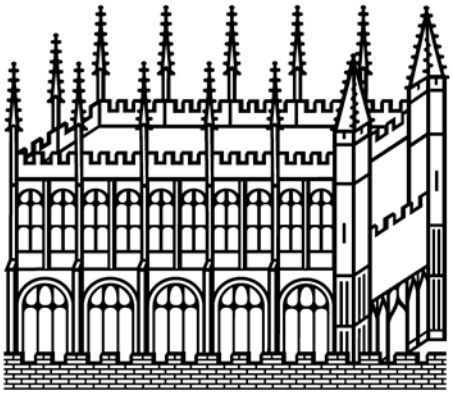


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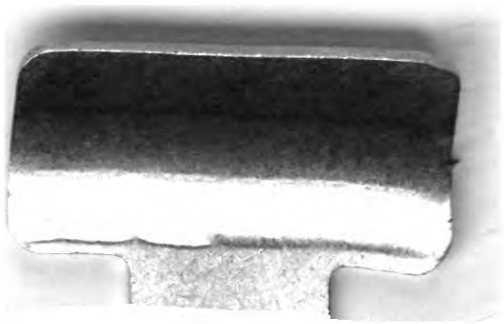
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MARLOWE

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MARLOWE

A CONSPECTUS

BY

J. M. ROBERTSON

Author of "The Genuine in Shakespeare," etc.

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MARLOWE



PART I

CAREER, FACULTY AND CHARACTER

§ 1. *Past Estimates*

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE may be held to have two special claims on the friendly consideration of lovers of English literature. At his death, at twenty-nine, he was probably counted by all kindly contemporaries " ill-starred," in that he died a violent and a scandalous death at the height of his remarkable powers. Not for a decade, perhaps, did any of his admirers suspect that his fame as dramatist had been no less star-crossed. Chapman evidently saw in him a splendidly inspired poet ; and long afterwards Drayton perceived in him an element of genius that he did not let himself detect in Shakespeare. But by 1630, when the Folio had become a not uncommon possession, the deeper vision of the greater Milton was already seeing in Shakespeare the risen star in whose rays the red meteor of Marlowe burned dim. In the next century the meteor had almost passed out of knowledge ; and only in the nineteenth was it recovered for all men.

The work begun by Robinson's edition in 1826 was greatly advanced by that of Dyce (1850: several reprints), with its careful apparatus of research and notation, fitly introducing Marlowe to all students; Lamb, Collier and Hallam had given the critical lead; and in what was originally announced as a "Mermaid edition," apparently intended to include many of the old dramatists, there appeared in 1870 the cheaper issue enthusiastically edited by Lieutenant-Colonel Cunningham, many times since reprinted. Thenceforth the eloquence of Swinburne made for a time at least as many converts as cavillers; and in 1886 Mr. A. W. Verity, by his attractively youthful prize essay,[1] assisted in justifying his claim for Marlowe that "time has done him justice"; though in strict truth the exposition dealt with anything rather than the exact theme of the title. And in the very act of acclamation so many critical problems were raised, for a generation which had but begun to face them, that the gulf between Marlowe and Shakespeare seemed to be made almost deeper than before.

If we can generalise on such matters with any accuracy, it would be perhaps in saying that after the predominant prosaism or didacticism of eighteenth-century poetry had given way before the regenerating charm of the poetic, men for a time valued that for itself, partly irrespective of either versification or purport. And this seems to have

[1] *The Influence of Christopher Marlowe on Shakespeare's Earlier Style;* being the Harness Prize Essay for the year 1885.

been particularly true as regards blank verse. The old satisfaction in a neat metre, which made the new poetry only slowly acceptable, and kept the heroic couplet long on foot against it, had not been superseded by any new perception of the higher functions of verse as such. It could be said, by a professed student of verse, that most readers had little sense of the charm of "numbers." What he meant was that they read Shakespeare for his dramatic substance and not for his poetic art.

And this was true, apparently, even for the unconscious critic himself, whose ear for blank verse was rather metrical than rhythmical (that is, perceptive of a line-norm without further vision of individualities), until the advancing cult of the poetic had begun to laurel Marlowe for his sheer wealth of poetic inspiration. That temper in turn seems to have been little concerned about the critique of sanity, which is ultimately insuperable for drama and poetry alike. The predominantly poetic tempers justly proclaimed the beauty of such lines as those in which Tamburlaine, after asking his question, "What is beauty?" magnificently declaims through thirteen leaping iambic lines—as if to show how the iambus *could* leap—that

> If all the pens that ever poets held
> Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,

there would still hover in their restless heads

> One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
> Which into words no virtue can digest.

This was indeed, for any spirit percipient of

poetry, something that quite transcended the eighteenth century and put Marlowe at once in the higher world of Keats and Shelley. But there were two drawbacks. For one thing, the delighted devotees showed no suspicion that linear verse is not the highest "wonder" in that mystery, and that there is a dramatic law of congruity which challenges that speech on beauty as coming from Tamburlaine. It is thus that men collectively proceed in their æsthetics by a step at a time; and the defect in one order of study entails confusion in another.

Had it been critically noted how Marlowe goes on to make Tamburlaine poetically confess the incongruity of his fine outburst as coming from *his* mouth, they might have drawn the fair inference that this whole passage is not properly part of the dramatic movement at all, and is in all likelihood an insertion by the poet when his play is being later prepared for the press. Nothing indeed could be more irrelevant than the insertion as it stands. And yet no poet of that day could have inserted anything nearly as fine. It belongs in fact to the excursive and expatiative mode of the time, sufficiently obvious for everybody in THE RAPE OF LUCRECE.

A just criticism, taking account of all the relevant facts, would have noted at once the strange dramatic incongruity, the splendour of the poetry which constitutes it, the explanation in the ruling poetic practice, and the confirmation given by other quite obviously inserted passages in the same play, all perceptibly dictated by the same unbridled concep-

tion of literary art. The residual judgment would have been a recognition of the high inspiration which thus imposed such superb incongruity on drama, revealing a born poet who utterly outwent his dramatic vocation at the call of what was for him a greater.

But criticism only slowly reaches justice. The men mainly alive to drama as drama scoffed at the "poetic" mode which made the slaughterous Tamburlaine a devotee of the abstract beautiful, outsoaring even the Elizabethan age in his æsthetic rapture. For them the dislocated play as a whole remained on its planned level of blood and fury, a very orgy of monotonously lawless conquest and massacre. And, what was more serious, the incubating critical sense began to realise that the linear Marlowe verse, even at its best, is something that artistically falls far short of the greater harmony which is in Shakespeare, even as the moral and mental content is relatively indigent.

Then came, as it were, a new critical occultation. Swinburne, who inspired so many young students, but never clearly saw the scientific truth as to versification, might declaim as he liked about Gods and Titans: the case remained, so to speak, still one of star and meteor; and when William Watson with a signal felicity penned the super-epigram:

> Your Marlowe's page I close, my Shakespeare's ope.[1]
> How welcome, after gong and cymbal's din,
> The continuity, the long slow slope
> And vast curves of the gradual violin!

[1]The first form of the line, I think, was different.

probably many of us, in youth, gave an instant enthusiastic assent, staying not for an answer.

But I think we were less than just. It is finely true: yes; but it is not all the truth; and Shakespeare, could we have summoned him, would have told us so. The "gong and cymbal" pointed to TAMBURLAINE; but TAMBURLAINE is only one of Marlowe's first-fruits; and even there, surely, there are clarions and flutes, to say nothing of the trombone. In the other plays we are listening to quite other instruments than gong and cymbal. Lamb had seen as much; and there are living critics who have said, wrongly, I think, yet not quite unplausibly, that Marlowe compassed in FAUSTUS ends not within Shakespeare's power. And that is not all.

Watson's epigram is inexpugnably true in that Marlowe never glimpsed "the vast curves of the gradual violin"; and it is the failure to see this that still keeps men assigning to Shakespeare plays and scenes and rhythms in which the violin enters rarely or not at all. But to say this is to say that men wrongly credit to Shakespeare much of Marlowe's work, thereby "not enriching" the Master, but making the other poorer than he is by his own right.

Hence it is still necessary, or at least desirable, to do Marlowe æsthetic justice. That has hardly been rendered by the too devoutly hero-worshipping Ingram, or the otherwise devout Miss Ellis-Fermor, who have produced the only two outstanding monographs; though the weighty tribute of Mr. Edward

Thomas, prefixed to a distressingly faultful edition, has certainly done justice to Marlowe's poetic power, with a literary skill not attained by Cunningham. Therefore, though the reading world will assuredly not be convinced yet awhile of the fuller truth, by reason of the conventions surrounding the Shakespeare Canon, it is fitting that the survey be systematically if concisely gone about, and the balance-sheet drawn up anew. And, obviously, the first stage is a circumspect notation and study of Marlowe's life.

§ 2. *Life*

Apart from the high lights of tragic notoriety latterly thrown on the story of his death, we still know even less of Marlowe's life than we do of Shakespeare's. That excellent old editor of Elizabethan drama, the Rev. Alexander Dyce, who so worthily followed up with new research the labours of the school of Malone, gave a documented account of Marlowe's life from which little is to be withdrawn. To that was added, in the last generation, the zealous research of John H. Ingram,[1] a student to be commemorated for the diligence and devotion he gave to the fresh investigation of the lives of Poe, Marlowe and Chatterton, and to be sadly corrected in his many Marlovian extravagances, of which one was the suggestion that Marlowe really originated the passages in TAMBURLAINE which he had extracted from the FÆRIE QUEENE.

[1] Article of 1889, and *Christopher Marlowe and his Associates*, 1904.

On the death tragedy and the attendant documents, which Ingram treated in the spirit of the unflinching panegyrist, the recent notable discoveries of Dr. Leslie Hotson and others have added a number of illuminating details, of which the exploration is not yet complete, and as to which there is still much play of conjecture. The so far sifted details, and some of the conjectures, have latterly been diligently and usefully collected by Dr. F. S. Boas,[1] one of the latter-day pioneers. Still the record remains scanty as to Marlowe's young life.

Born at Canterbury in Februray, 1563–4, he was the son of John Marlowe, shoemaker, burgess, and later Clerk of St. Mary Bredman, Christopher being apparently the second child in a family of five, three of whom pre-deceased him, while the father lived till 1604–5. The mother, Catherine, "appears to have been "[2] the daughter of Christopher Arthur, rector of the Church of St. Peter's, Canterbury, who had been ejected by Queen Mary.

In the documentary allusions of the time, as Dyce notes, the surname was spelt in eleven different ways—Morley, Marlo, Marloe, Marlow, Marlowe, Marley, Marly, Marlye, Marlen, Marlin, Marlyn! It was the way of the time, and there is no reason to doubt that the "n" is apocryphal, though there had been Canterbury Marleys, and Christopher appears to have been listed at college, at times, as Morley—whereby hangs the latest tale.

[1] *Marlowe and his Circle*, 1929.
[2] Cp. Ingram and Boas.

Named after his clerical grandfather, Christopher probably had a good schooling, though he had only two years under a scholarship at the old King's School of Canterbury, where his name appears in one list as Marley. There, probably, he had his first lead to interest in drama,[1] since the Dean and Chapter " contributed liberally to the setting forth by ' the schoolmaster and scholars ' of tragedies, comedies and interludes." Thence he proceeded in 1580–1 as a " Pensioner " to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he is " Chrof. Marlen," until his *supplicat* for his B.A. degree in March, 1583–4; and again " Marley " when he becomes M.A. in 1587, after being " Marly " or " Marlye " in the college accounts.

Of his studies we know nothing apart from the rules; but the fact that the scholarship under which he drew his scanty allowance was one created under Archbishop Parker's will in 1575 indicates that he was expected to train for the Church. During the six appointed years, with some considerable absences, he drew his pension till he became M.A. in July, 1587. The university of that day is justly described as " half monastery, half school," and the training is partly so to be inferred.[2]

Now begins the modern perplexity over his supposed identity with one of two other Christophers

[1] Ingram, pp. 21-22, citing S. W. Clarke's *Canterbury in the Olden Time*; and Boas, p. 13, citing the *History of the King's School, Canterbury*, by Woodruff and Cape, 1908.

[2] Miss Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe*, 1927, p. 2.

who bore the surname of Morley or Marler. This appears to be adequately cleared up by Dr. Boas. The residual documentary fact is that in the Privy Council Register, under date 29 June, 1587, there is this entry of a sitting attended by the Archbishop, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer, the Lord Chamberlain and the Comptroller:

"Whereas it was reported that Christopher Morley was determined to have gone beyond the seas to Reames [=Rheims] and there to remain: Their Lordships thought good to certify that he had no such intent, but that in all his actions he had behaved himself orderly and discreetly, whereby he had done her Majesty good service, and deserved to be rewarded for his faithful dealing. Their Lordships request that the rumour thereof should be allayed by all possible means, and that he should be furthered in the degree he was to take this next Commencement. Because it was not her Majestie's pleasure that any one employed as he had been in matters touching the benefit of his country should be defamed by those that are ignorant in the affairs he went about."[1]

As our Marlowe—known at college as Marley and Morley—took his M.A. degree in July, 1587, the identification in the present case appears to be valid. Another Christopher Morley, a scholar of Trinity, took his M.A. degree in 1586. But a "Christopher Marlor (as he will be called)," so mentioned by William Vaughan in a letter from Pisa to the Privy Council on 14 July, 1604, and described as "sometime master in arts of Trinity College," turns out to

[1] Cited by Dr. Boas, pp. 16–17—spelling here modernised.

be yet a third person, who became a Catholic seminarist.

The third man is named " Christopher Marlowe *alias* Mathews " in an official prison record, in which, as a prisoner at Westminster, he figures in June–September, 1604. He is identifiable with " Christopher Marlor," or " Marley," but not with the Morley who became M.A. in 1586; which leaves us in possession of the officially protected Christopher Morley of 1587. The Mathews—Marlor or Marley of 1604 is finally traced back to Trinity, whither he had gone from Westminster School in 1588 (aged about 16), taking his B.A. in 1592–3 and his M.A. in 1596, and becoming a priest in 1602. After his imprisonment he was deported.

Left with our Christopher Marlowe, shown to have been employed in 1587 on a secret State service which he creditably carried off, we have to ask what the service may have been. As the hostile rumour had charged him with planning to go to the English Catholic seminary at Rheims, it was presumably a " foreign mission " of some kind; and he may reasonably be believed to have been sent on such a mission by Francis Walsingham, the then renowned Spy-Master of Elizabeth's service, who " at one time had in his pay fifty-three private agents in foreign courts, besides eighteen spies who performed functions that could not be officially defined."[1]

No document so far recovered reveals any detail of Marlowe's secret service, then or later; and it is

[1] Sidney Lee in *D.N.B. s.v.* SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

only in connection with his death, six years later, that we have to keep in view the character of Walsingham's department. " He was commonly represented to outshoot the Jesuits with their own bow," practising the contemporary rule of " tell a lie to find a truth " ; and " many of his agents were men of abandoned character." But, continues Lee, with apparent gravity, " Walsingham was keenly alive to their defects, and never depended *solely* on their *uncorroborated* testimony." In his service, then, Marlowe from the first is likely to have been thrown among daring rogues, having the due daring for the risks.

Of deeper interest to his readers, at this stage, is the question of his first association with the theatre. TAMBURLAINE (both parts) being dateable 1587,[1] Dyce surmised that he could not at that date have become, as the contemporary and later tradition represented him to have been, an actor at " The Curtain " theatre, it being distinctly unlikely that the university would accord to an actor the M.A. degree, even if he were already a successful dramatist.

But if we suppose him to have come to London in 1586, in some of his absences from college, with perhaps a qualification for acting begun in his schooldays and developed at Cambridge, various possibilities are seen to emerge. Heywood tells us expressly in his APOLOGY FOR ACTORS :[2]

" In the time of my residence at Cambridge I have

[1] Cp. Boas, p. 57.
[2] N.S.S. rep., p. 29.

seen tragedyes, comedyes, historyes, pastorals, and shewes, publicly acted, in which the graduates of good place and reputation have been specially parted. This is held necessary for the emboldening of their junior schollers, to arme them with audacity against they come to be employed in any publicke exercise, as in the reading of the dialecticke, rhetoricke, ethicke, the physicke, or metaphysike lectures. It teacheth audacity to the bashfull grammarian, being newly admitted into the private colledge, and, after, matriculated and entred as a member of the University, and makes him a bold sophister, to argue *pro et contra*, to compose his syllogysmes, cathegoricke, or hypotheticke (simple or compound), to reason and frame a sufficient argument to prove his questions, or to defend any *axioma*, to distinguish of any dilemma, and be able to moderate in any argumentation whatsoever."

And so forth. Concerning Heywood we know neither the date of his birth nor that of his death, though he must have been junior, by perhaps a dozen years, to Marlowe. But if the university practice in his day (*circa* 1590) was as he says, it was presumably not a sudden innovation ; and a university which thus encouraged acting in Marlowe's day could hardly make a graduate's resort to the stage a reason for denying him his degree. Besides, if Marlowe was, as is above set forth, already concerned in some sort of secret service with Sir Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's Secretary of State, there would be sufficient influence available in his behalf even if he were also an actor.

According to the tradition in the hostile *post*

mortem ballad,[1] Marlowe's acting was cut short by his breaking his leg.[2] Whether or not there was any truth in this tale, it does not appear that Marlowe was an actor in the later years of his short life; and we can but speculate as to how much he gained as a dramatist from a short experience on the London stage. The dramatist who strode to the front of Elizabethan drama, as it were in the fashion of one of his own conquerors, with the TAMBURLAINE which won the ear and comment of all London, would in ordinary course soon cease to be an actor if he had been one. The obvious chances are that in that capacity he could have no such status as that which he won as a poet. And we shall find abundant reason to believe that, whatever may have been the nature of his early connection with Walsingham, he was one of the most fertile play-makers of his short day.

This is, however, one of the tasks involved in a new scrutiny of the Elizabethan drama. A century ago, the researchers saw reason to infer Marlowe's hand in a number of plays not previously ascribed to him. To-day there are grounds for carrying the

[1] It is a hard saying of Sidney Lee's that this ballad is "in all probability one of Collier's forgeries." It does not appear that Collier in this case could have any axe to grind; and at least the tradition, being substantially supported by Philips in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, must stand for what it is worth until it is disproved.

[2] He had alsoe a player beene
Upon the Curtaine-stage,
But brake his leg in one lewd scene
When in his early age. . .
The Atheist's Tragedie, cited by Dyce, pp. xiv, 387

process of ascription much further; but the reader must be duly warned that he is being invited to attend in our Second Part to innovating views. It is fitting, therefore, to keep separate the record of the Life from the study of the chronology of the assigned plays and the data founded on for a large extension of the list.

Beyond the *post-mortem* mention of him by "J.M." in 1600 as "Kind Kit Marlowe,"[1] and the publisher Blount's testimony in 1598 that "the impression of the man hath been dear unto us," there is only one personal trace of him, in an enigmatic document brought to light in 1894, before we come to the personal testimony of Thomas Kyd and others, which so luridly illuminates, or obscures, the tragedy of his death. The enigmatic document is an entry in the Middlesex Sessions Rolls for 1st October, 1589,[2] recording in the contracted Latin of the courts that Richard Kytchine of Clifford's Inn, gentleman, and Humfrey Roland of East Smithfield, became sureties for "Christopher Marley of London, gentleman," to the amount of £20 each; "and he, the said Christopher Marley, undertook for himself, under penalty of forty pounds . . . on condition that if [?] he the said Christopher shall personally appear at the next Sessions of Newgate to answer everything that may be alleged against him on the part of the Queen, and shall not depart without the permission of the Court."

[1] Cited by Halliwell-Phillipps, *Life of Shakespeare*, 1848, p. 191. J.M. may have been John Manningham.

[2] See Boas, p. 62 *sq.*

Of this episode there is no further trace, and no elucidation. It is impossible either to deny that "Marley" may have been our dramatist, or to take it as proved that he was. Incidentally we learn that there was a well-to-do Jacobus Morlowe in East Smithfield in 1588. The vigilant research of Dr. Hotson has further revealed (1) that Kytchine was probably Richard Kitching who "acted as attorney" in 1586, and in 1594 was presented, "for a grave felony" in the parish of St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield; while (2) Rowland is a "yoman" of that name who was charged in 1586 in the King's Bench Controlment Rolls "de quibusdam transgressionibus et extorcionibus." Yet he held for six years the office of churchwarden.

Again we are on a dead scent. "Marley" and his sureties are alike under a shadow of suspicion, against which we can but set the fact of the universality of litigation in the Elizabethan period. An undecided charge or lawsuit proves nothing as to merits, even when we can be sure of the persons involved, which, here, we cannot.

Very definite issues, on the other hand, are raised by the familiar documents setting forth the charges of Kyd[1] and Baines and Cholmeley immediately before Marlowe's death. The testimony of Baines,[2] imputing to Marlowe hair-raising blasphemies, has

[1] In Dr. Boas' introduction to Kyd's works, and in his recent survey.

[2] Given by Dyce, Cunningham and Bullen, with some elisions, and unexpurgated in Havelock Ellis's original "Mermaid" edition.

been challenged by Ingram and others as incredible; or as being wholly discredited by the character of Baines, who was hanged in the following year; and when Cholmeley is cited by the spy as holding Marlowe "able to show more sound reasons for atheism than any divine in England is able to give to prove divinity," we are clearly in the mental atmosphere in which the label of "atheism" is given alike to Socinianism and freethinking criticism of the Biblical records. The document which Kyd declared to belong to Marlowe turns out to be a series of Socinian passages collected for *refutation* by John Proctor in 1549.[1] But when we put Kyd's testimony beside Baines's, they are found in the main to chime.

The gist of the matter is that Marlowe in particular, and some members of the "*schola frequens de Atheismo*" (charged upon Sir Walter Raleigh by the Jesuit, Robert Parsons) in general, impugned or jested at "both Moyses and our Savior, the olde and the New Testamente." Of this group the astronomer Harriot is described as "the Conjurer," and other persons named by Kyd are Walter Warner, a mathematical friend of Harriot; Royden (presumably Matthew, the poet) and "some stationers in Paul's Churchyard." Concerning these in general it appears to be alleged that they were "taught among other things to spell God backward."[2]

[1] Boas, p. 69, citing Prof. W. D. Briggs.

[2] This is not unlikely to be built upon the passage about "Jehovah's name, Forward and backward anagrammatised," in *Faustus*, I, iii.

When we remember that Harriot, the revered friend of George Chapman,[1] was the most accomplished mathematician and scientist of his day, it is fairly clear that we are faced by impudent and malicious aspersion on the part of Parsons and the informers alike. But that Marlowe was a companion of serious thinkers of the deistic or Socinian schools of the time, incapable of buffoonery, and that he personally would elsewhere indulge in profanities not to their taste, are not incompatible propositions. If Baines invented all the profane jests he ascribed to Marlowe, he had a pretty gift of his own that way.

What Kyd specially testifies is that Marlowe, on the other hand, besides " jesting " at the Scriptures and at prayers, and " striving in argument to frustrate and confute " the prophets " and such holy men," also argued at times " that things esteemed to be done by divine power might have as well been done by observation of men "—a kind of rationalism that was then being disseminated in many parts of Europe, and is abundantly indicated in the writings of Bacon, to say nothing of such an unctuous allusion as that in the LOOKING-GLASS FOR LONDON (IV, iii) to those

> Who say that Nature God's decrees hath wrought,
> Who build on fate, and leave the corner-stone,
> The God of Gods, sweet Christ, the only one . . .

[1] When speculation about the personalities of the time reaches, as in the New Cambridge Shakespeare *Love's Labour's Lost*, the notion that the " School of Night " of Chapman was the " School of Atheism " of Raleigh, the whole field is duly shrouded in fog.

Two inferences suggest themselves. The inquiry which elicited the testimony of Baines and the prosecution and torture of Kyd was probably directed in a spirit of hostility to Raleigh, whose name had been dragged to the front by Parsons. But the special incrimination of Marlowe, whether or not a part of the machinery to compromise Raleigh, would seem likely enough to have meant accusation and punishment for him had he not, just at that time, met his death by violence, or had he not in any case found high protection.

Baines's testimony against Marlowe is dated 2 June, 1593. Kyd had been arrested on or before 12th May, with the fragments of the Socinian treatise in his possession; and on the 18th the Privy Council had issued a warrant to a messenger to seek for Marlowe at the house of Mr. T. Walsingham in Kent, and to bring him to the Court. This Walsingham, a cousin of Francis, the Secretary of State, had in his service one Ingram Frizer. By this Frizer, Marlowe was killed, ostensibly in a scuffle, in a tavern in Deptford Strand, on 30th May, 1593. The news, presumably, had not reached London when Baines laid his impeachment.

Of Frizer we learn, from the brilliant research of Dr. Leslie Hotson,[1] that he in turn was of highly dubious antecedents. He appears to be one of the men of "abandoned character" in the spy service of the Secretary of State; and his service with Thomas Walsingham is a light on the prevailing

[1] Summary given by Dr. Boas, p. 93 *sq.*

standards of the time, under an energetic Queen, whose character for habitual mendacity and duplicity, groaned over by her loyal officials, appears to have made them and the generality of her subjects tolerant of at least that form of human imperfection.

With this Ingram Frizer, his associate Nicholas Kyrse *alias* Skeers, identified as a cutpurse and burglar, and their mutual friend Robert Poley—a bird of like feather, traced by Dr. Boas through a career of variegated rascality—Marlowe spent the day of 30th May at the Deptford tavern mentioned, " from the tenth hour before noon." What business brought them together we cannot tell, though we may guess that they had been somehow associated in the Secret Service. That Marlowe was troubled by no obvious scruples about companionship with such rogues is a datum that must become part of our conception of him as a "man of the Renaissance," who, making plays about villains, took the varletry of actual life as it came.

The record returned on 1st June by William Danby, Coroner of the Household, and retrieved by Dr. Hotson, tells in legal Latin how the four dined quietly, and walked about in the garden of the tavern till the sixth hour after noon, whereafter they returned to the dining-room and had supper. Thereafter arose a quarrel between Frizer and " Morley," as Marlowe is officially named, while Marlowe was lying on a couch and Frizer was sitting by, with his back to the couch and his face to the table, Poley and Skeers sitting on either side of him.

Marlowe then, according to the testimony given by the others at the coroner's inquest, suddenly and maliciously drew Frizer's dagger from its sheath at Frizer's back and gave him two wounds on the head; whereupon Frizer, in self-defence, got back his dagger and struck Marlowe "above the right eye," making a wound two inches deep, whereof Marlowe instantly died.

That such a story should have satisfied a coroner's jury of sixteen men at the time, and should to-day dissatisfy a number of inquirers, is equally natural. The event would pass at the time as a normal stabbing affray; and the entry of Frizer's name, in the church register of the burial, as "ffrancis ffrezer," is in the heedless way of the period. Frizer went scot free, getting the royal pardon, and the story of the killing took various forms, one relating that Marlowe was killed by one Francis Archer in a quarrel about a woman.

The well-grounded doubts of our own day have been partly set forth in Dr. Boas's narrative. The main point is that the blow admittedly dealt by Frizer must have been given with terrific force; and the surmise that the murder of Marlowe had been planned in advance is very natural. The statement that, pinned between Poley and Skeers, Frizer "could not . . . get away," is obviously suspicious. One American student, Miss de Kalb, appears to draw the inference that the Lords of the Privy Council, who twelve days before the killing had been trying to get Marlowe in custody, had

reasons for putting him out of the way.[1] The thing is not exactly inconceivable; but the hypothesis somewhat outgoes our knowledge of the practice of the Privy Council at that or any other period. The evidence as to Marlowe having talked about going to the King of Scots does not seem to mean much.

Dr. S. A. Tannenbaum, on the other hand, offers[2] a no less striking hypothesis to the effect that Marlowe was certainly murdered, and that the controlling hand was Raleigh's. This, the most elaborate and ingenious discussion of the subject, demands close attention, the more so as Dr. Tannenbaum has in more than one research displayed a high acumen, recognised by the present writer despite dissents from several of his conclusions. A concise statement will reveal the difficulties in the present case.

1. In Dr. Tannenbaum's opinion, the arrest of Kyd, which was followed by his torture, was made in connection with official suspicion of a political plot, turning on the then burning question of the expulsion of foreigners from London, which had been made the theme of the composite play, never acted, entitled *Sir Thomas More*, in which Kyd had collaborated.

2. Kyd, in the critic's opinion, *must* have suspected that the information which led to his arrest had been

[1] Cited by Dr. Boas, pp. 102–3.

[2] *The Assassination of Christopher Marlowe*, N.Y., 1928. (This treatise, being privately printed, has not come under the notice of Dr. Boas in his book.)

given by Marlowe, with whom he had been associated. Accordingly, the obvious malice of Kyd's inculpation of Marlowe for "atheistic" opinions, apropos of the discovery among his papers of the Socinian extracts from Proctor's old pamphlet, must be interpreted as a procedure of revenge against Marlowe, as his betrayer.

3. At the same time, the critic takes as referring to Marlowe, Kyd's words attributing his troubles to "*some* outcast Ishmael" who, "for want, or of his own dispose to lewdness," may have "incensed your Lordships [of the Privy Council] to suspect me." That phrase, says the critic, serves "almost without a doubt to identify Kit Marlowe as the informer who betrayed Kyd," who would mean that "Marlowe's atheism made him a social outcast."[1]

4. Yet the critic also notes Kyd's reference to "men of quality" who associated with Marlowe, naming further Harriot, Warner, Royden, and "some stationers in Paules Churchyard." Such specifications do not at all point to a "social Ishmaelite." The fair inference would be that Kyd suspected not Marlowe but another, of bad social standing; and that his malice against Marlowe had some other ground. One might infer, for instance, literary jealousy, or a consciousness that Marlowe did not esteem him highly.

5. Whatever the causation on this side, we have to face further Dr. Tannenbaum's theory that Marlowe, learning of Kyd's inculpation of him, felt

[1] Work cited, pp. 25–7.

himself in a desperate situation; but recognised that " the only men who could have saved him—by the use of their political influence—were the men who were most in danger from him "—i.e., Raleigh and his group, who, on the other hand, relied on Kyd's " reticence." " Marlowe was the only one they had cause to fear. Marlowe, therefore, had to be silenced."[1]

6. Again the assumptions are challengeable. Why should not Marlowe look for protection to Secretary Walsingham, in whose secret service he had been? Furthermore, why should the Raleigh group fear their betrayal by Marlowe, who would thereby inculpate himself? And how *could* they rely on the reticence of Kyd under torture? By naming Harriot, Kyd had shown small reticence, as Harriot was Marlowe's known associate.

7. While, then, the whole investigation may well have been started in official hostility to Raleigh, who had spoken in the House of Commons in support of the expulsion of foreigners,[2] it does not in the least follow that Raleigh and his group had grave cause to fear danger from Marlowe alone. Baines's and Cholmeley's testimonies implicate them sufficiently. And when, in the following year, Raleigh was actually examined as to his religious opinions, no further proceedings were taken.[3]

8. That Marlowe might have been made a scapegoat seems possible enough, were it not for his

[1] Work cited, pp. 45–7.
[2] *Id.*, p. 57.
[3] *Id.*, pp. 60–1, *note.*

association with the Walsinghams. But the Raleigh group would presumably know of that association; and that they dreaded the consequences of avowal by him (to his own danger) that they held the "atheistical" opinions which were already the subjects of open talk and imputation, as in Parsons's pamphlet (1592), to the point of arranging his murder, is an unduly violent hypothesis.

9. Not that we are bound to deny Dr. Tannenbaum's assumption that Raleigh would stick at nothing in the way of assassination to save his own neck, even if it does not appear that it *was* in danger. But others were implicated; and it is again a violent hypothesis that Harriot, the man of science, would join Raleigh in such an act.[1] The Earl of Oxford, it appears, was quite ready to do such a deed.[2] But Raleigh's unscrupulousness, in an unscrupulous age, cannot be held to lend weight to the hypothesis we are considering.

10. It may be, on the other hand, that Marlowe was deliberately murdered by Frizer according to plan; though Dr. Tannenbaum's theory that Marlowe was first made drunk and murdered in another room hardly squares with the Coroner's recognition of the death as caused by a stab in the forehead. A planned murder would surely have taken a more certain method than a dagger-blow at the forehead of a man lying drunk. In any case, Frizer was in the service of Thomas Walsingham, and the others are not identified as Raleigh's creatures.

[1] *Id.*, p. 61. [2] *Id.*, p. 48, *note.*

11. Finally, if he did employ them for the murder, he was putting himself in *their* power.

The tragedy, then, is not plausibly explicable on Dr. Tannenbaum's hypothesis. Dr. Boas, on the other hand, is finally disposed to think it happened very much as the inquest sets forth; and that Marlowe's death was thus due to his own vinous resort to violence in the company of ruffians. But it would be just as reasonable to surmise that, in a quarrel, the resort to the dagger was made solely by Frizer, and that the slight cuts on his head, for which no medical treatment seems to have been required, were afterwards made by himself to bear out his plea of self-defence. We shall probably never know the truth.

And that is surely not a reason for deciding with Dr. Boas to agree unreservedly with the coroner's jury. To say with him that drawing a dagger on Frizer would be an instance of what Kyd called Marlowe's "rashness in attempting sudden privy injuries to men" would really not be judicial. If Marlowe were given thus to using his dagger, how came he, by the tacit admission of the witnesses, to carry no dagger of his own? And is it readily credible that a man lying on a couch would draw another man's dagger to strike at him upwards? It is conceivable, indeed, that Marlowe may have at some time boxed Kyd's ears. But Kyd himself deliberately sought to do grave "privy injury" to his former comrade; while as to Marlowe we have no other record of proclivity to violence. What we

hear of him is the description, " Kind Kit Marlowe."

But we end in uncertainty. The dramatist of *Sturm and Drang*, schooled in riotous Canterbury, probably familiar as a boy with the sight of bull-baiting, and frequently a witness of violent scenes in that violent age, is not to be pronounced incapable of vinous violence even in a quarrel over a tavern reckoning. We have just to remember that his three companions were presumably worse men than he, and that not one of them would have scrupled to bear false witness. Assuredly we could better have spared any of *them*.

Our most profitable memorandum, however, in taking leave of the slain poet as a human being, is that we shall find reason for holding that Kyd had been his coadjutor in dramatic work till very near the end of his life. Of his character we do not know enough to bear out the surmise ; but it is obviously possible that his collaboration with Marlowe may have developed in him a professional jealousy. It was Marlowe who had chiefly eclipsed him on the stage.

§ 3. *Chronology of the Plays*

The chronology of Marlowe's plays, it must be avowed, has been gratuitously confused, the excuses being slight as against the guidance. It has been a persistent habit to rank EDWARD II as one of the

later of the series,[1] one critic dogmatically declaring it to afford " unmistakable evidence " that it was his last.[2] Yet, even if we ignore here the whole argument for the assignment to him of the bulk of the HENRY VI plays and RICHARD III, we have in the Chorus prologue to DOCTOR FAUSTUS a plain lead which overrules the assumption of the lateness of EDWARD II :—

> Not marching now in fields of Thrasimene
> Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians,
> Nor sporting in the dalliance of love,
> In courts of Kings, where state is overturned ;
> Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,
> Intends our muse to vaunt his[3] heavenly verse . . .

Though we have no title for the tragedy first indicated, it is a reasonable inference that it may have been the play—or one of the plays—on Hannibal thrice alluded to in Heywood's APOLOGY FOR ACTORS,[4] were it only because Hannibal was for Marlowe as likely a theme as Julius Cæsar or Tamburlaine. And that he wrote a staged play on

[1] Tucker-Brooke, ed. of Marlowe, 1910, p. 307 ; Ward, *Eng. Dram. Lit.*, i, 347–9 (giving 1590–1) ; Fleay, *Biog. Chron. of Eng. Drama*, ii, 63 (giving 1590–1 : in his Manual he had given 1592–3) ; Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, iii, 425 (c. 1592) ; Symonds, *Shakespeare's Predecessors*, ed. 1900, p. 524 ; A. W. Verity, ed. of *Edward II*, pref., p. viii ; O. W. Tancock, ed. of *Edward II*, introd., p. viii (c. 1590). Cp. Dyce, introd. to Marlowe's works, 1-vol. ed., p. xxiv.

[2] Grant White, ed. of Shakespeare, vii, 416. This decision is accepted by Miss Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe*, 1927, pp. 6, 110, though she offers the date 1591.

[3] Usually corrected to *her*.

[4] N.S.S. rep., pp. 21, 56. There were several other plays, all lost, on Hannibal and Scipio.

Carthaginian history is probably the clue to the interpretation of Greene's much-debated allusion to "the mad priest of the sun," in the passage in his prefatory address to his story, PERIMEDES THE BLACKSMITH (1588): "daring God out of heaven with that atheist *Tamburlan*, or blaspheming with the mad preest of the sonne."

Fleay,[1] fastening on the spelling "sonne," argued that the reference was to Hieronimo in THE SPANISH TRAGEDY, whom he thought describable as "the mad priest of *the son*," in respect of his devotion to the task of avenging the slain Horatio. But Fleay's ingenious interpretation will not bear scrutiny. In the lax spelling of that age we find at times both "son" for *sun* and "sun" for *son*[2]; and Hieronimo, though presented as chronically mad, does not in any natural sense of the word blaspheme. Nor is "*the* son" a likely expression for "his son," save as a bad pun. On the other hand a "mad priest of the sun" was a perfectly likely character in a Marlowe play on the defeat of the Carthaginians; and "blaspheming" would be quite in the order of things in that connection.

[1] *Biog. Chron. of English Drama*, ii, 31–2.

[2] See Halliwell-Phillipps's *Dictionary of Misprints*, 1887, pp. 72–5. In Prof. Schœll's exact print, 1920, of the MS. of Chapman's *Charlemagne* (probably written by an amanuensis) we frequently have the spelling *soune* for *son* (Ill. 464, 496, 523, ii, 68; III, i, 34); though we also have frequently *sonne* (II, l. 122; III, i, 59, 82; ii, 4). In II, i, we have *rouge* and *roauge*, in two successive lines (346–7), for *rogue*; and then (356) *roague*. In l. 534 we have the two spellings *rynge* and *ringe* in one line. Greene's own spelling, as reproduced by Grosart, is even more variegated than this.

When, then, Collier inferred that " Marlowe also wrote the play in which ' the priest of the sun ' was a leading character "[1] he was well within his rights; and the odd thing is that neither he nor Dyce, who unexpectedly ignores the problem, should have connected the allusion with the Carthaginian play. It is fairly clear that Greene was thinking of only one author in his sentence; and it is surely no less likely that Marlowe would lend the Priest of the Sun as daring language as he put in the mouth of Tamburlaine. We have to remember, indeed, that there is reason to ascribe to Marlowe a lost play on Scanderbeg;[2] but that topic does not seem likely to offer a place for a Priest of the Sun.

Still more coercive is the inference that, even as the third piece alluded to in the prologue must be TAMBURLAINE, so the second must be EDWARD II. To no other play ever assigned to Marlowe can it be applied. It will not fit THE MASSACRE AT PARIS or DIDO; and it is Marlowe plays that are in view. Only by refusing to take the specifications as labelling *his own* plays can we reject the identification; and to do that is to bar the natural induction. " *Our* muse " is *his* muse. In the prologue to TAMBURLAINE:

> *We'll* lead you to the stately tent of war

is the vaunt of the particular poet who is beckoning his auditors to turn their backs on " jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits "—the old jingling verse of

[1] Dyce, p. xv.
[2] Fleay, *Biog. Chron.*, ii, 64–5.

the actors' plays. Surely he is speaking in the FAUSTUS prologue in his own person, as befitted.

And if, as might seem to be the natural course, we followed our clue quite strictly, we might even be led to challenge the long-standing assumption that TAMBURLAINE, which first established Marlowe's fame, was his first staged play. The order given us in the FAUSTUS prologue is :—

1. The Carthaginian play. (? HANNIBAL.)
2. EDWARD II.
3. TAMBURLAINE.

Granted that the list may proceed backwards, referring first to the latest play, we have yet to note the possibility that it follows the chronological order.

And is it not rather unlikely that a dramatist's most notable success—for TAMBURLAINE of all Marlowe's works had the most resounding celebrity —should have been his first attempt ? Assuming, again, that Marlowe took to play-making as a result of associating with the actors, were they not likely to invite him, first, to try a historical play of the kind they had already been producing ? Only the force of habit, in disregard of the bibliographical clue, could give the old assumption untroubled currency ; and only the force of literary habit can keep it quite unshaken by doubt. For while we have all been taught, not unreasonably, to see in the notorious play the unpruned exuberance of youth, and in EDWARD II the more vigilant compression of the ripened artist, there are certain marked features

of the last-named play which at least justify our questioning.

If only the editors had had regard to one outstanding feature of its composition, to wit, the *stichomythia*, or passages of dialogue in single lines, they might have remembered that this is one of the most archaic aspects of Elizabethan drama. It pervades the SPANISH TRAGEDY, to say nothing of earlier work. In no other play of Marlowe's does it so abound. It enters into the first scene; and in the second, third, and fourth we have much more; there being more than a dozen passages, varying from three to eight lines, of such dialogue. And this structural feature pervades the play to the close.

In I TAMBURLAINE there is nothing approaching this; and in the Second Part, hardly more. There is rather more in DIDO, but more, again, in FAUSTUS, and still more in the JEW, in which last play it figures chiefly in the "comedy" or bustling scenes, whereas in EDWARD II it abounds in the serious matter. Are we then to suppose that after achieving in TAMBURLAINE much applause by a declamation marked by a new freedom of line, a new spaciousness of lyrical rhetoric, the poet reverted years afterwards to the *stichomythia* which was almost the certificate of Senecan archaism?

I proffer, at this stage of our inquiry, no decision, merely pointing out that pronounced *stichomythia* in serious dialogue *is* an archaic phenomenon; that the free-flowing verse of TAMBURLAINE might be a

deliberate resort to a markedly different mode of composition for relief; and that there is nothing extravagant in the hypothesis that TAMBURLAINE was preceded by other plays of Marlowe's. Conceivably, of course, he may as aforesaid have put his list in reverse order, naming the last play first, and the first last. But that would still leave EDWARD II second. And there are obvious reasons why EDWARD II should not have had a stage success. To begin with, it obtrudes a theme always offensive, though, as we know, of a morbid interest for Marlowe.

This indeed may have been the reason why DIDO had had no stage life, the theme being there thrust to the front of a play that might otherwise have had attractions. These things it is customary, but idle, to ignore. But EDWARD II, in addition to its fundamental offence, has the theatrical disadvantage of presenting the King who lost the battle of Bannockburn, the highly unpopular because unheroic son of a famous conqueror; and it can never have gratified normal patriotic feeling. But whether we finally count it second or fourth, we cannot evade the reasons for ranking it among the earlier rather than among the later plays of Marlowe, in despite of the common assumption.

The only alternative inference that could be drawn from the lines under notice is that they may have referred to an earlier drama, now lost, which includes

> sporting in the dalliance of love,
> In courts of Kings, where state is overturned;

and that, after FAUSTUS, another play fitting that description was produced by its author, to wit, EDWARD II. It will probably be admitted, however, that such a hypothesis is so unplausible that it must give way to the natural one. Deliberately to write two unpopular plays fitting the description before us would be an unintelligible freak on the part of any author whatever; and no possible argument from features of style or treatment can entitle us to make such a supposition.

EDWARD II, then, had been penned and staged before DOCTOR FAUSTUS, to say nothing of later work. Since, then, FAUSTUS was admittedly played in 1588, EDWARD II presumably also belongs to that year, if not to 1587, in its first form. The fact that it was played by Pembroke's men in 1590–1, which is usually taken as pointing to that date for its origination, may really furnish the explanation of the internal evidence which alone could be properly founded on for the same conclusion—the phenomenon, namely, of the double-endings. It has been argued, at various times, that the dramatic maturity of the poet is more evident in EDWARD II than in any others of his plays; this in respect both of condensation and of characterisation. But however highly we reasonably rate the death-scene of Edward, the sheer power shown in that of Faustus is higher; and when we come to characterisation there arise questions which involve others.

Apart from *stichomythia*, the most nearly trustworthy internal test of the evolution of blank-verse

drama in those days is that of the use of the double-ending; and one of the scandals of the Marlovian chronology is the failure hitherto to recognise this. Dyce, unhappily, faced the problem of the Lucan translation without a thought of this, the vital test, discussing only "variety of pause," and even this without an eye to the phenomena. For in the Lucan translation the variety of pause is much greater than in TAMBURLAINE. After Dyce it has been, I think, the general view of editors that alike the translation from Lucan and that of the AMORES are to be dated as early college work.

Now, as we have many times sought to make readers realise, the Lucan translation as a whole reaches 17 per cent of double-endings, with 26 in the first 100 lines, and 23 in the last. To suppose, then, that Marlowe wrote *this* blank verse, with its peculiarly close-packed diction, before he had dramatically *made* blank verse, before 1587, before the SPANISH TRAGEDY, and before TAMBURLAINE, is to make the assumption that in blank-verse evolution anything *could* happen; that Shakespeare *could* have written the verse of CORIOLANUS in any previous decade of his work; and that double-endings were multiplied or stinted, forwards and backwards, from very high percentages to very low, under no intelligible or traceable progression, and wholly irrespective of rhythm. And this is just æsthetic irrationalism.

"To the last years at Cambridge," writes Miss Ellis-Fermor, "we *must* assign the translation of

Ovid's ELEGIES; of the first book of Lucan's PHARSALIA, and the first draft of DIDO."[1] As regards the translations, the " must " is just the other way about. If we are to have any æsthetic chronology at all, we " must " date the Lucan translation no earlier than about 1592. And though Dyce gave the lead in marking the Ovid translation early, on the score of its blunders, Miss Ellis-Fermor's own sympathetic and appreciative account of the merits of the style and versification of that performance is really an argument for a much later dating.

As to the blunders, they are more plausibly to be assigned, à priori, to a man who for five or six years had let his Latin rust, than to a keen young student who, at college, could surely have found ready help in getting at the meaning of such a line as

Carmine dissiliunt abruptis faucibus, angues,

of which Marlowe makes nonsense. As to the verse in general, Dyce unfortunately had no taste save for the neat Popean couplet. Miss Ellis-Fermor, on the contrary, justly pronounces that " the ELEGIES at their best are marked by a felicity of diction and a smoothness, often a musical quality, in the couplet that are a foretaste of the *mature* beauty of the lines of HERO AND LEANDER."[2] Why not then recognise that they are probably *of* the mature period, and not of the college days?

To sum up that in the ELEGIES " for the *last* time,

[1] Work cited, p. 3.
[2] *Id.*, p. 11.

until we come to HERO AND LEANDER, there are traces of that loving observation of the common earth that *does not otherwise* distinguish Marlowe's work," is to pronounce that Marlowe is at first felicitous and observant, musical and attractive, then for some six years devoid of those qualities, then again thus poetical in the last poem. And this is to subordinate all the natural tests of æsthetic chronology to a tradition fossilized in a " must."

As to DIDO, if we could be at all sure that Nashe, who seems to have avoided the usage of double-endings, had not to his own ends modified the versification, which he edited after Marlowe's death, we should be led to reckon that play the first item in Marlowe's surviving work. In any case, if we begin with TAMBURLAINE we note no progression as between the First and Second Parts, the former having some 75 double-endings, and the second 79, in nearly the same number of lines. FAUSTUS AND EDWARD II and the JEW set out in the same fashion: they are all to be regarded as belonging to the years before 1590, when Marlowe can be inferred to have begun his freer resort to the double-ending.

But while we find in TAMBURLAINE, save in possibly added scene-sections,[1] hardly any approach to a clustering of double-endings, we do find the phenomenon in EDWARD II. In that play, I think, there is no double-ending till we reach line 7 of the

[1] For instance, *2 Tamb.*, II, ii *b*, where we have always the scansion *Christi-ans*, after *Christian* in sc. i and ii *a*, which recurs in iii.

fourth scene; but in the third section of that scene we have five in 20 lines; in II, i, three in 9 lines; in II, v, a similar increase; in III, i, three in 4 lines (the whole scene having only 18); and in III, ii, in all, seventeen in 183 lines, or over 9 per cent.

Still more notable in this respect is the second scene of Act IV, where we have 7 double-endings in the first 17 lines—a rate of 40 per cent. In these scenes of Acts III and IV, further, we meet them in clusters—three in sequence (as again in IV, iv), or four in 7 lines. Thereafter, till we come to V, v, the rate falls and there are no more clusters. There had been no such rise and fall in TAMBURLAINE; and the *prima facie* inference would be that here is a proof of the *lateness* of our play. When, however, we note that in FAUSTUS there is a new diffuseness with clustering of rhyme and of double-endings, in scenes ia and ii of Act III, where the matter is plainly not all Marlowe's, we recognise ground for a new inference.

That inference is finally that in the plays written before 1590 there have been made interpolations, whether by Marlowe's hand or another's, which belong to the years after 1590 in which we know the double-ending to have multiplied in the work of both Kyd and Marlowe[1]; and when we scrutinise the scene-section in IV, ii, of EDWARD II, where the multiplication reaches its highest rate, we can well

[1] See *Introduction to the Study of the Shakespeare Canon*, pp. 27 *sq.*, 122 *sq.*

understand that this matter at least is additional. The prince here enters for the first time, expressing himself as at once hostile to his father's friends the Spencers and devoted to his father; only to be immediately associated (in the older action) with Young Mortimer, his father's enemy. We are getting a new action, with a partly new versification.

If we now consider the problems raised by the duplication of certain "literary" passages in EDWARD II and the CONTENTION BETWEEN THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER, our inference is reinforced. Long ago, Ulrici argued that the chief passages in question are original in the CONTENTION, and echoed in EDWARD II. Ward, claiming that they are certainly original in EDWARD II, and seeing that to be as a whole the earlier play, merely rejected the judgment. But the strongest item in Dr. Tucker Brooke's argument on the passages in question is that the reference to "the wild O'Neill," the Dane in command of "the narrow seas," and the tilting of Edward or Suffolk in France in the presence of Isabel or Margaret, are all historically accurate or appropriate in the CONTENTION and wholly inaccurate and inappropriate where they occur in EDWARD II.

The obvious solution is that EDWARD II was redacted; that its present form is not the original one; that some of the additions were probably made for the production of 1590–1; and that others were made for the publication of the play in 1594.

We now account for the presence of the clusters of double-endings in certain scenes, after an outset in which the double-ending was no more developed than in TAMBURLAINE and the outset of FAUSTUS or THE JEW.

And yet other phenomena tell of a systematic—or rather a fortuitous—process of literary expletion of one play from another for purposes of publication. In DOCTOR FAUSTUS, which we have seen strong reason to rank *after* EDWARD II in order of composition, we have the line (1422) :

Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,

in a perfectly appropriate context, visibly inspired by the theme of the coming doom. In EDWARD II we have the line (2052) :

Stand still, you watches of the element,

as part of an adjuration to the seasons to stay,

That Edward may be still fair England's King.

Every test of congruity would declare the FAUSTUS passage the original, and the other a strained adaptation to another piece of rhetoric. On the face of the case, then, if we date it by taking as primary matter these obvious interpolations, EDWARD II is the later play, as commonly supposed. But when we have realised that this play has been specially prepared for publication by the addition *at various points* of purely literary strokes from other works of the same author, and that, furthermore, dramatic additions have been made, involving the use of *a versification not present in the opening*

scenes, we are the more confirmed in our conviction that EDWARD II is one of the plays referred to in the prologue of FAUSTUS as having preceded it. The existing text is a *réchauffée*.

When we remember that the whole practice of the pre-Shakespearean group tells of such literary expansion of stage-plays for publication; that (1) Marlowe himself in 2 TAMBURLAINE IV, iv, (iii), adds the lines

> Like to an almond tree y-mounted high
> Upon the lofty and celestial mount
> Of ever-green Selinus, quaintly decked
> With blooms more white than Erycina's brows,
> Whose tender blossoms tremble every one
> At every little breath that thorough heaven is blown——

which are certainly "lifted" from Spenser's FÆRIE QUEENE (I, vii, 32) and were not in print when TAMBURLAINE was produced in 1587[1]; that (2) LOCRINE is thus embellished by Spenserian passages *for the press* by some one attending to SELIMUS; and that (3) Peele adds all manner of Marlovian echoes to EDWARD I and to DAVID AND BETHSABE, there remains no critical perplexity as to the procedure. EDWARD II thus falls into its place as an early play (1587?) manipulated after an interval of two or three years; and we can proceed to group alike

[1] See also the other Spenserian insertions (*F.Q.*, I, viii, 11) in the same Act, scene ii, near end. Ingram's bold suggestion that it was Spenser who copied Marlowe will bear no scrutiny. The cited lines are at once quite Spenserian and wholly irrelevant to their context in TAMBURLAINE.

the assigned and the theoretically assignable plays in their apparent sequence.

The MASSACRE AT PARIS in its original form was probably earlier than the date 1592–3, commonly assigned to it. From the prologue to THE JEW we know that "the Guise" was recently dead (1588) when that was written; and it is the historical fact that Henri III was assassinated in August, 1589. Marlowe would probably not wait long to pen his play on the new theme; and the soliloquy of the Guise, which stands out most clearly as his work in the visibly composite MASSACRE, has a sprinkling of double-endings, but nothing suggestive of a date after 1590. There is thus an à priori reason to look for dramatic work by him between 1590 and his death in 1593—precisely the years in which we are led inductively to see his hand in work never published as his, and only in recent times assigned to him upon internal evidence.

Elsewhere, as against the caveat that we must take care not to assign too many plays to the six or seven years of Marlowe's life as a dramatic poet, I have pointed out that, in the first place, no author could live in comfort in Elizabethan London on the produce of one or two plays per year. The theatre's price, before the date at which Jonson could exact £10, is known to have been a little over £6 per play; and there were no royalties. Either, then, Marlowe had sources of income from his patrons which made playwriting for him a work of pleasure, or he had to produce, with or without coadjutors, at least four

plays per annum to make a livelihood. And we have seen no reason to think he had much money from his patrons. Indigence—avowed in HERO AND LEANDER—is stamped on the lives of all the men of his group; and Dekker and Jonson and Chapman shared a similar fortune.

As against those outstanding facts the only consideration ever urged is the dead dogma that in that age money had "eight times the purchasing power" that it has in our own (pre-war) time. This statement, confidently made by Lee and Ingram and many others, comes from men of letters who have made no exact economic studies, and belongs to the normal ignorance of economic science among "educated" persons in the England of to-day. That it is incredible is revealed even by some of the writers who repeat it. Thus in Mr. Percy Macquoid's chapter on Costume in SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND, where the dogma is tabled with the usual calm certitude,[1] we learn a few pages later that "plain satin cost 12 to 14 shillings a yard, equivalent to about £5 of our money,"[2] without even a question as to who pays £5 a yard for satin in our time.

Next we learn that an "ordinary gentleman in town" paid, in 1589, 4 pounds 6 shillings for "4 shirts, 6 bands, and 6 pairs of cuffs"; and that "even a cheap shirt cost a crown."[3] When we read that the bed at Knole prepared for King James, hung with embroidered cloth of gold, "cost the

[1] *Sheakespeare's England*, 1917, ii, 98.
[2] *Id.*, p. 101.
[3] *Id.*, p. 106.

Earl of Dorest £8000 in money of that time,"[1] we realise the absurdity of the eightfold theorem. Always when we come to concrete prices the bubble bursts. The bills of a " well-to-do bachelor who lived in lodgings in Warwick Lane, London," in 1589, show him paying 3*s.* 11*d.* for the *materials* of a dinner that might have sufficed for four persons; and about exactly the same for supper. In each case, indeed, there is a charge for " dressing " the food; but cooking and service would apparently be payable over and above. In short, the error we are considering appears to be simply a loose deduction from the fact of the low prices of meat in the country markets, a phenomenon telling nothing of the cost of life in town, and throwing no light whatever on the costs of clothing and lodging there.

The decisive data as regards the life of a literary bachelor in Marlowe's age, perhaps, are these, not noted, I think by our literary authorities: in the ordinary London eating houses there were meals at a " shilling ordinary," an " eighteenpence ordinary," and a " two shilling ordinary," as noted in many plays of the period. And that disposes once for all of the formula of " eight times the purchasing power of to-day "; for ordinaries at similar rates were common in London before the war, and are even in existence to-day.

The clothing of " gentlemen " being then by all accounts, including Mr. Macquoid's, notably expensive, it was thus simply impossible that men of the

[1] *Id.*, p. 128.

status of dramatists could live in decent comfort on even £25 per annum in Elizabethan London. Their food and their clothing alone would have cost them more, even if they lived thriftily. But when we recall that at Cambridge the poor scholars were held to live like beggars with "penny pieces of meat" where there was no rent to pay, and that Marlowe, moving in "good" society, would be expected to dress in the manner of the gentry or middle class, it becomes impossible to conceive him as living on the produce of one or two plays a year. The assumption was possible in a "nation of shopkeepers" only in virtue of the literary inclination to keep all such matters out of sight.

For the rest, Marlowe of all men was capable of play-production at a rapid rate. For Shakespeare's facility we have the evidence of his fellow-players; for Marlowe's, the evidence leaps to the eye in all his work. The movement of every line in TAMBURLAINE tells of easeful energy: the sheer spontaneity is as obvious as the dilute prolixity of Greene in prose and verse alike, or the mechanical penny-a-lining of the uninspired Peele; and the strong simplicity of Marlowe's dramatic method is in keeping with the forceful and forthright diction. And whereas Shakespeare's writing was a task added to that of acting, Marlowe had no distraction save those obscure labours in the service of Walsingham, of which we know so little.

Finally, we cannot miss seeing that his industry was as remarkable as his facility. The tense toil of

the line-for-line version of the First Book of Lucan, and the translation of Ovid's AMORES, is that of a man either driven or bent to hard literary work—hard, that is, even if the work be at points faultily done. Indeed that miscellaneous work of translation, with the final production of the two sestiads of HERO AND LEANDER, might with some plausibility be urged as against the conclusion that he had a hand in many plays beyond those collected as his; though the evidence of his industry bears us out.

But while we have the strongest à priori grounds for holding him likely to have written or collaborated in many plays—despite Dr. Tucker Brooke's à priori decision that he was unlikely to collaborate—we must never let any apriorism whatever dictate to us any of our assignments. Our results can be valid only inasmuch as they are yielded by a strictly inductive æsthetic criticism, in the light of all the bibliographical evidence obtainable. If we were disposed to adopt the bold hyperbole of Bury's dictum that " history is a science, nothing more and nothing less," we might claim as much for the inductive scrutiny of æsthetic texts. But we had better shun the hyperbole. History is an attempt to decipher the human past in the *scientific spirit* of strict concern for evidence, yet always consciously in the presence of elements of human nature insusceptible of the exactitude of notation of the sciences commonly so called.

Scrutiny of the problems of authorship in Elizabethan drama is equally a pursuit to be conducted

in the scientific spirit, with a concern for testable inference such as is only latterly emerging. Without loyalty to inductive method it is but a procedure of literary or æsthetic impressionism not recognisable as scientific in any sense. Sheer apriorism, on a basis of minimum knowledge and lawless hypothesis, has yielded all the vain dogmatisms of the series of theories which began with Baconism and has successively presented Rutlandism, Derbyism and Oxfordism, all alike substituting asseveration for judicial inquiry, all destroying each other, none offering reasonable evidence to the rational inquirer. Theirs is the method of speculative ignorance, wholly detached from the procedures of æsthetic and other testation which are indispensable to any induction worthy of the name.

It is by such testation alone that we can reach reasoned knowledge in regard to the problem before us, involving as it does the wider inquiry into the authorship of the Shakespeare Folio plays up to 1593, as well as of a series of anonymous plays of the same period.

§ 4. *Genius and Character*

In his own age, Marlowe visibly makes the two-sided impression at once of singular and sudden genius and of a reprehensible attitude to life and its problems. The volume of the praise given to his " elemental " power is a witness to the amount of real freethinking and tolerance in that period of

poise between new nationalisation and fanatical civil war. On the other hand the prosecution and the torturing of poor Kyd are insistent reminders of the persistent stress of a murderous orthodoxy, which blenched at no atrocity of vengeance on the officially convicted heretic, though in his case the primary motive was perhaps political. And Marlowe, as we have seen, was of all men of letters in his day the most daring defier of the normal proprieties. Men in that age "lived dangerously" to a degree not practicable in peace-time in ours; and years before the sinister procedure against Kyd, Marlowe was in one quarter jealously aspersed, nominally on theological grounds, really on the score of ethics.

The phrase "Atheist Tamburlaine," which comes first from the jealous and malicious Greene, who on his death-bed tearfully avows having formerly held "atheistic" opinions, is a typical form of Elizabethan malediction. Of course the usage had been continuous from the age in which Pagans and Christians, alike devout believers in Gods, fervently called each other *atheoi*. Bishops in our own age have been known to apply the term to Voltaire and to Paine, strenuous theists both; and in the Tudor and the Stuart periods alike it was a standing epithet for fervent deists and Unitarians, or indeed for any doubters of miracles or prophecies.

Tamburlaine is no more an atheist than Faustus. Jonson's Sejanus, on the other hand, *is* an atheist, as is Marlowe's Aaron in TITUS ANDRONICUS; but

nobody has yet pretended to deduce personal atheism on the part of authors who exhibited atheists as wholly evil men. In the wildest passage inserted in Part II (IV, ii, 45–56 = ll. 3795 sq.), Tamburlaine is made to announce himself a determined enemy of the God who gave him such a son as Calyphas; but immediately afterwards he declares himself

> Crown'd and invested by the hand of Jove,

and

> The scourge of God and terror of the world;

and in the last Act, scene i, after the deriding of Mahomet as impotent, we have a vehement attestation of "God himself,"

> The God that sits in heaven, if any God,
> For he is God alone, and none but he.[1]

The insertion of the God-defying lines in Act IV is thus an interesting illustration of Marlowe's literary practice. They include, as does SELIMUS, the phrase from Spenser about "darting mountains" at the head of the offending Power; and they clearly cannot have been in the primary text at all, since they reduce it to violent absurdity. They may be taken indeed to illustrate Marlowe's headlong and heedless temper; but the bibliographical point of importance is that they form one of several samples of deliberate interpolation of "literary" matter by him in his plays for publication.

That he should thus gratuitously help to bring

[1] See also the passages in Act II, scene ii, and IV, iv (iii).

upon himself the epithet " atheist " was part of his fate ; but he was of course no more an atheist than any of his characters.[1] He never reached any logical dismissal of anthropomorphism, any more than Raleigh or the other members of the so-called " School of Atheism." Raleigh declares himself a devoted theist, ready as such to put atheists to death, in the good old spirit.[2] There is in fact no *known* atheist of that age, whatever Shakespeare may have been in his innermost thought—a question not to be solved by, or to be usefully discussed with, verbalists who can grasp neither the logical problem nor the significance of the law of relativity.

The residual truth about Marlowe, in this aspect, is that wherever ideal and action can be put into the poetic-dramatic form he is eagerly ready to make the experiment. We can realise his personality, on this side, much more definitely than we can Shakespeare's, at that age. Fed on the lore of the English Renaissance, deriving alike from Italy and France and the Latin classics, he has heard a hundred eager debates, and, in a world responsive to all the memories of dangerous living, has conceived all manner of Iliads and enterprises as food for buskin'd poesy. He can identify himself at will

[1] Dr. Boas's remark (p. 66) that " from his arrival in London Marlowe's notoriety as an ' atheist ' at least equalled his fame as a playwright " must be demurred to. The cry began with Greene, when there was not even the God-defying passage to justify it. Tamburlaine is a theist, and Marlowe was not then charged with blasphemy.

[2] *History of the World*, ed. 1736, pp. xxiv, xxviii. Cp. art. RALEIGH in *D.N.B.*, pp. 200–1.

with either the conquerors' or the anti-autocratic temper, with the irresistible Tamburlaine or the stark nobles who struck down an intolerable King, or the spirits who asked:

What right had Cæsar to the empery?

The failing and falling King interests him alternately with the victorious one; and, as all responsive readers have felt, his Faustus and Barabas are but variants of the Superman of resolute will, resolved to impose his will on his world. Of all his adjectives, "resolute" is about the commonest. And yet at bottom he is tragically sane, dooming the strong and the weak alike to defeat, if it be only at the hand of death. Thus tragedy is his natural element; and there could be for him no notable achievement in comedy, though, as we shall see, he essays it. The outstanding fact is that he is always energising, making his merchandise of calamity and crime, as so many dramatists had done long before him and in his own age, turning it all into a ringing verse that is nearly always sonorous, and is often vividly strong.

It is really on that side that he provokes question; and it is on that side that the outcries of Greene and Kyd impeach him. What Greene meant by "diabolical atheism," of course, was not any reasoned opinion in theology, though like Marlowe and so many others of that age he had himself pronounced "hell a foolish speech."[1] He meant what was then

[1] Melicertus' Eclogue, in *Menaphon* (1589).

called Machiavellism,[1] the supposed denial that rulers owed any allegiance to moral principles, or to any code outside reasons of State. The inference was a confusion of practice with theory. Bacon saw clearly enough the value of Machiavelli's presentment of the life of States and men in the light of the actual. "We are much beholden," he avowed, "to Machiavel and others, that write what men do and not what they ought to do."[2]

The odium incurred by Machiavelli was, in fact, that of the thinker turning the north light on life, and calmly showing men how unscrupulous was the normal policy which they cloaked under pretences of religion and righteousness. All that was crooked in that age resented the scientific study of expediency; and men morally quite inferior to Machiavelli denounced him, as did the unscrupulous Frederick in a later age, for tranquilly debating the exigencies and devices of statecraft in respect of which they had no scruple whatever, as against his sane code of real utility. And Greene, proclaiming a death-bed repentance after a nefarious private life and a lawless literary one, played the devout hypocrite like the rest.

His death-bed confession is one of the many

[1] The matter is fully discussed in *The Villain as Hero in Elizabethan Tragedy*, by Dr. C. V. Boyer, 1914. Marlowe was the first to introduce Machivelli on the English stage.

[2] *Of the Advancement of Learning*, B. II, Routledge's ed. of Works, p. 140. (Rep. in the *De Augmentis*, p. 570.) Bacon quotes Machiavelli more than a dozen times. See also the *Advancement*, p. 153; *De Augmentis*, p. 593; also p. 601; and the Essay *Of Custom and Education*.

reasons for inferring that he wrote or shared in SELIMUS, in which the ostensible immoralism and brutalitarianism of Tamburlaine are ostensibly outgone, and a bloody and faithless savage is paraded as a triumphant conqueror. The verbal implication is that a Selimus is the incarnation of "godlessness"; this in an age in which the devout Philip II and Alva and "the Guise" were bywords for systematic cruelty. But Marlowe, after producing the moral mirage of TAMBURLAINE, shows no esteem whatever for the Guise, whose murderous immoralism he projects on his screen with the same detached and impartial power; whereas in SELIMUS there is no trace of anything like a sense of moral judgment.

It is as if Greene's personal badness, joined with that equally congenital element of moral perception and fictive faculty which made him the first portrayer in Elizabethan drama of lifelike and credible good women, had been through his own envy made drunk by the successful spectacle of "blaspheming" Tamburlaine, and had set himself to out-blaspheme "the scourge of God." It was of this, apparently, that he repented in his pitiable pangs of dissolution[1]; and, like the other pietists who felt the slow torturing and burning of heretics to be godly acts, he was religiously conscious of saving virtue in his patronising imputation of guilt to Marlowe, who probably was, like Machiavelli, a much humaner man at bottom than the odious torturers.

[1] Doubtless there had been a previous veering to the "respectable" attitude, as in the pietism of *A Maiden's Dream* (1591), to say nothing of *A Looking-Glass for London*.

Kyd, however, we must remember, had called him " intemperate, and of a cruel heart." All words used by a man who had been demoralised by torture, and who was himself exhibiting a cruel heart, are to be heard with compassion, whatever we may think of his poverty or perversity of spirit; and it may well have been that the " intemperate " was true. It would be idle to fasten on Marlowe the white flower of a blameless life in a largely evil age. But are we to suppose, because of TAMBURLAINE, that he had a " cruel heart " ? So far as we can discover, it is of his literary sentiments that Kyd is thinking; and the judgment is suspect on the grounds already indicated.

Kyd might indeed claim that in his SPANISH TRAGEDY, in ARDEN, and in SOLIMAN AND PERSEDA, as in the old HAMLET, he had exhibited cruelty and crime as things wholly reprobate. There is in SOLIMAN, too, as even in the TRAGEDY, a pervading quality of natural tenderness which is " to seek " in Marlowe, at least before he handled ROMEO AND JULIET. The man who drew Perseda might feel that in Marlowe something human was left out. And there too he might be right, up to a point. Marlowe, assuredly, is no Shakespeare. Kyd's whole drama is indeed a systematic preachment of revenge; but it is always revenge against cruelty and wickedness, which seem to be *felt* in his plays as Marlowe did not feel them.

And, needless to say, there is no moral or any other good sense in the modern literary pose of the

youth who affects to see a fine thing in a bull-fight, or prattles of genius as something responsible to no moral standards. But while Marlowe would probably not wince at a bull-fight, and Shakespeare certainly would, we shall do ill to conclude that he had a cruel heart in respect of human things, or to doubt that he would not have played the part of Sydney, the dagger-bearer, to the dying soldier at Zutphen.

Like Sidney, he was chivalrous in a sense in which neither Greene nor Kyd was. It was he who began the chivalrous presentment of Jeanne Darc in I HENRY VI[1]; and it is fairly to be inferred that it was that audacity which had made the play so unpopular with the "amiable and pious"[2] Elizabethans as to necessitate, for the theatre, the recast in which Jeanne is degraded and dishonoured, at the hands, certainly of Greene, probably of Peele, and possibly of Kyd. From all that baseness, we may confidently say, Marlowe was wholly averse. He was no witch-burner, and his sins were never those of a vile fanaticism.

In sum, if we are to think of him aright, we must conceive him the genially reckless man of genius who was so far a natural dramatist that the sanguinary spectacle of Renaissance life struck him as a fitting theme for poetry; tragedy as so essentially part of the nature of things that it was to be boldly presented with neither fear nor favour; and love and

[1] See *The Shakespeare Canon*, Part IV, Division I, Sec. II, Ch. II, § 2.

[2] "That amiable and pious people." Andrew Lang.

bloodshed alike to be envisaged as part of the scheme of nature. Such an outlook he had in the Senecan drama as a whole. His careless association with blackguards of the political under-world is the measure of his amoral detachment: it is not the measure of his personal proclivity. Were they, at bottom, he might ask, any worse than the Walsinghams or the other conscienceless intriguers of the age? Were the men who used or played the *agent provocateur*, to entangle Mary of Scotland in a plot that should bring her to the block, any better than the killers of past history?

In a word, Marlowe is first and last a literary and artistic personality, so to be understood and estimated; and this without counting him either a killer or an inhuman "defective." English ethical snobbery still fatuously pillories Bacon on the pretence that he was "ungrateful" to the crazy egoist, Essex, whom he had wisely but vainly counselled for his good through years of sagacious and ill-paid service, and whom at the end he sought in vain to save from himself. Marlowe stood in a saner relation to reality than that of our traditionary sentimentalists; and Essex would be for him no hero save in the negative sense, like Edward the Second and Richard the Second. If we are to know him, we must look through his eyes, the eyes of the most outstanding dramatist of the Elizabethan world before Shakespeare.

It is not to be supposed that Marlowe ever exhorted himself, in Pater's fashion, to "burn with a

hard and gemlike flame." He just did it. And perhaps no poet ever more thoroughly fulfilled the description. The vibrating lines with which he opens his prologues :—

> From jigging veins of rhyming mother wits . . .
> We'll lead you to the stately tent of war ;
>
> Albeit the world think Machiavel is dead,
> Yet was his soul but flown beyond the Alps ;
>
> Not marching now in fields of Thrasimene ;

like the lines which begin his plays :

> So that of thus much that return was made . . .
>
> Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin . . .
>
> My father is deceas'd. Come, Gaveston,
> And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend,

reveal his mood along with his mode. The hard and gemlike flame, which is the ideal of his concentration at the moment, glows forth like a switched electric light.

Soon we realise the literary penalty, the coercion of the stage, under which the brave projection and conception waver down into series of actions wherein we must have ranting declamation or lachrymose pathetics and bathetics, or clotted curses, or crudely bizarre comedy, till we feel we are delivered to an action in which the dominating character only reiterates itself ; and, it may be, revising or abetting hands turn the kaleidoscope for us from time to time. He can always project a fit catastrophe ; and yet, with all his masterly beginnings, he has no fine ending save that of FAUSTUS :

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burnèd is Apollo's laurel bough !

THE JEW, like FAUSTUS, simply could not maintain the intellectual level at which it set out. For this play no printed " source " has yet been traced ; and we can but speculate as to whether he developed his theme from that of the story of the Jew of Venice, in rehandling which, we shall find, he had a share. As to the salient power of the first two Acts, Hallam's eulogy is not too high. But the entertainer, with his genius for ringing linear verse and his creative poetic imagination on the plane of masterful egoism, must follow up his scenes of mental action with scenes of drama proper ; and inevitably the man of unscrupulous mind becomes the man of wildly unscrupulous deeds. As a mere framer of a melodrama, a " thriller," Marlowe, in virtue of his sheer power, is easily more swiftly effective for us than Kyd, who in this field gave him his first lesson. But on the plane of the hero-villain play, as distinct from the revenge-play proper, the action must approximate to that of the modern " thriller," with only the difference that the villain is the protagonist and plot-compeller, and must work his own destruction.

The literary fatality, however, is curiously similar, where the action is not raised to a higher plane of terror, as in FAUSTUS ; and even there the vulgarisation forced upon the play after it left Marlowe's hands was inevitable from the standpoint of the stage. The entertainer must entertain ; and Marlowe himself must have had to face something like

the popular diablerie which reduces the play, as redacted for the next generation, to a *pastiche* in which the great projection and the great ending are separated by all manner of necromantic farce. The stage-play must dree its weird.

It is instructive to note how the " thriller " of all orders, after dropping or modifying the obsolete law of the revenge-play, conforms to the conditions. The poetic and the unpoetic alike may begin with an alert efficiency, as Marlowe always begins, the instinct of the writer controlling his outset, the poise debonair and craftsmanlike. There is, of course, the immense difference that at his outset Marlowe is putting forth his highest power of poetic phrase and imagination, and so producing " literature." His beginning is thus an achievement in itself, only in one case to be maintained throughout in a work of dramatic construction—which TAMBURLAINE is not. More often, the needs of the theatre dictate mechanical episode. At the close, in THE JEW, we have the accelerated downhill rush into the wind-up, with improbabilities piled up to the point of vertigo. We begin with a perception of the charm of " literature " ; we end with a perception of the law of demand and supply.

But, let us further remember, a certain formal flatness of conclusion is the dictated convention of stage drama in general, to say nothing of the crazy conclusion dictated to the modern " thriller " by the need for a stupefying " surprise " prepared by a sorry series of false scents—a thing unimaginable

for the Elizabethan melodrama. What we get there is relatively reasonable. We must not ask of this form what it cannot give—the poised tiptoe ending of the great sonnet or poem. Marlowe is the embodiment of the forward-leaping muse of aspiration, " still climbing after knowledge infinite," conceiving something more ideal than drama, the philosophical dramatic poem, which cannot be realised without making drama miss its compulsory mark. TAMBURLAINE is the revelation of the fatal limits : the thing cannot live through five so-called Acts to any good dramatic purpose. And Marlowe's fundamental sanity and practical intelligence conformed to his conditions so far as his spirit could.

Those who speculate sympathetically as to what he might have achieved in drama had he lived another twenty years are probably but seeking to relume the ideal which, in drama, he saw he must relinquish, and could not have fulfilled. His actual progress to the close, we shall find, was not to a more truly psychic and a more deeply poetic drama, to a larger vision of the clashing and interacting life of men, but simply to a more effective theatrical use of his instrument of dominating personality. For he lacked alike humour and native tenderness ; and his poetry, in which he seeks and finds his final distinction, is essentially descriptive rather than dramatic.

Noting how in HERO AND LEANDER he was regenerating and invigorating the rhymed couplet as masterfully as he did linear blank verse, we may indeed fitly say that he might have become even a

greater poet proper than he ever could have been a dramatist proper. That is part of the enduring interest of his personality. But there is a relative ripeness in his spirit as in his verse technique even in the six years of his meteoric flight; and our speculation cannot justifiably project for him a mastery of fields of poetry into which he never entered. None could more masterfully express the tumult of the soul: of its depths he was no keen explorer.

Yet in his own arena his purely poetic powers appear to be developing to the end; and nothing in his decade can be put in competition with HERO AND LEANDER in its kind. It would be hard to show that in any form of relevant percipience he was here lacking. There has been an odd and otiose discussion on his use of colour in his plays, expatiation proceeding in all directions save that of the needed research into his actual work. "Much," writes Miss Ellis-Fermor,[1]

"has been made of Marlowe's love of colour; and, for simple, strong tones, his instinct cannot be questioned. But it is only the simple and the strong tones that he *dwells* upon; his is not a subtle colour-sense. In all the range of both parts of *Tamburlaine* he speaks only of blood-red, black, gold, crystal, silver and milk-white. So startling and decorative are the effects that he achieves with these, that we forget at first there is no mention in the whole ten acts of the green of grass, or the blue of the sky, or the browns, greys, and violets of the *English* landscape. Except for a dubious reference

[1] *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 50.

to sapphires (by which I suspect him to mean diamonds) there is nothing to indicate that Marlowe was not colour-blind to the whole range of the spectrum beyond red and yellow."

This studious enumeration is unfortunately astray in detail, and critically astray in its apparent aim. Drama, *as such*, is not colorate; and Marlowe actually lends it colour far in excess of its needs. He uses colour in TAMBURLAINE rather more freely than does Shakespeare in almost any play. Even in naming the flowers, the master poet often does not name their colours; yet Miss Ellis-Fermor denies colour to Marlowe's many allusions to jewels, where colour is equally subsumed.

But she denies him colour where he had actually put it. She has overlooked, in her curt catalogue, his purple, pearl, crimson, and scarlet, besides treating ivory and "snowy" as alike white and (apparently) amber and gold and fire as merely yellow. And she overlooks the "green." Even in TAMBURLAINE, where verdure hardly belongs, we have (Pt. II, IV, iv, near end):—

> *Ever green* Selinus quaintly decked
> With blooms more white than Erycina's brows;

and so far from making sapphires diamonds, the poet specifies (*Id.*, III, ii):—

> A chair of gold, enamellèd,
> Enchased with diamonds, *sapphires, rubies,*[1]
> And fairest pearl of wealthy India.

[1] For the metre, *diamonds* should have come last, unless we are to read *rubiës*.

That this spendthrift of colour should be casuistically suspected of being " colour-blind to the whole range of the spectrum beyond red and yellow " is hard measure. " Hues of blood," vermilion, crimson, scarlet, ruddy, ruby and purple, give surely a reasonable range of " red " in mere play-writing. Even in drama, where, as aforesaid, colour is supererogatory, he gives us (DIDO, IV, near end) :—

> An orchard that hath store of plums,
> *Brown* almonds, services, ripe figs, and dates,
> *Dew*berries, apples, *yellow* oranges . . .
> . . . red-gill'd fishes . . . white swans,

and again dead Hector's " blueish, sulphur eyes," and also heaven's " azur'd gates," and " purple sea," and the morning's " grey uprise." Further, as Tamburlaine has " amber hair "—not catalogued—Æneas has golden hair. And then in THE JEW we have :

> Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
> Jacinths, hard topaz, *grass-green* emeralds,
> Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds.

To found a serious indictment of defect of colour-sense on one play ; to do even that with oversights ; and to ignore the other plays, is arbitrary criticism enough ; but to ignore the small body of Marlowe's non-dramatic poetry, where signs of his colour-sense were more reasonably to be looked for, is the oddest procedure of all. When we turn to that, we find in the first fifteen lines of HERO AND LEANDER " purple," " green " and " blue," to be followed soon by " blushing coral," " pearl and gold." But

we might particularly have expected the matter to be put to the test of the two short poems. In THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE we have " roses," " myrtle," " gold," " a belt of straw and ivy-buds," and " coral clasps and amber studs." And, finally, in the Fragment preserved in ENGLAND'S PARNASSUS, after the " ivory shine " we have not only

> the eglantine and rose,
> The tamarisk, olive, and the almond tree,

but the varying leaves that,

> Though all were green, yet *difference*[*d*] *such in green*
> *Like to the checker'd bent of Iris' bow,*

which might suggest to most people an eye for colour.

When Miss Ellis-Fermor proceeds to give Milton, on the strength of his whole body of poetry, colouristic credit for his " *complicated* tones," including in them *dusky, silver, grey, azure, sooty, yellow, emerald* and *amber*, all of which Marlowe actually *has in drama* (*pitchy*=sooty ; ditto *jetty*) one is fain to inquire what we are driving at. For there are other issues to try, and when a dramatist who is abnormally and gratuitously colorate is taxed with narrowness of colour range, the chances of his getting justice done for him for his range of drama would seem to be scanty.

Miss Ellis-Fermor certainly gives Marlowe much free-handed, and often just, panegyric, though she goes so far as to claim that " his poetry and his aspiration will be heard in times of doubt and con-

fusion," which soft impeachment some of us must respectfully deny. But when panegyric tends to be at once doctrinary and subjective, the critical course should be shaped towards objective æsthetic valuation, which alone is testable. And to that end, seeing that (1) Miss Ellis-Fermor, counting EDWARD II Marlowe's last play (yet dating it 1591),[1] finds in it a "weary flatness,"[2] while (2) Mr. Edward Thomas, chiming with Mr. Verity[3] and Sir A. W. Ward[4] and Mr. Havelock Ellis,[5] pronounces that "in none of the other plays have all of Marlowe's powers combined so happily to one great end"; and (3) other critics alternately deny that it has either faults or merits, an objective æsthetic criticism would seem to be in the common interest. Everybody, in time, gets tired of critical chaos; and for the open-minded student the merits and the demerits of EDWARD II are equally obvious.

The play is not historically revelatory: Marlowe's history plays never are; and there is no foreseeing grasp of the action as regards the Queen. What we get is a disconcertingly kaleidoscopic presentment of a long action, in which the vicissitudes are bewildering by reason of being selected for merely scenic purposes. The total effect is really a condemnation of the chronicle play as a thing that

[1] Pp. 6, 110.
[2] P. 128.
[3] *The Influence of Christopher Marlowe on Shakespeare's Earlier Style*, 1886, pp. 29, 67, 71.
[4] *History of Eng. Dramat. Lit.*, ed. 1899, i, 347.
[5] Ed. of Marlowe, p. xliii.

cannot yield historical unity. But the scenes and episodes are vivid as no one else in that day could have made them; and though there are flat spots, "weary flatness" describes the series for few readers. If we do not get the historical personages we get *an* Edward, a Gaveston, and a Mortimer who are as alive as any figures Marlowe made. And, when all is said, he could claim that the sheer needs of the theatre barred him from any other order of reality, while he gave it the most vivid dramatic verse it had yet heard.

PART II

PERFORMANCE

CHAPTER I

THE ACCEPTED PLAYS

THE problem of the composite character of the bulk of the Elizabethan and Stuart drama, as to authorship, involves even the small body of the accepted work of Marlowe. If there is anything in the whole *corpus* that might seem at first sight to be nearly if not quite homogeneous, it is such a play as TAMBURLAINE, or, as some would still argue, such plays as not only THE JEW but EDWARD II. But even for those apriorists, the shadow lies across DOCTOR FAUSTUS and THE MASSACRE AT PARIS, and, in some degree, over DIDO. The superscription of the last-named play expressly involves Nashe. The heterogeneity of the matter in FAUSTUS and the MASSACRE forces itself on the perception even of the traditionists who either stolidly or desperately deny that we can rationally distinguish alien work in the Shakespeare Folio.

This is a phenomenon to be watchfully weighed. There is of course no foliolatrous " Confession of Faith " ; and even from within the official circle

whose prominent members are fiercely proclaiming allegiance to Heminge and Condell there come voices of heresy, proclaiming " collaboration " in certain plays—with, of course, no tabling of tests. Thus, even in a group which affects solidarity and imputes incompetence to the outsider as such, there is radical if furtive dissidence. Yet further, there may come from the same men (1) the denial that there is or can be any internal " evidence " for the presence of non-Shakespearean matter in the Folio, and (2) the unabashed avowal that the presence of non-Marlowe matter in the Marlowe plays is internally obvious.

It would of course be idle to infer or suggest that such critical self-stultification proceeds from unveracity. At most we can deduce that it involves a lax standard of intellectual as distinguished from social rectitude. But nothing is to be effected by dwelling on the moral duty of rectitude, which is recognised only by the strictly veridical minds. The working inference is simply that in this field of criticism we may generally look for a traditionary anchylosis of critical judgment where the alien elements in the Folio are concerned, alongside of a relatively rational perception of alien elements in, say, some of the plays assigned to Marlowe, as to whom there is no foliolatry to speak of.

Always we are faced by the bibliographical fact that TAMBURLAINE is anonymous, being printed without an author's name, and with no preserved contemporary mention of any. Greene's attack names no author ; and Heywood, who is our express

external authority for the attribution of THE JEW, renders no such clear service here; though in the Cock-Pit Prologue for THE JEW, which is avowedly his, he brackets TAMBURLAINE with the other (as plays in which Alleyn shone), in a fashion which may fairly be held to imply a common authorship. How then do we know that Marlowe wrote TAMBURLAINE? "From internal evidence," say the academics, though it is far from certain that they have gone behind the mere consensus of editors, since the lack of such consensus is given as a reason for denying Marlowe any share in plays where his hand *does* enter, as clearly as in TAMBURLAINE.

But the fact stands that it is just the congruity of style, verse movement, diction and sentiment between TAMBURLAINE and the other plays which bear Marlowe's name that proves his authorship. And since no consensus is attainable by those for whom consensus is the only decisive guide, it is for those who recognise the real grounds for any ascription of authorship in this field to apply the tests faithfully where consensus is lacking. After all, we are nearing consensus as to the CONTENTION plays, and it is always conceivable that where students explore, academics may one day "consent" to tread as a body.

1. Obviously, the heterogeneity of FAUSTUS is to be established precisely by the æsthetic perception which the Foliolaters refuse to permit to operate on the Folio. Henslowe's Diary (22 Nov., 1602) records a payment to "Wm. Burde and Samwell Rowle" of

four pounds " for ther adicyones in doctor fostes " ; but the detection of those additions can be made only by elementary " literary connoisseurship." Nobody pretends to find them in the " great " scenes, at the beginning or at the end.

And so with the MASSACRE. On the professed principles of traditionism, nobody has the right to go beyond the publisher's announcement. But the veto is recognised by no critic, by no editor, even. No scholar whatever, I think, pretends to believe that Marlowe wrote FAUSTUS and the MASSACRE as they stand. Not only is much of the farcical matter in FAUSTUS discerned to be alien: Mr. Dugdale Sykes has with high probability assigned definite portions of it to the actor, Samuel Rowley.[1]

As regard the former of those plays, of course, it is common ground that the additions or changes were made after Marlowe's death. And, that being so, champions of the Folio might claim (1) that they stand on different ground, inasmuch as the " disintegrator " has no right to suppose that the Folio editors would insert as Shakespeare's what was written by other men ; (2) *à fortiori*, that nobody can fairly suppose the editors likely to adapt Shakespeare's work after his death. But here we come upon the sections within the orthodox camp. Not only did Professor Raleigh admit alien matter immediately after professing absolute allegiance to the Folio editors: Professor A. W. Pollard has expressly affirmed their probable readiness to admit

[1] *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama*. 1924, p. 49 *sq.*

alien matter, even while he is letting them settle the Canon for him. Out of this deadlock the only licit way is a faithful application of *all* the tests.

The student, then, is in duty bound to examine FAUSTUS with an eye not merely for inserted comic prose but for all perceptible differences of "hand." And he will find ground for inferring much reckless remodelling of the whole central part of the play. While much of the matter, both verse and prose, reveals itself as alien, there is no clear ground for thinking that even as it left Marlowe's hand the third and fourth Acts were of high quality. As it is, they are but a tedious composite of variegated farce and necromancy, crying out against Gœthe's verdict: "Wie gross ist *alles* angelegt!" The anomaly of the judgment, indeed, is equally salient in the *alles* and the *angelegt*. For the centre of the play is not planned at all. With a strong beginning and a strong ending, it has a nugatory centre.

What could Marlowe have made of it with a free hand? In the first two Acts, Faustus attains to selling his soul; and the third and fourth should set forth the reward he reaps. But the specified reward was to be four-and-twenty years spent "in all voluptuousness"; and *that* could not be staged. It is only in the fifth Act that we come to the shining episode of Helen of Troy; which may be conceived as either Marlowe's planned consummation or as a natural resting-point in the development of the dictated action. The possibilities may be argued at will, because we really do not know how he may

have sketched his central Acts; though we are entitled to put aside the doctrinary assumption that the play was for him an expression of a "spiritual catastrophe" within himself. We shall not discover or elucidate the man of the Renaissance by imagining for him an evangelical experience.

The Marlowe who began and ended FAUSTUS was no more a religionist than he of the last days. His vivid intelligence handled the theological legend as he did those of history, assimilating the material with the same alertness and poetic vigour of exposition, being bent simply "on making a poetic tragedy"; and the didactic criticism which would make his personality its "pipe" is expending unrewarded breath. All that we are entitled to say is that his theme could apparently yield him no middle part worthy of the first and last; and that he may even have originally left the middle part more or less to collaborators when he had written the rest.

That he would have made Faustus receive the price of his soul in playing legerdemain with the Pope and the rest is hard to be believed. If so, "the less Marlowe he"; and the less justifiable the claim, "how greatly it is all planned." The general acceptance of that verdict is distressingly suggestive of the ancillary and conformist mood in which much reading is done, and much "criticism" written.

It would be fair to assume that Marlowe did in some degree imagine or plan a partial fruition of the

> world of profit and delight
> Of power, of honour, of omnipotence.

dreamed of by Faustus before his bargain.

> All things that move between the quiet poles
> Shall be at my command:

such is the aspiration. But, the bargain made, the fruition eludes us. The third Act, with its genuine Chorus, starts Faustus to Rome; and the first scene is pleasantly expatiative; but the game of flouting the Pope is outlined even before we come to the second section, which is at once reminiscent of the tone of the old KING JOHN, playing popular Protestantism against Papalism. If Marlowe wrote the bulk of the first and second scenes of Act III, the failure is already substantial.

To succeed on the stage, apparently, the play had to go in some such fashion. Popular diablerie and gramarye, legerdemain, flouting of Popes and friars and cardinals and potentates, form the bulk of the middle action; and the upshot is that, barring the brief possession of Helen in a splendid flight of poetry, Faustus is duly and terrifically damned for a life of soul-purchased gratification which ran mainly to making a fool of the Pope and the Papacy. The successive interpolating hands—for, as Dyce suspected, there had probably been stage recasting long before the additions of Byrd and Rowley—made due merchandise of the greatly begun and ended play, as others did after them, stultifying the very Protestantism that for half a century savoured it, and leaving the Catholics entitled to say that it showed anti-Papalism to be damnable sacrilege, duly punished by hell-fire.

It was Marlowe's fate, apparently, thus to scheme magnificent things for a theatre which chiefly needed something else. Something of his power, presumably, was felt by part of the auditory; but it was not his poetry that kept FAUSTUS on the stage for half a century, finally at the hands of elusive travelling players under the Commonwealth. *Habent sua fata libelli.*

2. What is left to us is the literary vision of this strange incarnation of force of linear poetic speech, which could fully accomplish no great artistic end. It is so with the MASSACRE, which has been worse mangled or worse compiled than FAUSTUS, being a work of collaboration, apparently curtailed for revival. The beginning of the second Act proclaims itself the work of a collaborator—which is a likely enough solution. That Marlowe repeatedly collaborated with others will become fairly clear when we come to the composite " unaccepted " plays, as it is in I HENRY VI; and his main interest here would be in the Guise, whom he limns and moves with his usual taut power over the Superman type.

Miss Ellis-Fermor's decision[1] that the Guise " lacks life " because he knows what he wants, and therefore lacks imagination, whereas Tamburlaine and Faustus and " the earlier Barabas " were indefinite in their aspirations and therefore more " convincing," is not usefully to be disputed over. To regard Guise and Richard III as life-lacking, and Tamburlaine as convincing, is a subjective satisfac-

[1] Work cited, p. 106.

tion not widely shareable. But it is satisfactory to be able to agree with the critic in her less à priori view that the King of Navarre is limned by another hand. The forcible-feeble lines of Navarre's speech in Act II, scene v (ll. 723–8) :—

> The power of vengeance now encamps itself
> Upon the haughty mountains of my breast,
> Plays with her gory colours of revenge,
> Whom I respect as leaves of boasting green
> That change their colour when the winter comes,
> When I shall vaunt as victor in revenge,

are certainly not Marlowe's. If they were contributed to the first form of the play, the guilt would be as likely to lie with Kyd as any. The laborious invention and expansion of a hopeless trope is one of his specialties; and the mechanical accumulation of " vengeance " and " revenge " is also within his ambit.

All this is the perfunctory hackwork of a collaborator; and the scarcity of double-endings everywhere tells of a date before 1590. But equally un-Marlovian are the previous and the later speeches of Navarre. Some of these, indeed, have the flat insipidity in respect of which Peele competes with Kyd. The speech of Anjou (II, i) has this amorphous and colourless quality. Either of the hacks might contribute the " for to's " in II, ii and iii, or the tag:

> A griping pain hath seized upon my heart,

which savours primarily of Kyd, as does the scansion " Henery "[1]; while the Queen's " Thou killst thy

[1] Cp. Div. I of Part IV of *The Shakespeare Canon*, pp. 103–4.

mother's heart " recalls Peele. All that is certain is the fact that a mass of matter of this quality is alien; and when we come upon the Marlovian tag (l. 794)

And we are grac'd with wreaths of victory

we know that here, as so often in Peele and Kyd, we are but listening to an echo; even as when we read line 1034 (III, ii) :—

Surcharged with guilt of thousand massacres,

and are pointed back to line 960 :

Surcharged with surfeit of ambitious thoughts,

we have been listening to two voices.

The play, in short, is a composite from the start; and perhaps even the apriorist school may finally recognise that the utterance of the " life-lacking " Guise, and the scenes in which he enters, are the most memorable matter it contains. For the inductive student, it is the last display of characteristic power in the accepted plays of Marlowe. Here, as so often elsewhere, he dominates a play which he does not care to complete, Kyd helping in the planning.

3. DIDO, in which there is no typical Marlovian figure, remains an interesting exercise in the renaissance-classic, which may really have been penned before the dramatist " found himself " in the projection of his own aspiring force into fit personages. It would thus satisfy the reasonable surmise that he did not reach stage success at his first attempt. No one has detected in it anything convincingly

suggestive of Nashe, whose name is on the title-page; and if we are to make, for once, an à priori guess, it might be that he limned the nurse. That would involve, certainly, surrendering to Miss Ellis-Fermor at this point on the matter of the colour-sense exhibited in the nurse's description of the contents of the orchard. Perhaps—though there would be a good deal of colour left elsewhere to account for—that might be a way to a partial agreement on a doubtful issue.

4. Still more difficult is the textual analysis of EDWARD II, because in this case there is a common clinging to the view that here, at least, we have unmixed Marlowe. When, however, we realise that the analysis of 2 HENRY VI forces the recognition of interpolations by the author (or another) in his own text, for publication, we cannot ignore the further reasons for surmising some interventions by other hands. Taking the Marlovian interpolations first, we note that the passage beginning

Proud Rome! that hatchest such imperial grooms

in Act I, scene iv, is so close an echo of the speech of the English Agent in THE MASSACRE (III, iv, near end), and in one line so clearly recalling Bajazet's

Ringing with joy their superstitious bells

in I TAMBURLAINE (III, iii), that either these or the other make echo. By the test of congruity, the main original is the speech in THE MASSACRE, where it is in key and character, whereas the burst of Protestant anti-papalism in EDWARD II is even a more complete

anachronism than those above noted as being literary adaptations from the HENRY VI plays. And in view of all these heightening touches, explicable only as inserted for the publication of the play, there remains open the question whether the lines in Act V, scene iv (or iii) :

> Immortal powers : that know the painful cares
> That wait upon my poor distressèd soul ;
> O level all your looks upon these daring men !

which are almost identical with these in Lodge's WOUNDS OF CIVIL WAR (ll. 1814–17) :—

> Immortal powers that know the painful cares
> That wait upon my poor distressèd heart ;
> O bend your brows and level all your looks
> Of dreadful awe upon these daring men,

may have been borrowed from Lodge.

When, however, we note that by all accounts the WOUNDS and EDWARD II were both first published in 1594, after Marlowe's death, and that there is reason to assign to Peele some passages in the latter play, there arises the hypothesis that *all* the mere interpolations in EDWARD II may have been made by Peele, editing the play for publication. And this hypothesis cannot be rejected without decisive negative evidence. We know indeed that, under Marlowe's hand, or with his knowledge, passages from Spenser were inserted in TAMBURLAINE for publication. But borrowing from Spenser is another matter, as is the incongruity of Tamburlaine's inserted speech in praise of beauty.

We are not finally entitled to say, without external evidence, that Marlowe would deliberately have written up EDWARD II for the press by interpolating passages either from other plays of his own or from Lodge. In the former case, some of the insertions are wholly anachronistic; in the latter case, the resort is enigmatical. Marlowe was not so poor in prompt invention as to need *thus* to eke out his work; and we cannot exclude the possibilities that either Lodge had echoed Marlowe's original, or an editor had made the insertion for Lodge. And Peele so often ekes out his own work, as in DAVID AND BETHSABE, by lines and passages echoing Marlowe, that he is the most probable editorial operator.

Only as a hypothesis, of course, is the suggestion here submitted. It is a possible elucidation of a number of perplexities. Interpolations by Marlowe himself in the play are intelligible when they can be seen intentionally to modify the action, as where the short first scene of Act IV is abruptly ended with Kent's "Fear it not," and *Exeunt;* and we have Scene ii, with 7 double-endings in 17 lines, in which the Queen and her son, and then Sir John of Henault, are as abruptly introduced, tentatively giving the prince a new rôle. On the sudden re-entry of Kent and Young Mortimer, Kent's "Madam, long may you live" points to a surgical operation, "cutting" the previous text. All this is hasty work, but it is not ascribable to Peele, the hand being Marlowe's.

It is otherwise when, in Scene v *b*, we have the temporarily victorious Queen speaking:—

Successful battle gives the God of Kings
To them that fight in right, and fear his wrath.
Since then *successfully* we have prevailed,
Thankèd be heaven's great *architect*, and you ;

and so on, to :—

Deal you, my lords, in this, my loving lords,
As to your wisdoms fittest seems in all.

The vocabulary, the platitude, the flaccid verse movement, the iteration, the padding, seem all alike to deny the hand of Marlowe, and point to Peele, the three italicised words being tics of his. And that quality of verse and diction seems to persist into Scene vi, where there is still some Marlowe, especially when Baldock replies to the bleating of Young Spencer. But such lines as :

Oh, is he gone, is noble Edward gone ?
Parted from hence ? never to see us more ? . . .
Earth, melt to air, gone is my sovereign,
Gone, gone, alas ! never to make return,

are as hard to associate with Marlowe as they are easy to associate with Peele—or, indeed, with Kyd. The line :

Hence, feigned weeds ! unfeigned are my woes,

actually occurs, with " grief " for " weeds," in EDWARD I (Dyce, p. 413, *a*.), where it may or may not be an echo from Marlowe. So with Warwick's line in III, iii :

It is but temporal that thou canst inflict,

which we find in Peele's EDWARD I, scene iv (line 55). But in scene iv the line :

Who made the channel overflow with blood

is one of a number of echoes which support the surmise that Peele is here eking out Marlowe from himself. That tag has already occurred in the play (I, iv) :

With slaughter'd priests make Tiber's channel swell
And banks raised higher *with* their sepulchres,

in a passage which we have seen to be a late interpolation, lifted from the MASSACRE. This tag is primarily Marlowe's, in 2 TAMBURLAINE, V, i (near end) :—

Thousands of men, drowned in Asphaltis' lake,
Have made the waters swell above the banks ;

and it is one of many which point to his presence in the primary form of our JULIUS CÆSAR (I, i, 63) :—

Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.

The traditionists would have us believe that Shakespeare thus furbished up for himself, about the year 1600, a tag which had been doing duty in TAMBURLAINE and EDWARD II long before—a thing not to be conceived when we note the linear Marlovian structure of the verse. That Marlowe would thus repeat *himself* is on the other hand likely enough. But when we get the tag *twice* again in EDWARD II, once in a speech visibly interpolated with other echoes from him, and again in a scene marked by much flat and nerveless diction, and followed by one in which Peele's hand is almost undeniable, the

double employment is doubly suspicious. In this case the phrase, " made the channel overflow with blood " has almost every mark of an echo by another.

It is not to be supposed that such verse would be contributed by Peele to the first form of the play; but, though he may have edited it for the press in 1594, he might very well have contributed to the recast of 1591–2. That the play was then a good deal revised by its author may become fairly clear when we note that from Act II, iv, *c* to IV, ii, *e*, there are 45 double-endings in some 326 lines,[1] that is, 13 per cent. As before noted, we have no approach to such a percentage in the first Act, nor is it nearly attained in the scenes before and after. Such a metrical change can be understood only as representing a long insertion or reworking in the recast of the play, by its author.

It is when we are faced by incongruous insertions of Marlovian lines that we are forced to suspect late intervention by other hands. And when we find in Act V, scene v, those lines adapted from 2 HENRY VI,

> Tell Isabel the queen, I looked not thus,
> When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,

knowing that here they are historically false, while there they seem to be Marlowe's own imposition on a history which in 1 HENRY VI (V, iii, *c*) had been told quite differently by Greene, we are conscious of an irreducible dubiety about the text. Many readers

[1] Ll. 1119–1459 in Mr. Tucker Brooke's old-spelling reprint, which counts as lines broken parts of a verse that together make a whole.

must have been struck by the inequalities of diction in the tragic scenes of EDWARD II, Act V; and the unravelment of the whole problem will be a heavy task. Here we must be content with the general demonstration that the play is not warrantably to be pronounced homogeneous.

5. In THE JEW OF MALTA, though the perplexity is small, there is yet ground for inferring intervention at one point. It has been pointed out that at the close of the second scene of Act III the line:

> And with my prayers pierce impartial heavens

is taken from Peele's ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS (III, i, near end). "Pierce" is a word used in this metaphorical sense perhaps as often by Marlowe as by Peele, who employs it many times; but the line as a whole is certainly Peele's, dating 1584, while Marlowe was still at college. And Marlowe of course might use it as a quotation, in compliment to his senior.

But the whole scene-section is as it were expletive ornament, supererogatory to an action which for the rest is notably close-packed; and the key and the diction are again unlike Marlowe and like Peele. In fact, the final speech of the Governor, beginning:

> Then take them up, and let them be interred
> Within one sacred monument of stone,
> Upon which altar I will offer up
> My daily sacrifice of sighs and tears,

begins exactly in the manner of the final speech of Lucius in TITUS ANDRONICUS, which is again the

key and manner of speech of the victorious Guendolen at the end of LOCRINE. And both of these speeches are reasonably to be assigned to Peele, who shared in both plays.

Since the speech, then, further contains an early line of his, and the whole scene breathes of his order of pathos, there is reason to suspect him of the alien authorship, such as it is, though there seems little likelihood that he collaborated to that trifling extent with Marlowe when the play was first produced. It is more probably an "eke" contributed at some revival after Marlowe's death. It has been suggested, on the other hand, that Kyd is present in parts of the play—a proposition yet to be explored. If he were, he may have been an early collaborator.

6. And this, for all we know, may hold of the few doubtful passages in the Mycetes speeches (1) in the first scene of 1 TAMBURLAINE, where the "for to's" are suspicious; (2) in II, iv; (3) in the prose matter of IV, iv; and (4) in the scene-section of Zabina's madness in V, ii. There has always been a surmise that the "fond and frivolous gestures" mentioned by the publisher of the edition of 1592 as omitted by him were not of Marlowe's penning, and this may have been the case with some of the inferior matter which he left.

CHAPTER II

THE ASSIGNABLE PLAYS IN THE FOLIO

§ 1. *The "Henry VI" Plays*

1. IN the day of Malone it was beginning to be recognised that there was a Marlovian aspect in the three HENRY VI plays in the Folio, whether considered in that text or in the anonymous and anomalous forms presented by the old Quartos of the CONTENTION BETWEEN THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER and the TRUE TRAGEDIE OF RICHARD DUKE OF YORK, otherwise the SECOND PART OF THE CONTENTION. The special suspicion, which with Farmer and Morgann became a confident dictum that I HENRY VI is wholly non-Shakespearean, prepared the way for recognition of the obvious presence of Marlowe's note, movement, style, diction, afflatus, and substance, in the opening scene.

The faculty of discrimination in F. G. Fleay and others stressed this perception to the extent of assigning to Marlowe, with collaboration from Greene and Peele, the play as a whole, with reservation to Shakespeare of the "Roses" or Temple Garden scene, and the series of mostly rhymed

scenes presenting the last fight of Talbot. Within the present century, however, leading scholars in the United States, while mostly adhering to the ascriptions of the Roses and Talbot scenes to Shakespeare, have created an extensive dubiety by variously assigning, as did Fleay, other scenes or sections among the probable collaborators; and Professor Tucker Brooke, proceeding on a conviction that there was no "jingoism" in either Marlowe or Greene, ascribed to Peele, as the only Jingo of the group, the drafting of the play as a whole, with only revision from Shakespeare.

On this fallacious assumption, Marlowe is denied the authorship of the intensely characteristic opening speech: "Hung be the heavens with black," though there is nothing more Marlowesque in the whole Folio. The matter is by Professor Brooke assigned either to Peele or to the imitative Shakespeare. Anyone who has read Peele through even once can see that Peele *could not* have penned such forceful rhetoric, in such firmly striding lines, though we shall find him imitating Marlowe in his own humble way.

The simple corrective facts are that (1) Greene could demonstrably be as "jingo" as anybody: witness the patriotic sections in FRIAR BACON and JAMES IV; while on the other hand (2), Marlowe has only one English play in his universally accepted works; and there, though patriotism is implicit,[1]

[1] E.g. the lines:

> And thereof came it that the fleering Scots,
> *To England's high disgrace*, have made this jig.

the spectacle of a degenerate, defeated, and vicious King gave no opening for vaunting patriotic sentiment. But even outside the Folio, as we shall see, the "jingoism" of Marlowe declares itself; and in the composite work in the Folio we shall find it revealed clearly enough. To assign to him the opening of 1 HENRY VI, then, is a compulsory act of rational criticism when the erroneous presupposition is dismissed.

2. But Marlowe did a great deal more of 1 HENRY VI than the opening, though there are certainly two, and probably three other hands concerned; while Shakespeare does not perceptibly intervene at all. By the tests of style, manner, diction, movement and metrics, the Roses scene is just Marlowe's; and the common persistence in assigning that scene to Shakespeare rests upon a mere evasion of the problem of the "double-endings,"[1] which in this scene run to 28 per cent. Fleay, who at first accepted the general ascription to Shakespeare, perceived that the latter could not be producing double-endings at that rate so early as 1592, and he therefore classed the scene as an addition made about seven years later. But finally he seems to have realised that the *line-ended* character of the versification makes it impossible for Shakespeare at *any* later period.

The fact that Fleay in his latest survey[2] silently drops altogether the assignment of the Roses scene to Shakespeare is significant of the pressures of un-

[1] As to this, see *The Genuine in Shakespeare*, pp. 17, 26.
[2] *Biog. Chron.*, ii, 177.

critical orthodoxy. Again and again he thus found himself silenced by the unthinking traditionism of his day. After assigning TITUS ANDRONICUS to Marlowe, on evidence which fully justifies a *partial* ascription, he came to see the more pervading presence of Peele; but, finding no critical support whatever, dropped the subject. Later, Mr. A. W. Verity was to renew the ascription to Peele; and it needs only a thorough examination to show that the play is the work of four hands—Peele, Greene, Marlowe and Kyd, the latter being the presumptive draftsman of the older TITUS AND VESPASIAN (preserved only in the probably curtailed German version) on which our Folio play is founded.

It should now be possible to profit by all the *aperçus* and the method of systematic analysis alike. So doing, we can recognise that, whether or not there was an old "actors' play" on I HENRY VI, as there certainly was in the cases of RICHARD III and HENRY V, and probably also in that of the CONTENTION plays, our I HENRY VI is drafted or planned, and dominated, by Marlowe. He has schemed and penned the organic scenes introducing Joan of Arc; and it is broadly certain that his too chivalrous treatment of that heroine, in the first form of the play (probably before 1590), led to the demand by the theatre men for the recast (? 1592) as we now have it, in which Greene certainly, and Peele probably, did the required work of patriotic denigration, a thing which Marlowe would have disdained to undertake. His contempt for bad faith on the

part of Christians is defiantly obtruded in TAMBURLAINE.

3. Marlowe, however, made the most effective contributions to the recast by adding both the Roses scene and the Talbot scenes; which last are dated for us in 1592 by Nashe's panegyric describing their success. Fleay seems to have adhered to the ascription of *those* scenes to Shakespeare. Other voices have since assigned them to Peele. But as in the case of the opening of the play, so here, Peele must be ruled out by those who realise his limitations, seeing that the ascription is made "categorically" without any vindication from clues of phrase or vocabulary, or of similar style effects in Peele. It is idle to assign to him long scenes of continuously sinewy and forceful verse such as he never compasses in his signed work. It is true that those scenes, alike the rhymed and the unrhymed, are on Marlowe's lower popular plane; but a careful all-round study will certify them as his.[1]

The traditionist view of them as Shakespeare's is already in collision with the confident ascription of them, by some, to Peele. They are really below Shakespeare and above Peele; but the primary consideration is that they have no marks of Shakespeare's diction, or of his movement in his undisputed couplets. The main reason for denying them to Marlowe seems to be an acceptance of Swinburne's misinterpretation of Marlowe's derision

[1] See *The Shakespeare Canon*, Part II, pp. 78–97.

of " jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits " as a ban upon all rhyme in drama. It simply meant a dismissal of the " jigging-verse," normally of fourteen syllables, which filled the old " actors' plays " as it did their models. There is enough of rhyme even in TAMBURLAINE to discredit the misinterpretation.

The resort to rhyme in the Talbot scenes, and elsewhere, may have been a genial response on Marlowe's part to Greene's shrill protest in the preface to PERIMEDES, 1588, against those who " set the end of scholarism in an English blank-verse." He knew well enough the potential superiority of blank to rhymed verse in drama; but, even as Greene submitted to the victorious advent of blank verse by scribbling ALPHONSUS OF ARRAGON, and afterwards doing better things, so Marlowe would be ready enough to meet the challenge of the rhymer by writing for the recast of I HENRY VI rhymed scenes which could be trusted to capture a popular audience. We know from Nashe that they did. If Peele *could* have done them in 1592, he would certainly have sought further success in that form. Such popular success he never attained.

Broadly, then, Marlowe is to be credited with nearly all the more lastingly effective features of I HENRY VI. But (*a*) Greene, and probably Peele, are critically to be saddled with the denigration of Joan; and (*b*) Greene with the Margaret-and-Suffolk matter; while (*c*) Kyd, who with Greene effects interpolation in the opening scene, can be shown to have done—in the first form of the play,

not for the re-cast—the death-scene of Mortimer, so variously ascribed in turn to Marlowe, Shakespeare and Peele. The reasons for these judgments have been set forth in detail in THE SHAKESPEARE CANON, Part IV, Division I. They consist in analysis of diction, metaphor, verse movement and sentiment.

§ 2. "*2 and 3 Henry VI*"

Pending a similar analysis and distribution of these two plays, it may be summarily claimed that in 2 HENRY VI Marlowe is again predominant: and that in the third Part he is in substance still more so. The recognition of this has already gone so far that not only is the TRUE TRAGEDIE OF RICHARD DUKE OF YORK appended to Mr. Edward Thomas's edition of Marlowe, but Professor Tucker Brooke has in a monograph on the two plays claimed them for Marlowe to the extent of denying altogether the presence of Greene, and saying nothing of the presence of Kyd.

He complicates the problem, however, by ascribing much of the revision work, as between the CONTENTION and the Folio forms of the plays, to Shakespeare, finding at many points a lowering of dramatic effect and consistency at Shakespeare's hands. All this analysis is laid open to decisive challenge by the preliminary assumption that it was Shakespeare who first multiplied double-endings, a proposition which can be supported only by an argument in a circle.

We have the unquestionably early work of Shakespeare in the DREAM, in I HENRY IV, and in KING JOHN. In the first of these, which at points exhibits demonstrable revision, the percentage of double-endings is 7; in the second, 5; in the third, 6. To evade this irreducible proof by setting aside those unquestioned plays, in favour of a selection of *disputed* matter in other plays, is to burke the problem as regards Shakespeare, and to ignore, no less indefensibly, the outstanding fact of the very high percentages in Marlowe's version of the First Book of Lucan. It is tiresome to have to reiterate these things, but it is necessary so long as they are ignored.

The discrimination of the blank verse of Shakespeare and Marlowe is not merely a matter of counting double-endings: it involves the recognition of Marlowe's verse as *linear*, end-stopped in rhythm even when the sense is run-on; while Shakespeare's is *periodic*, predominantly non-linear, but run-on at once in rhythm and in sense, to a degree attained by none of his corrivals. By this test alone, even if we had not the concurrent evidence of ideation, sentiment and subtlety of diction, we might at once recognise in 2 HENRY VI, Act V, scene ii, the visible revising intervention of Shakespeare in the outstanding speech of Young Clifford (down to near its close) and in some of the shorter speeches which follow.

So long as this discrimination of profound æsthetic differences is not made, the actual work of Marlowe

in a number of the composite plays in the Shakespeare Folio is not scientifically perceptible, and the debate is in vain. Revision work which is really Marlowe's own is assigned to Shakespeare, who as early as 1592 had inferably transcended the end-stopped versification of Marlowe in the opening scene of the COMEDY OF ERRORS, grafted on a play which is in the main by Marlowe, whose versification leaps to the eye in the second scene.

Had the study of versification been kept to the front as it should have been, the ascription of any of the HENRY VI plays to Shakespeare could hardly have been persisted in. The attempt of Richard Grant White, by simple vociferation, to assign to him the powerful harangue of Queen Margaret in 3 HENRY VI, I, iv, 66 *sq.*, on the score that nobody but Shakespeare *could* have written it, is simply a blind claim that Shakespeare wrote absolutely linear verse, with no elasticity of periodic movement and rhythm, in the period in which he wrote the speech of Young Clifford, above cited. If a comparison of the two speeches does not make the difference clear to the open-minded student, of course, further argument is idle. But fluidity of rhythm, nevertheless, is an objective and not a merely subjective fact.

The vigour of the speech of Queen Margaret is not in dispute. What is astonishing is the inability to realise that Marlowe possessed just that order of vigour. His vindicators, beginning with Miss Jane Lee's defence in the N.S.S. Transactions of 1877,

have been hampered only by their failure to realise the æsthetic fact of rhythm in versification, which alone should cancel the ascription to Shakespeare. But equally the claimants of the speech for Shakespeare have compromised their cause by treating as a masterpiece a speech in which the verse is always linear, never winged, and at no point psychologically subtle in Shakespeare's way. The patient reader has but to note how instead of climaxing in *mental* quality the harangue grows thin, shrill and hysterical at the lines:

> I prithee grieve to make me merry, York . . .
> Stamp, rave and fret, that I may sing and dance. . . .

Marlowe, perhaps, would have argued that that was strictly feminine; but if so, the preceding matter was not, and would stand invalidated. In simple fact, we have had a sample at once of his power and of his psychic limitation. It is just that he should have his due credit for the first, which has been denied him by the school that swears by the Folio through thick and thin, and should shoulder at the same time the psychological disparagement in which they unconsciously involve Shakespeare, by their impercipience of verse differences.

Of course 3 HENRY VI is not wholly from Marlowe's pen. He would never have written the laboured elegiacs of Scene v of Act III, in which King Henry, in the revision, ruminates through fifty odd lines, and the son and the father through fifty more. We are entitled to say this on a review of his whole

work, as well as by reason of the visible presence of another hand. For the King's speech, Fleay reasonably pointed to Drayton, who in THE LEGEND OF ROBERT DUKE OF NORMANDY has a stanza (93) of six " So many " lines :—

> So many years as he had worn a crown,
> So many years as he had hoped to rise,

and so on, which are of the exact pattern of

> So many hours must I tend my flock ;
> So many hours must I take my rest,

and the rest of the conscientious series in the reverie of the play.

In RICHARD DUKE OF YORK the scene-section is represented by a reasonably short speech of thirteen lines, the King seeming conscious of the battle ; and the son and father are also briefer. This too is non-Marlovian, and on a balance might be awarded to Kyd, if it were not rather more likely to be a survival of the humble actors' work to be found in the old RICHARD III. The Foliolaters who saddle Shakespeare with the CONTENTION would charge the players with corrupting the whole. But the King's speech is entirely rewritten, like so many more in the Folio revision of the CONTENTION ; and the recast here is no more Shakespeare's than it is Marlowe's. It is all end-stopped verse of the old sort, but with a non-Marlovian pace and pulse.

Such matter is not plausibly assignable, either, to any of Marlowe's usual collaborators, and may have been a special " eke " in the way of pathetic

interest, contributed by Drayton after Marlowe's death. In 1593 he had come to the front with his IDEA sonnets; and in 1596 appeared the TRAGICAL LEGENDS, beginning with that of Robert of Normandy, with its "So many" lines. Marlowe was hardly likely to borrow another man's work of that modest order, though he could borrow better things from Spenser; and the textual problem is merely as to which came first, the play-scene or the poem.

It is worth remembering that the IDEA sonnet (47) in which Drayton tells how when seeking fame he "for the laurel strove" in the "thronged theatres," did not appear till the 1605 edition, and *may* thus refer to the speech in 3 HENRY VI, though there is another possibility. It is at least not impossible that the pathetic soliloquy went "with shouts and claps at every little pause," as the sonnet says. It was a soothing change from the clash of invective in the bulk of the play.

In any case Marlowe's work would get such applause in plenty while the vogue of the chronicle plays lasted. But the strongest impression of all, probably, was made when the HENRY VI trilogy was consummated in the truly Marlovian play that begins:

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York,

in the old ringing end-stopped verse, and in the old manner of opening soliloquy; Marlowe, now near his end, energising at his freest in his most characteristic fashion. It is doubtless the energy of

the verse that disguises for so many readers its linear rhythm, which subsists even when the sense is run-on. But the speech is simply studded with Marlovian parallels of phrase and sentiment, which, with the versification, at once reveal the hand.

§ 3. *" Richard III "*

When we come to RICHARD III, the internal evidence for Marlowe's authorship is so overwhelming[1] that the really critical explorers and editors recognise it, though the Foliolaters continue stolidly to resort to the Imitation Theory when they consent to argue at all. Fleay pronounced it a Marlowe play, finished by Shakespeare. His verdict was ignored or flouted in his day. But no student of the best modern edition, that of Mr. A. H. Thompson in the ' Arden ' series, can gather from his Introduction any critical reason for rejecting Fleay's view.

On grounds of the intellectual quality of the whole, Mr. Thompson places it " beyond all doubt, among Shakespeare's *earliest* plays," that is, before RICHARD II and KING JOHN. But JOHN has only 6 per cent of double-endings; and this, as a whole, has 19.5, with much higher rates in some scenes. We are to suppose, then, that Shakespeare suddenly and greatly multiplied his double-endings in Marlowe's manner, lowering his psychology accordingly, and then, recovering his natural reflective power, did

[1] Details in Part I of *The Shakespeare Canon*.

much more thoughtful verse on other themes with his own early frugality in the use of the double-ending.

The fit comment is a citation of Mr. Thompson's own phrase: "*If* we allow Shakespeare to have had *any* part in the play . . .," as indicating the rational alternative. Mr. Thompson, as it happens, overlooks one passage in the play in which not only the psychology but the versification is really Shakespearean, to wit, the speeches of Buckingham and Richard in III, vii. On his view, that passage inferably must have been inserted by Shakespeare years afterwards. On a study of the whole phenomena, however, it is to be reckoned as probably inserted quite early, in a composite in which Marlowe turned to theatrical purpose as best he could a "full dress" presentment of the central figure he had been creating in the DUKE OF YORK, on the lines of the old actors' RICHARD III.

That figure *could not* be staged with any new revelation of psychological insight or subtlety. If the stage, in his six years, could teach Marlowe anything, it was that he could best succeed by expressly cultivating stage effects, albeit his own bent was to poetic effects. What the theatre rewarded by its suffrages at that stage was *action*. The recast TITUS shows that other men, with him, were learning the same lesson. To spiritualise action was not within even his scope, much less in theirs. When objectors ask, How came it that the Chamberlain's company took over, not a known

Marlowe play, but one not specified as his, the answer is that they took what best suited the theatre in that day.

On a broad estimate, Marlowe dominates all three of the HENRY VI plays, his work bulking largest, dramatically speaking, in Part III; where in the person of Richard Crookback he develops his Superman type to the point of transition to the RICHARD III of the Folio. The ascription of *that* play, as a whole, to Shakespeare, involves the flouting of all the rational tests upon which we have been proceeding. It imputes to him, not only an abject apery of Marlowe's diction and sentiment, to the point of adopting the crude concept,

I am determinèd to prove a villain,

but a servile surrender to the linear mould of versification which he has transcended in the first scene of the ERRORS, in the DREAM, in I HENRY IV, and in KING JOHN. The rational view is that of Fleay, that the play has been drafted by Marlowe.[1]

Collaboration, certainly, there has been, and also subsequent revision. But the share of Shakespeare in either process has been of the smallest; and the extent of the later expansion is uncertain. Of Shakespeare's few entrances, the most obvious is the speech of Buckingham in Act III, scene vii, 117 *sq.*, and Richard's reply, where we have at once his versification and his diction, weaving their violin strain into the utterly different texture of the bulk

[1] The problem is examined at length in Part I of *The Shakespeare Canon*.

of the play. To Marlowe, and not to Shakespeare, is to be assigned the linear but musical versification of Clarence's Dream, the one piece of notable poetry in the play that any reader need wish to claim for the greater Master.

To assign it to Shakespeare is not merely to ignore the end-stopped character of the versification, or to identify him with that, but to charge on him the most meticulous imitation of Marlowe's phraseology to be found in the Elizabethan drama on any such scale. It is a cento of Marlowisms.[1] Assigning it, as in critical duty bound, to Marlowe, we at least cannot be accused of merely crediting Shakespeare with the better poetry in the Folio; for this is good, and, like the harangue of Margaret, has been ecstatically praised as possible only to him. It is indeed one of the proofs that near his end Marlowe was the more concerned for sheer poetry as he became conscious that his drama had little outlook. For Clarence's dream is non-dramatic poetry.[2]

Richard, on the other hand, is the most realistically strenuous and theatrically effective of all his Supermen, whence his long survival on the stage; while the contrasted figure of Richard II, as rehandled by Shakespeare, ranks more as a "school-classic," even now, than an acting play. *Non equidem invideo, miror magis,* Shakespeare might

[1] See Part I of *The Shakespeare Canon*, pp. 171–3.

[2] It is so essentially poetic and non-dramatic that it was dropped by the eighteenth-century adapters and dismissed by Steevens with contempt.

have murmured of RICHARD III, of which he loyally left the central figure almost untouched, and quite unaltered, recognising, as he must have done, that it was the product of Marlowe's ruling proclivity, untrue to humanity whether or not untrue to history.[1]

We must infer that the play, in the main, was a late reconstruction for the Chamberlain's company by Marlowe. Only he could have so multiplied the double-endings at that date (23 per cent in the opening scene; the same in Clarence's dream). It is, further, a reasonable inference that he had begun a new KING JOHN, drafting the first scene (with its 16 per cent of double-endings), of our Folio play, the rest of which Shakespeare almost entirely re-wrote, mainly, perhaps, by way of tribute to the " dead shepherd's " memory.

But that there were other hands than Marlowe's in our RICHARD III is made clear by any close analysis of the style. In Scene ii we come upon a forcible-feeble and iterative versification, typified in

Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood,

which is strictly in the earlier manner of Kyd; and though the dialogue between Richard and Anne develops distinctly Marlovian features, there are only two double-endings in the first 32 lines; and even when the percentage rises it is not certain that it is not Kyd who is imitating Marlowe in a revision of earlier work. For instance, the turgid line:

[1] *Canon*, Part I, Epilogue.



I'll make a corse of him that disobeys

points to

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me

(HAMLET, Q. 1), which may have been in the old Kyd HAMLET, following as it does the line

Who first lays hand on me, I'll be his priest

in the SPANISH TRAGEDY, III, iii, 37.

As we find Kyd collaborating with Marlowe in EDWARD III and 1 HENRY VI, as well as in TITUS, and as we have his own admission in 1593 that the two had at one time lived in the same chamber, it is quite likely that they should be co-operating here. We cannot tell whether it was Kyd who planned the RICHARD III as a gathering-up of the plot of 3 HENRY VI. We can but recognise that Marlowe dominates it. An expansion by Kyd, at points, may indeed have followed on Marlowe's death, in the service of the theatre.

But the most notable expansion of the play is visibly that of the wooing of Queen Elizabeth for the hand of her daughter, which is a sufficiently crude duplication of the effect sought in the previous wooing of Anne. However begun, it is incongruous with previous plot indications, and the protracted development is not Marlovian. Such a turgid line as

So she may live *unscarred of bleeding slaughter*

points at once to Heywood, who has many such pleonasms; and *unscarred*, occurring in the Folio only here and in a non-Shakespearean passage in TIMON, is by Heywood used thrice. There are in

fact many verbal and phrasal clues to him in the scene ;[1] and if we suppose him to have collaborated here for a revival of the play some years after Marlowe's death, the percentage of double-endings would be quite within his usage. So far, no more likely hand has been suggested.

There are further reasons for surmising that Heywood, who duplicates some of the matter of this play in EDWARD IV (which has so far not been satisfactorily assigned to any hand but his), also intervened in the scene of the slaying of the Princes, where the matter is not Marlovian. The play in fact seems to have been repeatedly revised and eked out. But the hand of Marlowe is obvious not only at the outset but at the close, and in all the characteristic scenes which develop King Richard for us, as well as the wildly impossible Queen Margaret.

Historically, as usual, it is outrageously untrue. Richard had actually been wedded to Anne six years before he is here represented as winning her against her will, and had lived happily with her ; and Henry VI had died seven years before the imprisonment of Clarence, for which Richard had not been responsible. The wooing for the hand of Princess Elizabeth is pure fabrication ; and the fighting youth of Richard is equally mythical. Such is chronicle history as the Marlowe group handled it. But it is not on that ground that the play is to be assigned to Marlowe and not to Shakespeare : it is on the decisive ground that, from the first scene,

[1] See Part I of *The Shakespeare Canon*, p. 181, *sq.*

where there are a dozen of his finger-prints, his figure of Richard gives it its character.

§ 4. *"Henry V"—as to Origination*

A practical consideration of the phenomenon of the old actors' play, THE FAMOUS VICTORIES OF HENRY V, (dateable 1588; licensed 1594; printed, in curtailed form, 1598) might have suggested to editors and commentators that it was at least a very likely course for the pre-Shakespearean group to deal with Henry V as they had dealt with the three Edwards. Henry V was the most recent and most popular of the famous conquering Kings; and to deal with the disastrous reign of his son without handling the conqueror himself would have been an inexplicable course from the theatrical point of view. In point of fact, our Folio play contains many internal evidences that it is a late recast of an earlier one, in which Marlowe had a preponderant share, as in EDWARD III. That there was an intermediate play has been argued even by Professor A. W. Pollard.

HENRY V, in its earlier Acts, is visibly a twin-play of EDWARD III. They begin with the same kind of machinery, each King having to be convinced of his right of inheritance to France. In HENRY V the beginning is more dramatic and less recitative than the other; but that may well be part of the revision, in which other hands than Shakespeare's have entered. And the crispness of the opening is soon lost in expatiation. The expository speeches of the

King and the Archbishop read like overdone elaborations of the introduction to a historic play in which there was little matter available beyond recitative, harangues and battles, eked out with comic relief; and a whole Act is given to preluding.

That Shakespeare thus orginally planned a play about 1599, in his maturity, is one of the fantasies imposed on us by the tradition. It is commonly supported by the wording of the prologue to the fifth Act, where " the general of our gracious empress " must be understood as referring to Essex, who was thus expected to return from Ireland in 1599. But that prologue is conspicuously in the style, tone and diction of Peele, who probably died in 1597, and is certainly not in the verse or diction of Shakespeare. By merely substituting " from France returning " for " from Ireland coming," we make it applicable to Essex's expedition to France with 4000 men in aid of Henry IV in 1591. Only some slight modification of the further line,

Bringing rebellion broachèd on his sword,

which is one of the *clichés* of the pre-Shakespeareans, would be further required. Peele himself has :

Joab brings conquest piercëd on his spear

in DAVID AND BETHSABE (IV, ii).

This prologue is in fact one of the internal reasons for dating the Marlowe play 1591. It is a historic datum that Essex was publicly panegyrised on nearly every one of his expeditions; and Peele had acclaimed him in an " Eclogue Gratulatory " in

1589, by way of "welcome into England *from Portugal.*" In literary quality this is visibly the least inspired of the five prologues, of which the second savours most strongly of Marlowe, the first suggesting the hand of Dekker, writing in 1599 or later. The fourth, perhaps, might be from Marlowe's hand, revised, as it has some of his diction and much of his inspiration. For even that is not confidently to be assigned to Shakespeare.

Marlowe's presence in the play which underlies the revision will be clear to the careful student of the speeches before Harfleur (III, i and iii), where the declamation in the first, about the proper facial expressions for fighting, is a rather lamentable *pastiche* from his TAMBURLAINE stores, and that of the second is an otherwise sad brew from the recital of the fall of Troy in DIDO, with reminiscences of TAMBURLAINE also. It is not to his literary or dramatic honour that these things have to be noted. They belong to the critical expiscation of the history of Elizabethan drama.

As the first harangue has eight double-endings in 32 lines (25 per cent), and the second twelve in 56 lines (21.4 per cent), they must be at least as late as 1591, and may conceivably have been written or redacted later. In any case, they are throughout in his linear verse, which Shakespeare would no more have written in 1599 than he would Greenean stanzas.

A comprehensive revision about 1599 there evidently was; and much of the comic matter is plaus-

ibly to be assigned, on verbal and other clues, to Chapman, even down to the wooing of Katharine, though Shakespeare may have retouched Fluellen. And to Chapman, probably, should be assigned the manipulation of the scenes in Act IV whereby the threat which Marlowe had put in the mouth of Henry, about cutting the throats of prisoners, is developed into the massacre described by Hall and Holinshed, and expressly vindicated, in Chapman's ethico-historical manner.

Shakespeare cared enough about the play to write or re-write the best things in it, as the passage on the honey-bees (I, ii, 180 *sq.*), the remarkable prose dialogue with John Bates—at least, it is hard to name any other who could have done it—and Henry's soliloquy which follows, beginning, " Upon the King ! " That is apparently early work, but it belongs to another mental world than that of the harangues before Harfleur. Revision, too, he probably gave to such matter as that of the second scene of the second Act, where, with embedded lines which point back to Marlowe, and beyond him to Kyd, there seems to have been an intermediate expansion.

The play, in short, is broadly Marlovian, but probably written originally in collaboration with Kyd and Peele ; revised by Marlowe about 1592–3, in sections in which the double-endings mount above 20, to 27 per cent ; but afterwards much recast, as late as 1599, by other hands, striving to freshen a play that had no lasting vitality, even for

the populace which generally welcomed such matter.

It is fitly to be kept in view that the HENRY IV plays, as well as those on Henry V and Henry VI, were probably handled in their order by the Marlowe group. It has been shown by Professor Morgan of Exeter that old verse matter underlies, at points, the present prose of 1 HENRY IV;[1] and there are touches in the prologue to 2 HENRY IV which insistently recall Marlowe. In that case he may have had a hand in drafting Percy.

But Shakespeare has wholly rewritten 1 HENRY IV; and it is he who has made Falstaff, evolved from the Oldcastle of the old FAMOUS VICTORIES, the greatest comic figure in the Elizabethan drama. To that, Marlowe can have lent nothing. It is only in HENRY V, in that special series, that he can be traced with certainty.

An unusually intelligent reviewer has lately raised the issue, whether what we view as Marlowe matter revised or overlaid by Shakespeare may not be really Shakespeare matter worked up by Marlowe. But that particular difficulty disappears, as regards any play as a whole, when confronted with the chronology. Marlowe was killed in May, 1593. Shakespeare's VENUS AND ADONIS, described by him as "the first heir of my invention," had been licensed on April 18th of the same year. Taking his words in their natural sense—which of course the Foliolaters refuse to do—we realise that Shake-

[1] Paper read to the Shakespeare Association, 1924.

speare had not so much as drafted any complete play which Marlowe could have handled.

It might indeed be argued that, hypothetically speaking, Shakespeare may have *begun* the COMEDY OF ERRORS as we have it, and that Marlowe had taken *that* up and written the bulk of it from the second scene onwards. Strictly speaking, such a hypothesis is not barred by the circumstances, as Marlowe might have allowed the insertion of the other Shakespearean matter that occurs later in the play. But such a theory would leave us with the two definitely contrasted hands, Shakespeare and Marlowe each writing in his own way.

§ 5. *"Julius Cæsar"—as to Origination*

Our Folio play is visibly a combination of two, of which the second, telescoped in Acts IV and V, deals with the events after Cæsar's death. Equally constricted, having regard to the titular purpose, is the treatment of Cæsar in the first three Acts. When and how this twofold compression was made, and by whose hand or hands, are problems for careful exploration.[1] What concerns us here is the outstanding fact that Shakespeare's hand certainly does not pervade the whole, or even cover the first part; while there are plain reasons for inferring two previous plays, in both of which Marlowe appears to have shared, and which he probably drafted.

He was, in fact, as likely to handle Julius Cæsar

[1] Dealt with in Part I of *The Shakespeare Canon.*

as to handle Henry V. It is reasonable to say that he could not have " kept his hands off " the Roman conqueror, to whom he refers many times in his plays. The number of the allusions to Cæsar plays before 1599 which we find scattered through the pre-Shakespearean drama of Marlowe, Peele and Greene, and in the " Shakespeare " plays, is quite incompatible with the notion that Shakespeare was left to handle it first at the end of the decade of the 'nineties. This may be taken as common ground, especially when we note that Henslowe's Diary records a " Harey the V " as acted by the Admiral's men in 1595–6.

And in the very first scene of our play, which has probably been redacted, we have the Marlovian lines :—

> Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
> Into the channel, till the lowest stream
> Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.

We have seen that tag of swelling channel and Tiber banks used in EDWARD II and the MASSACRE, in the former case apparently as an echo ; and we have noted that Marlowe began using the trope in TAMBURLAINE. Foliolatry would have us believe that Shakespeare in 1599 or 1600 dutifully sat down to employ that well-worn trope, in the old line-ended verse, in a new play on Cæsar. Ceding to æsthetic reason, we recognise the Marlovian origination of the play long before.

The possibility that Jonson or another revised the double-play makes it impossible to be sure that in

the parts of Brutus and Cassius we have traces of Marlowe's diction. It is hard to believe that, though like Jonson and Chapman he might be anti-Cæsarean, he would have drafted such a line as

His coward lips did from their colour fly,

though the diction might seem to be his. But the " Cæsar shall go forth," in this play (II, ii, 48) and in the MASSACRE (III, ii : twice) points to him. It must surely have existed before the MASSACRE was written, as Mr. William Wells has urged. Even the altered line :

Cæsar doth never wrong but with just cause

points back to

What right I have
To offer wrong, as he accounteth wrong,

in the TROUBLESOME RAIGNE OF KING JOHN (scene i) where the hand seems to be his. But quite clearly is the prediction of Antony in Act III, scene i, 254 *sq.*, a Marlovian duplicate of the prophecy of the Bishop of Carlisle in RICHARD II, Act IV. The ideation, the diction, the substance, the key, the manner, the verse movement, are absolutely of the same fount.

If it be argued that Shakespeare was as likely as Marlowe thus to repeat himself, the answer is that if Shakespeare *could* have written like that about 1594, when he could and did write the utterly different blank verse of Richard's " No matter where " speech in III, ii, it is simple folly to assume that about 1600, when he had laid his hands on TROILUS

AND CRESSIDA, he would flatly revert to the pre-Shakespearean versification, manner and matter.

But Marlowe, writing both speeches within a space of a year or two, would be writing in his own normal manner in both cases, eking out a situation as he so often did, by thoughts that had served before. It is to him, again, that we are to look for the origin of the crude trope about mouth-like wounds; and

> Let us bathe our hands in Cæsar's blood
> Up to the elbows, and *besmear* our swords,

is wholly in the way of the old bombast in the chronicle-plays. So, too, he seems to pervade the compressed fourth and fifth Acts; and if the closing line:

> To part the glories of this happy day,

be not from the pen that wrote (2 TAMB., III, v, near end):

> The glory of this happy day is yours,

it was surely written in his day.

§ 6. *"The Comedy of Errors"*

It has been repeatedly pointed out by the present writer that the first and second scenes of the ERRORS cannot be by the same hand, the first being in notably free-rhythm'd though "early" verse, with hardly any double-endings; the second in notably end-stopped verse, with 24 per cent of double-endings. Neither Marlowe nor Shakespeare comported himself in that acrobatic fashion. The

latter, when he reached so high a percentage of blank verse in his later work, was utterly incapable of assuming the strait-waistcoat of linear verse. What we are dealing with, we shall find, is a Marlowe comedy, of which Shakespeare has entirely re-written the opening scene.[1]

We are forced to infer that Marlowe had *some* opening scene, to indicate the basis of the action; for it is his hand that predominates in the play, and Shakespeare enters only at points, as in the opening scene, in the quatrains in Act III, scene ii, and in the couplets following; and, ostensibly, in Ægeon's part at the close. He cannot therefore be plausibly regarded as planning the play and enlisting Marlowe as collaborator. The reasonable inference is that there had been in existence an actors' play, probably connected with the old HISTORIE OF ERROR known to have been played in 1577, and based on the MENÆCHMI of Plautus. Like other old plays, it was presumably brought to an " academic " playwright to turn into blank verse, about 1591–2. Of the old play a number of archaic doggerel lines are actually preserved in our COMEDY OF ERRORS.

That dating is established by collating what appears to be Kyd's narrative description—unless Marlowe contributed the passage—of a ruffian in ARDEN (reg. 1592) II, i, 49, with a visibly prior passage, highly Marlovian, in this play (V, 237 *sq.*)

[1] The theoretic possibility that Shakespeare began the play, and that Marlowe had finished it for him, has been indicated above. But the practical probabilities and the analogy of *The Two Gentlemen*, where Shakespeare has recast the beginning of a Greene play, invite the view here set forth.

and an earlier passage in THE JEW (Act IV, sc. v). We cannot of course prove that Shakespeare rewrote Marlowe's opening scene while Marlowe was alive; but in style and movement it is distinctly the earliest piece of his dramatic writing that we have, and at least cannot be dated later than 1593; while the high percentages of Marlowe's second scene suggest a date no earlier than 1592.

Marlowe's preponderating part is demonstrated on the one hand by his verse movement, and on the other by a series of verbal and phrasal clues.[1] Of the 44 "once-used" words in the play, 20 can be at once traced to his printed work, while a number more are in passages otherwise clearly assignable to him. Only the old assumption that he "would not" write comedy has stood in the way of the recognition of his pervading presence. But, even apart from A SHREW, we have farcical and comedy matter from him in THE JEW, and comedy matter in EDWARD II; and the old Plautian piece dictated a farcical treatment, with the primary story seriously treated. The à priori objection is thus idle. It is by simple induction from the whole phenomena that our identification has been reached, unexpectedly enough. It was perhaps the lead from "Lapland sorcerers" in the ERRORS to his "Lapland giants" —both uncommon allusions—that started the enquiry, at a time when Marlowe had not been thought of as ever attempting a comedy. The versification and the other clues completed the demonstration.

[1] See Part II of *The Shakespeare Canon*, for details.

CHAPTER III

ASSIGNABLE COLLABORATIVE WORK

A. Outside of the Folio

OUTSIDE of the Folio, and apart from his assigned plays, Marlowe is to be traced with critical confidence as a sharer in at least four anonymous Elizabethan plays: (1) THE TROUBLESOME RAIGNE OF KING JOHN (of which our Folio play is a complete re-writing); (2) ALPHONSUS EMPEROR OF GERMANY; (3) the old TAMING OF A SHREW; and (4) EDWARD III. The full title of the last-named, THE RAIGNE OF EDWARD THE THIRD, externally assimilates it to the old KING JOHN, of which the title, again, chimes with THE TROUBLESOME AND LAMENTABLE RAIGNE OF EDWARD II; and the entire plan and structure of EDWARD III, as we have noted, suggest a close kinship with the play on Henry V which we have seen reason to regard as having underlain our Folio play. With perhaps less ground for confidence, we have yet good reason, further, for ascribing to Marlowe, in collaboration with Lodge, a share in A 'LARUM FOR LONDON.

1. The chief stress of resistance to those ascriptions will probably still be met with in regard to THE

TROUBLESOME RAIGNE OF KING JOHN, which the late A. W. Bullen scornfully declared to have no Marlowese quality, and which Mr. Dugdale Sykes has assigned wholly to Peele, as he does ALPHONSUS OF GERMANY and the old KING LEIR AND HIS THREE DAUGHTERS. In these matters, authority must not guide us; but it was F. G. Fleay who elicited the scornful denial of Bullen; and his ascriptions are generally well worth attending to. He had in this case the "authority" of Malone, who had ascribed the play to Marlowe, probably on the strength of the prologue. But as later publishers (1611, 1622 and 1764) unscrupulously ascribed the play to Shakespeare, who certainly did not write it, we must scrutinise for ourselves.

"Earless and unabashed," wrote Bullen, "must be the critic who would charge Marlowe with *any* complicity in THE TROUBLESOME RAIGNE OF KING JOHN"[1]—a sad sample of the violence with which so many Shakespearean critics have disposed of unexamined and unargued problems. As we shall see in a subsequent chapter, Bullen had not analysed Marlowe's versification, and might himself be charged with being "earless" on that score. Mr. Sykes, on the other hand, finds in the RAIGNE the pioneer of the chronicle plays, and, in its way, one of the best. That such judgments ascribe to Peele an amount of dramatic originality and power not exhibited in any of his commonly assigned plays is

[1] Cited by Fleay, *Biog. Chron.*, ii, 53.

at least an obvious reason for scrutinising the problem closely.

In Fleay's opinion, Marlowe was the "chief plotter" of the RAIGNE, with Lodge, Peele, and Greene as collaborators. The first claim is obviously to be established only by showing a preponderating share for Marlowe from the outset. It would indeed be a natural inference from the prologue "To the Gentlemen Readers" of Part I (1591) that the play was substantially Marlowe's:

> You that with friendly grace of smoothèd brow
> Have entertained the Scythian *Tamburlaine*
> And given applause unto an Infidel,
> Vouchsafe to welcome, with like courtesy,
> A warlike Christian and your countryman.

These, which are the better of the eleven lines, may quite possibly have been Marlowe's, having his "instant" force of stride; and though the remaining lines, ending with two couplets, are less individual, they too may have been his. The stage business of discrediting Papacy and Papalism seems to have been part of the original as it is of the later middle-part of FAUSTUS. What is, perhaps, most clearly to be inferred is that this play came soon after TAMBURLAINE, and before FAUSTUS, of which also the prologue deals with Marlowe's own plays. The deprecatory note of the allusion to "infidel" Tamburlaine, however, is compatible with a prudential purpose on the side of the theatre; and it is not to be argued that the play is opened by Marlowe.

But while there are better grounds in diction and

vocabulary for assigning the opening to Peele—doing his best to be relatively compact—it would be rash to assign to him the whole, even up to Queen Elinor's " Philip, awake ! " on which Philip speaks in a quite Marlovian fashion. " Dare lay my hand " is Peelean, as is " this princely presence," both recalling the ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS ; and perhaps still more characteristic is the lame couplet :

> This is my doom, and this my doom shall stand
> Irrevocable, as I am King of Eng*land*.

To the inexperienced reader it may seem not a rhymed couplet at all ; but Peele abounds in certainly intentional couplets of the kind, in which a halting rhyme is made by a false syllable-stress. It was a bad fashion of the time, accepted even by Chapman in his earlier verse.

But when Philip begins his speech of reverie with " *Philippus, atavis edite regibus,*" diction and style and afflatus together point so obviously to Marlowe that Mr. Ivor John, in his ' Arden ' edition, avows that " no one but an admirer or a pupil of Marlowe's could have produced Falconbridge's soliloquy." It has in fact as many verbal and phrasal clues to Marlowe[1] as the previous part of the scene has to Peele ; and the " uplift " is Marlovian and non-Peelean. To argue again that Philip's speech beginning :

> And art thou gone ? misfortune haunt thy steps !

[1] See the *Introduction to the Study of the Shakespeare Canon*, p. 281 *sq.*

is Peelean in respect of the first phrase, is illicit, for we have variants of that phrase in Greene's ALPHONSUS OF ARRAGON (Mermaid ed., pp. 13, 23). It seems to have been common property; but Greene might have echoed it from Marlowe, and Peele echoes Marlowe often in his later work. Other tag phrases, such as "trust me" and "I mean," which have been similarly used to certify Peele, must be similarly dismissed as common to nearly all the pre-Shakespeareans; and a number of speeches in the play are as unlike Peele, in respect of their compact force of diction, as they are like Marlowe.

On the other hand there are quite a number of phrasal and verbal clues to Lodge, such as "divine instinct," "resist" (noun); "ingrate," "heartless" (=faint-hearted), and "noonstead" (misprinted "moonsted," Part II I, ii).[1] In his case it is fair to remember that though his WOUNDS OF CIVIL WAR is marked by a terrible monotony of versification, Lodge is as likely to have improved on that score as did all the other pre-Shakespeareans of his group in various other ways.

A reasonable hypothesis, which does not seem to have occurred to any of the editors, may broadly account for all the phenomena. There are strong grounds for inferring from the bibliographical phenomena of the old TRUE TRAGEDIE OF RICHARD III, THE TAMING OF A SHREW, ROMEO AND JULIET, and the COMEDY OF ERRORS, that before the advent of the "academics" who wrote blank verse there

[1] *Introduction to the Canon*, pp. 401–2.

were " actors' plays " on these and many other themes, which the actors, faced by the new vogue, brought to the new poets to be more or less " blank-versified." It is further highly probable, on the face of the case, that the old play of KING JOHAN, by Bishop Bale, had inspired one or other company of actors to produce a play on *that* theme, the subject being so inherently popular in respect of the use made of the *motif* of Protestantism.

Such an actors' play, brought to Peele or Marlowe, would be readily taken up in collaboration, with no special " chief-plotter," inasmuch as the lines of the action were already broadly laid down. Even the Bastard may already have been on the stage, in a less poetic form ; and the business of ridiculing the friars would be ready to the hands of the collaborators. The Bastard would be a figure upon which Marlowe would naturally fasten, he being, with John, of the self-assertive type which Marlowe most readily handled.

If it be objected that such a hypothesis ascribes too much practical efficiency to the actors' play-making, as apart from their inferior literary form, the answer is that the practical efficiency of the academics was often far to seek. The student should read LOCRINE, to realise the intellectual poverty and dramatic nullity of which men like Peele and Greene were capable when, at an early stage, they took a free hand. Considered as actors' plays, the old A SHREW and RICHARD II and ROMEO seem to have had far more dramatic content. The comparative

effectiveness of the old KING JOHN and the old LEIR may very well be due to a practical basis, though of course the academics learned their business and improved. Such composites as TITUS ANDRONICUS and RICHARD III stand finally for the knowledge of possible variety of effect attained by the practitioners when they had become "old hands" at the game. The efficiency of Kyd in one way, and of Marlowe in another, was of course exceptional from their outset; and Greene was presumably more efficient in his inferable early prose comedies than in his first verse-tragedy experiments.

2. Marlowe's presence in ALPHONSUS EMPEROR OF GERMANY is probably more obvious to an impartial eye than even in the RAIGNE. In ALPHONSUS also Peele is clearly a sharer; and the proclivity to single-author solutions has led to that play being claimed for him by Mr. Sykes, as is EDWARD III by Professor Tucker Brooke. Considering the modest level maintained in his accepted work, Peele has been surprisingly favoured by latter-day ascriptions of plays mainly above his level.

As to ALPHONSUS OF GERMANY the issue can be speedily tried by examining the speech cited by Mr. Sykes as decisively Peelean because of its parallelisms with one in Peele's DAVID AND BETHSABE.[1] That Peele had a hand in ALPHONSUS OF GERMANY is as certain as any such proposition can be. But that Peele could have written such a

[1] Extracts in *Introd. to the Canon*, p. 271.

speech as that of Alphonsus in the first scene, beginning:

So I, not muffled in simplicity,

will probably be denied by nine out of ten critical readers of his work. In DAVID AND BETHSABE he has a speech by David in which a series of phrases are paralleled, about "laying the ground," "flight of birds," and "natural presage," which are as utterly and absurdly incongruous as anything in Elizabethan drama.

This suffices to prove the DAVID speech the later, for it could not have been conceived in that connection. But it is not an echo of Peele himself. His rhythm is as unoriginal as his poetics; and the style of the whole speech of Alphonsus is as alien to him as the conception of the character and the rigorous, ruthless action. The whole construction of the hero-villain part is as essentially and typically Marlovian as the diction and the strong linear versification. There could be no clearer warning against taking mere echoes of phrase as identifications of hand, in critical disregard of style and substance. For there is no approach to such strenuous figure-drawing in any of Peele's assigned plays.

Yet there is probably little more of Marlowe in the piece. We cannot be afterwards sure of him even in the part of Alphonsus, though we may surmise it in Act III, and in Alexander's speech in IV, ii:

Now is my lord sole Emperor of Rome.

The most probable hypothesis by way of solution is

that the play is an adaptation from the Italian, controlled by Kyd; and that Marlowe merely lent his gift for a strong beginning. With its 9.5 per cent of double-endings in the opening scene it is fitly to be dated, as it commonly is, 1590. The second scene is not Marlowe's, and may have been by Kyd; but in the drastic reconstruction which the play underwent long afterwards, when the German matter was inserted, the second scene appears to have been recast, though the closing section, even when retouched, still testifies to Peele, who in later portions is found at times echoing Marlowe. Thus the line:

Water from forth the cold Tartarian hills,

which so plainly echoes Marlowe's

Brave horses bred on the white Tartarian hills

may be a mere imitation by Peele, though we cannot be certain.

Marlowe's opening alone displays high literary power, spent as usual on one of his typical Supermen, a special "Italianate" incarnation of evil. It may even be later than the figure of Guise, though neither is to be placed later than 1590. In the dramatic evolution, it has the individual interest of exemplifying Marlowe's fatality of masterful beginnings, not to be carried to any fit consummation, and the general interest of exhibiting, probably, with TITUS ANDRONICUS, the influence of the Italian "tragedy of horrors," which in Italy had been the portent of the previous generation.

3. The old TAMING OF A SHREW, so long dismissed

as containing merely borrowings and imitations from Marlowe, and latterly alleged to be but a corruption of the Folio play, needs but to be carefully read in order to realise that there is a quantity of genuinely Marlovian verse not ascribable to imitation.[1] The phenomena tell of an early " actors' play," brought to Marlowe and one or two coadjutors, probably Kyd and Peele, to be " blank-versified," the prose being retained. And this may have been Marlowe's first attempt at comedy. The mere lifting into it, in the Induction, of an incongruously serious passage from FAUSTUS (I, iii, 1–4) is fair evidence that he was at first nonplussed; hence a strong presumption that this came before his handling of the COMEDY OF ERRORS, where he is more at ease on a similar basis.

4. With EDWARD III the case is different, though even there it may be that there was an " actors' play " in existence, as there may well have been for Peele's EDWARD I. In EDWARD III, Marlowe's hand is evident at the outset; and though all logical scrutiny of the versification and the phrasal echoes of the " Countess scenes " leads to the view of them as rewritten by Greene, not long before his death, there also we have such plain traces of Marlowe's hand that he must be held to have drafted the episode in the first form of the play. The other contributions to the piece, by Kyd and Peele,[2] are subsidiary; and though its plot, purpose, and limitations precluded

[1] See Part II of *The Shakespeare Canon*, p. 135 *sq.*
[2] *Introduction to the Canon*, pp. 310, 383–5.

any powerful exercise of his faculty on the male parts, he may be reckoned in this case "chief plotter."

It is the biographical fact, however, that Greene had many times over, in his prose tales as well as in his plays, handled the central theme of the Countess scenes; and his frequent manipulation of it is to be regarded as inspiring him to the ablest of all his treatments, in respect alike of poetic and dramatic power. Hence it is his contribution that chiefly keeps the play "alive" as literature, the drum-and-trumpet interest of the rest being evanescent. And it is this predominant effectiveness of the Countess scenes that inspires the still frequent ascription to them to Shakespeare, though, in respect of the versification of any entire play, they compare or consist only with the Greenean TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA. It is for the traditionists to explain how, if the Countess scenes be Shakespeare's, the play was not included in the Folio on the usual principles of the editors.

The objection that Marlowe was "unlikely" to collaborate with Greene is barred in advance by the other instances in which Greene's hand is plainly found beside his—for instance, in A SHREW and in I HENRY VI. But in all the cases alike, any "improbability" that the socially heedless Marlowe would collaborate with a man who had jealously girded at him is readily to be balanced by the probability that Kyd, if not Peele, would in these cases act as go-between. The poet who spent his

death-day in talk with enemies is really not to be conceived as averse from "mixing" with his corrivals.

5. The suggestion that Marlowe wrote, with Lodge, A 'LARUM FOR LONDON (printed in 1602) has found no great favour. Yet no hand but Marlowe's can plausibly be suggested for the first Act. Lodge's may be traced, by verbal and phrasal clues, in later portions, and especially at the end. But Simpson's suggestion of Marston, based on some of the "ruffianly" phrasing in the earlier Acts, will not bear investigation. The cited phrases in the 'LARUM are scattered, and some of them are actually Marlovian; whereas Marston heaps his together at his outset, in inordinate measure. But the percentages of double-endings definitely exclude him. In the first scene we have 12.4; in the second, 20 in 88 lines of blank verse, = 22 per cent. Marston visibly avoids double-endings in his earlier work (1602), as it were instinctively.

The play is critically to be regarded as begun by Marlowe, and by him left unfinished, being indeed an unpromising theatrical undertaking. The story of the *Siege of Antwerp* had been published by Gascoigne in 1576; and Marlowe's interest in it had been expressed in his allusion to the fiery keel at Antwerp bridge in FAUSTUS. Furthermore, the *motif* of the starved demobilised soldier, discussed and enacted by Stump in the 'LARUM, is vigorously developed by Marlowe in the first scene of EDWARD II, whereof the lines:

Why, there are hospitals for such as you . . .
Farewell, and perish by a soldier's hand,
That wouldst reward them with an hospital,

are echoed by Stump's

He shall at least, when he hath lost his limb,
Be sent for harbour to a spittle-house,

and much else in his talk.

Dyce's declaration that in the play " no traces of [Marlowe's] genius are discernible " is impercipient both positively and negatively. The lines on Antwerp (74–6):

Oh, she is amorous as the wanton air
And must be courted: from her nostrils comes
A breath as sweet as the Arabian spice . . .

are like Marlowe and no one else; and his " genius," of which Dyce seems to have noted only the inflation, is to be seen here in the strong concision of the writing. It was a case for realism, with no clear opening for either the " high astounding " vein of TAMBURLAINE, or a " character " study like that of Guise. We begin with ruthless military planning and preparation for a treacherous attack; and nobody even up to 1602 can be named who could more forcibly strike the note. Furthermore, there are in the earlier Acts a score of verbal and phrasal clues to Marlowe, and to no one else.[1]

Judging from the double-endings, we should infer it to have been worked-upon by him about 1590 and later, and left unfinished for the obvious reasons

[1] *Introduction to the Canon*, p. 393 *sq.*

given. Apart from such features as the lame soldier Stump, scornful of the rich burghers who would not pay for defence, it can have had no long success; and for Marlowe it had but limited possibilities. Lodge's completion and possible revision of the piece may well have been a labour of love, his appreciation of Marlowe being abundantly visible in the WOUNDS OF CIVIL WAR; and the theme of warning to rich cities "How they in sin and pleasure take delight," in the Epilogue, is very much in the spirit of the LOOKING-GLASS FOR LONDON, in which he had collaborated with Greene.

6. That Marlowe did yet more fragmentary or collaborative work, in addition to his two lost plays, is likely enough. One or two passages in ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM, notably the opening of the second scene of Act III, are so emphatically in his manner and spirit, and so much above the measure of Kyd, that it is idle to deny the likelihood of his having here given Kyd "a hand."[1] But while there are also a few lines even in the throaty LOCRINE that are not unworthy of him, and must be credited, with much else, to his influence, it is too precarious an undertaking to seek to find him in the plays of the various men who imitated him.

The strongest claim of the kind is that made by Mr. Charles Crawford[2] for his predominance in SELIMUS, where indeed his *aura* is at times strong. But it must here suffice to have compiled a list of

[1] *Introduction to the Canon*, pp. 403–4.
[2] In his *Collectanea*, vol. i, 1906.

claims which, even as it stands, is likely to be arraigned for temerity. The issue must be left to the student, and to time.

B. In the Folio

§ 1. *"Richard II"*

For a perceptive reader, the presence of Marlowe in this play might be at once made plain by such lines as these (I, iii, 88–92):

> Never did captive with a freer heart
> Cast off his chains of bondage and embrace
> His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement
> *More than* my dancing soul doth celebrate
> This feast of battle with mine adversary.

Everything that constitutes blank-verse style is here identical with the same elements in these (EDWARD II, II, ii):

> Sweet lord and King, your speech preventeth mine.
> Yet have I words left to express my joy:
> The shepherd nipt with biting winter's rage
> Frolics not *more* to see the painted spring
> Than I do to behold your majesty;

which in turn point straight back to these (2 TAMB., I, iii):

> Your presence, loving friends and fellow-Kings,
> Makes me to surfeit in conceiving joy:
> If all the crystal gates of Jove's high court
> Were open'd wide and I might enter in
> To see the state and majesty of heaven,
> It could not *more* delight me than your sight.

In these three passages there is no repetition of phrase, yet the trope-scheme is exactly similar in all, and the verse-movement is congenital in every pulse. When men asseverate, nevertheless, that Shakespeare wrote the first passage, they are asking us to believe that in him the principle of imitation was of a pathological potency. And yet in this same play we have from his hand, verse which, though almost certainly written on a Marlowe basis, is to Marlowe's as magistral modern music beside a vigorous barbaric chant. Such verse is the passage (III, ii, 160–170) beginning:

> Within the hollow crown
> That rounds the mortal temples of a King,
> Keeps Death his court,

—early Shakespearean, yet already of another æsthetic world.

To say that the hand which could thus easily transcend the art of the other put itself in chronic subjection to it, mimicking it in a maniacal abjection, is merely to expel reason from æsthetic judgment. If the student demands more concretely obvious proofs that Marlowe is in the play, such as uses of his special phraseology and ideation, they are to be found, and have been produced, by the dozen. But the homologies above cited should at least prepare an open mind for the true conclusion.

The probability that a draft by Peele underlies our Folio play is sufficient ground for regarding Marlowe as merely collaborating in another's plan, more or less perfunctorily. Though the contrary

may be argued, Peele was perhaps more likely than Marlowe to propose (though Marlowe might in the way of business readily agree) to add a RICHARD II to EDWARD II, a second study of a weak and falling King to a first. Henry VI is but the quiet storm-centre of a manifold action that is quite in Marlowe's way. EDWARD II has a special Marlovian motivation, and begins in his characteristic manner. This play does not.[1] And, with a surplus of Marlovian and other matter, there is yet so much of Peele's manner and tone and phrase, from the very first line, that he is fitly to be counted the draftsman, though Marlowe overlays the play in point of quantity.

On the other hand, the character of Richard II offered opportunities to Shakespeare which that of Richard III did not. He has therefore retouched this play to a considerably greater extent. But, despite a long series of panegyrics, inspired by the better portions to disregard the many worse, it is neither a unified nor a great play; and scene after scene of action is aloof from Richard's story altogether. It gave, in fact, less of central opportunity to Marlowe than to Shakespeare, Marlowe's hand appearing only in episodes, save when he handles Bolingbroke, his natural "hero" in the piece. There we recognise him in the speech (I, iii, 294) beginning:

O! who can hold a fire in his hand.

[1] The tentative positions taken up in Part II of *The Shakespeare Canon* are here somewhat modified.

But even in the first scene he probably retouched besides adding to Peele's work, heightening the style and the invective.

It is probable, indeed, that the play was revised by Marlowe after its first state. In the first 100 lines of blank verse there are 17 double-endings, which is much above Peele's percentages, but also higher than the rate in some scenes which appear to be Marlowe's. When, as in II, iii, it reaches 20 per cent, there can be no question of his activity unless we raise the hypothesis that here as in some other plays the imitative Heywood had a revising hand.

There are, in fact, so many salient parallels in RICHARD II to EDWARD II and to RICHARD III, as well as to other work of Marlowe's, that we must either avow his presence or assume Shakespeare to have actually aimed at all manner of unimportant imitations, not of style but of little specialties of phrase. In Act I, scene i, for instance, we have the line (152):

> Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me.

In Marlowe's translation of Ovid's AMORES we have the lines (II, v, 51-2):

> As might make
> Wrath-kindled Jove away his thunder shake.

Nowhere else in the Folio does the double epithet "wrath-kindled" appear at all. Coming as it does at the beginning of a line, it is either a fantastic reminiscence by Shakespeare of a line in a *manuscript* by Marlowe, not yet printed, or a normal reminis-

cence of himself by Marlowe in one or the other case. For nobody now dates RICHARD II as written by Shakespeare before the date of Marlowe's death.

Neither critical science nor common sense can long hesitate to confess that we are listening to Marlowe in both cases, for the line is not at all like Peele. And in many more instances the verbal and the phrasal clues alike leave no reasonable doubt.[1] Nowhere can Shakespeare's recognisable work in the play be held to constitute original collaboration, though that is a possibility to be considered. The justified inference is a collaboration between Marlowe and Peele, who apparently began and outlined the play, Marlowe apparently revising *his* work as well as expanding his own.

Doubt may arise as to the quality of the work in the rhyming passages in general. The warranted conclusion appears to be that Marlowe has done a good deal of the rhyming, when we have realised that the Talbot death-scenes in I HENRY VI are his; though some of the couplet work here is quite within the range of Peele, and is probably his. His practice in EDWARD I includes both rhymed and blank verse; and it is fair to infer for him the drafting of some rhyme and blank in RICHARD II which Shakespeare has bettered.

We may trace Marlowe's hand with little doubt through the fourth Act: the fifth begins with the tones of Peele and with his feebler line-movement;

[1] Details in "The Authorship of Richard II" in Part II of *The Shakespeare Canon*.

and whosoever penned the cheap scene-section of Aumerle's treason and pardon, execrated by Swinburne, it cannot be assigned as a whole to Marlowe on grounds of either versification or phraseology, any more than to Shakespeare. Unless there was a later revision, eking out a play that never had much popularity even with Shakespeare's touch on it, the responsibility must lie with Peele. Yet it contains Marlowesque lines which are not mere echoes; and we cannot with perfect confidence deny that Marlowe was incapable of the "*pardonnez-moi*" over which so many critics have groaned. He *could* sin in that fashion.

It is rather more comforting to remember that he reverts, albeit automatically, to his "natural" form in such lines as these (III, iii, 62–7):

> See, see, King Richard doth himself appear
> As doth the blushing discontented sun
> From out the fiery portal of the east,
> When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
> To dim his glory and to stain the track
> Of his bright passage to the occident.

If the student does not at once hear Marlowe there and in the context he is still not at home in his author. But the verse is visibly not well inspired. Rather it is part of the evidence that the poet was in this play doing hack-work, line-making against the grain.

§ 2. "*Romeo and Juliet*"

When we attentively compare certain parts of

ROMEO AND JULIET with certain lines in HERO AND LEANDER, we are compelled to admit that there is a connection which goes beyond those plain parallels which have always been recognised between passages in this and in Marlowe's plays. Long ago it was noted that the ROMEO lines (II, ii, 2):

But soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!

echo those in the JEW OF MALTA (II, i):

But stay, what star shines yonder in the east?
The loadstar of my life, if Abigail;

as do the ROMEO lines (IV, v, 28–9):

Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field,

those others in the JEW (I, ii, near end):

A fair young maid, scarce *fourteen years* of age,
The sweetest flower in Cytherea's field.
Cropt from the pleasures of the fruitful earth.

So, too, the old commentators noted how Juliet's

Gallop apace, you fiery footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' lodging; such a waggoner
As Phaëthon would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately

echoes those lines in EDWARD II (IV, iii):

Gallop apace, bright Phœbus, through the sky,
And dusky night, in rusty iron car,
Between you both shorten the time, I pray;

as they noted further how Juliet's lines (II, ii, 58):

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance

connect with the line in EDWARD III (II, i, 2) :

His ear to drink her sweet tongue's utterance.

No less obvious is the homology between such passages as :

Flower as she was, deflowered by him [death]

in our play (IV, v, 37), and the lines (V, iii, 102) :

Shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous,
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour,

and the lines about " amorous Jove " snatching Zenocrate or Olympia, and crying that

Infernal Dis is courting of my love

in 2 TAMBURLAINE, II, iv ; IV, iii.

Yet another unmistakeable echo was noted between the play (V, i, 7, 9) :

I dreamt my lady came and found me dead . . .
And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips . . .

and the line in HERO AND LEANDER (II, 3) :

He kiss'd her, and breath'd life into her lips.

But a deeper connection is revealed when we note how in the poem (i, 94 *sq.*) some who had not been lovers

Came lovers home from this great festival,

as in the case of the banquet in the play ; and how the poem's lines :

Every street
Glister'd like breathing stars, who, where they went,
Frightened the melancholy earth, which deem'd
Eternal heaven to burn

develop that in the play (I, ii, 25) :

Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light,

and Romeo's passage (II, ii, 15 *sq.*) about

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven.

That speech sets out with the passage which adapts that of Barabas on the star that shines in the east ; and those sequent lines :

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,

and the rest, are in the key of the tropes in TAMBURLAINE and EDWARD III (II, i, 143) about the Zenocrate giving light to Phœbus and the fixed stars, and the pale queen of night being turned to a fading taper when the sun lifts up his head. The speech of Romeo, in short, is Marlovian in its whole structure, down to the tic of " the airy region " ; and the end-stopped verse, as so often elsewhere in the play, is his, and not Shakespeare's, though Shakespeare may have touched it. Nowhere is that line-ended movement more apparent than in Juliet's soliloquy (IV, iii), where the

Environèd with all these hideous fears,

and the " madly play with my forefathers' joints " are in Marlowe's idiom,[1] though here again, as so frequently throughout the play, the retouching hand may have been at work.

[1] For when their *hideous force environed* Rhodes . . .
The Jew, II, ii.

Or should I dig up thy forefathers' graves
And hang their rotten coffins up in chains.
Richard, Duke of York, I, iii.

The traditional attitude is to assume that when "Shakespeare" thus copies, wholesale, matter and manner, phrase and sentiment, he is but naturally imitating the diction and phraseology of his predecessor—a thing he does *not* do either in the DREAM or KING JOHN, though in the latter play he is following the old play which he re-writes. It is true that in the VENUS AND ADONIS, rapidly composing rhymed verse for the market when the theatres are closed by the plague, he adapts matter from speeches that are plainly by Peele and Greene in TITUS; and that even in the Sonnets and in the LUCRECE he echoes lines traceable to EDWARD III or to Greene. In the DREAM, again (III, ii, 21–4), there are four lines which develop a trope in TITUS about wild-fowl scattered by gusts.

But here the poet of the DREAM is poetically *transcending* the lines he is said to "imitate," and so in his use of TITUS matter in the VENUS he effectively condenses into crisp lines the flaccid verse he is echoing. Again and again in our enquiry we have had to note flaccid imitation of strong verse; and in Shakespeare's early poem we simply have the contrary process. In both cases the casting vote is given by the style test. And when he is charged with descending, in a play, to mere direct imitation of other men's phraseology, his whole dramatic practice in his undisputed plays dictates the reply that that is not his method.

In the case of ROMEO AND JULIET the problem defies that thoughtless solution. Either HERO AND

LEANDER proceeds with a memory of the play, which must in that case be dated before 1593, or Shakespeare, after that year, was inspired by the yet unpublished poem as well as by twenty reminiscences of Marlowe's plays. On that view, Juliet's

> I'll prove more true
> Than those that have more cunning to be strange

was suggested by Leander's lines in the poem (I, 207–8):

> My words shall be as spotless as my youth,
> Full of simplicity and naked truth;

which are not in the poem of Musæus, any more than these (175–6):

> Where both deliberate, the love is slight:
> Who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?

The rational inference is that the poem develops or proceeds upon the play, not the play the poem; and when we find Marlowe so clearly present in the play it is hardly possible to come to any conclusion save that, uplifted as he had been by the great old love story which he had partly handled, he was inspired to begin the poem which he did not live, or did not see his way, to finish.

If the traditionists further seek to make out Shakespeare the first draftsman of the play, they are faced by the hopeless task of accounting for the dismal and discreditable matter in the scene of the lamentation over Juliet's supposed death, and many more anomalous elements that are utterly irreconcilable with Shakespeare's authorship. Simple biblio-

graphy, if it will be honestly inductive, must acknowledge that there was a pre-Shakespearean play, at least as early as 1591, and more probably dateable 1590, or even earlier. The phenomena of the old German version, in which the opening scene is entirely different from that of ours, points to the reasonable solution.

That there was an old actors' play on Romeo and Juliet is practically certain. The story, as Dowden notes, had " acquired an European celebrity " when Arthur Brooke in 1562 produced his long poem on the subject; and Brooke records that he had seen it " lately set forth on stage." No theme was likely to be more attractive to the early travelling companies; and the prologue (which was dropped in the Folio) is in the taste of an earlier generation than Shakespeare's. That the actors' play was brought to the academics to be " blank-versified " is the natural conclusion.

Comparing the opening scene of the old German version with ours, we find the former to be very much in the didactic taste of the GORBODUC period, and the presumption from that and the German form of Juliet's first talk with her nurse is that the opening was handled by Peele.[1] Marlowe, then, is to be conceived as collaborating, not drafting the play as a whole; and the striking indications of Greene in the rhyming parts, and of Kyd in others, lead to the general conclusion that all four of the

[1] The problem is treated in Part III of *The Shakespeare Canon*.

group were concerned. They well might be; for no better story had ever come to their hands; and, as in the case of other plays above discussed, it is not reasonably to be supposed that they would all have left such an excellent subject to be handled by Shakespeare for the first time in the newer fashion.

If this outline be correct, the prose section which opens our play is of later date; and is very much more plausibly to be assigned to either Peele or Kyd than to Shakespeare. It constitutes a realistic and theatrically effective substitution for the old didactic one, which savours of the primary play. Of course this opening also might conceivably have existed in the actors' play, and been for a time superseded by Peele's in verse, till it was recognised that the scene of action was the better beginning for the purposes of the theatre. Or Peele's scene may have been specially written for the company which first took the play to Germany, where the didactic opening might be reckoned preferable.

All this is unexplored ground. What seems probable, on a scrutiny of the double-endings, is that pre-Shakespearean revision of the Acts after the second took place about 1591 or 1592, since in the later Acts the percentages rise. And there, as in the earlier, there are plain traces of Marlowe, to whom strict criticism must assign the drafting of Juliet's epithalamion, as well as of her soliloquy before taking the drug. There the double-endings begin to cluster, as in the fifth Act. Readers loth to suppose that Marlowe handles the culminating

action should note not merely the echoes about amorous Death, but the parallel of ideation and manner between Romeo's lines to the apothecary:

> There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
> Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
> Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell,

and these in THE JEW (I, ii):

> Why, I esteem the injury far less
> To take the lives of miserable men
> Than be the causers of their misery;

which again point to EDWARD III (II, ii, 114–17):

> The sin is more to hack and hew poor men
> Than to embrace in an unlawful bed
> The register of all rarieties
> Since leathern Adam till this youngest hour.

Marlowe is in fact further within the higher drama in his work in ROMEO AND JULIET than anywhere else; and the explanation would seem to be that the really fine story "enskied him" as nothing else did in his play-themes, moving him, as aforesaid, to his high poetic flight in HERO AND LEANDER. It might well uplift him if, as it would appear, it uplifted Greene in his parts of the collaboration.[1] For "night's candles" would seem to come from Greene (ORLANDO FURIOSO; ed. Dyce, p. 106*a*); though Shakespeare has visibly rewritten Greene's passage for us.

And that revision, at times so felicitous, has apparently been at work over the better parts of the

[1] See Part III of *The Shakespeare Canon*.

play in general, though it has left unredeemed some of the very poorest of the writing. Evidently the play, representing as it did the combined effort of four playwrights, working on a popular old play drawn from a highly popular story, was regarded in the theatre as a successful one, requiring no general re-writing. It was indeed a thing of new charm in the field of tragedy, blending a happy humour with a brilliant if unsubtle wit, a brilliant poetry in the newer mode, and a profoundly touching pathos. No actor in the young Shakespeare's company would want him to re-write Juliet's bridal speech, ungirlish though it is; and the line-ended verse throughout would satisfy the actors at that stage as it has satisfied so many since.

As to the wit and humour, we have to note that Mercutio was already in the old play at the stage of the German version. On bibliographical grounds, the famous speech of the Nurse, which is printed in italics in the Quartos, is to be reckoned an addition, not by Shakespeare. We can but guess at its authorship, and the likeliest guess seems to be—Nashe. Mercutio's "Queen Mab" speech, if written by Shakespeare, may be regarded as an early experiment by him in end-stopped verse. But it contains many words which never recur in the Folio.

Finally, if we find Marlowe in this play at his dramatic best, on the plane of normal human feeling, we find him also at his worst. The miserable line (III, iii, 41):

Flies may do this, but I from this must fly,

must be assigned to him, with the dismal " I " puns of Juliet, and others in earlier parts of the text. It has been customary to evade the truth about these atrocities, under the shift of a genial allusion to Shakespeare's punning proclivities. But Marlowe, like Peele, was a shameless punster[1]; and those puns cited have the finger-print of him who wrote: "Io too much eyed." The "fly" pun is embedded in the speech that has the lines:

> They may seize
> On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
> And steal immortal blessing from her lips,

which point us to HERO AND LEANDER (Sest. i, 29–30):

> They [sun and wind] took delight
> To play upon those hands, they were so white,

and the cry of Faustus: " Make me immortal with a kiss." The punster and the poet are one man; and he who identifies him with Shakespeare knows neither his Shakespeare nor his Marlowe.

Thus, at what may be termed his high-water mark in the Folio, Marlowe is the strong imperfect artist we have found him in his dramatic work in general. That he was not without humour, we know from passages in the Roses scene, and in EDWARD II. But his humour functioned transiently, leaving him capable of sadly mechanical wit. If, on the other hand, the high-water mark be placed at Juliet's epithalamion, we are left reflecting that, as in her

[1] Lists given in *The Shakespeare Canon*, Part III, pp. 173–5; Part IV, Div. I, pp. 24–5.

tirade at the discovery of Tybalt's death, by Romeo's hand, he is not the reader of women's hearts, or the singer who can give their voices. It is the defect of the quality of the " hard and gemlike flame."

Unless we are to revert to the theory of Shakespeare as the hypnotised imitator of other men in all his plays, we must realise that the line (III, ii, 73):

O serpent heart hid with a flowering face!

is in the ordinary way of the poet-craftsman who had written:

O tiger's heart, wrapt in a woman's hide!

in 3 HENRY VI. That the hand is Marlowe's in both cases is the only rational æsthetic inference open to us. His better things and his worse are assignable to him not because they are either good or bad, but because they have his plain finger-prints.

§ 3. *" Titus Andronicus "*

A century ago, it was common to assign this play as a whole to Marlowe, on the lax principle which sought for single authors for all anonymous Elizabethan plays, in the teeth alike of Henslowe's records and the internal evidence. When Fleay, after agreeing, hesitated about Marlowe, and substituted Peele, he was going in the right direction, since Peele opens and pervades the play; but it is really a composite; and Marlowe has in it an obvious hand.[1]

[1] The problem is discussed at length in the *Introduction to the Study of the Canon.*

The reasoned summary of the history of the play is that (1) an old play of TITUS AND VESPASIAN, preserved only in the old German version, and played for a time by Shakespeare's (the Chamberlain's) company, was probably by Kyd, who may have had it from an Italian source; (2) that a dispute arose between the Chamberlain's and Pembroke's men as to the ownership; and (3) that in 1592–3 a new TITUS ANDRONICUS, founded on the other but re-written and modified, was produced under the general control of Peele.

That Shakespeare made what may be termed a general editorial revision for his company is likely enough, in view of the general correctness of the verse. Such a revision would give his company the legal title to include it in the Folio, with other alien plays in which he either did only similar service or inserted better matter of his own without any general re-writing. But over no alien play in the Folio is it more idle to pretend that he can be its author.

One good critic, the late Dr. Garnett, who had always denied that Shakespeare wrote the play, and who, after assigning it to Marlowe, came to admit the presence of Peele and Greene, yet argued that the line (V, iii, 116) beginning " But soft " is Shakespeare's because there is a line so beginning in HAMLET, and that the line in Act V :

Do shameful execution on herself,

is also his, because in RICHARD II (II, i, 66) we have :

Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.

But the last *sentiment* occurs in a dozen writers of the period, including Marlowe,[1] to whom we have seen reason to ascribe a large share in RICHARD II; and the former line is in his idiom:

> Do speedy execution on them all
> (*Edward II*, III, iii).

The completest scrutiny, in short, merely reveals alien hands; and "But soft" is common to Marlowe and Kyd.

The character of the Moor, who existed in the old play, naturally fell at some stage to Marlowe, who develops him as Aaron; and though Marlowe evidently also handled the Saturnine-Tamora scene, IV, iv *a*, it is in the part of Aaron that his hand is most obvious. In particular, the homology of the gloating speech of Aaron on his crimes (V, i, 124 *sq.*) and of that of Barabas on his in the JEW (II, ii) is so unmistakable that those who cling to Shakespeare either as author or as reviser of the whole are compelled to account for the TITUS speech as a deliberate imitation by Shakespeare of the other.

We have only to test that claim in order to quash the assumption. In the two confessions of Barabas and Ithamore there is only a single double-ending to the 52 lines. That is early Marlowe, before his resort to free use of the double-ending. In the scene of Aaron's avowal the percentage of double-endings rises to 20. If, then, Shakespeare was "imitating" Marlowe, he was choosing to do so in a scene in

[1] See the trans. of Lucan, ll. 22–3.

Marlowe's latest manner of versification. That is to say that he recognised Marlowe as already the leader in the multiplication of double-endings. But the very theory which assigns the matter to Shakespeare pronounces him the pioneer in the multiplication. Thus the theory confutes itself.

In Scene iv *a* of Act IV, again, there is only one double-ending in 38 lines; and though that is much better verse and better diction than the other, it is still line-ended. If either scene could be pretended to be Shakespeare's it would be this; yet on the theory that he is the pioneer in the free use of double-endings it is denied him by the critic who gives him the worse matter. It is by this time surely clear that the theory is false. Both scenes are rationally to be assigned to Marlowe; and as Aaron's confession must be dated 1592–3, the other is either an earlier performance or a late attempt to write blank verse with the liberated pulsation of Shakespeare's.

The two lines:

> Sweet scrolls to fly about the streets of Rome!
> What's this but libelling against the Senate?

point straight back to EDWARD II (I, iv; II, ii, 34, 165):

> Give it me—I'll have it published in the streets.
>
> What call you this but private libelling
> Against the Earl of Cornwall and my brother?
>
> Libels are cast against thee in the streets.

It is impossible to be sure that these last are not, like others before noted, late insertions in the play

for publication. All that is clear is that the Saturnine speech in TITUS is about the best dramatic dialogue verse that Marlowe produced; while Aaron's speech of confession is a coarsely powerful reversion to the raw psychology traded upon in the JEW, which again connects with that of Richard:

I am determinèd to prove a villain.

The hard and gemlike flame was not finally being transmuted to fine issues.

§ 4. *"The Merchant of Venice"*

It is pleasant to be able to think that Marlowe left to Shakespeare, besides his share in ROMEO AND JULIET, another legacy of better inspiration than the Aaron in TITUS. But the problem of THE MERCHANT OF VENICE is a highly complicated one.

That the play was originally entitled THE JEW OF VENICE we know from the Stationers' Register of July 22, 1598, where both titles are given. Fleay in his LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE identified this with the lost play of Dekker, JOSEPH THE JEW OF VENICE ("written *c.* 1592") and, by implication, with the VENETIAN COMEDY which Henslowe records to have been played in 1594. In his BIOGRAPHICAL CHRONICLE OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA he omits the suggestion, though Dr. Greg in his magistral edition of Henslowe seems to recognise various possibilities of connection in the matter.

Our Folio play is by Fleay finally dated "*c.* 1596"; and this had been the common view,

though Malone had proposed 1594. Probably the later chronologists, without saying so, preferred 1596 in respect of the total percentage of double-endings (16.6). But if we attend closely to style we note three general facts: (1) the style is in the main distinctly early for Shakespeare, the writing having the diffuseness seen at times in 1 HENRY IV; (2) a good deal of the verse is not only line-ended but heavily charged with double-endings; (3) the play is at the outset surcharged with supererogatory matter.

There is thus a primary presumption that, though Shakespeare's revising hand pervades the play, it is based on an older one; and, further, that he may have revised it at different dates, though he may well have worked on it as early as 1594. Furthermore, there are such plain clues to Marlowe that they have had to be accounted for in the usual fashion, as imitations by Shakespeare, like the Marlovian matter in ROMEO AND JULIET and elsewhere. Thus Ward noted,[1] as clearly showing Shakespeare's reminiscence of THE JEW OF MALTA: (1) Barabas's allusions to his argosies and Shylock's allusion to Antonio's; (2) Barabas on the blessings promised to the Jews (JEW, I, i) and Shylock's similar phrasing (MERCHANT, I, iii, 90–1); (3) Barabas's "You have my goods, my money, and my wealth" (JEW, I, ii) and Shylock's "Nay, take my life and all" speech (MERCHANT, IV, i, 374); (4) the references to the citing of Scripture (JEW, I, ii;

[1] *Hist of Eng. Dram. Lit.*, ed. 1899, i, 346.

MERCHANT, I, iii); the close parallelism of the phrases about girl, gold, daughter and ducats in THE JEW, II, i, and THE MERCHANT, II, viii; (5) the chiming of Barabas (II, ii) and Shylock (II, v) in denouncing hearty feeders; (6) Barabas's account (II, ii) of how he had learned to shrug and duck and kiss his hand; and Shylock's closely similar speeches in the MERCHANT, I, iii; III, i.

Furthermore, there is a heavy presumption in favour of the hypothesis of an early blank-verse play on the story. We know from Gosson that some of its motives were dramatised as early as 1579, the usurer, the bond, and the caskets having apparently been already brought together; and as these items were given long before in the *Gesta Romanorum*, they would naturally be used for an "actors' play." As naturally, so attractive a play would be re-handled in the period of blank-verse.

If, then, there were a blank-versified play on the subject about 1590, Marlowe would be very likely indeed to take up the Jew of Venice, on the strength of his success in the JEW OF MALTA; and the extent to which his typology and ideation stamp the play is a phenomenon that cannot be evaded. It is conceivable, indeed, that after his death Dekker and others might purposely embody as much of his matter as they could. But while the opening scenes, re-written as they evidently are by Shakespeare, are of another fashion than Dekker's, Shylock is from the first presented in a way that is either Marlowe's own or a determined imitation of him.

There are open, then, the two hypotheses that Marlowe drafted, and may have left unfinished, a JEW OF VENICE which began, as it effectively might, with the third scene of the present Folio play; and that others worked up the fuller action later, or that he collaborated with others in a play which began in some such fashion as ours, taking to himself the Shylock matter.

That problem being left open, we must at least recognise that Shylock's speech beginning "How like a fawning publican he looks" is as Marlovian in manner as in matter. It is line-ended in his fashion, and it has the quality of the speeches of Barabas in so high a degree that imitation is an entirely inadequate solution. Shakespeare of course *could* have done that; but as we have always found decisive reason in the other partly Marlovian plays to conclude that Shakespeare *did not* thus determinedly imitate to the uttermost the manner and matter of his forerunner, any more than he did in KING JOHN or in Ægeon's speech in the first scene of the ERRORS, so we are compelled in reason here to avow that the author is Marlowe.

When, again, we turn to the "daughter and ducats" speech (II, viii), we are faced by the phenomenon of 16 double-endings in 53 lines of end-stopped verse, = 30 per cent. There is no justification for ascribing such versification to Shakespeare in 1596; and the whole diction, no less than the end-stopped movement, forbids the ascription to him of such writing at any later period.

It is quite possible, of course, that such lovely verse as Portia's ever-quoted speech,

The quality of mercy is not strain'd,

may have been added at a later date. In any case, that speech, and much else of the Shakespeare matter in the play, is as disparate with the Marlovian speeches as is the Shakespeare matter in RICHARD II and RICHARD III.

We have Shakespeare's own hand, again, in the " I pray you, tarry " speech (III, ii), though all the casket plot is quite certainly prior to him; and when, apart from Shylock, there is plain reason for suspecting another operator, as in the dialogue of Lorenzo and Portia in III, iv, where the percentage of double-endings, up to Portia's " early-Shakespeare " speech to Nerissa, is about 27, it is hard to name anybody likelier than Marlowe. It is in the trial scene that Shakespeare again fully takes hold of the verse: there, presumably, he is re-writing Marlovian matter; and to nobody else would anybody assign the music of Act V, whosoever may have finished off the prior play.

For Marlowe, as aforesaid, the play cannot be dated earlier than 1592; and indeed the percentage of 30 in the double-endings would suggest that parts of it were of his latest workmanship. If so, he may have reverted from the dramaturgy of TITUS and the psychology of Aaron to something better, on which Shakespeare was very willing to lay his hand, yet without removing the traces of his forerunner.

In point of stage attraction it has been Shakespeare's most enduring comedy; and it consists with all our knowledge of stage history to say that the success was the outcome, not alone of good writing and charming portraiture, but of the tested and matured machinery of a first-rate stage-story, more crudely exploited long before him by practical playwrights. The really impossible and quite un-legal scene of the trial makes still an irresistible appeal. And so it would to Marlowe.

§ 5. *Conclusion*

There is still a problem to be solved in regard to Marlowe's connection with the Folio—that, namely, of his possible share in the recast of the old TAMING OF A SHREW into THE TAMING OF THE SHREW.[1] The issue is being freshly confused by the "diehard" device of assuming, on the most inconclusive grounds, that *A* SHREW is only a corrupted and curtailed version of *The* SHREW, and not a pre-Shakespearean piece at all.

That issue will be found an excellent field of exercise for the Marlowe student who has eye and ear for differences of style and versification. But the re-writing of the old play, which is not Shakespearean, raises a variety of questions. There are various hands; and though Marlowe might have penned the opening speech, that does not carry us far. Nothing but a minute and searching study of

[1] See *The Genuine in Shakespeare*, pp. 46–9.

the styles and the matter of the whole play can give ground for a conclusion as to whether and how Greene and Kyd, who shared in the first form, shared also in the second, or whether later hands redacted their work.

Other possibilities as to Marlowe seem indeterminable. It is impossible to say that he had no further share in Folio plays; but impossible also, so far, to prove that he had. There is much reason to infer a pre-Shakespearean form of MACBETH, in which the Sergeant scene-section, and the next, have long been regarded as spurious; but one might as plausibly saddle these on Kyd as on Marlowe, having regard to the similarities of diction and verse movement there and in some of Benvolio's lines in ROMEO AND JULIET, which hint of Kyd rather than of Marlowe. But it is of the latter that we think when we read Macbeth's phrase (IV, i, 79): "Be bloody, bold and resolute," or when we note that we must read "enterance" in the passage (I, v, 40):

> The raven himself is hoarse
> That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
> Under my battlements.

Why that scansion nowhere save there, and in a line in an "old" scene in ROMEO AND JULIET (I, iv, 8), in all the Folio, or in the poems? The editors ought to spell it "enterance," as they ought to print "emperess" when that scansion clearly comes up in TITUS. Is it that there is a shrinking from anything like a hint of the alien hand—at the

expense even of making Shakespeare write flatly false metre? We cannot expel literary suspicion; but neither can we claim to have either internal or external evidence enough to bear it out; and by evidence alone can we honestly proceed.

We may ask, again, how there came to be in HAMLET that shocking line (III, iv, 212):

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room,

the plain echo of that in RICHARD DUKE OF YORK (V, near end):

I'll drag thy body in another room,

preserved in 3 HENERY VI (V, vi, 92), with "throw" for the "drag" that is so close to "lug." The lines are of the same moral quality: are we to call them all Shakespearean, or fall back on the old formula of either conscious or unconscious imitation, making Shakespeare play the parrot just where that would be the most senseless thing to do?

That particular æsthetic futility should by this time be barred to us. But again we have no evidence with which to lift surmise even to hypothesis. We do indeed find fossils of Greene at the opening of the play-scene; and we know that the old HAMLET was drafted by Kyd, who so often collaborated with Greene and Marlowe; but to find Marlowe in that palimpsest, so copiously overwritten by Shakespeare, is beyond our visible resources. Kyd, who so often imitated Marlowe, may have echoed him here; and the "lug" line may have been such an echo, in a revision made before Shakespeare took

hold. Or the echoing may have been the other way about.

The possible or probable collaboration of Marlowe in a pre-Shakespearean treatment of HENRY IV is another problem not now soluble: whatever he may have done in Part I is now Shakespearised; and the non-Shakespearean verse in Part II appears to be from another hand. The Induction, indeed, is certainly more like Marlowe than Shakespeare; but that too, as it stands, appears to tell of another hand. So far, the problem is unexplored.

And so when, in some of the comedies which clearly proceed upon prior pieces, we find clusters of double-endings in end-stopped verse, where there is much Shakespearean verse to contrast with it, and fossils of phrase and vocabulary to boot, we must remember that these can as well be the footprints of other and later performers, who revelled in double-endings and could not reach free rhythm. Our inquiry is scientific only in so far as we face *all* the logically relevant considerations, and all the aspects of the phenomena. As regards Marlowe, then, leaving open only the question of his probable share in the re-cast of *A* SHREW into *The* SHREW, we seem to have reached our limits.

" At last ! " may be the derisive comment of some who resent or flout the whole enquiry. But the student who has been critically thinking while he reads has his withers unwrung. He knows that all the sifting out of pre-Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean matter in the plays leaves the

supremacy of Shakespeare, in all the great things of the Folio, just so much the clearer. Whosoever may have recast the SHREW, he has hardly any hand in it. Not from Marlowe or any other came the great harmonies of the great plays, the large vision of life, the exquisite all-touching poetry, the beautiful joys and the appalling woes, the profound portrayal of the human soul, the masteries with which only *in* the Folio does our literature endow us. Touching all things, Shakespeare wrought at times on levels on which the others energised, but still in his own way, and if faultily, with his own faults and not theirs. It is the individuation that here concerns us; and it is for that we have been searching, by objective æsthetic tests.

CHAPTER IV

ACHIEVEMENT IN VERSIFICATION

I

MARLOWE'S pre-eminence among the pre-Shakespearean writers of blank verse is so marked that it is customary to acclaim him as if he were its creator in drama.[1] In point of fact, to say nothing of Peele's tentatives in the ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS (1584), Marlowe cannot be pretended to have written dramatic blank-verse before Kyd;[2] and the previous experiments, from Sackville and Norton to Hughes, bar any special claim for Kyd in the matter of his medium. The explanation of the tribute paid to Marlowe is that he first made the medium triumphant; since it was he who made it irresistible for the Elizabethan stage.

His triumph was indeed twofold, splendour of poetic diction being as salient in his verse as metrical facility. After hearing him, men could have no more

[1] J. A. Symonds, *Blank Verse*, 1895, pp. 20–1; A. W. Verity, Harness Prize Essay, 1886, pp. 53, 64, 73, 83, 92; Prof. Boas, *Shakespeare and his Predecessors*, p. 38; Seccombe and Allen, *The Age of Shakespeare*, ii, 53.

[2] Mr. Verity never touches this point; apparently it had not in 1886 come to his knowledge.

ear for pseudo-classic Harveian exercises in hexameters than for the " jigging " jog-trots of the past. This was " the end of scholarism," as regards non-rhymed verse, which was then in high scholastic favour; and malcontents wasted their breath in disparaging it as " a drumming decasyllabon." Petowe tells how young men lay awake at nights meditating on the beautiful lines of their new poet. When one *read* it, after 1590, the battle was won, as it could never have been won by the careful progressions of Kyd, who is soberly pedestrian, where Marlowe bounds tirelessly on springing limbs. And then the " mighty lines," taking memory captive with their sheer mastery of spontaneous poetic phrase! It is not too much to say that in that distinction he divides with Spenser the new glory of his age.

Nor is he second to Spenser in the vital characteristic of energy. The Spenserian line, at its beautiful best, is a thing of tender, loving finish.

> Upon her eyelids many graces sate
> Under the shadow of her even brows

is the perfected form of a recurring chime, not a " first fine careless rapture." But though Marlowe too knew how to heighten a felicity, as in

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?

he has sudden spontaneous perfections, as:

> Oh! thou art fairer than the evening air,
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars!

Perhaps Spenser's silvern quality of music had

moved him there, as it moved him to insert in TAMBURLAINE the lyrical rapture on "evergreen Selinus"; and in such singing as:

Shadowing more beauty in their aery brows
Than have the white breasts of the Queen of Love;

but it was his congenital gift that in general struck out the "mighty line," which pervades verse that aims at sheer canorous expression as such:

A hell as hopeless and as full of fear
As are the blasted banks of Erebus:

With milk-white harts upon an ivory sled
Thou shalt be drawn amidst the frozen pools,
And scale the icy mountains' lofty tops:

Brave horses bred on the white Tartarian hills:

As far as Boreas claps his brazen wings:

Of such a burden as outweighs the sands
And all the craggy rocks of Caspia:

Above the threefold astracism of Heaven.

Before the Armada, such verse was as new as Spenser's, as new as, later, was that of Keats or of Tennyson at their outset; and it tells of a special æsthetic receptivity in the Elizabethan world that it gave the new art such a collective welcome as the later generations did not give to anything new in form. So far, Marlowe was fortune's favourite. His sheer *verve* was inexhaustible, down to his last unfinished piece or his last recast.

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of York,

makes the same stringent impact on the metrical sense as any lines of ringing overture in all his series. *In that kind*, there was no greater visible gift, to the day of his death. And to those for whom the linear form of blank-verse is the last word in the art, Marlowe remains the master " maker."

His real service is best understood when we note, on the contrary, that as mere verser, far as he had out-stripped his earlier comrades, he had but gone half way. The bane of all verse forms is in the ratio of their monotony, and it is only the masters in a given form that transcend it. In respect of mere effortless fecundity, Marlowe did this from the beginning. Where Kyd gets along by mostly laborious construction, Peele by a more facile but not more intelligent metrical knack, Lodge by a rigorous strain of rhetoric according to rule, and Greene by a lively iambic movement, whether with or without noticeable purport, their exemplar is as powerful as he is tireless. In sheer spontaneous continuity of utterance, in the linking of line to line through a progressive " period," he entirely eclipses them, first and last.

The others usually add line to line as men laying brick on brick, happy when they can make their sentence reach beyond the measure of a couplet. For him, a six-line sentence is as natural as the one-line clause. But technically they are at one in that their line is a rhythmic as well as a metrical unit: they as it were think in lines; and though the imperative departure from a mere iambic norm

within the line is accepted by all as it was even in FERREX AND PORREX, trochaic feet relieving the iambic, and though they all from time to time "run on" the sense of a line into the next, they never, save by accident, run-on the rhythm.

Thus the metrical monotony of which Lodge's WOUNDS is the monument must soon have begun to make itself felt even in the rich linear verse of Marlowe, where wealth of diction cannot ultimately disguise it. And this is the probable explanation of the fact that he first sought consciously the partial aural relief that is given by a "feminine" or double-ending of the line. Taking these as they came by accident of language, he had at first not craved them, accepting as he did the old decasyllabic line as the given form. But after some three years' practice he perceives that there is a certain gain of vitality of utterance in the freer use, and he begins to employ it.

Kyd, who has barely a dozen instances in the SPANISH TRAGEDY, seems to have quickly followed the new example in SOLIMAN AND PERSEDA and ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM; and even Greene, angrily loth at first to follow the blank-verse fashion at all, and slow to expand the academic rule, can be seen in his late work, in the Countess scenes of EDWARD III, half-consciously raising his percentage to 12, before making his final surrender to the new mode in THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.[1]

[1] The problem is discussed in Part II of *The Shakespeare Canon*.

Apart from Shakespeare, the master rhythmist of all, the history of dramatic blank-verse is but a revelation of the natural preference for the easy solution of mechanical rule in verse to the high and difficult one of rhythmically controlled freedom. The double-ending was but a license in a limited progression. Metre, as was long ago perceived by an original observer, is but a mode or sub-division of rhythm, which last is the expression of a larger, higher and rarer psychic satisfaction. " Rhythm is fluent metre : metre is closed rhythm." The higher mastery was in that age possible only to Shakespeare. Most practitioners—Chapman, Jonson, Fletcher, Massinger and others—being metrists rather than rhythmists, multiplied the double-ending till they had but made a new and worse monotony, which lasted, at the hands of a long series of artistic mediocrities, into the nineteenth century, when, in average hands, it finally killed blank-verse drama for the stage. Shelley could not save it.

Some of Shakespeare's younger contemporaries, as Beaumont and Marston, seem instinctively to have perceived that the double-ending was but a mechanical device, speedily and afflictively obtrusive. Lack of poetic energy in the case of Beaumont, and lack of artistic sanity in Marston, barred them from any successful vindication of the higher rhythmics, of which, as to blank-verse, only Milton in his period was the master, born *and* made. Dryden, the powerful metrist, never grasped the Shakespearean secret of blank-verse rhythm, though he glimpsed it.

And so we are left with Marlowe as the greatly gifted but only half-developed master of the art which another was to raise to perfection, raising it at the same time to new heights of connatural psychic comprehension, becoming at length "the circumnavigator of the soul" where Marlowe is the daring first explorer, bent on a single bold course. His sheer poetic power and technical originality are perhaps alike best revealed in his unfinished HERO AND LEANDER, where his handling of the couplet is as awakeningly fine as had been his linear blank-verse.

Poetic energy, wealth and strength as distinguished from subtlety of diction, are there combined with freedom of form to a degree that was not to be attained by Shakespeare in his VENUS and his LUCRECE, poems penned for the market about the moment when Marlowe was struck down. The new supremacy in the couplet, which Shakespeare in his maturity never sought to challenge, is more than enough to keep the stricken Marlowe for us in the line of the Masters, as the "cut branch" that "might have grown full straight." The burned laurel bough is assuredly of Apollo's tree. His song, "Come live with me and be my love" has the sure forthright ring and mastery of his blank-verse beginnings. Without tenderness, without overtones or undertones, it is yet a spontaneous victory in lyric form, baritone through and through. It is the symbol of the hard and gemlike flame.

II

When the case has been thus put with proper appreciation of Marlowe's original power, it is fitting to qualify the panegyrics which acclaim him by help of disparagement of his predecessors in the use of blank-verse. No critic is to be finally judged by a youthful prize essay, but some of the things said by Mr. Verity in his must be corrected in detail if students are not to be misguided. When he claims that the primordial GORBODUC (FERREX AND PORREX) is rigidly iambic and limited to single-line or couplet sentences he is so far from just that he is refuted by his own sample passage (p. 59).

In that very speech of 18 lines, where ostensibly he finds nothing but iambics, five begin with trochees, and two with spondees. Thus his phrase (p. 65) about "hitherto forbidden trochees,"[1] is wholly astray. Men never wrote blank-verse long without trochees, as Mr. Verity was apparently misled, by Gascoigne's statement about rhymed verse, into believing they did, though some, like Greene, tended to be monotonously iambic. But the strange and outstanding fact is that Marlowe's

[1] I do not understand Mr. Verity's argument here. Insisting on "the futility of attempting to impose upon one language the rules of another," he avows that "The Greek dramatist was *not* bound to have an iambus in every foot. In the first, third and fifth places, other feet were admissible" (pp. 58–9). Necessarily so, for no poetry could endure perpetuity of iambics, though mediocre men might cling to them, and better men overdo them at times. But where then was there an iambic "rule" that could be imposed?

famous TAMBURLAINE speech on beauty, cited by Mr. Verity (pp. 65–6) for its super-excellence, is almost entirely iambic, and has only one line beginning with a trochee! Were it not that he was youthfully bent on crowning Marlowe at the cost of everybody else, Mr. Verity must have perceived the pedal monotony of the lines he cited, which is veiled only by the rapturous energy of the poetic purport and the easy continuity of the period, though the iambic rhythm of every line is end-stopped, even when the sense runs on.

What is more, whereas Mr. Verity denies all sense of " period " to GORBODUC, describing that as never getting beyond the couplet clause, his own sample contains either (by his punctuation) two periods, one of four lines and one of eight, or three periods of four lines each! Yet further, while he alleges an " invariable " pre-Marlovian " pause after the fourth syllable," that pause is evaded in the third, seventh, twelfth and eighteenth lines of the old speech. So that the " creative " operations ascribed to Marlowe, so far, are all imaginary. The fact is that what he achieved was not the innovations in form ascribed to him but the really captivating innovation of easeful and forceful poetic diction in the linear verse already produced. It was in fact the real if immature genius revealed in his diction and in the continuous ease of his verse that won the ear of his world.

Without attaining a great new *rhythm*, without even recognising the lifting rhythmic quality in the

wholly experimental verse of Surrey (to whom our critics have given so little sympathetic heed), he gave new *poetic power* to a metre which was already in existence without having conquered the academic bias to the classic line of twelve syllables. The ten-syllable line of Surrey and Sackville and Spenser and Peele and Hughes and Kyd, which he rightly adopted, is, as Mr. Verity notes, the immemorial ten-syllable line of English rhymed verse which Chaucer had taken for granted. What Marlowe achieved, by force of poetic power, was the substitution of the unrhymed for the rhymed pentameter, or line of five "feet."

On this issue, again, confusion has been wrought by the theory, which Mr. Verity judiciously deprecated, that Marlowe's verse found Shakespeare in two minds, by reason of a spontaneous proclivity to rhyme, which persisted, according to the traditionist theory, in I HENRY VI and RICHARD II as well as in the DREAM and the LABOUR, and to which Marlowe alone was opposed. The truth is that rhyme was never wholly cast out, and that the young Shakespeare was simply practising a mode which he knew to remain popular. And that this was the case is decisively proved by Marlowe's own (not Shakespeare's) vigorous resort to rhyme in the Talbot death-scenes of I HENRY VI, which had a great immediate success in 1592; as well as by his large resort to rhyme in RICHARD II.

Again the solution is that Marlowe in his serious work found he could make rhyme go as well for his

audience as blank-verse, provided he could give the rhymed line in turn the necessary fire and energy, albeit on a lower æsthetic plane. He had rightly seen that it is the less generally fit for drama, where his own energy craved the unrhymed line. But in the Talbot death-scenes he could give it poetic play, even while he perhaps exhibited a certain disrespect for stage-rhyme by heedless improvisation. He may in effect have replied to Greene: "You claim you can write blank-verse easily enough: I will show you that 'tragical' rhyme is just as easy." It is never to be forgotten that these were theatre-poets, with audiences to cater for.

Shakespeare, we may conceive, saw no great vital difference between blank and rhymed *so long as both were line-ended.* The interest of blank-verse began for him with the perception that it gave a new franchise, the unlimited rhythm which, making metre its instrument, lifted verse utterance above all its old trammels. And this perception he cannot have received from Marlowe, because Marlowe had never attained it. It is the non-recognition of this vital fact that limits the utility of Mr. Verity's undertaking to study "Marlowe's Influence on Shakespeare's Earlier Style." If the idea of style is to include rhythm, and if we take the first scene of the ERRORS as Shakespeare's earliest verse that has been preserved, the case is one of a *new* style-departure.

What is fairly to be regarded as a Marlowe in-

fluence is the feeling for the "instant" outset, as in the lines:

> Merchant of Syracusa, plead no more:
> I am not partial to infringe our laws.

Those very lines, indeed, though not Marlovian, may have been suggested by a Marlovian beginning. But at once there follows a continuous eight-line period of interfluous verse, in which metre is absorbed in rhythm, in a fashion not to be found in Marlowe's freest sentences. That is the true "creation," to which Marlowe had apparently not even aspired.

It may be doubted whether Shakespeare, in turn, was at all commonly recognised as having made any vital new departure in verse technique. To this day, apparently, only a minority of readers have the rhythmic as distinct from the merely metric perception. Mr. Verity in his prize essay does not propound it; and the whole history of post-Shakespearean poetic drama—reacting as it does from the doubled monotony of multiplied double-endings only to the other metrical mode of rhyme, with no return to the Shakespearean freedom—tells of mere normal defect of rhythmic sense.

What then wrought Shakespeare's success in the theatre, which was so soon recognised to have in some respects outgone Marlowe's? Again the answer must be that it was the success of sheer genius for utterance and for dramatic action, in which the majority could see at once splendour of language and a range of feeling and character that outwent

Marlowe's ambit. He reached mastery alike in comedy and in tragedy, by force of a universal assimilation of character forms. The high probability is that that age valued him less for his absolute supremacy in the art of verse than for his "circumnavigation of the soul," just as men have mostly done since. And so long as we do not discriminate between the Marlovian end-stopped line and the Shakespearean verse of "infinite" rhythm, we are at their standpoint.

That quasi-fundamental appetite for metric finity, which made Dr. Johnson wholly impercipient of rhythm, and later enabled Guest to produce (under the title of "English *Rhythms*") a treatise on metrics which is a mere museum of error, may possibly survive the entire modern movement of prosodic re-discovery associated with the name of Omond. The Folio tradition can subsist only by ignoring prosodic science; and, to say nothing of vested interests, "prejudices, like odorous bodies, have a double existence, both solid and subtle." Little is said in academic manuals of the difference wrought in blank-verse by free rhythm. Only the visible wavering of the line of resistance promises an advance in force for rational æsthetic opinion.

But for those who are intelligently interested in blank-verse it is vital to realise that to the end of the eighteenth century it had but two consummate masters, Shakespeare and Milton, and that they alone, the first in drama and the second in epic, compassed the higher mystery of rhythm. When

Mr. Verity agreed (p. 68) with Bullen that the nine lines of I TAMBURLAINE, III, iii, beginning:

> The galleys and those pilling brigandines,

and ending:

> And thence unto the straits of Jubalter,

"might have come out of *Paradise Lost*" they alike missed a profound difference. Every one of the nine lines is end-stopped. They were thinking of the musical handling of place-names, not of verse movement as such. We have but to turn to one of the first place-naming passages in *Paradise Lost* (I, 302–7) to realise the rhythmic difference—if we have the rhythmic sense:

> Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
> In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
> High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
> Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
> Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
> Busiris and his Memphian chivalry.

The Miltonic passage that Bullen and Verity had in mind was presumably this (ll. 351–5):

> A multitude like which the populous North
> Poured never from her frozen loins to pass
> Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
> Came like a deluge on the South and spread
> Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.

After a lapse of fifty years, perhaps, students may be able to perceive the difference between the striding Marlovian line-ended verse and the winged movement in which every line flows into the next

in an unending rhythm. That movement, that rhythm, is primarily the creation of Shakespeare, whose "violin," indeed, could give it a thrilling plangency that outsoars the stately sweep of Milton's violoncello, so to say, even as drama outsoars epic.

Nothing is to be done for Marlowe's fame by evading or glossing the fact that the supreme creation is not his. In his short life he wrought what it was in him to do; and that swift and shining achievement will earn fit praise so long as men occupy themselves with Elizabethan drama. In dramatic poetics, he had no rival in his day; for Shakespeare was but beginning his career when Marlowe's ended. It is when we have realised what Shakespeare was to do that we best perceive what his friend and forerunner counts for. When we remember that he left the unfinished HERO AND LEANDER, and that Shakespeare was to sing:

> Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might,
> Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?

we may even feel that, when all is said, Marlowe was not wholly "unhappy in his end," considered as a dramatist. He had died "with harness on his back."

CHAPTER V

POSITION IN DRAMATIC EVOLUTION

IT is hardly possible to think of Marlowe as dramatist without thinking of him as poet; but the attempt must be made if we are to estimate him justly in the former capacity. Till long after his death he held the stage in his own name with FAUSTUS and THE JEW; and under another's name, in RICHARD III, he held it down to our own age. But TAMBURLAINE in the seventeenth century ceased to be a name to conjure with. "Bedlam Tamburlaine" is Drayton's phrase for the hero as early as 1619 (?)[1]; Drayton being one of those who gave short shrift to the passed fashions of his youth, as in his harsh dismissal of EUPHUES in terms of its faults; though it was Drayton who also wrote in 1620 (?)[2]:

> Next Marlow, bathèd in the Thespian springs,
> Had in him those brave translunary things
> That the first Poets had; his raptures were
> All air and fire, which made his verses clear;
> For that fine madness still he did retain
> Which rightly should possess a Poet's brain.

[1] *Eglogues:* The Fourth (Eighth in first ed.).
[2] *Elegies:* Epistle "To my most dearly-loved friend, Henery Reynolds, Esquire, of *Poets and Poesie.*"

Heywood, it is true, writes in 1633, in his Prologue for the revival of THE JEW at the Cockpit, that it was

> By the best of poets in that age
> The Malta Jew had being, and was made;

and in naming TAMBURLAINE he speaks of the acting of Alleyn, not of the status of the play. It would be quite natural to Heywood, however, to count Marlowe "the best of poets" on the stage of his day, for he formed on Marlowe, whom he often echoed, his own blank-verse style, which was always end-stopped. As Professor Elton writes: "The incommensurable part of Shakespeare was after all little seen by contemporaries, who honoured those gifts akin to their own, which he was seen to have in greater measure than they, not the gifts that only came in sight on the eve of the nineteenth century."[1] Heywood knew Shakespeare as "mellifluous" and "enchanting," but not as the master of rhythm and supreme tragedy.

TAMBURLAINE, however, was not an enduring drama. It was not that Marlowe had made an unlucky invention. The hero-villain type, which had already superseded the type of personalised virtues and vices, was there before him, lying to his hand in Preston's CAMBYSES; and Marlowe had simply selected another of the type. It was sufficiently popular, especially in his hands, to permit him to try his power successively on such variants as

[1] *Michael Drayton: A Critical Study*, 1905, p. 141.

Hannibal and Scipio, Scanderbeg, Barabas, Henry V, Edward III, Julius Cæsar, the Guise, Alphonsus of Germany and Richard III. The significant thing is that he ends as he began. To all appearance, at least, RICHARD III is his last play.

Certainly it has new elements of variety, whether or not of his planning. The women figures are no longer merely passive and subordinate, as they probably were in the original JULIUS CÆSAR, and perhaps even in EDWARD III till Greene re-wrote the Countess episode, with his interest in the feminine. The story of Romeo and Juliet, as we have seen, inspired Marlowe as it did his collaborators, to new dramatic and tragic ideation. But there is no sign that it moved him to new drama on that plane. The inspiration takes effect in HERO AND LEANDER.

Thus we cannot say of him with any assurance that had he lived he would have risen from " physical " to psychic drama, advancing on Greene as Shakespeare did, to present a gallery of real men and women, living from within. We can conceive of him as taking up Coriolanus, but not as conceiving Virgilia or presenting Volumnia, or even a Cleopatra, and still less an Imogen. To make this a disparagement of him, of course, would be but to repeat the critical irrelevance of merely condemning an artist for not being something else than he was. It is just a needful reminder that Marlowe, with much creative and poetic force and fecundity on certain lines, could not well have become an all-round dramatist.

His comedy remains substantially farce, though not wholly so.

If we knew anything of what he *may* have done in the old MACBETH, we might be able to say whether he inspired Shakespeare to any high purpose in that tremendous drama. As it is, we can say nothing; and we cannot pretend to think that he might have imagined the unearthly effect of "Which of you have done this?" or have made Lady Macbeth more credible than the Margaret of RICHARD III. Shakespeare's KING JOHN, while it certainly owes to Marlowe the figure of the Bastard (save in so far as he may have been presented in an actors' play before the TROUBLESOME RAIGNE), remains to show that at all other points the new Master out-went his leader in psychological exploration no less than in subtlety of verse.

We have indeed seen reason for inferring that Marlowe effectually interested Shakespeare in THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, where the survivals of his special phrasing should leave no reasonable doubt that there was a JEW OF VENICE after (or before?) the JEW OF MALTA, on the basis of the still older play in which we know there were casket scenes and a Jewish usurer. To suppose that Shakespeare deliberately lifted into a play *drafted by himself* the series of catchwords about the ducats and the daughter, and the matter in which Barabas describes how he and his tribe had been compelled to shrug and duck, is to be automatically and unintelligently credulous. The figures of Shylock and his daughter,

the plot of the bond, the plot of the caskets, the baffling of the usurer and the confiscation of his wealth, are to be rationally regarded as the groundwork of a pre-Shakespearean play in which Marlowe shared, if he did not write it all.

But we cannot suppose that Marlowe would have added to his Shylock those touches which make Shakespeare's psychically tragic, though he has actually led Shakespeare to leave the portrait overweighted on the side of its savagery, as it is in the story. The conception of the insane insistence on the pound of flesh is a serious flaw in Shakespeare's play, countervailing the element of pity. Something less wildly savage would have left a more acceptable approach to a real personality. Thus Marlowe's influence is to be regarded as having at this point positively swayed Shakespeare's adaptation for the worse.

That being so, the credit of having inspired the better elements of a felicitous romantic play must be measured. It is not to be supposed that Marlowe helped with Portia, or made any of the moonlit music of the garden at Belmont. It must suffice to acknowledge that he is to be remembered as at Shakespeare's elbow in a comedy which has survived because of Shakespeare's handling, where the brassier brilliance of THE JEW OF MALTA, with its hero-villain and its melodrama, has not finally held the favour of the theatre. And this, which perhaps says the best that is truly claimable for Marlowe's place in dramatic evolution, may be saying a good deal.

Apart from Shakespeare, there is little to add. Marlowe did not noticeably inspire others after Lodge and Peele and Greene and Kyd had gone. Of his other dramatic contemporaries, perhaps Chapman admired him most. Yet it cannot be said that he perceptibly influenced Chapman in drama. Neither the tragedies nor the comedies of that writer develop on Marlovian lines; for the presentment of strenuous types in the tragedies necessarily follows other paths of plot and conception. Bussy d'Ambois is in a way Marlovian; but in his tragedy the art is elaborate beyond Marlowe's scope; and still more so is it in the Byron plays. And of Marlowe we find no trace in Jonson, despite the tribute to the " mighty line."

It might be argued, perhaps, that he inspired to some extent, later, the heroes of Dryden's rhymed tragedies. But there is no sign of any consciousness of this in Dryden's many discussions of the dramatic evolution of his age. He had looked up first to Jonson and Fletcher, and later to Shakespeare; and if he was really more akin to Marlowe he at least did not know it. Indeed, in the Epistle Dedicatory to the RIVAL LADIES (1664) in which he writes that Shakespeare " was the first who, to shun the pains of continual rhyming, invented that kind of writing which we call blank verse, but the French, more properly, *prose mesurée*," he seems absolutely ignorant of Marlowe's existence—though, for that matter, Malone's note (1800) on the passage seems only a little better informed.

Further influences, after 1630, are hardly at all traceable. Marlowe's position in dramatic evolution, if dynamic, must be reckoned as consisting in his contact with Shakespeare, chiefly in ROMEO AND JULIET and THE MERCHANT OF VENICE; that is to say, it does not operate past Shakespeare's first period. It is therefore as an isolated yet commanding theatre-poet " for an age " that he remains significant, formidable and memorable. Whatever else we may say of him, we can all agree that he is a salient landmark.

EPILOGUE

IT was an amateur experiment that called up, for straining eyes, the Shade of Marlowe, no expert aid being available; and some will count the whole but a telepathic hallucination. Still, such as it is . . .

He could not be said to materialise, ectoplasm being inaccessible. As he mistily showed, he was not in the least like the portrait of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, which used to do duty as his. The eyes gleamed strangely: one looked for a scar on the brow. . . .

"Speak to me!" whispered the half-chilled interviewer.

"I marvel," breathed the Shade, "that after these three hundred [it sounded *hundered*] and seven and thirty years you should still be prating of *us*."

"You fascinate us the more because of the distance," stammered the shrinking interviewer.

"Think you," queried the Shade, "that three ages hence men will be considering so of *your* tale-tellers of to-day?"

"I'm afraid not," gasped the interviewer.

"Your tale-tellers are madder than were we play-makers," came as it were in a cold breath. "What are my Supermen, as you do dub them, beside the

super-criminals of your tales, hatched by the hun-d(e)red like flies in the sun ? "

" Quite ! " breathed the interviewer.

The Shade looked askance, as if turning to go. " Yet were we mad too, in our day and way," he sighed over his shoulder. " Mayhap," he added with the ghost of a smile, " we were so with a finer madness, as sober Drayton roused himself to sing."

" And Shakespeare ? " whispered the interviewer, with a beating heart.

The Shade, turning away, drooped his head and slowly wagged it, with a lift of the hands. He seemingly had no more to say.

" At least tell me," urged the interviewer, " what you think of our material world—the motor cars and cycles and so on. That is our way of living dangerously, you know ! "

Was it a Satanic laugh that conveyed the Shade's reply, delivered over his shoulder ? " Meseems that England's heart is firmly stayed upon her pillars of eternity, cricket and football, tennis and Scots golf ! "

He seemed to begin to dislimn.

" But what about our new poetry ? " eagerly cried the interviewer.

The answer sounded like a faint groan : " Whose ?"

" But the wireless ? " was the interviewer's last appeal. There floated back a whisper like " Cross-word puzzles."

The Shade was gone ! There was a fume as of burnt spices.

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