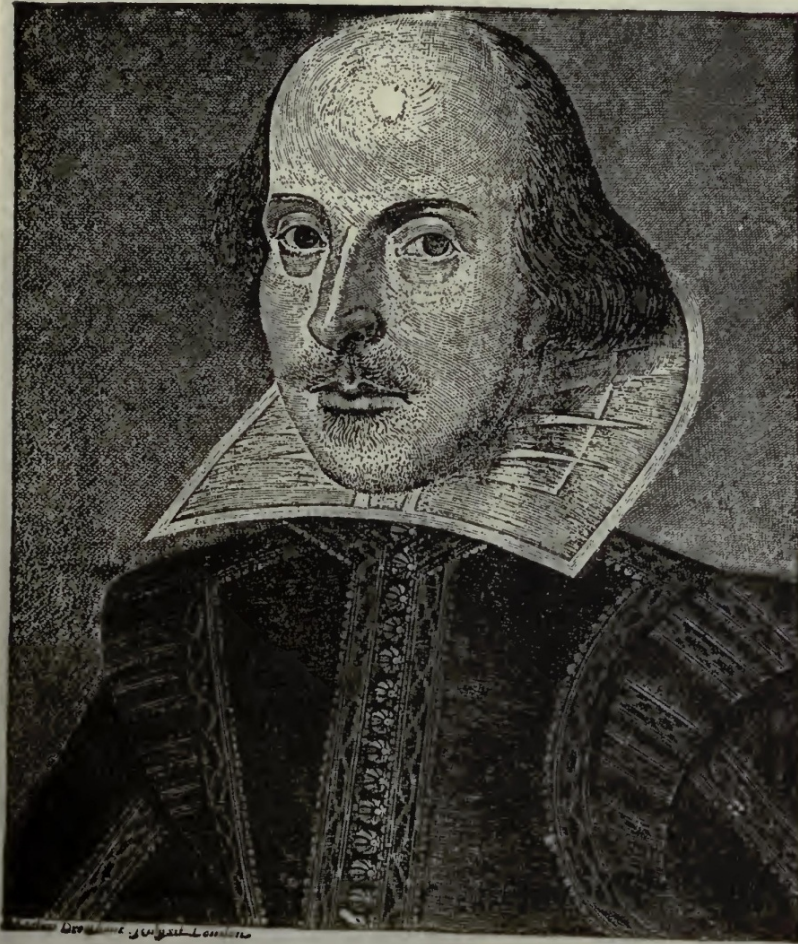
*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SHAKESPEARE MYTH ***

THE SHAKESPEARE MYTH
By Edwin Durning-Lawrence,
1912

Mr. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARES

COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES.

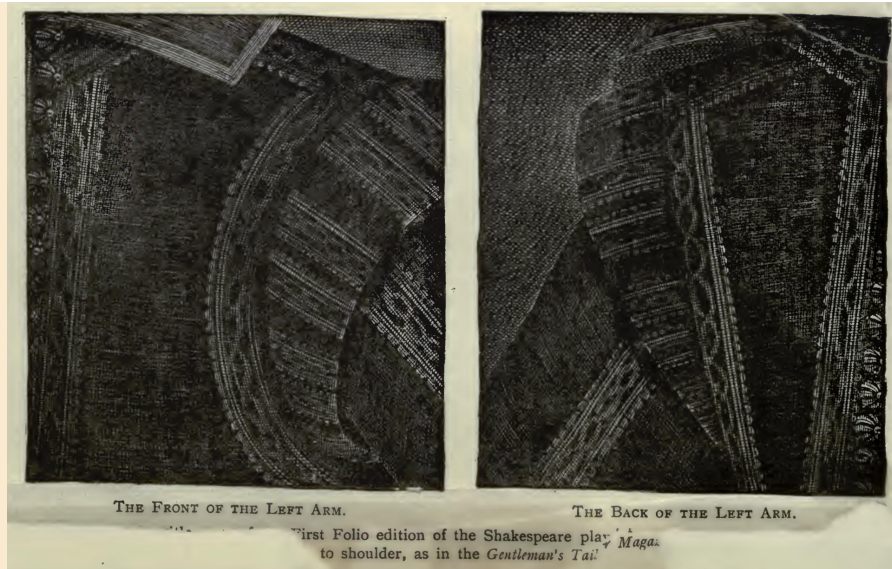
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LONDON
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623

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1912.

Original



[Original](#)

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Halliwell-Phillipps says: "*It was not till the Jubilee of 1769 that the tendency to the fabrication of Shakespeare anecdotes and relics at Stratford Museum became manifest. All kinds of deception have since been practised there.*"

THE FOLIO OF THE PLAYS, 1623.

IT is now universally admitted that the Plays known as Shakespeare's are the greatest "Birth of Time," the most wonderful product of the human mind which the world has ever seen, that they evince the ripest classical scholarship, the most perfect knowledge of Law, and the most intimate acquaintance with all the intricacies of the highest Court life.

The Plays as we know them, appeared in the Folio, published in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death in 1616. This volume contains thirty-six plays. Of this number only eight are substantially in the form in which they were printed in Shakespeare's lifetime. Six are greatly improved. Five are practically rewritten, and seventeen are not known to have been printed before Shakespeare's death, although thirteen plays of similar names are registered or in some way referred to.

The following particulars are mainly derived from Reed's "Bacon our Shakespeare," published 1902. The spelling of the first Folio of 1623 has, however, been strictly followed.

**THE EIGHT WHICH ARE PRINTED IN THE FOLIO
SUBSTANTIALLY AS THEY ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN
THE QUARTOS ARE:—**

1. Much ado about Nothing.
2. Loves Labour lost. *
3. Midsommer Nights Dreame.
4. The Merchant of Venice.
5. The First part of King Henry the fourth.
6. The Second part of K. Henry the fourth.
7. Romeo and Juliet.
8. The Tragedie of Troylus and Cressida. **

** Note.—The scene of the play is Navarre and one of the characters is Biron. A passport given to Bacon's brother Anthony in 1586 from the court of Navarre, is signed "Biron." (British Museum Add. MS. 4125).*

*** Note.—This has a new title and a Prologue in the Folio. This extremely learned play which we are told was "never clapper-clawd with the palmes of the vulger... or sullied with the smoaky breath of the multitude," has recently been shewn by Mrs. Hinton Stewart to be a satire upon the court of King James I.*

THE SIX WHICH HAVE BEEN GREATLY IMPROVED ARE:

1. The Life & death of Richard the second. Corrections throughout.
2. The Third part of King Henry the sixth. New title, 906 new lines, and many old lines retouched.
3. The Life & Death of Richard the Third. 193 new lines added, 2,000 lines retouched.
4. Titus Andronicus. One entire new scene added.
5. The Tragedy of Hamlet. Many important additions and omissions.
6. King Lear. 88 new lines, 119 lines retouched.

THE FIVE WHICH HAVE BEEN PRACTICALLY REWRITTEN ARE:—

1. The Merry Wives of Windsor. 1,081 new lines, the text rewritten.
2. The Taming of the Shrew. New title, 1,000 new lines added, and extensive revision.
3. The Life and Death of King John. New title, 1,000 new lines including one entire new scene. The dialogue rewritten.
4. The Life of King Henry the Fift. New title, the choruses and two new scenes added. Text nearly doubled in length.
5. The Second part of King Hen. the Sixt. New title, 1,139 new lines, and 2,000 old lines retouched.

[The practice of false-dating books of the Elizabethan period was not uncommon, instances of as much as thirty years having been discovered. It has been proved by Mr. A. W. Pollard, of the British Museum; by Mr. W. W. Greg, Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge; and by Prof. W. J. Neidig, that four of these, viz., "A Midsommer Nights Dreame," and "The Merchant of Venice," both dated 1600, and "King Lear," and "Henry the Fift," both dated 1608, were in fact printed in 1619, three years after Shakespeare's death.]

THE THIRTEEN WHICH SEEM NOT TO HAVE BEEN PRINTED BEFORE SHAKESPEARE'S DEATH,

although plays of somewhat similar names are registered or in some way referred to, are:—

1. The Tempest.
2. The First part of King Henry the Sixt.
3. The two Gentlemen of Verona.
4. Measure for Measure.
5. The Comedy of Errours.
6. As you Like it.
7. All is well, that Ends well.
8. Twelfe-Night, or what you will.
9. The Winters Tale.
10. The Life and death of Julius Cæsar.
11. The Tragedy of Macbeth.
12. Anthony and Cleopater.
13. Cymbeline King of Britaine.

THE FOUR WHICH SEEM NEITHER TO HAVE BEEN PRINTED NOR REFERRED TO TILL AFTER SHAKESPEARE'S DEATH ARE:— *

1. The Life of King Henry the Eighth.
2. The Tragedy of Coriolanus.
3. Timon of Athens.
4. Othello, the Moore of Venice.

Of the above plays, most of those which were printed in Shakespeare's lifetime originally appeared anonymously; indeed, no play bore Shakespeare's name until New Place, Stratford-on-Avon, had been purchased for him and £1,000 given to him in 1597. The first play to bear the name of W. Shakespere was Loves Labors Lost, which appeared in the following year—1598.

** Note.—The above very strongly confirms Mrs. Gallup's reading of the Cypher, viz.: that there are twenty-two new plays in the Folio. The Tempest, with Timon of Athens and Henry VIII., seems to be largely concerned with the story of Bacon's fall from his high offices in 1621, and Emile Montégut, writing in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" of August, 1865, says that the Tempest is evidently the author's literary testament.*

Stratford, to which Shakespeare was sent in 1597, was at that period much farther from London for all practical purposes than Canada is to-day, and Shakespeare did not go there for week ends, but he permanently resided there, only very occasionally visiting London, when he lodged at Silver Street with a hairdresser named Mountjoy.

It is exceedingly important and informing to remember that Shakespeare's name never appeared upon any play until he had been permanently sent away from London, and that his wealth was simply the money—£1,000—given to him in order to induce him to incur the risk entailed by allowing his name to appear upon the plays. Such risk was by no means inconsiderable, because Queen Elizabeth was determined to punish the author of Richard the Second, a play which greatly incensed her; she is reported to have said, "Seest thou not that I am Richard the Second?" There is no evidence that Shakespeare ever earned so much as ten shillings in any one week while he lived in London.

At Stratford, Shakespeare sold corn, malt, etc., and lent small sums of money, and indeed, was nothing more than a petty tradesman, a fact of which we are quite clearly informed in "The Great Assises holden at Parnassus," printed in 1645, where Bacon is put as "Chancellor of Parnassus," i.e., greatest of the world's poets, and Shakespeare appears as "the writer of weekly accounts." This means that the only literature for which Shakespeare was responsible consisted of his small tradesman's accounts sent out weekly by his clerk; because, as will be shewn presently, **Shakespeare was totally unable to write a single letter of his own name.**

Let us now return to the Folio of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623. On the title page appears a large half-length figure drawn by Martin Droeshout, which is known as the Authentic (i.e., the authorised) portrait of Shakespeare. Martin Droeshout, I should perhaps mention, is scarcely likely to have ever seen Shakespeare, as he was only 15 years of age when Shakespeare died. On the cover of this pamphlet will be found a reduced facsimile of the title page of the Folio of 1623. It is almost inconceivable that people with eyes to see should have looked at this so-called portrait for 287 years without perceiving that it consists of a ridiculous, "putty-faced mask," fixed upon a stuffed dummy clothed in a trick coat. *

** Note.—This stuffed dummy is surmounted by a mask with an ear attached to it not in the least resembling any possible human ear, because, instead of being hollowed, it is rounded out something like the back side of a shoehorn, so as to form a sort of cup to cover and conceal any real ear that might be behind it.*

The "Tailor and Cutter" newspaper, in its issue of 9th March, 1911, stated that the figure, put for Shakespeare, in the 1623 Folio, was undoubtedly clothed in an impossible coat composed of the back and the front of the same left arm. And in the following April the "Gentleman's Tailor Magazine," under the heading of a "Problem for the Trade," prints the two halves of the coat put tailor fashion, shoulder to shoulder, as shewn here on page 2, and says:—

"It is passing strange that something like three centuries should have been allowed to elapse before the tailor's handiwork should have been appealed to in this particular manner.

"The special point is that in what is known as the authentic portrait of William Shakespeare, which appears in the Celebrated first Folio edition, published in 1623, a remarkable sartorial puzzle is apparent.

"The tunic, coat, or whatever the garment may have been called at the time, is so strangely illustrated that the right-hand side of the forepart is obviously the left-hand side of the back part; and so gives a harlequin appearance to the figure, which it is not unnatural to assume was intentional, and done with express object and purpose.

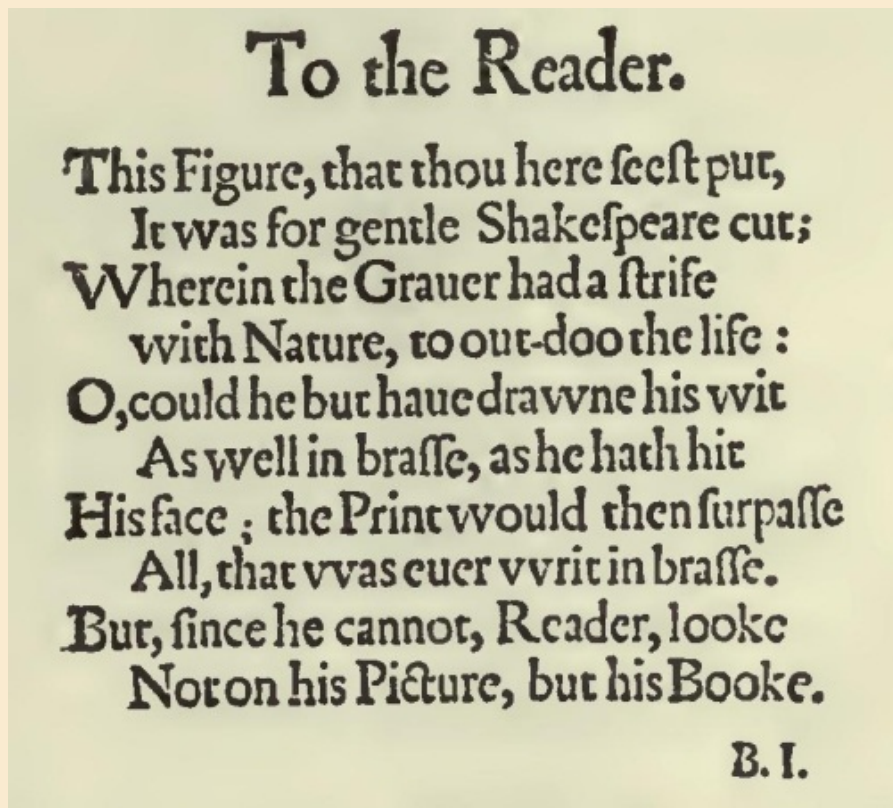
"Anyhow, it is pretty safe to say that if a Referendum of the trade was taken on the question whether the two illustrations shown above [exactly as our illustration on page 2] represent the foreparts of the same garment, the polling would give an unanimous vote in the negative."

Facing the title page of the 1623 first Folio of the plays, on which the stuffed and masked dummy appears, is the following description (of which I give a photo-facsimile), which, as it is signed B. I., is usually ascribed to Ben Jonson:—

To the Reader.

This Figure, that thou here seest pur,
It was for gentle Shackspeare cut;
Wherein the Grauer had a strife

with Nature, to out-doo the life:
O, could he but haue drawne his wit
As well in brasse, as he hath hit
His face, the Print would then surpasse
All, that was cuer writ in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
Not on his Picture, but his Booke.
B.I.=



Original

If my readers will count all the letters in the above, including the four v's, which are used instead of the two w's, they will find that there are 287 letters, a masonic number often repeated throughout the Folio. My book, "Bacon is Shakespeare," was published in 1910 (i.e., 287 years after 1623), and tells for the first time the true meaning of these lines.

B. I. never calls the ridiculous dummy a portrait, but describes it as "the Figure," "put for" (i.e., instead of), and as "the Print," and as "his Picture," and he distinctly tells us to look not at his (ridiculous) Picture, but (only) at his Booke.

It has always been a puzzle to students who read these verses why B. I. lavished such extravagant praise upon what looks so stiff and wooden a figure, about which Gainsborough, writing in 1768, says: "Damn the original picture of him... for I think a stupider face I never beheld except D... k's... it is impossible that such a mind and ray of heaven, could shine with such a face and pair of eyes."

To those capable of properly reading the lines, B. I. clearly tells the whole story. He says, "The Graver had a strife with Nature to out-doo the life." In the New English Dictionary, edited by Sir James Murray, we find more than six hundred words beginning with "out." Every one of these, with scarcely an exception, must, in order to be fully understood, be read reversed; outfit is fit out, outfall is fall out, outburst is burst out, etc. Outlaw does not mean outside the law, but lawed out by some legal process. "Out-doo" therefore must here mean "do out," and was continually used for hundreds of years in that sense. Thus in the "Cursor Mundi," written in the Thirteenth Century, we read that Adam was "out-done" [of Paradise]. In 1603 Drayton published his "Barons' Wars," and in Book V. s. li. we read,

For he his foe not able to withstand,
Was ta'en in battle and his eyes out-done.

B. I. therefore tells us that the Graver has done out the life, that is, covered it up and masked it. The Graver has done this so cleverly that for 287 years (i.e., from 1623 till 1910) learned pedants and others have looked at the dummy without perceiving the trick that had been played upon them.

B. I. then proceeds to say:—"O, could he but have drawne his wit as well in brasse, as he hath hit his face." Hit, at that period, was often used as the past participle of hide, with the meaning hid or hidden, exactly as we find in Chaucer, in "The Squieres Tale," where we read, ii. 512, etc.,

Right as a serpent hit him under floures
Til he may seen his tyme for to byte.

This, put into modern English prose, means, Just as a serpent hid himself under the flowers until he might see his time to bite.

I have already explained how B. I. tells the reader not to look at the picture, but at the book; perhaps the matter may be still more clear if I give a paraphrase of the verses.

TO THE READER.

The dummy that thou seest set here
Was put instead of Shake-a-speare;
Wherein the graver had a strife
To extinguish all of Nature's life.
O, could he but have drawn his mind
As well as he's concealed behind
His face; the Print would then surpasse
All, that was ever writ in brasse.
But since he cannot, do not looke
On his mask'd Picture, but his Booke.

"Do out" appears as the name of the little instrument something like a pair of snuffers, called a "douter," which was formerly used to extinguish candles. Therefore, I have correctly substituted "extinguish" for "out-do." At the beginning I have substituted "dummy" for "figure" because we are told that the figure is "put for" (that is, put instead of) Shakespeare. "Wit" in these lines means absolutely the same as "mind" which I have used in its place, because I feel sure that it refers to the fact that upon the miniature of Bacon in his eighteenth year, painted by Hilliard in 1578, we read:—"Si tabula daretur digna animum mallem," the translation of which is—"If one could but paint his mind!"

This important fact which can neither be disputed nor explained away, viz., that the figure upon the title page of the first Folio of the plays in 1623 put to represent Shakespeare is a doubly left-armed and stuffed dummy, surmounted by a ridiculous putty-faced mask, disposes once and for all of any idea that the mighty plays were written by the drunken, illiterate clown of Stratford-on-Avon, and shows us quite clearly that the name "Shakespeare" was used as a left-hand, a pseudonym, behind which the great author, Francis Bacon, wrote securely concealed. In his last prayer, Bacon says, "I have though in a despised weed procured the good of all men," while in the 76th "Shakespeare" sonnet he says:—

Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keepe invention in a noted weed.
That every word doth almost sel my name
Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed.

Weed signifies disguise, and is used in that sense by Bacon in his "Henry VII.," where he says, "This fellow... clad himself like an Hermite and in that weede wandered about the countrie."

It is doubtful if at that period it was possible to discover a meaner disguise, a more "despised weed," than the pseudonym of William Shakespeare, of Stratford-on-Avon, Gentleman. Bacon also specially refers to his own great "*descent* to the Good of Mankind" in the wonderful prayer which is evidently his dedication of the "Immortal Plays."

THIS IS THE FORM AND RULE OF OUR ALPHABET

May God, the Creator, Preserver, and Renewer of the Universe,
protect and govern this work, both in its ascent to his Glory, and
in its descent to the Good of Mankind, for the sake of his Mercy
and good Will to Men, through his only Son (Immanuel). God
us.

In the "Promus," which is the name of Bacon's notebook now in the MSS. department of the British Museum, Bacon tells us that "Tragedies and Comedies are made of one Alphabet." His beautiful prayer, described as the Form and Rule of our Alphabet, was first published in 1679 in "Certaine Genuine Remains of Sir Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam and Viscount St. Albans," where it appears as a fragment of a book written by the Lord Verulam and entitled, "The Alphabet of Nature." In the preface we are told that this work is commonly said to be lost. "The Alphabet of Nature" is, of course, "The Immortal Plays," known to us as Shakespeare's, which hold "The Mirror up to Nature," and are now no longer lost, but restored to their great author, Francis Bacon.

BACON SHEWN BY CONTEMPORARY TITLE PAGES TO BE THE AUTHOR OF THE SHAKESPEARE PLAYS.

I HAVE shewn on pp. 6 to 9 that the title page of the 1623 Folio of the Plays known as Shakespeare's is adorned with a supposed portrait of Shakespeare, which is, in fact, a putty-faced mask supported on a stuffed dummy wearing a coat with two left arms, to inform us that the Stratford clown was a "left-hand," a "dummy," a "pseudonym," behind which the great Author was securely concealed.

This fact disposes once and for all of the Shakespeare myth, and I will now proceed to prove by a few contemporary evidences that the real author was Francis Bacon.

I place before the reader on page 11 a photographically enlarged copy of the engraved title page of Bacon's work, the *De Augmentis*, which was published in Holland in 1645. "*De Augmentis*" is the Latin name for the work which appeared in English as the *Advancement of Learning*.

This same engraved title page was for more than one hundred years used for the title page of Vol. I. of various editions of Bacon's collected works in Latin, which were printed abroad. The same subject, but entirely redrawn, was also employed for other foreign editions of the *De Augmentis*, but nothing in any way resembling it was printed in England until quite recently, when photo-facsimile copies were made of it for the purpose of discussing the authorship of the "Shakespeare" plays. In this title page we see in the foreground on the right of the picture (the reader's left) Bacon seated with his right hand in brightest light resting upon an open book beneath which is a second book (shall we venture to say that these are the *De Augmentis* and the *Novum Organum*?), while with his left-hand in deepest shadow, Bacon is putting forward a mean man, who appears to the careless observer to be running away with a third book. Let us examine carefully this man. We shall then perceive that he is clothed in a goat skin. The word tragedy is derived from the Greek word *tragodos*, which means an actor dressed in a goat skin. We should also notice that the man wears a false breast to enable him to represent a woman; there were no women actors at the time of Shakespeare's plays. The man, therefore, is intended to represent the tragic muse. With his left hand, and with his left hand only, he grips strongly a clasped sealed, concealed book, which by the crossed lines upon its side (then, as now, the symbol of a mirror) is shewn to be the "*Mirror up to Nature*," the "*Book of the Immortal Plays*," known to us under the name of Shakespeare, which, together with Bacon's *De Augmentis* and his *Novum Organum*, makes up the "*Great Instauration*," by which Bacon has "procured the good of all men."



PHOTO-FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE PAGE OF BACON'S
DE AUGMENTIS, 1645.

Original

Having very carefully considered this plate of the title page of the *De Augmentis*, 1645, let us next examine the plate on page 13, which is the title page that forms the frontispiece of Bacon's *Henry VII.* in the Latin edition, printed in Holland in 1642. This forms, with the 1645 edition of the *De Augmentis*, one of the series of Bacon's collected works which were continually reprinted for upwards of a hundred years. In this title page of *Henry VII.* we see the same "left-handed" story most emphatically repeated. On the right of the engraving—the reader's left—upon the higher level, Francis Bacon stands in the garb of a philosopher with grand Rosicrucian rosettes upon his shoes. By his side is a knight in full armour, who, like himself, touches the figure with his right hand. On the "left" side of the picture upon the *lower level* we see that the same Francis Bacon, who is now wearing *actor's boots*, is stopping the wheel with the shaft of a spear which, the "left-handed" actor grasps (or shall we say "shakes"), while with his "left hand" he points to the globe. This actor wears one spur only, and that upon his "left" boot, and his sword is also girded upon him "left-handedly." Above this "left-handed" actor's head, upon the wheel which the figure is turning with her "left" hand, we see the emblems of the plays; the mirror up to nature (observe the crossed lines to which we called attention in reference to the crossed lines upon the book in the title page of the *De Augmentis*, 1645)—the rod for the back of fools—"the bason that receives your guilty blood" (see *Titus Andronicus* v. 2) which is here the symbol for tragedy,—and the fool's rattle or bauble. That the man is not a knight, but is intended to represent an actor, is manifest from his wearing actor's boots, a collar of lace, and leggings trimmed with lace, and having his sword girded on the wrong side, while he wears but one gauntlet and that upon his "left" hand. That he is

a Shake-speare actor is also evident because he is shaking the spear which is held by Bacon. He is likewise a shake-spur actor, as is shewn by his wearing one spur only, which is upon his "left" boot. In other emblematic writings and pictures we similarly get "Shake-spur," meaning "Shake-speare."

The reader cannot fail to remark how perpetually it is shewn that everything connected with the plays is performed "left-handedly," that is, "underhandedly" and "secretly in shadow." On the right-hand side upon the higher level the figure with her right hand holds above Bacon's head a salt box. This is in order to teach us that Bacon was the "wisest of mankind," because we are plainly told in the "Continuation of Bacon's New Atlantis" (which was published in 1660, but of which the author who is called "R. H., Esq.," has never been identified) that in "our Heraldry" (which refers to the symbolic drawings that appear mostly as the frontispieces of certain books such as those before the reader) "If for wisdom she (the virgin) holds a salt."

But the reader will perceive that in her right hand she also holds something else above Bacon's head.



PHOTO-FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE PAGE OF BACON'S
HENRY VII., 1642.

[Original](#)

Only a considerable knowledge of Emblems and Emblem books enables me to inform my readers what this very curious object represents. It is absolutely certain that what she holds above Bacon's head is a "bridle without a bit," which is here put for the purpose of instructing us that the future age is not to curb and muzzle and destroy Bacon's reputation. This emblem tells us that, as the ages roll on, Bacon will be

unmuzzled and crowned with everlasting fame. How do we know so much as this? In February, 1531, the first edition of the most important of all Emblem books, viz., "Alciati's Emblems," was published, and in that book there is shewn a hideous figure of Nemesis holding a bridle in which is a tremendous "bit" to destroy "improba verba," false reputations. A little more than a hundred years later, viz., in 1638, Baudoin, who had translated Bacon's essays into French, also published a book of Emblems, a task which, he tells us in the preface, he was induced to undertake by "Alciat" (printed in small letters) and by BACON (printed in capital letters). In this book of Emblems Baudoin puts opposite to Bacon's name a fine engraving of Nemesis, but which is, in fact, a figure of Fame holding a "bridle without a bit," of exactly the same shape as that shewn in the title page of "Henry VII.," which is now under the reader's eyes. I may perhaps here state that I possess books that must have belonged to a distinguished Rosicrucian who was well acquainted with Bacon's secrets, and that in my library there is a specially printed copy of Baudoin's book in which this figure of Fame that is put as the Nemesis for Bacon, is purposefully printed upside down; I do not mean bound upside down, but printed upside down, the printing on the back being reversed and so reading correctly. Other books which I possess have portions similarly purposefully printed upside down to afford revelations of Bacon's authorship to those readers who are capable of understanding symbols. This particular upside down drawing of the Nemesis placed opposite to Bacon's name in Baudoin's book is so printed in order to emphasise the author's meaning that the Nemesis for Bacon is to unmuzzle him and spread his fame over all the world. This "specially printed" copy of Baudoin's book is also "specially bound"—in contemporary binding—with Rosicrucian Emblems on the back.

The figure which turns the wheel turns it with her "left" hand, while with her right hand she holds over Bacon's head what the reader now knows to be the emblems of Wisdom and of Fame. Streaming from her head is a long lock of hair which is correctly described as "the forelock of time," and this is to teach us that as time goes on so will Bacon's reputation continually extend farther and farther.

Bacon in his will declared that he bequeathed his "name and memory... to foreign nations and the next ages." * Bacon knew that much time must elapse before the world would begin to recognise how much he had done for its advancement, and there is considerable evidence that he fixed upon the year 1910, which is 287 years after the year 1623, in which the Folio edition of the immortal plays, known as Shakespeare's, first appeared.

** Note.—The following story, related by Ben Jonson himself, shows how necessary it was for Bacon to conceal his identity behind various' masks:—"He [Ben Jonson] was dilated by Sir James Murray to the King, for writing something against the Scots, in a play Eastward Hoe, and voluntarily imprisoned himself with Chapman and Marston who had written it amongst them. The report, was that they should then [have] had their ears cut and noses. After their delivery, he banqueted all his friends; there was Camden, Selden, and others; at the midst of the feast his old Mother dranke to him, and shew him a paper which she had (if the sentence had taken execution) to have mixed in the prison among his drinke, which was full of lustie strong poison, and that she was no churle, she told, she was minded first to have drunk of it herself." This was in 1605, and it is a strange and grim illustration of the dangers that beset men in the Highway of Letters.*

With respect to Bacon's remarkable reference to foreign nations, we must remember that the title pages here shown and numerous other striking revelations of his authorship of the plays were never printed or published in England, but appear only in editions printed in foreign countries. I will once more repeat that the title page of the "De Augmentis" clearly tells us that Bacon has secretly with his "left hand" placed his great work, the "Immortal plays," "the Mirror up to Nature," in the hands of a mean actor, and that the title page of "Henry VII." repeats the same "lefthanded" story, and tells us that, while the history of Henry VII. is written in prose in Bacon's own name, his other histories of the "Kings of England" are set forth at the Globe Theatre by the Shakespeare actor, concealed behind whom Bacon stands secure. In other words, that Bacon's other histories of England will be found in the plays to which is attached the name of his pseudonym, the doubly "lefthanded" and masked dummy, "William Shakespeare."

THE SHAKESPEARE SIGNATURES (SO-CALLED).

NO scrap of writing is in existence which can by any possibility be supposed to have been written by William Shakespeare, excepting only the six (so-called) signatures. And, since every one of these supposed signatures is undoubtedly written by a law clerk, the inference that William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, Gentleman, was totally unable to write, seems to be incontrovertible.

The first so-called signature in the order of date is the one last discovered, viz.: that at the Record Office, London. This is attached to "Answers to Interrogatories," dated May 1th, 1612, in a petty lawsuit, in which it appeared that William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, Gentleman, had occasionally lodged in Silver Street at the house of a hairdresser named Mountjoy.

Among the "Answers to Interrogatories" those which were signed very carefully by Daniell Nicholas, and

the "Answers to Interrogatories" from William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, Gentleman, which are dated May 11th, 1612, are both written in the handwriting of the same law clerk, who attached to the latter the name "Wilm Shaxpr" over a neat blot, which was probably the mark made by the illiterate "Gentleman" of Stratford, who was totally unable to write even a single letter of his own name.

To those acquainted with the law script of the period it is abundantly evident that the "Wilm Shaxpr" is in the same handwriting as the body of the Answers.

The next (so-called) signatures in order of date are upon the purchase deed now in the London Guildhall Library, and upon the mortgage deed of the same property, which is in the British Museum. The purchase deed is dated March 10th, 1613, and the mortgage deed is dated March 11th, 1613, but at that period, as at the present time, when part of the purchase money is left on mortgage, the mortgage deed was always dated one day after the purchase deed, and always signed one moment before it, because the owner cannot part with his property before he receives both the cash and the mortgage deed. About twenty-five years ago, I succeeded in persuading the City authorities to carry the purchase deed to the British Museum, where by appointment we met the officials there, who took the mortgage deed out of the show-case and placed it side by side with the purchase deed from Guildhall. After a long and careful examination of the two deeds, some dozen or twenty officials standing around, everyone agreed that neither of the names of William Shakespeare upon the deeds could be supposed to be signatures. Recently one of the higher officials of the British Museum wrote to me about the matter, and in reply I wrote to him and also to the new Librarian of Guildhall that it would be impossible to discover a scoundrel who would venture to swear that it was even remotely possible that these two supposed signatures of William Shakespeare could have been written at the same time, in the same place, with the same pen, and the same ink, by the same hand. They are widely different, one having been written by the law clerk of the seller, the other by the law clerk of the purchaser. One of the so-called signatures is evidently written by an old man, the other is written by a young man. The deeds are not stated to be signed but only to be sealed.

Next we come to the three supposed signatures upon the will, dated March 25th, 1616. Twenty or twenty-five years ago, on several occasions I examined with powerful glasses Shakespeare's will at Somerset House, where for my convenience it was placed in a strong light, and I arrived at the only possible conclusion, viz., that the supposed signatures were all written by the law clerk who wrote the body of the will, and who wrote also the names of the witnesses, all of which, excepting his own which is written in a neat modern looking hand, are in the same handwriting as the will itself.

The fact that Shakespeare's name is written by the law clerk has been conclusively proved by Magdalene Thumm-Kintzel in the Leipzig Magazine, "Der Menschenkenner," of January, 1909, in which photo reproductions of certain letters in the body of the will and in the so-called signatures are placed side by side, and the evidence is conclusive that they are written by the same hand. Moreover, the will was originally drawn to be sealed, because the solicitor must have known that the illiterate householder of Stratford was unable to write his name. Subsequently, however, the word "seale" appears to have been struck out and the word "hand" written over it. People unacquainted with the rules of law are generally not aware that anyone can, by request, "sign" any person's name to any legal document, and that if such person touch it and acknowledge it, anyone can sign as witness to his signature. Moreover the will is not stated to be signed, but only stated to be "published."

In putting the name of William Shakespeare three times to the will the law clerk seems to have taken considerable care to show that they were not real signatures. They are all written in law script, and the three "W's" of "William" are made in the three totally different forms in which "W's" were written in the law script of that period. Excepting the "W" the whole of the first so-called signature is almost illegible, but the other two are quite clear, and show that the clerk has purposefully formed each and every letter in the two names "Shakespeare" in a different manner one from the other. It is, therefore, impossible for anyone to suppose that the three names upon the will are "signatures."

I should perhaps add that all the six so-called signatures were written by law clerks who were excellent penmen, and that the notion that the so-called signatures are badly written has only arisen from the fact that the general public, and even many educated persons, are totally ignorant of the appearance of the law script of the period. The first of the so-called signatures, viz., that at the Record Office, London, is written with extreme ease and rapidity.

Thus are for ever disproved each and every one of the writings hitherto claimed as "signatures" of William Shakespeare, and as there is not in existence any other writing which can be supposed to be from his pen, it seems an indisputable fact that he was totally unable to write. There is also very strong evidence that he was likewise unable to read.

BACON SIGNED THE SHAKESPEARE PLAYS.

ACAREFUL examination of the First Folio of "Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies," 1623, which are generally known as "The Plays of Shakespeare," will prove that Bacon signed the plays in very many ways.

I will place a few examples before my readers, and when they have carefully studied these they may perhaps (if they can get access to a photographic facsimile copy of the First Folio of Shakespeare's Plays, 1623), be able to discover additional traces of the great author's hand.

For reasons which it is not now necessary to discuss, Bacon selected as one of the keys to the mystery of

his authorship of various works the number 53.

The Great Folio of the Plays of 1623 is divided into Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. Each of these, although they are all bound in one volume, is separately paged. It follows therefore, that there must be three pages numbered 53 in the Folio Volume of Shakespeare's Plays. I must also inform my readers that every page is divided into two columns, and it is absolutely certain that the author himself so arranged these that he knew in what column and in what line in such column every word would appear in the printed page.

Let us examine, in the first instance,

The First Page 53

in the plays. The second column of this page 53 commences with the first scene of the fourth act of the "Merry Wives of Windsor" In this act a Welsh schoolmaster, "Evans," "Dame Quickly," and a boy named "William" appear. The object of the introduction of the Welshman seems to have been that he might mispronounce "c" as "g," and so call "hic" "hig," and "hoc" "hog." William also is made wrongly to say that the accusative case is "hinc" instead of "hunc," and Evans, the Welsh schoolmaster, who should have corrected this error made by the boy, repeats the blunder with the change of "c" into "g," so as to give without confusion the right signature key-words which appear in the second column of the first page 53, as follow:—

Eva. I pray you have your remembrance (childe) *Accusative*, king, hang, hog. *

** Note.—In the folio Ac-cusativo king, hang, hog are in italics as here printed.*

Qu. Hang-hog, is latten for Bacon, I warrant you.

Observe that "Bacon" is spelled with a capital "B," and also note that in this way we are told quite clearly that Hang-hog means Bacon. In very numerous instances a hog with a halter (a rope with a slip-knot) round its neck appears as part of some engraving in some book to which Bacon's name has not yet been publicly attached. I shall again refer to "Hang-hog" as we proceed.

Next, let us carefully examine

The Second Page 53

in the Folio of the Plays, which in the first column contains the commencement of the first scene of the second act of the first part of "King Henry the Fourth." Two carriers are conversing, and we read:—

1 *Car.* What Ostler, come away, and be hangd; come away.

2 *Car.* I have a Gammon of Bacon, and two razes of Ginger, to be delivered as farre as Charing-crosse.

Observe that gammon is spelled with a capital "G," and Bacon also is spelled with a capital "B." Thus we have found Bacon in the second page 53. But I must not forget to inform my readers that this second page 53 is really and evidently of set purpose falsely numbered 53, because page 46 is immediately followed by 49, there being no page numbered 47 or 48 in the Histories, the second part of the Plays.

Having found what appears to be a revelation in each of the first two pages numbered 53 in the First Folio, we must remember that a Baconian revelation, in order to be complete, satisfactory, and certain, requires to be repeated "three" times. The uninitiated inquirer will not be able to perceive upon the third page 53, on which is found the beginning of "The Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet," any trace of Bacon, or hog or pig, or anything suggesting such things. The initiated will know that the Great "Master-Mason" will supply two visible pillars, but that the third pillar will be the invisible pillar, the Shibboleth; therefore, the informed will not expect to find the third key upon the visible page 53, but upon

The Invisible Page 53.

Most of my readers will not fail to perceive that the invisible page 53 must be the page that is 53, when we count not from the beginning, but from the end of the book of Tragedies, that is, from the end of the volume.

The last page in the Folio is 399. This is falsely numbered 993, not by accident or by a misprint, but (as the great cryptographic book, by Gustavus Selenus [The man in the Moon], published in 1624, will tell those who are able to read it) because 993 forms the word "Baconus," a signature of Bacon. Let me repeat that the last page of the Great Folio of the plays is page 399, and deducting 53 from 399 we obtain the number 346, which is

The Page 53 from the end.

On this page, 346, in the first column, we find part of "The Tragedie of Anthony and Cleopatra," and we there read,

Enobar. Or if you borrow one another's Love for the instant, you may when you heare no more words of *Pompey* returne it againe: you shall have time to wrangle in, when you have nothing else to do.

Anth. Thou art a Souldier, onely speake no more.

Enob. That trueth should be silent, I had almost forgot.

Now here we perceive that "Pompey,"

"in," and "got," by the manner in which the type is arranged in the column, come directly under each other, and their initial letters being P. I. G., we quite easily read "pig," which is what we were looking for.

But on this "invisible" page 53, in which the key-word is found, other very important revelations may also

be discovered, because it is the "Shibboleth" page. If we count the headline title and all the lines that come to the left-hand edge of the column on this page 346, we find that "Pompey" which begins the word, "pig" is upon

The 43rd Line. (Example 1.)

Bacon very frequently signed with some form of cypher the first page of his secret books. Let us, then, look at the first page of the Great Folio of 1623, on which is the commencement of the play of "The Tempest." In the first column of that first page we shall read

is perfect Gallowes: stand fast good Fate to his han
ging, make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our
owne doth little advantage: If he be not borne to bee
hang'd, our case is miserable.

Here, reading upwards from hang'd, we read hang'd, H. O. G., the "h" of hang'd being twice used. And just as "*Pompey*" the commencement of Pig, is upon the 43rd line of page 346 (the invisible page 53), so here on page 1 the commencing word "hang'd" is also upon

The 43rd Line (Example 2.)

counting all the lines without exception, including as before the head-line titles. Observe, that it is only made possible for us to read "hang'd hog," because by the printer's "error" hanging is divided improperly as han-ging instead of hang-ing. This apparent misprint is a most careful arrangement made by the great author himself.

I must once again repeat that there are no misprints or errors in the First Folio, 1623, because the great author was alive, and most carefully arranged every column in every page, and every word in every column, so that we should find every word exactly where we do find such particular word. Hang'd hog is, therefore, clearly the signature of the great author upon the first page of the Folio, just as 993 is his signature upon the last page of the Folio. But, as I have already said, in order to obtain a full, certain and complete revelation we must discover a third example. This we shall find in the second column of

The First Page 43. (Example 3.)

wherein is the first scene of the second act of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," where we read as follows:—

Mis. Page. What's the matter, woman?

Mi. Ford. O woman: if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour.

Mi. Page. Hang the trifle (woman) take the honour.

Here, reading the initial letters of each line upwards from "Hang," we get quite clearly S. O. W., and we perceive that "Hang sow" is just as much Bacon as is Hang hog. Thus, we get a triplet of No. 43, as we had a triplet of page 53, but we should also realise that we get a third triplet, because we find

Hang HOG (Example 1.)

on page one in the Comedies, the first portion of the plays, and we find

Hang SOW (Example 2.)

which is practically the same thing as Hang hog, upon page 43 in the Comedies, the first portion of the plays, and we find that

Hang-hog is latten for Bacon (Example 3.)

is on page 53 in the Comedies, the first portion of the plays, and "Hang-hog is Bacon," gives the Shibboleth, and affords the explanation of the two previous examples. Thus we have a revelation of Bacon's authorship in "three times three" forms, and the revelation is, therefore, "absolutely perfect."

The Number 36.

There are thirty-six plays in the First Folio. This is not accidental. Thirty-six is a cabalistic number, and is used in several of Bacon's works when he refers to the Stage or to Plays.

The 36th Essay,

in the Italian edition of Bacon's "Essays," published in London, in 1618, is entitled "Fattioni" (Stage Plays).

The 36 th Antitheta.

In the Latin edition of Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," published in 1623, the same year in which the Folio of the Plays appeared, the XXXVI. Antitheta commences "Amorum multa debet scena (stage plays)," and when the English edition was brought out in 1640, the XXXVI. Antitheta commences with the word "The Stage."

The 36th Apophthegm.

In the collection of Bacon's "Apophthegms," printed in 1671, Apophthegm 36 reads as follows, and fully explains the meaning of "Hang-hog is latten for Bacon, I warrant you."

"Sir *Nicholas Bacon*, being appointed a Judge for the Northern Circuit, and having brought his Trials that came before him to such a pass, as the passing of Sentence on Malefactors, he was by one of the Malefactors mightily importuned for to save his life, which when nothing that he had said did avail, he at length desired his mercy on the account of kindred: Prethee said my Lord Judge, how came that in? Why, if it please you my Lord, your name is *Bacon* and mine is *Hog*, and in all Ages *Hog* and *Bacon* have been so near kindred, that they are not to be separated. I [Aye], *but*, replied Judge *Bacon*, *you and I cannot be kindred except you be hanged; for Hog is not Bacon until it be well hanged.*"

Page 53.

At an early date Bacon selected the number "53" to give in numerous books revelations concerning his authorship. In Florio's "Second Frutes," published in 1591, on page 53 we read:—

- H. A slice of bacon, would make us taste this wine well.
- S. What ho, set that gammon of bakon upon the board.

Florio was always a servant of Bacon's, and received a pension for "making my lord's works known abroad." The above is inserted on page 53 to inform us that Bacon's name may be spelled in many different ways, as students of various books will find to be the fact.

In the "Mikrokosmos," * of which editions both in Latin and in French were published at Antwerp in 1592, we find on page 53 a picture of Circe's Island, which the intelligent reader will perceive represents "the Stage." Beneath it are the words from Proverbs ix. 17, which in our English authorised version read, "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." Examining this engraving, we perceive in the forefront Bacon's boar, drawn exactly as it is heraldically portrayed in Bacon's crest, but with a man's head surmounted by a "Cap of Liberty," and we should remember the words in Shakespeare's play, "As You Like It" (which means "Wisdom from the mouth of a clown"): "I must have liberty:... to blow on whom I please, for so fools have... Invest me in my motley: Give me leave to speak my mind, and I will through and through cleanse the foule bodie of th' infected world, if they will patiently receive my medicine."

** Note.—The title page is headed with the figure of a Chameleon, which forms the "53rd" of "Alciati's Emblems." The Chameleon was supposed to assume various appearances, and is therefore used as an emblem for Bacon, who assumed numerous masks in order to do good to all mankind, though in a despised weed."*

In Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," 1640, first edition in English, we find a first page "53." In the margin of this page we find "Alexand": (Bacon sometimes alluded to himself as Alexander). But the page 55 is misnumbered "53," and on this second and false page "53" we read in the margin

S. FRAN
BACON,

all in capital letters, almost the only marginal capital letters in the whole of the book, which is Bacon's own book, and yet has this striking reference to himself on the false page "53." The number of pages "53" (very frequently falsely paged "53"), in which some reference to Bacon or to the Plays may be discovered, is very large. I will, however, now quote only two other instances.

In 1664, the third edition of Shakespeare's plays, containing seven extra plays, was issued, and the editors, in order to mislead the initiated and pretend that they had Bacon's authority for so adding some of his inferior plays to his revised selection of the thirty-six plays which formed the great Folio of 1623, numbered two pages 53, which they placed opposite to each other, and on each of these we find "S. Albans" (Bacon was Viscount S. Albans).

In 1709, the fifth edition was published by Nicholas Rowe, and in that edition there is a proper page 53, and also 55 is misprinted 53 (the only mispagination in the whole book of 3,324 pages), and this is made in the false page 53 in order to afford a revelation if we carefully read both pages "53" together.

THE NORTHUMBERLAND MANUSCRIPTS.

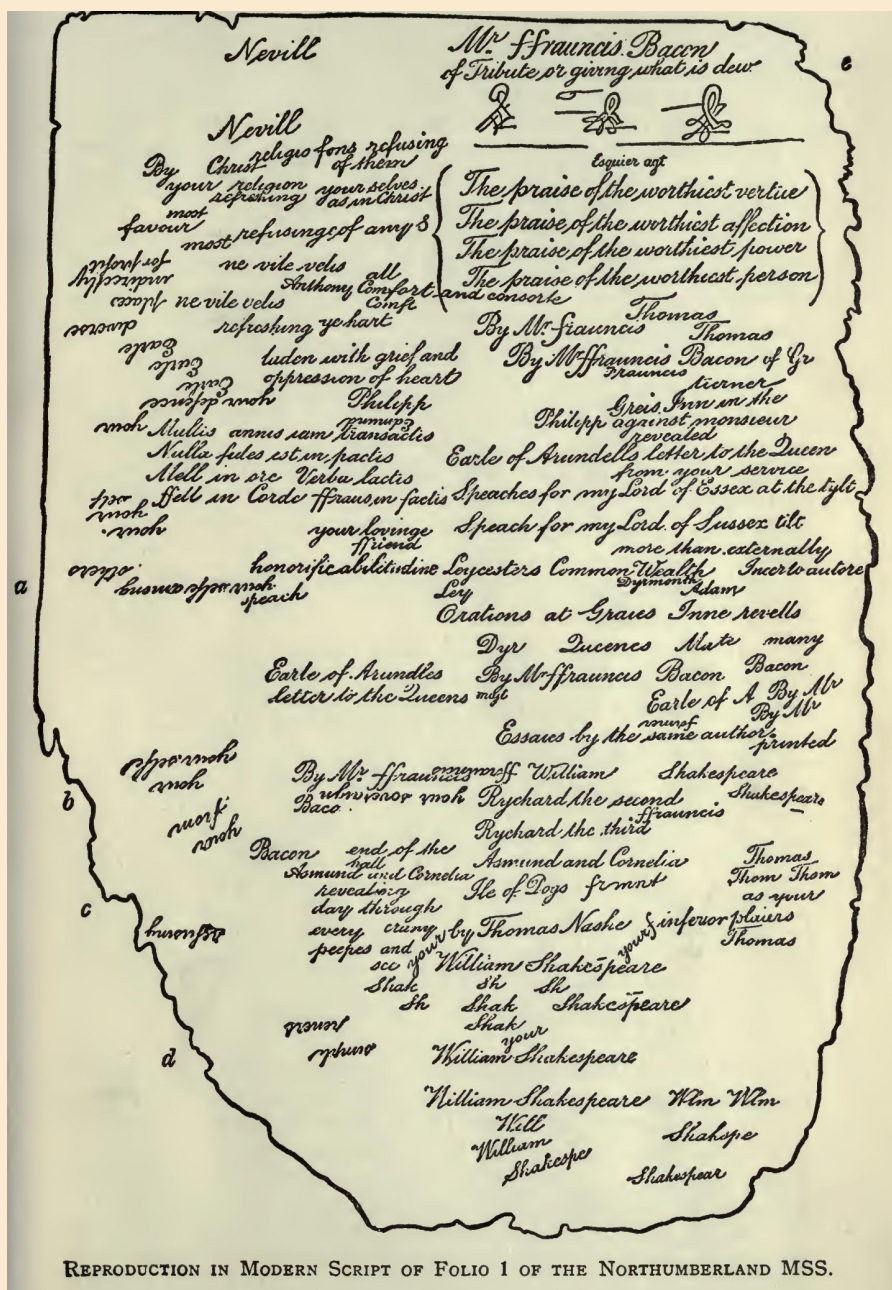
On page 25 is shewn a type transcript of the cover or outside page of a collection of manuscripts in the possession of the Duke of Northumberland, which were discovered at Northumberland House in London in 1867 Three years later, viz., in 1870, James Spedding published a thin little volume entitled "A Conference of Pleasure," in which he printed a full size facsimile of the original of the outside page, which is here reproduced in modern script on page 25. He also gave a few particulars of the MSS. themselves.

In 1904, Mr. Frank J. Burgoyne brought out a Collotype Facsimile of every page that now remains of the collection of MSS. in an edition limited to 250 copies, in a fine Royal Quarto at the price of £4 4s. each. Of the MSS. mentioned on the cover, nine only now remain, and of these, six are certainly by Francis Bacon; the first being written by him for a Masque or "fanciful devise," which Mr. Spedding thinks was presented at the Court of Elizabeth in 1592.

The reader's attention is directed to this Masque, which consists of "The praise of the Worthiest Vertue, &c," Lower down we read: "Speeches for my Lord of Essex at the tylt,"

"Speech for my Lord of Sussex tilt,"

"Orations at Graies Inne revells." We must remember that in numerous instances when masques were presented, reference is made to Bacon having in some way countenanced them or assisted them by taking part in the arrangement of the "dumb shew." This teaches us how familiar Bacon was with stage presentations.



REPRODUCTION IN MODERN SCRIPT OF FOLIO 1 OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND MSS.

Original

Further down on the page we find "Rychard the second" and "Rychard the third." Mr. Spedding declared himself satisfied that these were the (so-called) Shakespeare plays. Immediately above, we read "William Shakespeare," which appears to be part of the original writing upon the page.

It is not necessary here to refer to the remainder of these original writings, but there is a mass of curious scribblings all over the page. Concerning these, Mr. Spedding says: "I find nothing in these later scribblings or in what remains of the book itself to indicate a date later than the reign of Elizabeth." They are therefore written by a contemporary hand.

For the purpose of reference I have placed the letters a b c d e outside of the facsimile.

(a) "Honorificabilitudine." This curious long word, when taken in conjunction with the words "Your William Shakespeare," which are found more than once upon the page, appears to have some reference to the longer word "Honorificabilitudinitatibus," which is found in "Loves Labors Lost," printed in 1598, the first play to which the name of Shakespeare (spelled Shakespere) was attached. I must repeat that upon no play appeared the name William Shakespeare until that man had been sent permanently away to Stratford in 1597. The long word, as I shew in my book, "Bacon is Shakespeare," Chapter X., page 84, gives us the Masonic number 287, and really tells us with the most absolute mechanical certainty that the plays were Francis Bacon's "orphan" children.

(b) "By Mr. ffrauncis William Shakespeare Baco"———— observe that ffrauncis is repeated "upside down," over these lines, and that *your/yourself* also printed upside down, appears at the commencement of the lines. The reader will therefore not be surprised to read at (c) "revealing day through every crany peepes"; which seems to be a particularly accurate account of the object of the revelations afforded by the "Scribblings" so called, viz., to inform us that "Bacon was Shakespeare." The same kind of revelation is again repeated at (d), when we find *your/William Shakespeare* and then above it "Shak Shakespeare" and "your William Shakespeare." And the reader should remember that, as Mr. Spedding admits, all these so-called "scribblings" were contemporary and written before 1603, the date of the death of Queen Elizabeth.

I also call attention at (e) to the three curious scrolls, each written with one continuous sweep of the pen, which it would take a great deal of practice to succeed in successfully and easily writing. I myself am in a particularly fortunate position with regard to these scrolls, because I possess a very fine large-paper copy of "Les Tenures de Monsieur Littleton," 1591. This work is annotated throughout in what the British Museum authorities admit to be the handwriting of Francis Bacon, and, upon the wide large paper margin of the title page, eight similar scrolls appear, which have evidently some (shall we say Rosicrucian) significance. *

** Note.—A few copies of my book, "Bacon is Shakespeare," published by Gay & Hancock, are still on sale at the price of 2s. '6d. No important statement contained therein has been or ever will be successfully controverted because the facts stated are derived from books contained in my unique library, which includes works that must have belonged to a distinguished Rosicrucian who was well acquainted with the secrets of Bacon's authorship.*

Perhaps I should add that here, in this little book, before the reader's eyes, is the knowledge of this revealing page of the Northumberland MSS. given for the first time wide publicity. Spedding's little book, which has been long out of print, was too insignificant to attract much notice, and Mr. Burgoyne's splendid work was too expensive for ordinary purchasers.

BACON AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

WE owe our mighty English tongue of to-day to Francis Bacon and to Francis Bacon alone. The time has now come when this stupendous fact should be taught in every school, and that the whole of the Anglo-Saxon speaking peoples should know that the most glorious birthright which they possess, their matchless language, was the result of the life and labour of one man, viz.—Francis Bacon, who, when as little more than a boy, he was sent with our ambassador, Sir Amyas Paulett, to Paris, found there that "La Pléiade" (the Seven) had just succeeded in creating the French language from what had before been as they declared "merely a barbarous jargon." Young Bacon at once seized the idea and resolved to create an English language capable of expressing the highest thoughts. All writers are agreed that at the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, English as a "literary" language did not exist. All writers are agreed that what is known as the Elizabethan Age was the most glorious period of English literature. All writers are agreed that our language of to-day is founded upon the English translation of the Bible and upon the Plays of Shakespeare. Every word of each of these was undoubtedly written by, or under the direction of, Francis Bacon.

Max Müller, in his "Science of Language," Vol. I., 1899, page 378, says: "A well educated person in England who has been at a public school and at the university... seldom uses more than about 3,000 or 4,000 words.... The Hebrew Testament says all that it has to say with 5,642 words, Milton's poetry is built up with 8,000, and Shakespeare, who probably displayed a greater variety of expression than any writer in any language produced all his plays with about 15,000 words."

Does anyone suppose that any master of the Stratford Grammar School, where Latin was the only language used, knew so many as 2,000 English words, or that the illiterate householder of Stratford, known as William Shakespeare, knew half or a quarter so many?

But to return to the Bible—we mean the Bible of 1611, known as the Authorised Version, which J. A. Weisse tells us contains about 15,000 different words (i.e. the same number as used in the Shakespeare plays). It was translated by 48 men, whose names are known, and then handed to King James I. * It was printed about one

and a half years later. In the Preface, which is evidently written by Bacon, we are told "we have not tyed ourselves to an uniformitie of phrasing, or to an identitie of words." This question of variety of expression is discussed in the Preface at considerable length (compare with Max Müller's references to Shakespeare's extraordinary variety of expression) and then we read: "Wee might also be charged... with some unequall dealing towards a great number of good English words... if we should say, as it were, unto certaine words, Stand up higher, have a place in the Bible alwaies, and to others of like qualitie, Get ye hence, be banished for ever." This means that an endeavour was made to insert all good English words into this new translation of the Bible, so that none might be deemed to be merely "secular."

** Note.—The forty-eight translators made use of "The Bishops' Bible," but no copy of this work, on which appear any annotations by the translators, can be discovered. See Bishop Westcott's "History of the English Bible," 1905, p. 118.*

Is it possible that any intelligent person can really read the Bible as a whole, not now a bit and now a scrap, but read it straight through like an ordinary book and fail to perceive that the majestic rhythm that runs through the whole cannot be the language of many writers, but must flow from the pen, or at least from the editorship, of one great master mind?

A confirmation of this statement that the Authorised Version of King James I. was edited by one masterhand is contained in the "Times" newspaper of March 22nd, 1912, where Archdeacon Westcott, writing about the Revised Version of 1881, says, the revisers "were men of notable learning and singular industry.... There were far too many of them; and successful literary results cannot be achieved by syndicates."

Yes, the Bible and Shakespeare embody the language of the great master, but before it could be so embodied, the English tongue had to be created, and it was for this great purpose that Bacon made his piteous appeals for funds to Bodley, to Burleigh, and to Queen Elizabeth.

Observe the great mass of splendid translations of the Classics (often second-hand from the French, as Plutarch's "Lives" by North) with which England was positively flooded at that period. Hitherto no writer seems to have called attention to the fact that certain of these translations were made from the French instead of from the original Greek or Latin, not because it was easier to take them from the French, but because in that way the new French words and phrases were enabled to be introduced to enrich the English tongue. The sale of these translations could not possibly have paid any considerable portion of their cost.

Thus Bacon worked. Thus his books under all sorts of pseudonyms appeared. No book of the Elizabethan Age of any value proceeded from any source except from his workshop of those "good pens," over whom Ben Jonson was foreman.

In a very rare and curious little volume, published anonymously in 1645, under the title of "The Great Assises holden in Parnassus by Apollo and his Assessours," Ben Jonson is described as the "Keeper of the Trophonian Denne," and in Westminster Abbey his medallion bust appears clothed in a left-handed coat to show us that he was a servant of Bacon.

O, rare Ben Jonson—what a turncoat grown!
Thou ne'er wast such, till clad in stone;
Then let not this disturb thy sprite,
Another age shall set thy buttons right. '

Stowe ii., p. 512-13.

In this same book, we see on the leaf following the title page the name of Apollo in large letters in an ornamental frame, and below it in the place of honour we find Francis Bacon placed as "*Lord VERULAN Chancellor of Parnassus.*"

This means that Bacon was the greatest of poets since the world began. This proud position is also claimed for him by Thomas Randolph in a Latin poem published in 1640, but believed to have been written immediately after Bacon's death in 1626. Thomas Randolph declares that Phoebus (i.e., Apollo) was accessory to Bacon's death because he was afraid that Bacon would some day come to be crowned king of poetry or the Muses. George Herbert, Bacon's friend, who had overlooked many of his works, repeats the same story, calling Bacon the colleague of Sol, i.e., Phoebus Apollo.

Instances might be multiplied, but I will only quote the words of John Davies, of Hereford, another friend of Bacon's, who addresses him in his "Scourge of Folly," published about 1610, as follows:—

As to her Bellamour the Muse is wont;
For, thou dost her embozom; and dost use,
Her company for sport twixt grave affaires.

Bacon was always recognised by his contemporaries as among the greatest of poets. Although nothing of any poetical importance bearing Bacon's name had been up to that time published, Stowe (in his *Annales*, printed in 1615) places Bacon seventh in his list of Elizabethan poets.

THE SHAKESPEARE MYTH IS DEAD.

IN 1898 the Shakespeare myth was mortally wounded by the curious collection of "may have beens," "might have beens," "could have beens," "should have beens," "must have beens," etc., collected in Sir Sidney Lee's supposititious life of William Shakespeare. In 1910 it was killed by the Cambridge History of English Literature, edited by Dr. Ward, Master of Peterhouse, and Mr. Waller, also of Peterhouse, for in Volume V., pages 165-6-7, we read: "We are not quite sure of the identity of Shakespeare's father; we are by no means certain of the identity of his wife.... We do not know whether he ever went to school. . . No biography of Shakespeare, therefore, which deserves any confidence has ever been constructed without a large infusion of the tell-tale words 'apparently,' 'probably,' 'there can be little doubt,' and no small infusion of the still more tell-tale 'perhaps,' 'it would be natural,' 'according to what was usual at the time,' and so forth... John Shakespeare married Mary Arden, an heiress of a good yeomanry family, but as to whose connection with a more distinguished one of the same name there remains much room for doubt."

I should add that no letter addressed to Shakespeare exists excepting one asking for a loan of £30; and that no contemporary letter referring to him has been discovered excepting three which are about money.

In 1910 appeared my own book, "Bacon is Shakespeare," which, placed in every library in the world, has carried everywhere the news of the decease of the myth.

In 1911 Mark Twain's book, "Is Shakespeare dead?" which had been published in 1909 in England, was included in the Tauchnitz collection, and therefore likewise carries the news of the decease of the myth all over the earth. Mark Twain describes Shakespeare as just a "Tar Baby," and says: "About him you can find out nothing. Nothing of any importance. Nothing worth the trouble of stowing away in your memory. Nothing that even remotely indicates that he was ever anything more than a distinctly commonplace person... a small trader in a small village that did not regard him as a person of any consequence, and had forgotten all about him before he was cold in his grave.... * We can go to the records and find out the life-history of every renowned racehorse of modern times—but not Shakespeare's! There are many reasons why, and they have been furnished in cartloads (of guess and conjecture). . . but there is one that is worth all the rest of the reasons put together, and is abundantly sufficient all by itself—he hadn't any history to tell. There is no way of getting round that deadly fact. And no sane way has yet been discovered of getting round its formidable significance."

** Note.—Stratford owes all its glory to two of its sons, John, Archbishop of Canterbury, who built a church there; and Hugh Clopton, who built, at his own cost, a bridge of fourteen arches across the Avon. Translated from Jean Blaeu, 1645.*

The Shakespeare myth is now destroyed. Does any educated person of intelligence still believe in the "Tar Baby," the illiterate clown of Stratford, who was totally unable to write a single letter of his own name, and of whom we are told, if we understand what we are told, that he could not read a line of print. No book was found in his house, and neither of his daughters could either read or write.

There exists no "portrait" of Shakespeare. The significant fact that the Figure put for Shakespeare in the 1623 Folio of the plays consists of a doubly left-handed dummy is alone sufficient to dispose of the Shakespeare myth. I have printed in various newspapers all over the world about a million copies of articles demonstrating this fact, which none can successfully dispute.

In modern times Percy Bysshe Shelley—one of England's greatest poets (who knew nothing about the Shakespeare controversy)—wrote as follows: "Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect. It is a strain, which distends and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy." This statement by Shelley, taken in conjunction with the testimony of "The Great Assises holden in Parnassus," 1645, and the words of Thomas Randolph, 1640, and of Bacon's friends George Herbert and John Davies, together with the contemporary evidence of Stowe in 1615, are sufficient to dispose, once and for all, of the absurd contention that is sometimes put forth that Bacon did not possess sufficient poetical ability to have written his own greatest work, the Immortal Plays.

Lord Palmerston said that he rejoiced to see the reintegration of Italy, the unveiling of the mystery of China, and the explosion of the Shakespeare illusions. Lord Houghton, the father of the present Marquis of Crewe, said that he agreed with Lord Palmerston. John Bright said any man that believed that William Shakespeare wrote "Hamlet," or "Lear," was a fool. Prince Bismarck said in 1892: "He could not understand how it were possible that a man, however gifted with the intuitions of genius, could have written what was attributed to Shakespeare unless he had been in touch with the great affairs of State, behind the scenes of political life, and also intimate with all the social courtesies and refinements of thought which in Shakespeare's time were only to be met with in the highest circles."

The "Tempest" is over, the false crown of the Island (the Stage) has been torn from the head of the dummy that appeared to wear it. It seems difficult to imagine that people possessed of ordinary intelligence can any longer continue to believe that the most learned of all the literary works in the world was written by the most unlearned of men, William Shakespeare of Stratford, who never seems even to have attempted to write a single letter of his own name. It has been proved that the six so-called signatures of Shakespeare were written by various law clerks, and it is now admitted that there exist no other writings which can even be supposed to be from his pen.

E. D-L.

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