SHAKESPEARE NOT BACON

FRANCIS P. GERVAIS

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SHAKESPEARE

NOT BACON

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Some Arguments from Shakespeare's Copy of Florio's Montaigne in the British Museum

By FRANCIS P. GERVAIS
Barrister-at-law

Quod est ante pedes nemo spectat coeli scrutantur plagas.
Cic. div. lib. 2.

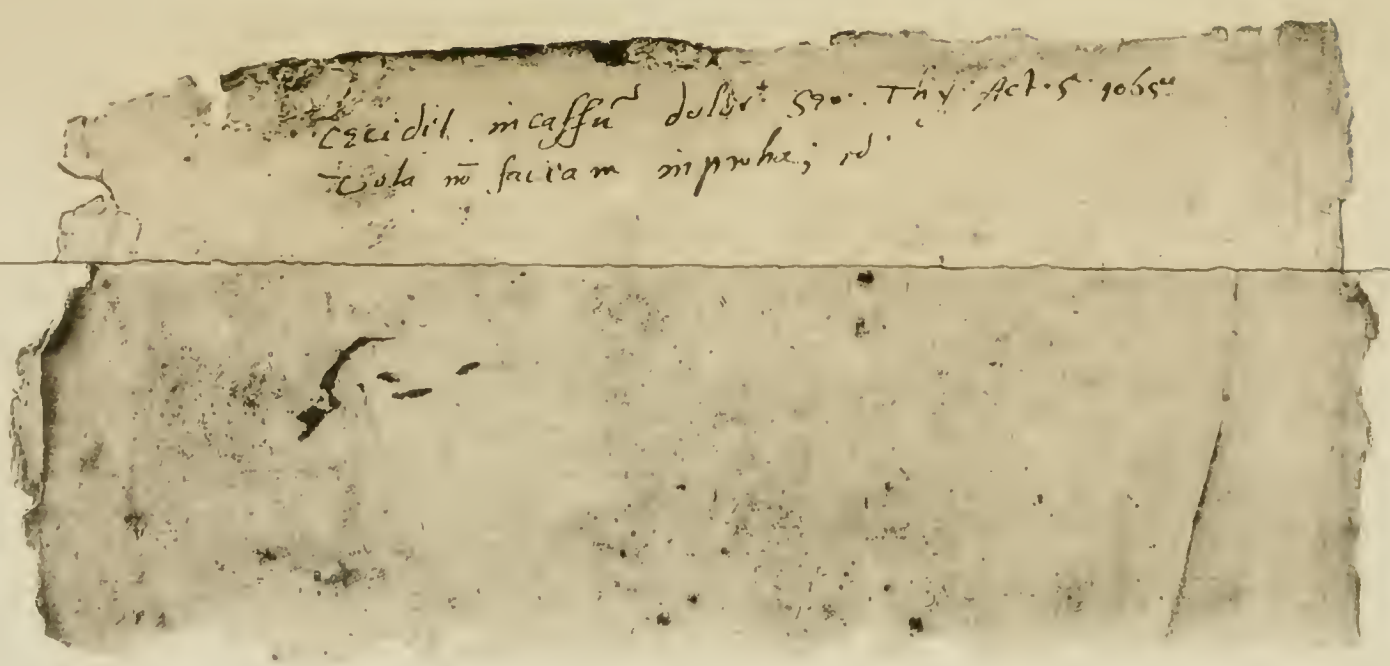
No man looks what before his feet doth lie
They seek and search the climate of the sky.
Florio's Montaigne, Book III., Cap. 12.

LONDON
AT THE UNICORN
7 Cecil Court St. Martin's Lane
NEW YORK: M. F. MANSFIELD A.D. MDCCCCI

TO

SIR HENRY IRVING

PLATE I.



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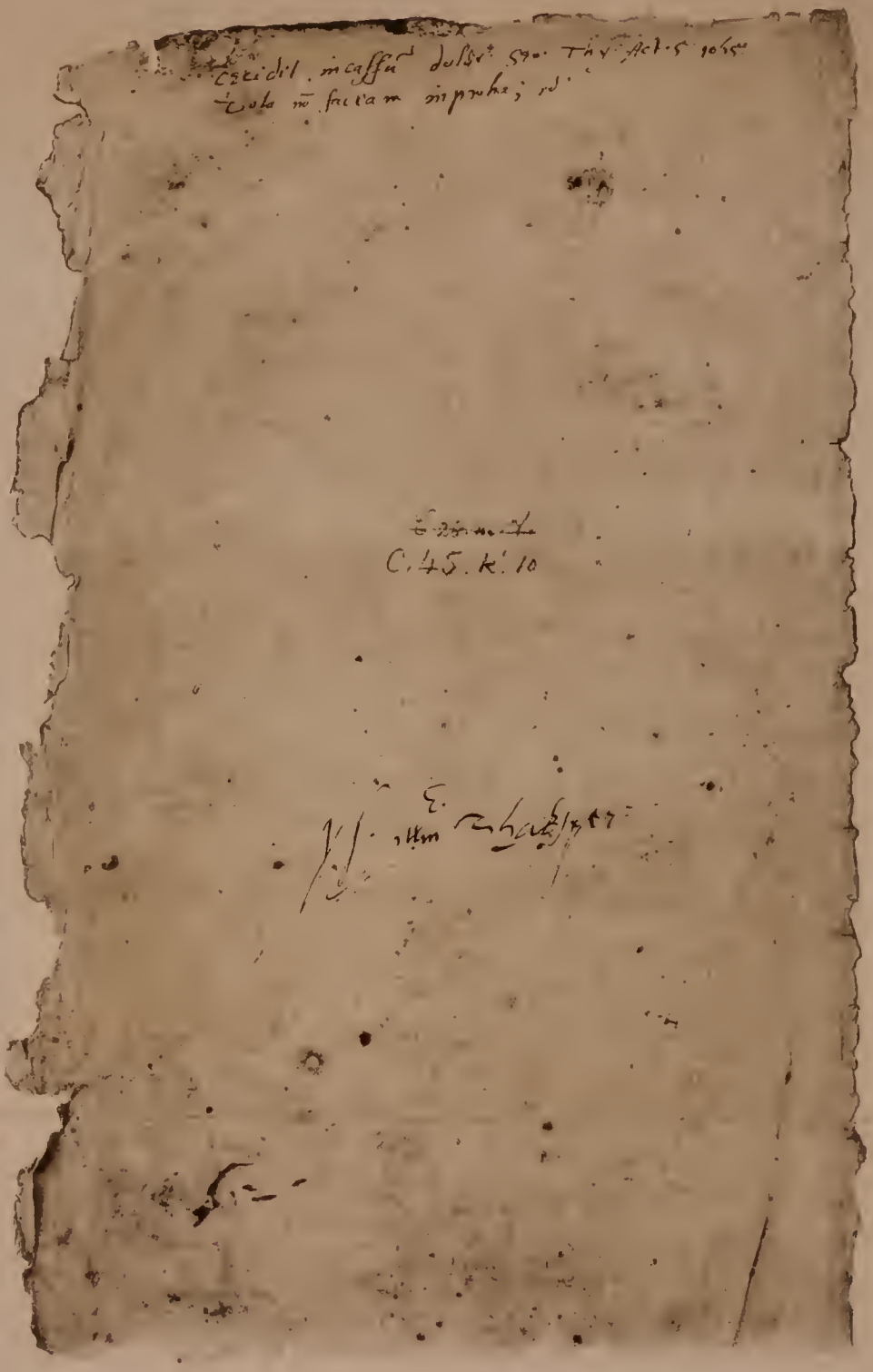

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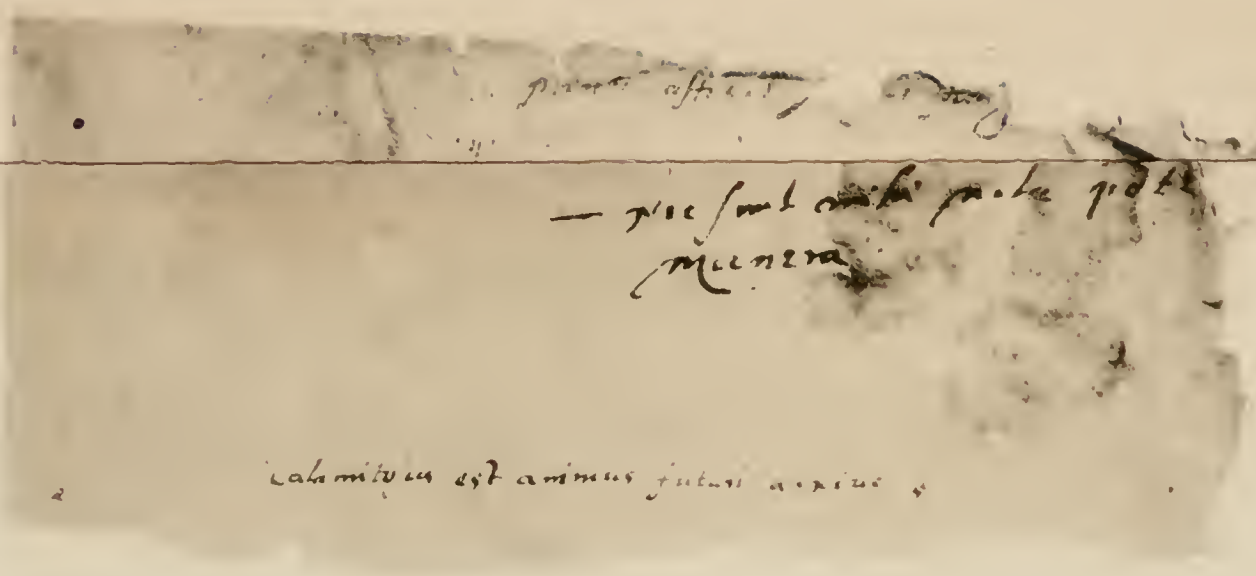

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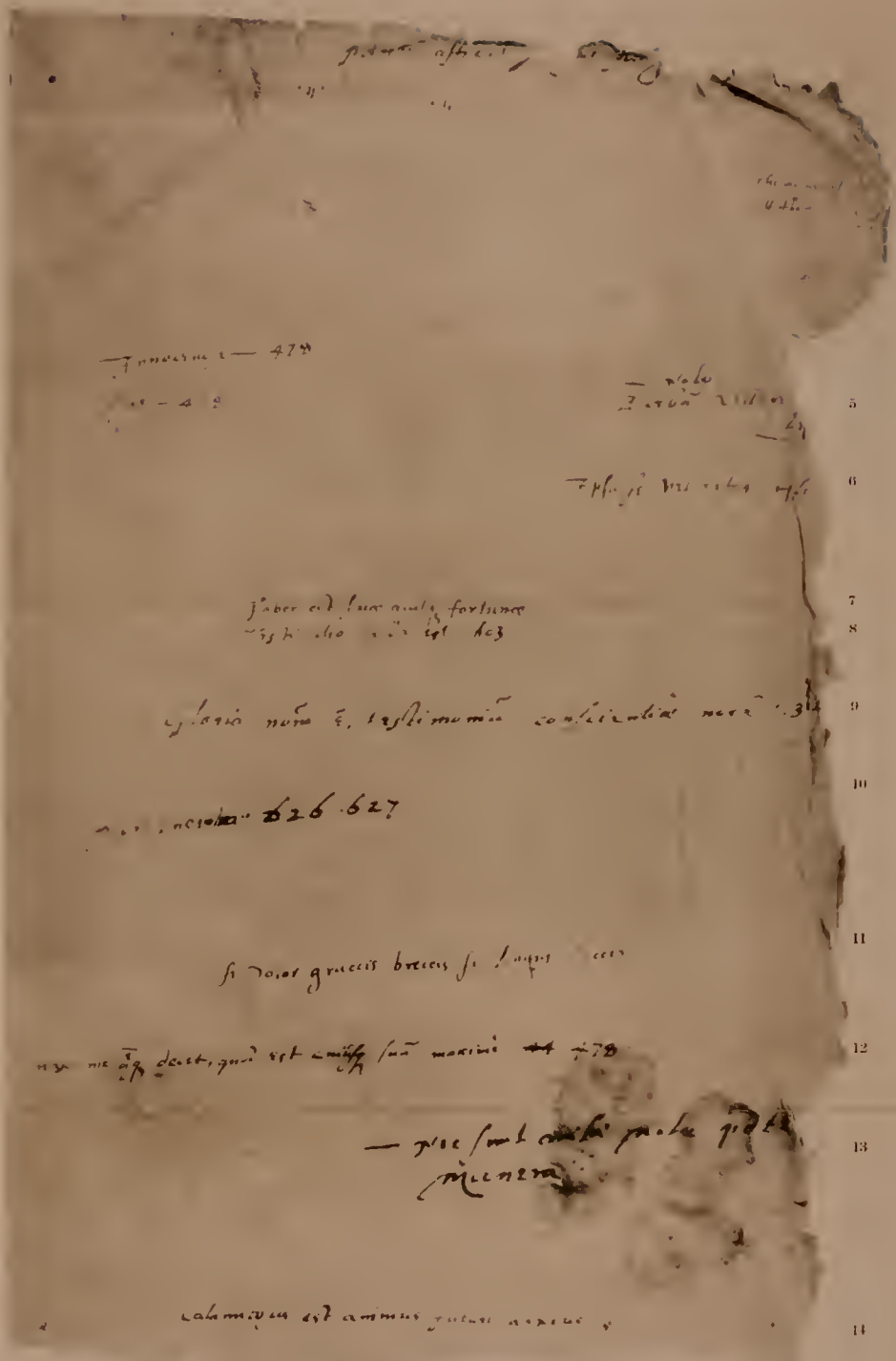

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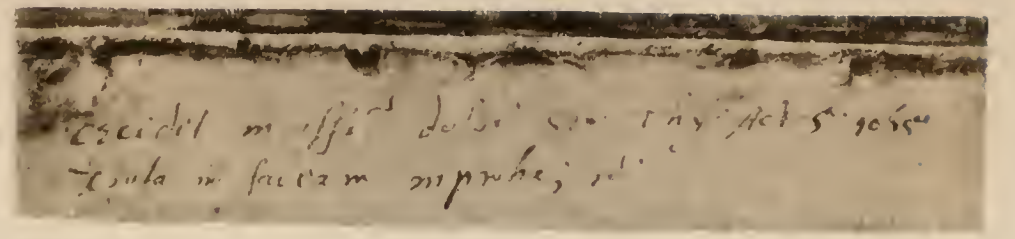

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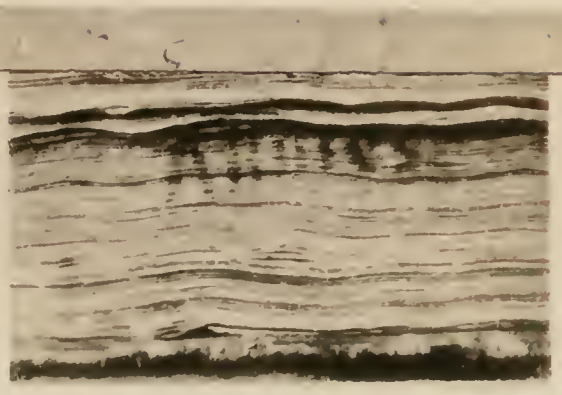

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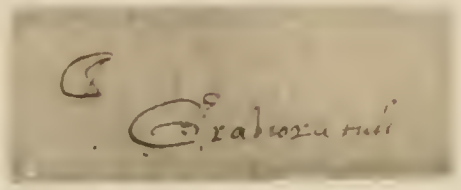

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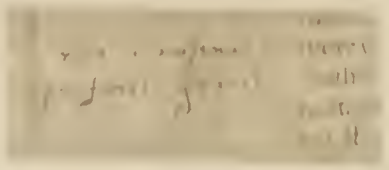

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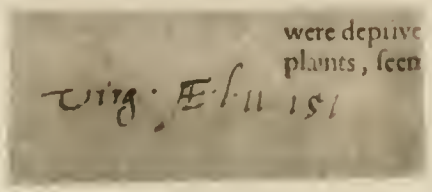

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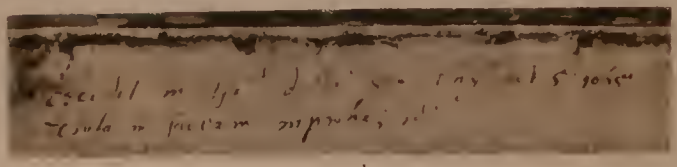

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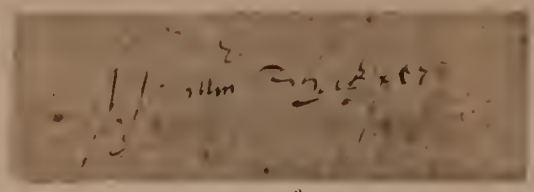

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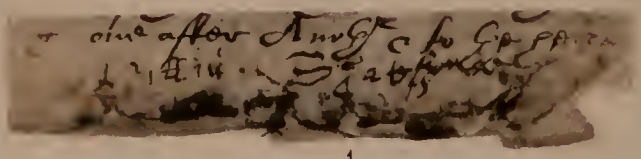

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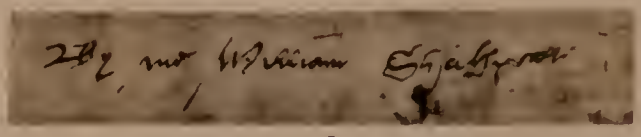

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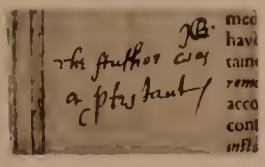

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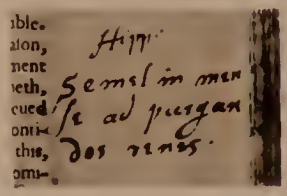

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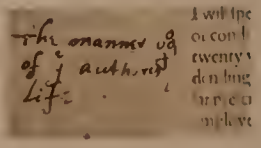

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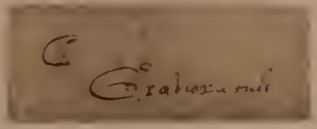

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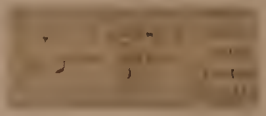

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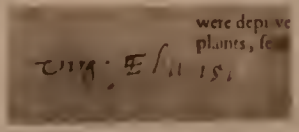

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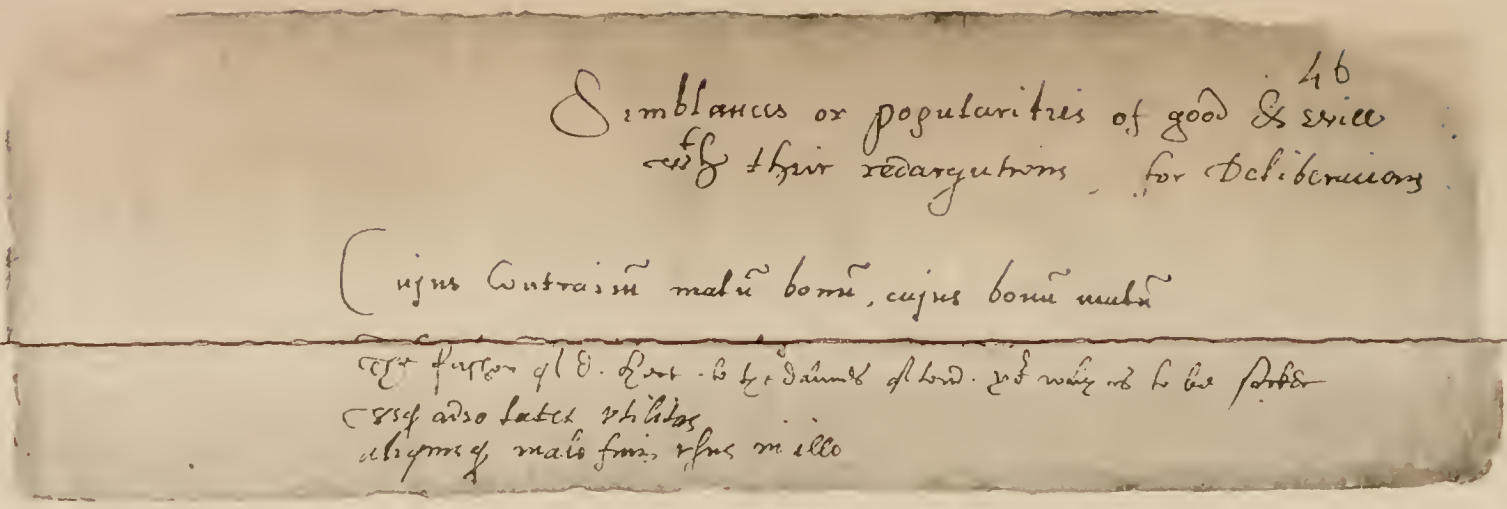
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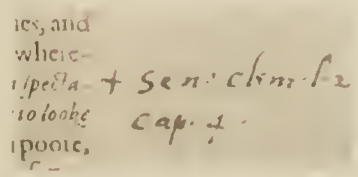
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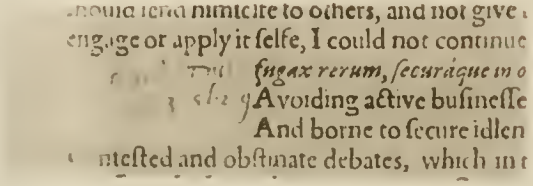
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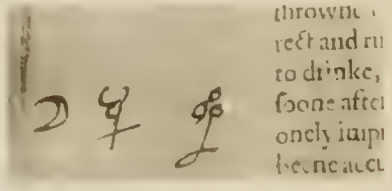
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SHAKESPEARE—NOT BACON

CHAPTER I

Never schooled, and yet learned.
(*As You Like It*, 1. i. 172.)

The first preface to the folio of 1623 contains these memorable sentences :—

> We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead to procure his orphans guardians ; without ambition either of self-profit or fame ; only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our *Shakespeare*, by humble offer of his plays to your most noble patronage. . . . We most humbly consecrate to your H.H. these remains of your servant *Shakespeare*, that what delight is in them may be ever your L.L., the *reputation his*, and the faults ours, if any be committed by a pair so careful to show their gratitude to the living and the dead, as is your L.L. most bounden,
>
> John Heminge.
> Henry Condell.

If Shakespeare's reputation was dear to these two fellow-actors, to whose reverence for the dead we are indebted for seventeen plays which probably would not otherwise have been preserved to us, so surely ought it to be to anyone who has experienced that "delight" in his works of which they speak above. That reputation has been assailed by a body of men and women who persistently assert that Bacon was the author of the plays. Their enthusiasm and energy have produced a whole literature : indeed there are now between sixty or seventy items under the heading " Bacon Controversy " in the Catalogue of the British Museum.

Their main argument runs somewhat on these lines :—" The plays show wide learning. William Shakespeare the actor, with his education and opportunities, could never have acquired that learning. We find it in Bacon's works. Therefore Bacon was the author."

We Shakespeareans join in the wonder that "a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage " should have been so learned, but we do not therefore rush to the conclusion that it is impossible ; for the same wonder was expressed by his own Archbishop of Canterbury with regard to the King in the play of *Henry V.*, written in 1599. After recounting his capability in divinity, politics, oratory, and

military tactics, in words aptly describing Shakespeare himself, and ending with the lines—

> And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,
> To steal his sweet and *honey'd* sentences,

which bring to mind the phrase "honey-tongued," as Francis Meres called Shakespeare in "Palladis Tamia" written the year before, he proceeds :—

> Which is a wonder how his grace should glean it,
> Since his addiction was to courses vain,
> His companies unlettered, rude and shallow,
> His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports;
> And never noted in him any study,
> Any retirement, any sequestration
> From open haunts and popularity.

Such is really the central point of the Baconian argument, that a man with so few opportunities should have such universal knowledge.

The Shakespearean answer is given by the Bishop of Ely :—

> The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
> And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
> Neighboured by fruit of baser quality;
> And so the prince obscured his contemplation
> Under the veil of wildness; which, no doubt,
> Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
> Unseen, yet crescive in his faculty.
>
> (*Henry V.* i. i. 50–70.)

Another subsidiary argument is, "How could anyone who wrote so badly, as his genuine signatures prove him to have done, have written the plays?" My answer is : "Many people of our own day show a fondness for writing their signatures badly," and does not Hamlet say?—

> I once did hold it, as our statists do,
> A baseness to write fair, and laboured much
> How to forget that learning.
>
> (*Hamlet*, v. ii. 33–35.)

I venture to assert that the most plausible Baconian arguments only go towards establishing the improbability of William Shakespeare's having written the plays, and that in the teeth of a vast body of contemporary evidence. I pass over the cryptogram theory, for to expose the fallacy of each separate cryptogram would require a separate book. No reasonable man would waste his time in such a profitless occupation, for Benedick has taught us, in *Much Ado*, II. iii. 265, that words with some little ingenuity can be made to mean anything.

Considering these facts, my purpose is to corroborate the direct statements in

the First Folio that William Shakespeare the actor, who was born and died at Stratford-on-Avon, wrote the plays usually attributed to him.

My arguments will be drawn from the subject-matter and a comparison of handwritings, facsimiles of which appear in the four Plates at the commencement of this work, now for the first time made public (except, of course, the signatures).

Plate I. is the first flyleaf of the folio of Florio's translation of *Montaigne's Essays*, dated 1603, which bears William Shakespeare's signature four and a half inches from the bottom. The "c45 k10" is the present British Museum pressmark, the c28 m7 crossed out is the pressmark that it had when there was no doubt of its genuineness and it was exposed for inspection. The book was bought in the year 1838 by Sir Frederick Madden for £134, and we shall hereafter refer to it as "the Montaigne."

Plate II. is the last flyleaf of the same book, and contains fourteen different references to the text.

Plate III. is a collection of various writings which I consider relevant to my argument.

Plate III. Fig. 1 represents the passage from Seneca at the top of Plate I.

Plate III. Fig. 2 represents the signature on the same Plate; and by comparing them, as thus brought together, their similarity of style will at once be apparent.

Plate III. Figs. 3–7 are facsimiles of the five recognised genuine legal signatures, to which I shall refer hereafter as the "legal signatures," Figs. 4, 6, and 7 being from the will dated March 1616, and the other two from two deeds, dated March 1612; the original of Fig. 5 being in the British Museum, and that of Fig. 3 in the Guildhall.

Plate III. Figs. 8, 9, 10, 13, and 14 are from Marginal Notes in "the Montaigne."

Plate III. Fig. 11 is from the fore-edge of "the Montaigne."

Plate III. Fig. 12 is from the first flyleaf of a translation of Seneca's tragedies, dated 1581, out of the Garrick collection.

Plate IV. is a facsimile of the last page of Bacon's *Promus and Formularies*, which Mrs. Pott has translated and illustrated with Shakespearean quotations to prove the Baconian theory.

For the sake of completeness the two remaining notes and a hieroglyphic from the margin of "the Montaigne" have been reproduced upon the same Plate, and thus on these four Plates we have every specimen of handwriting in "the Montaigne."

I shall in Chapter II. endeavour to prove that none of these writings, except the Bacon, could have come from any other pen than that of the author of the plays and poems, by showing that the great majority of the Latin sentences are almost literally translated in them, in many cases more than once, and that by referring to the pages, as the notes evidently intend us to do by being in the majority of cases numbered with the pages, we shall find that the context undoubtedly inspired other passages in Shakespeare's works.

In Chapter III. it will be argued that the references to materials outside the pages of "the Montaigne" bear also a close resemblance to passages in Shake-

speare's works, and also prove a familiar acquaintance with Latin authors in the original, which the Baconians rightly contend the author of the plays, whoever he be, must have had.

Having thus, as I hope, established a *primâ facie* case, and shifted the burden of proof on to my opponents, who, I hope, will not spare me, I shall show in Chapter IV., by a comparison of the various specimens of handwriting on the Plates, that there is no reason to doubt, and in fact every reason to believe, that the writings in "the Montaigne" came from the same hand that penned the five "legal signatures," and, in any case, not from that of Bacon.

Capell, in the year 1767, noticed the likeness between a passage in *The Tempest* and one in "the Montaigne," which Sir Frederick Madden quotes in his pamphlet announcing the purchase of the book.

Since then some French and German writers, and Mr. John M. Robertson and Mr. Jacob Fies, in their dogmatic and interesting works have noticed parallel passages. The last of these drew attention, in a note, to the *Mors incerta* (Plate II. Fig. 10), and pointed out that the matter of the handwriting required investigation. The well-known Shakespearean critic, Mr. Sidney Lee, in a letter to the *Times* in March 1898 compares the Baconian claims to those of the Tichborne Claimant. As this *cause célèbre*, before it was finally disposed of, took many years and made many reputations, so I shall try in this essay to bring the Baconian theory within the legal domain.

At any rate Shakespeareans will do well not to ridicule the Baconian claims, but to meet them by argument, and many interesting facts will probably come to light in the investigation; for we certainly owe the Baconians a debt of gratitude for insisting on the learning with which the plays abound. In any case, even to those who have no doubts, the fact, if it can be proved, that we have Shakespeare's handwriting and his favourite maxims will be intensely welcome, and a wonderful addition to our scanty knowledge of the poet's personality.

The references will be given to the book, chapter, and page of "the Montaigne," and to Morley's edition of the same, with a reference to the page and column of the latter, *e.g.* "the Montaigne," bk. i. cap. 1, fol. 1, Mor. 1, i.

I have modernised the spelling; for if all the editors have agreed to do this with Shakespeare, why should it not be done with Florio?

CHAPTER II

> Yea, from the table of my memory
> I'll wipe away . . . all saws of books . . .
> That youth and observation copied there.
>
> (*Hamlet*, I. v. 98–101.)

I SHALL deal in this chapter with all the notes on Plate II. and the marginal notes Plate III. Figs. 8 and 10, giving the context from "the Montaigne," and illustrating it by passages from Shakespeare. I hope to avoid quoting parallels which are only such in my imagination, and if any prejudice is shown in favour of the theory I am attempting to prove, I can only beg the indulgence of the reader.

I shall take the sentences in the order which seems best to illustrate the philosophy of their writer, and to be approved by the quotations from the poem of *Lucrece* hereafter appearing. My apology for departing from the regular order of the writings on the flyleaf is that they appear to be set down often at random, and at any rate not in their order of importance.

Figs. 7, 11, and 13 have no page numbers against them, nor can I speak for Figs. 1, 5, and 6, for they are mangled with damp and age, bearing witness to a long period, an "unregarded age in corners thrown," when "the Montaigne" lost its pedigree, but, we ought to be thankful, not its life.

Figs. 4 and 12 are wrong references, for, curiously enough, by an error of pagination no page 472 exists in "the Montaigne"; both these references are really to page 478. This mistake, and the fact that 44 is crossed out after Fig. 12, shows that these notes have been set down carelessly and from memory, and are therefore more likely to be leading and familiar maxims with the writer, which, as Chapter III. will show, found their most congenial embodiment in Latin.

The sentences whose ideas are most mirrored in the plays are the two following (Plate II. Figs. 6 and 8):—

IPSA SE VELOCITAS IMPLIC[AT] and FESTINATIO TARDA EST.

The sharpness and violence of desires hindereth more than steads the conduct of what we undertake, filling us with impatience as to the events, either contrary or slow, and with bitterness and jealousy towards them with whom we negotiate. We never govern that thing well wherewith we are possessed and directed. *Male cuncta ministrat impetus.* He who therein employeth but his judgment and discretion proceeds more cheerfully, he *feigns*, he yields, he defers at his pleasure, according to the occasion of necessity, he fails of his attempt without torment or affliction, ready and prepared for a new enterprise. He marcheth

always with the *reins* in his hand. He that is besotted with this *violent* and tyrannical intention doth necessarily declare much indiscretion and *injustice*. The violence of his desire transports him. They are *rash* motions, and, if fortune help not much, of little fruit.

Philosophy is within us to banish *choler* in the punishment of offences, not to the end that revenge should be more moderate, but contrary, more weighty and surely set on whereunto this *violence* seemeth to be a let. *Choler* doth not only trouble but wearieth the executioner's arms. This *passionate heat* dulleth and *consumes* the *force* as in too much *speed*. FESTINATIO TARDA EST, "Hastiness is slow." Haste makes waste, and hinders and stays itself. IPSA SE VELOCITAS IMPLICAT, "Swiftness *intangles* itself."

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 10, fol. 603, Mor. 517, i.)

The greater part of this passage is embodied in Norfolk's advice to Buckingham when he is vowing revenge against Wolsey—

> And let your reason with your *choler* question
> What 'tis you go about: to climb steep hills
> Requires *slow* pace at first: *anger* is like
> A full hot *horse*, who being allowed his way
> Self-mettle tires him . . . be advised,
> *Heat* not a furnace for your foe so hot
> That it do singe yourself: we may outrun,
> By *violent swiftness*, that which we run at,
> And lose by over-running.
>
> (*Henry VIII.* I. i. 132–143.)

The phrase *velocitas se implicat* is translated both in *Hamlet*, II. i. 103—

> Whose *violent property fordoes itself*,

and in *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xiv. 48—

> *Force intangles itself* with strength.

The word "intangles" is the same as "the Montaigne," and is only used this once by Shakespeare. These parallels are in plays in or after 1603, but there are some previous to that date. Gaunt says of Richard II.—

> His *rash* fierce blaze of riot cannot last,
> For *violent fires* soon burn out themselves;
> Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;
> He tires betimes, that spurs too fast betimes.
>
> (*Richard II.*, II. i. 33–37.)

These lines are in the first quarto of 1598, and so written before the publication of Florio's translation; and the collocation of three of the ideas from the above-quoted passage of Montaigne, and a fourth analogous to the sentence (Plate ii. Fig. 11),

> SI DOLOR GRAVIS BREVIS SI LONGUS LEVIS,

which being translated is, "If grief is heavy it is short, if light it is long," is very strong evidence that they were inspired by Montaigne in the original French.

The context to the last-mentioned passage in "the Montaigne" is as follows—

> Moreover, this ought to comfort us, that naturally if pain be *violent* it is also *short*
> ("The Montaigne," bk. i. cap. 40, fol. 131, Mor. 178, ii.),

which has a very close verbal parallel in Hamlet—

> The *violence* of either *grief* or joy
> Their own enactures with themselves destroy.
> (*Hamlet* III. ii. 206, 207.)

The fact that Shakespeare was inspired by Montaigne in the original is further corroborated by the following aphorisms of the Friar in *Romeo and Juliet* (none of which appear in the quarto of 1597 but all in that of 1599), and also by the lines hereafter quoted from the poem of *Lucrece*—

> Wisely and slow, they stumble that run fast
> (*Romeo and Juliet*, II. iii. 94),
>
> *These violent delights have violent ends*,
> Which in their triumph die; like fire and powder,
> Which, as they kiss, *consume*: the sweetest honey
> Is loathsome in its own deliciousness,
> And in the taste confounds the appetite:
> Therefore love moderately; long love doth so;
> *Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow*
> (*Romeo and Juliet*, II. vi. 9–15);

which last line is a translation of *festinatio* tarda *est*, the word tardy being strangely appropriate—

> But some untimely thought did instigate
> His *all-too-timeless speed* . . .
> With *swift* intent he goes
> To quench the *coal* which in his liver glows;
> O *rash* false *heat*, wrapped in repentant cold,
> Thy *hasty* spring still blasts, and ne'er grows old!
> (*Lucrece*, 43–49),
>
> Nothing . . . stop the headlong fury of his *speed*
> (*Ibid.* 501),
>
> *Violent* vanities can never last
> (*Ibid.* 894),
>
> Hast thou command? by Him that gave it thee
> From a pure heart command thy rebel will
> (*Ibid.* 624).

These and many hereinafter quoted lines from *Lucrece* (on the authorship of which, as far as I am aware, not even the Baconians cast any doubt) show how passages in that poem bear the impress of Montaigne's influence, which does not appear in the "first heir of his invention"—*Venus and Adonis*. Mr. Sidney Lee in his

suggestive article in the *Cornhill* of April 1898 shows how the friendship between Lord Southampton and Shakespeare had increased between the date of the two poems, both dedicated to the former. So the influence of Montaigne on works prior in date to 1603 may have come from Florio's manuscript, another protégé of Lord Southampton, and not the French; which militates against the theory of the date of *As You Like It*, p. 26.

Bearing in mind these numerous statements in Shakespeare's works of the principle of self-restraint, well summed up in Claudio's words—

> As surfeit is the father of much fast,
> So every scope by the immoderate use
> Turns to restraint
> (*Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 130),

it would not be overstating my case to consider how clearly the tragic elements in *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæsar* are due to (in the words I have already referred to of Montaigne) "not marching with the reins in hand," "to violence or want of measure" in *pride*; those of *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *Richard III.*, and *Henry VIII.* to the same want of moderation in *ambition*; those of *Cymbeline*, *Othello*, and *Winter's Tale* in *jealousy*; of *Timon of Athens* and *Lear* in *generosity*; those of *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Measure for Measure* in *love*; and the greatest wonder of all to Shakespeare—in the *piety* of *Henry VI.*, called by Swinburne "most hapless and gentlest of star-crossed kings"; although Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Troilus in *Troilus and Cressida*, Leontes in *Winter's Tale*, Posthumus in *Cymbeline*, and Alonso in *The Tempest*, find a place of repentance which changes these potential tragedies into comedies in the strict sense of the word. If Romeo had refrained a few moments longer from committing suicide, that play too would have been a comedy, but then it would not have been an illustration of "*velocitas se implicat*" and "*festinatio tarda est.*"

We now turn to Plate II. Fig 7,

FABER EST SUÆ QUISQUE FORTUNÆ,

"Each man is the forger of his own fortune,"

which Shakespeare paraphrases three times—

> Men at some time are masters of their fates
> (*Julius Cæsar*, I. ii. 139),
> There is a tide in the affairs of men
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune
> (*Ibid.* IV. iii. 218),
> Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie
> (*All's Well*, I. i. 230);

but, as we shall see hereafter by the context given on p. 16, it is used, in the text of

Montaigne, to illustrate a much less obvious but more philosophical temper of mind.

We now pass on to Plate II. Fig. 3, in which occurs the single word *Innocencie*, and looking up p. 478, which it will be seen is against it, the only reference to innocency on that page is in the following words:—

> Innocency itself could not in these times, nor negotiate without dissimulation nor traffic without lying.
> ("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 1, fol. 478, Mor. 405, i.)

Shakespeare almost paraphrases these words in *Cymbeline*—

> If I do lie and do
> No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope
> They'll pardon it.
> (*Cymbeline*, iv. ii. 378.)

This too is the keynote of a great number of the plays. Hero in *Much Ado*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Hermione in *Winter's Tale*, to gain their ends dissemble death; Julia in the *Two Gentlemen*, Viola in *Twelfth Night*, Portia and Jessica in the *Merchant of Venice*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Imogen in *Cymbeline*, disguise themselves as men; Mariana in *Measure for Measure*, and Helena in *All's Well*, deceive their husbands, and the *Merry Wives* pretend love for Falstaff; Hamlet and Edgar in *Lear* feign madness; Henry V. "hides his contemplation under the veil of wildness," and afterwards goes about among his men as a common soldier; and the Duke in *Measure for Measure* assumes the part of a friar. Here we have the heroines of thirteen and the heroes of four plays who "could not negotiate without dissimulation nor traffic without lying," and yet no disapprobation is ever implied. These seeming paradoxes—

> "When I am false, I am honest; not true, to be true"
> (*Cymbeline*, iv. iii. 42),
>
> "You'll be so true to him to be false to him"
> (*Troilus and Cressida*, iv. ii. 58),

in one to whom we know truth and honesty were most dear, is explained by the following note, which is immediately under the word "Innocencie" in the flyleaf (Plate II. Fig 4),

> Jus, 472.

As I have shown before, there is no p. 472, but from the tenor of the following passage of Montaigne on p. 478 it must be admitted that that is the correct reference, as it is a short commentary on the meaning of the word *Jus*—

> *There are some lawful vices; as many actions, or good or excusable, unlawful.* Justice in itself natural and universal is otherwise ordered and more noble distributed than the other especial and national justice, restrained and suited to the need of our policies. *Veri* juris *germanæque justitiæ solidam et*

expressam effigiem nullam tenemus, umbrâ et imaginibus utimur. "We have no lively or lifelike portraiture of upright *law* and natural *justice*."

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap 1, fol. 478, Mor. 405, i.)

Jus, or right, and innocency, so purposely placed together on the flyleaf, are also closely connected in the following passage:—

> While she, the picture of pure *piety*,
> Like a white hind under the gripe's sharp claws,
> Pleads in a wilderness, where are no *laws*,
> To the rough beast that knows no gentle *right*,
> Nor aught obeys but his foul appetite.
>
> (*Lucrece*, 542–546.)

The nature of justice is defined by Shakespeare in the following poem:—

> Take but *degree* away, untune that string . . .
> Force should be *right*; or rather, right and wrong
> (Between whose endless jar *justice* resides)
> Should lose their names, and so should *justice* too.
>
> (*Troilus and Cressida*, 1. iii. 109–117.)

The last-mentioned lines occur in the great speech of Ulysses, lines 75–137, the longest unbroken speech in all the plays. It is a sermon on the importance of recognising the fitness of things, an extolling of "degree," which word occurs six times in it. I mention this repetition of the word "degree," as I do that of "glory" in the great Wolsey scene, for as Shakespeare is so chary of repetitions, when they do occur the emphasis is stronger. The text of this sermon is the first line—

> The *specialty* of rule hath been neglected.

The translation by Florio suggests the idea that the word "degree" is well paraphrased by (Plate II. Fig. 12)

> ID MAXIME QUEMQUE DECET QUOD EST CUJUSQUE SUUM MAXIME.

The translation in "the Montaigne" is—

> That becomes *every man especially* which is his own *especially*.

Hamlet repeats the same idea—

> For *every man* has business and desire, such as it is
>
> (*Hamlet*, 1. v. 30);

and Sonnet 52 has the same repetition of the word "special"—

> To make some *special* instant *special* blest.

The essence of the last three commentaries on the notes on Plate II. Figs. 3, 4,

and 12 is well summed up in the words of the Friar in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which the word "special" again occurs—

> For naught so vile that on the earth doth live,
> But to the earth some *special* good doth give;
> Nor aught so good, but, strained from that fair use,
> Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse;
> Virtue itself turns *vice*, being misapplied;
> And *vice* sometimes by action 's dignified.
>
> (*Romeo and Juliet*, II. iii. 17–22.)

That Montaigne means by *Id maxime quemque decet quod est cujusque suum maxime* to imply that the virtue is not to be judged by its absolute quality, but by its relative fitness, is shown by the context, which refers to Æsop's ass, who put his forefeet on his master's shoulders in imitation of his dog and got punished. That which was a virtue in the dog was a crime in the ass.

Shakespeare well expresses this idea, though with a touch of cynicism—

> Great men may jest with saints; 'tis wit in them,
> But, in the less, foul profanation . . .
> That in a captain 's but a choleric word,
> Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.
>
> (*Measure for Measure*, II. ii. 126–137.)

All must acknowledge some truth in this, but, as Shakespeare says, "the devil can quote scripture to his purpose," therefore he recognises that the perversion of this truth is one of the strongest weapons in the Fiend's armoury, as Tarquin says to Lucrece—

> But if thou yield, I rest thy secret friend:
> The fault unknown is as a thought unacted;
> A little harm, done to a great good end,
> For *lawful policy* remains enacted.
> The poisonous simple sometimes is compacted
> In a pure compound; being so applied,
> His venom in effect is purified.
>
> (*Lucrece*, 525–532.)

In the "endless jar of right and wrong," "when virtue becomes vice, being misapplied," and vice never becomes virtue but is "by action dignified," what guide is there? Surely none but the conscience.

> God Almighty!
> There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
> Would men observingly distil it out . . .
> Thus we may gather honey from the weed
> And make a moral of the devil himself
>
> (*Henry V.* IV. i. 3–12);

but let us be sure that it is the voice of "conscience" and not "hot-burning will," so Tarquin's state of mind before committing the crime is described—

> Thus, graceless, holds he disputation
> 'Tween frozen *conscience and hot-burning will*,
> And with good thoughts makes dispensation,
> Urging the worser sense for vantage still:
> Which in a moment doth confound and kill
> All pure effects, and doth so far proceed,
> That what is *vile* shows like a *virtuous* deed.
>
> (*Lucrece*, 245–252.)

It is natural to expect that the writer of the above lines should put in the prominent position which it holds the following note (Plate II. Fig. 9)—

GLORIA NOSTRA EST TESTIMONIUM NOSTRÆ CONSCIENTIÆ, 362.

The translation of this is, "Our glory is the testimony of our conscience." We find in the plays two references to this witness of our conscience—

> The witness of a good conscience
>
> (*Merry Wives*, IV. ii. 220),

> Very reverend sport, truly; and done in the *testimony* of a good conscience
>
> (*Love's Labour Lost*, IV. ii. 1).

The context of this last Latin passage is as follows in "the Montaigne"—

> Our glory is the testimony of our conscience. He that is not an honest man but by that which other men know by him, and because he shall the better be esteemed, being known to be so, that will not do well but upon condition his virtue may come to the knowledge of men, such a man is no man from whom any great service may be drawn or good expected. . . . It is not for the exterior show or ostentation that our soul must play her part, but *inwardly within ourselves* where no eyes shine but it. There it doth shroud us from the fear of death, of sorrow, and of shame. There it assureth from the loss of our children, friends, and fortunes, and when an opportunity is offered it also leads us to the dangers of war.
>
> ("The Montaigne," bk. ii. cap. 16, fol. 362, Mor. 319, ii.)

This idea of a good conscience preserving us from the troubles of the world—by no means a commonplace one—is reproduced by Shakespeare in *Henry VIII.*—

> *Cromwell.* How does your grace?
> *Wolsey.* Why, well!
> Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.
> I know myself now; and I feel within me
> A peace above all earthly dignities,
> A still and quiet conscience . . . I am able now, methinks,
> Out of a fortitude of soul I feel
> To endure more miseries, and greater far
> Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer.
>
> (*Henry VIII.* III. ii. 375–390.)

This parallel becomes more striking when we consider that it occurs in a scene

in which the words "glory" and "conscience" are both found four times repeated, thus associating the two in a most forcible manner.

In the same scene a passage appears which contrasts very unfavourably the power of princes with that of conscience—

> O, how wretched
> Is that poor man that hangs on *princes'* favours:
> There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,
> That sweet aspect of *princes*, and their ruin,
> More pangs and fears than wars or women have.
>
> (*Henry VIII.* III. ii. 366–369.)

Taking into consideration the other parallels, it cannot be doubted that this is an elaboration of the following passage of Montaigne, commencing with Plate II. Fig. 13—

NEC SUNT MIHI NOTA POTE[NTUM] MUNERA,

With gifts I am not much acquainted, of mighty men, and much less tainted. *Princes* give me sufficiently if they take nothing from me, and do me much good if they do me no hurt.

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 9, fol. 579, Mor. 494, ii.)

With regard to the word "*potentum*," it is noticeable that Shakespeare alone uses the word "potent" in this sense and as a substantive—

> You equal *potents*, fiery kindled spirits!
>
> (*King John*, II. i. 358.)

These last two coincidences, together with the parallel passage on p. 6, are strong evidence in favour of Shakespeare having written the play of *Henry VIII.*, or at any rate that the notes furnished to Fletcher were very copious. It is, however, a more reasonable theory, and one more consonant with the statement of the editors of the First Folio that it was printed from original manuscripts ("we have scarce received a blot from him in his papers"), that, as Shakespeare wrote his first plays, *Titus Andronicus*, *Henry VI.*, and *Richard III.*, in the styles of Marlow and Green, so, in this last child "of his invention," when the faults of old age, obscurity and repetition, are apparent, he, conscious of his failing powers, should have adopted Fletcher's style, at any rate in the more important passages. One of the arguments that the First Folio was not taken from manuscripts by Shakespeare, as the prefaces assert, is that the text in some of the plays is taken from the quartos with the same mistakes. Would not printers have preferred to copy from print if they could get it? In this particular case they could do so with impunity, as there was no author alive to correct the proofs. Judging from Shakespeare's "legal signatures," and the illegibility (mostly from the numerous contractions) of the specimens of his hand on the Plates, there would be especial reason for the printers pursuing this course. So the plays in the First Folio, to which there are no quartos, have in them the greatest number of readings which on the face of them are manifestly wrong and impossible to make sense of. The note on conscience suggests the question: What was Shake-

speare's religion? It is not the object of this essay to decide this question; but if the reader is satisfied as to the handwriting, it is a most important light on the point that he should have written the following note in the margin (Plate III. Fig. 8)—

THE AUTHOR WAS A PROTESTANT XB.

What the meaning of the XB is I do not know, but doubtless it is, as Shakespeare puts it in *Lucrece*, line 101—

"A subtle-shining secrecy writ in the glassy margents of such books."

The word Protestant is not once used by Shakespeare, but it was in common use at the time, and the likeness in handwriting in this case to the "legal signatures" just above it (Plate III. Figs. 3 and 7) is most marked—especially the *B* in the *XB* to the *B* in the *By* of Plate III. Fig. 7, which is the well-known last signature to the will whose authenticity is beyond dispute, together with the other "legal signatures" (Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6) on the same Plate. The leaving out of the *ro* in this word Protestant agrees well with the theory that the signatures are contracted; see p. 29. The text, to which this marginal note "The author was a Protestant" refers, is evidently what the writer of such note considered as the leading principle of Protestantism, and, though of considerable length, is worthy to be quoted in full, and runs as follows:—

If this ray of divinity did in any way touch us, it would everywhere appear. Not only our *words*, but our *actions*, would bear some show and lustre of it. Whatsoever should proceed from us might be seen lightened with this noble and matchless brightness. We would blush for shame that in human sects there was never any so factious, what difficulty or strangeness soever his doctrine maintained, but would in some sort conform his behaviour and square his life unto it. Whereas so divine and heavenly an institution never marks Christians but by the *tongue*. And you will see whether it be so. Compare but our manners unto a Turk or Pagan and we must needs yield ourselves unto them: whereas in respect of our religious superiority we ought by much, yea, by an incomparable distance, outshine them in excellency. And well might a man say: Are they so charitable, so just, so good? Then must they be Christians. All other shows and exterior appearances are common to all religions, as hope, affiance, events, ceremonies and martyrdom. The peculiar badge of our truth should be virtue, as it is the heavenliest mark and worthiest production of verity itself.

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 12, fol. 254, Mor. 221, i.)

Shakespeare shows, too, the utter futility of religious forms without virtue, in Hamlet's words to his mother—

O, such a deed,
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul; and sweet *religion* makes
A rhapsody of *words*.

(*Hamlet*, III. iv. 45–48.)

At any rate, whatever Shakespeare's creed or philosophy might have been, his teaching is against every form of meanness, the grossest example of which is given in the following note (Plate II. Fig. 5)—

NOLO BARBAM VELLERE LE[ONI MORTUO].

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 5, fol. 536, Mor. 455, ii.)

The translation is, "I am unwilling to pluck the beard from a dead lion." That this shows one of the most remarkable correspondences between these notes and the text of Shakespeare can be easily seen by the following quotations—

> Who cannot abuse a body dead
> (*Lucrece*, 1267),
>
> You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,
> Whose valour *plucks dead lions by the beard*
> (*King John*, II. i. 138),
>
> 'Tis most ignobly done to *pluck me by the beard*
> (*Lear*, III. vii. 37),
>
> *Plucks off my beard* and blows it in my face
> (*Hamlet*, II. ii. 599).

It may well be that the incident of Achilles tying the dead body of Hector to his horse's tail mentioned in *Troilus and Cressida*, v. viii. 22, fostered that mediæval dislike of the Greek which appears by his grotesque and contemptible characterisation of their heroes in the same play, and of the citizens of Athens in *Timon*. How different is the treatment of the dead body of Brutus by Octavius!

> According to his virtue let us use him,
> With all respect and rites of burial.
> Within my tent his bones to-night shall lie,
> Most like a soldier, ordered honourably.
> (*Julius Cæsar*, v. v. 75–79.)

So far the notes and the contexts of them have been moral and religious; the remainder deal with the philosophical way of looking at life and death, so as to make them most tolerable, and to render us more reconciled to the inevitable conditions of existence.

Now we pass to Plate II. Fig. 2,

THE MANNER OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE, 134.

There is a similar note in the margin (Plate III. Fig. 10) to "the Montaigne," bk. i. cap. 40, fol. 134, Mor. 124, ii. For the next two or three pages Florio's translation describes three stages in the life of Montaigne, against which are put in writing numbers 1, 2, and 3. (1) deals with a period in which the author appears to have lived from hand to mouth; (2) in which he made money and saved it; (3) in which he "cut his garment according to his cloth," or, in other words, lived on his income. These correspond to well-defined periods of Shakespeare's life, which Drake in his *Life and Times of Shakespeare* terms Stratford, London and Retirement.

From the pages describing these three stages I have selected seven passages which have their counterpart in Shakespeare.

First—

I find that want and necessity is by diverse or different causes, and ordinarily seen to accompany and follow those that are *rich* as well as those that have none at all, and peradventure it is somewhat less incommodious when it is alone than when it maketh with riches. *Faber est suæ quisque fortunæ*, Each man is the forger of his own fortune; and methinks a rich man, who is needy, full of business, cark, and toil, and troubled in mind, is more miserable than he that is simply *poor*. *In divitiis inopes quod genus egestatis gravissimum est*, *In their abundance indigent*, which is the most grievous kind of indigence.

("The Montaigne.")

These ideas have three close parallels in Shakespeare—

But, *poorly-rich*, so wanteth in his store,
That, cloy'd with much, he pineth still for more

(*Lucrece*, 97, 98),

And so, by hoping more, they have but less;
Or, gaining more, the profit of excess
Is but to surfeit, and such griefs sustain,
That they prove bankrupt in this *poor-rich* gain

(*Lucrece*, 137–140),

Poor and content is rich, and rich enough;
But riches fineless is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor

(*Othello*, III. iii. 170).

It may here be noticed that the quotation *Faber est suæ quisque fortunæ* (Plate II. Fig. 7) does not seem, taking it in its ordinary meaning, to have much to do with the context. It must therefore refer to the power of everyone to be content. I have already given three passages of Shakespeare which illustrate the ordinary meaning. Looking at the Plate we notice there is no page number. There are three other passages, Plate II. Figs. 5, 11, and 13, where my argument gains no force by illustration from the context. In Figs 11 and 13 there are no page numbers; in Fig. 5 it is impossible to say whether there ever was any or not. The deduction is that the writer of these particular notes did not mean to refer to the context, and the fact that these notes by themselves have plenty of illustration in the text of Shakespeare, while the contexts of them (alone out of all the notes) have none, is a further argument in favour of the fact that the writer of these notes was Shakespeare himself. Let us now pass to the second illustration under "the manner of the author's life"—

Second—

Therefore doth ease and indigency depend upon every man's own opinion; and wealth *and riches no more than glory or health have either more pre-eminence or pleasure than he who possesseth them lendeth them.*

("The Montaigne.")

Shakespeare has two remarkable elaborations of this philosophic idea—

(1) I do not strain at the position,
It is familiar, but at the *author's* drift;
Who, in this circumstance, expressly proves
That no man is the lord of anything
Though in and of him there be much consisting
Till he communicate his parts to others.
(*Troilus and Cressida*, III. iii. 112–116.)

From the likeness between these two passages we may well come to the conclusion, even though it shows a glaring anachronism, that the author here referred to is Montaigne.

(2) Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, *'twere all alike*
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues; nor nature never *lends*
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,—
Both thanks and use.
(*Measure for Measure*, I. i. 34–40.)

Florio's own word *lend* is used here, and not *communicate* as in the former passage; but then it is applied to the donor in one case and the donee in the other. Shakespeare adds the idea of "let your light so shine before men" most appropriately in a play which derives its name from another dictum in the Sermon on the Mount, "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again."

Third—

To judge of high and great matters a high and great mind is required
("The Montaigne")

surely inspired

Spirits are not finely touched, but to fine issues
("Shakespeare");

though there is this difference, that Shakespeare's is a direct statement of providential design, while Montaigne implies an element of chance.

Fourth—

Every man is either well or ill according as he finds himself. Not he whom another thinks content, but he is content indeed who thinks so himself, and only in that opinion giveth itself sense and verity.
("The Montaigne"),

There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.
(*Hamlet*, II. ii. 257.)

This parallel has been noticed by most writers on the subject, including Pater, who mentions it in his chapter on Montaigne; but what has not been noticed is that the parallel occurs in a part of "the Montaigne" specially referred to by notes

both at the end and in the margin of a book which purports to have Shakespeare's signature in it.

Fifth—

The confidence in other men's honesty is no light testimony of one's own integrity, and therefore doth God willingly favour it.

("The Montaigne.")

This fact is three times mentioned in Shakespeare—

For unstained thoughts do seldom dream of evil
(*Lucrece*, 88),

A credulous father! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harm
That he suspects none
(*Lear*, I. ii. 195–196),

The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so
(*Othello*, I. iii. 405–406).

In each of these cases Tarquin, Edmund, and Iago take advantage of this "confidence" to entrap their victims, Lucrece, Edgar, and Othello; it is hardly possible, therefore, that Shakespeare agrees with Montaigne that God willingly favours unqualified confidence in other men's honesty. In this world we must be "wise as serpents" as well as "harmless as doves."

We now pass to a parallel where there are no verbal likenesses, nor indeed a like way of putting them, but where the ideas on a cardinal point of practical philosophy are similar and in themselves very interesting—

Sixth—

Opinio est quædam effeminata ac levis nec in dolore magis, quam eadem in voluptate; quâ quum liquescimus fluimusque molitia, apis aculeum sine clamore ferre non possumus. Totum in eo est ut tibi imperes. "There is a certain effeminate and light opinion, and that no more in sorrow than it is in pleasure, whereby when we melt and run over in dainty tenderness we cannot abide to be stung of a bee, but must cry and roar out." This is the sum of all, that you must be master of yourself.

("The Montaigne"),

Blest are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me the man
That is not passion's slave and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.
(*Hamlet*, III. ii. 73–79.)

Seventh—

He that hath not the heart to endure neither *life* nor *death*, and that will neither resist or run away, what shall a man do to him?

("The Montaigne"),

Unfit to *live* or *die*! O gravel heart!
(*Measure for Measure*, IV. iii. 68.)

So much for the pages of "the manner of the author's life," from which I have quoted seven passages having parallels in the plays, all of which, except the last two, being so close that it is impossible to consider them mere coincidences. We now pass to Plate II. Fig 10—

MORS INCERTA, 626–627.

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 12, fols. 626, 627, Mor. 539, 540.)

On the above pages, 626 and 627, we find the following eight parallels so full of verbal likenesses that they speak for themselves without comment: if one looks at the pages in "the Montaigne" themselves he will see how blotted and worn they are with signs of repeated re-reading—

It is not against death that we prepare ourselves; it is a thing so momentary. A quarter of an hour of passion, without consequence and without annoyance, deserves not our particular precept.

("The Montaigne"),

Thy best of rest is *sleep*,
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more.

(*Measure for Measure*, III. i. 17.)

Second—

To say truth we prepare ourselves against the preparation of death.

("The Montaigne"),

Darest thou die?
The sense of death is most in *apprehension.*

(*Measure for Measure*, III. i. 78.)

Third—

And is it not as we say, that the vulgar's stupidity and want of *apprehension* afford them this patience in private evils and this deep *carelessness* of sinister *future* accidents?

("The Montaigne"),

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

(*Measure for Measure*, IV. iii. 150.)

Fourth—

In God's name if it be so let us henceforth keep a school of brutality . . . we shall not want good teachers, Socrates shall be one; for as near as I remember he speaketh in this sense unto the judges, that determine of his life, "I fear me, my masters" (saith he), "that if I entreat you not to make me die, I shall confirm the evidence of my accusers, which is that I profess to have more understanding than others, as *having some knowledge more secret and hid of things both above and beneath us.*

("The Montaigne"),

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

(*Hamlet*, I. v. 167.)

Fifth—

I know that I have neither frequented nor known death, nor have I seen anybody that either tried or felt her qualities instruct me in them.

("The Montaigne"),

The undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns

(*Hamlet*, III. i. 79),

And how you shall speed in your journey's end
I think you'll never return to tell me.

(*Cymbeline*, v. iv. 190.)

Sixth—

. . . Yet it is to be believed that we shall be exempted from having anything more to do with wicked and *corrupted* judges.

("The Montaigne"),

In the *corrupted* currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by *justice*,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the *law*: but 'tis not so above.

(*Hamlet*, III. iii. 57.)

Seventh—

If it be a *consummation* of one's being

("The Montaigne"),

'Tis a *consummation* devoutly to be wished.

(*Hamlet*, I. iii. 63.)

Eighth—

It is also an amendment and entrance into a long and quiet night. We find nothing so sweet in life as a quiet rest and gentle *sleep* and without *dreams*.

("The Montaigne"),

To die,—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream:—ay, there's the rub,
For in that *sleep* of death what *dreams* may come?

(*Hamlet*, III. i. 64.)

The two remaining notes on the last flyleaf are at the top and bottom of Plate II., and are the only two with which I cannot find a complete correspondence in Shakespeare, but they may well have inspired the passages which I do quote along with them (Plate II. Fig. 1.)—

MINUS AFFICIT [SENSUS FATIGATIO QUAM COGITATIO].

("The Montaigne," bk. i. cap. 3, fol. 626, Mor. 538, i.)

The translation of this is, "Weariness less affects our senses than meditation." The greater part of this sentence, as will be seen from looking at the photograph, has been eaten away by damp; but as it is the only sentence in Montaigne beginning with "*minus afficit*," and as the remnants of the next two words appear on the Plate, there cannot be any doubt about it.

The evil effect of this "cogitation" is seen on Hamlet, who is only too conscious of its presence, and laments its power over him in two of his soliloquies—

> Thus *conscience* doth make cowards of us all;
> And thus the native hue of resolution
> Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of *thought*
> (*Hamlet*, III. i. 83–85),
>
> Some craven *scruple*
> Of *thinking* too precisely on the event;
> A *thought* which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
> And ever three parts *coward*.
> (*Hamlet*, IV. iii. 40.)

Here is a conscience not "seared with a red-hot iron," but too sensitive, like that of Henry VI. How different from Coriolanus—

> The din of war 'gan pierce
> His ready *sense*; then straight his doubled spirit
> Requickened what in flesh was *fatigate*.
> (*Coriolanus*, II. ii. 120.)

"Fatigate" is a Latinism only used once, and probably coined by Shakespeare (like "festinate" in *Lear*, III. vii. 10, and "festinately" in *Love's Labour Lost*, III. i. 6; see Plate II. Fig 8), and its proximity to the word "sense" makes it probable that the above Latin passage was in his mind. Almost identical in meaning is (Plate III. Fig 14)—

> CALAMITOSUS EST ANIMUS ANXIUS FUTURIS
> ("The Montaigne," bk. i. cap. 3, fol. 5, Mor. 5, i.);

the translation of this is, "A mind anxious for the future is calamitous," which has its echo in—

> There's the respect
> That makes *calamity* of so long life.
> (*Hamlet*, III. i. 68–69.)

The context in "the Montaigne" to these two Latin passages expresses in both cases the torment in the preparation for death; and as both the Shakespearean quotations quoted as parallels occur in the famous "to be or not to be" passage in *Hamlet*, we have in both cases a double coincidence.

It seems fitting to end this chapter with Plate IV. Fig. 4. This hieroglyphic is opposite the following passage, part of which can be seen in the photograph—

> During the time of Nero the sovereignty of physic fell into the hands of Thersalus, who abolished and condemned whatsoever had been held of it before his time. This man's doctrine was wholly overthrown by Crinas of Marseilles, who anew revived and framed that all men should direct and rule *medicinable operations* to the Ephemerides and motions of the *stars*, to eat, to drink, and to sleep at what hour it should please Luna and Mercury.
> ("The Montaigne," bk. ii. cap. 37, fol. 442, Mor. 393, i.)

It was pointed out to me by an officer of the British Museum that the first hieroglyphic represented the half moon, the second the caduceus of Mercury. Curiously enough, the brow of a woman is compared to

> A half moon made with a pen
> (*Winter's Tale*, II. i. 11);

and also we have

> Mercury, lose all the serpentine craft of thy *caduceus*
> (*Troilus and Cressida*, II. iii. 12);

and the words "medicinable" and "operations" are applied much in the same way—

> Whose *medicinable* eye
> Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil
> (*Troilus and Cressida*, I. iii. 91),
>
> By all the *operation* of the orbs
> From whom we do exist, and cease to be
> (*Lear*, I. i. 113).

So far the manuscript notes only refer to passages within "the Montaigne," and do not necessarily show an acquaintance with the Latin authors in the original, though they do show a partiality for putting down sentences in Latin and not English. The remainder, however, as I shall point out in the following chapter, do show that acquaintance, which has been so often doubted.

CHAPTER III

Thou hadst small Latin and less Greek.

BEN JONSON.

MR. ROBERTSON, on p. 73 of his book on the relation of Montaigne to Shakespeare, quotes Doctor Cunliffe—

"Whether Shakespeare was indebted to Seneca is as difficult as it is interesting."

Plate III. Figs. 1 and 13, and Plate IV. Fig. 2, are all references to Seneca, and (assuming that they come from the pen of Shakespeare) they are irresistible evidence of his being acquainted with the works of that Latin author in the original. The reader must judge for himself as to the amount of the indebtedness.

The lines of Seneca, out of his play called *Thyestes*, between the two to be found on Plate III. Fig. 1 (which, as I have already pointed out, are a reproduction of those on the top of Plate I.), are as follows :—

CECIDIT INCASSUM DOLOR
Scidit ore natos impio, sed nescius,
Sed nescientes. (Thyestes) Clusa litoribus vagis
Audite maria, vos dii audite hoc scelus,
Quocunque diffugistis; audite inferi,
Audite terræ, noxque Tartarea gravis
Et atrâ nube; vocibus nostris vacâ,
Tibi sum relictus, sola tu miserum vides
Tu quoque sine astris . . . VOTA NON FACIAM IMPROBA.

(*Thyestes*, Act v. 1065.)

These lines are rendered thus in a translation contemporary with Shakespeare, from which Plate III. Fig. 12 is taken :—

But now my wrath so lightly ended is,
He rent his sons with wicked gumme himself yet wotting nought
Nor they thereof. (Th.) O ye enclosed with binding banks about,
All seas me hear, and to this guilt ye *gods* now hearken well,
Whatever place ye fled are to. Hear, all ye spirits of *hell*,
And hear, ye *lands*, and night so dark that them does overlie
With cloud so black, to my complaints do thou thyself apply,
To thee now left I am, thou dost alone me miser see,
And thou art left without thy stars, I will not make for me
Petitions yet.

Hamlet makes a similar conjuration to the powers of nature and hell as Thyestes, though in much fewer words, but checks himself at the end in the same way—

> O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
> And shall I couple hell? O fie! Hold, hold, my heart.
>
> (*Hamlet*, I. v. 92–93.)

A few lines before the above lines in the *Thyestes* we have the sentence *Ut viventium biberes cruorem*, and the translation of this is, "That you may drink the blood of the living." Taking the two together we have an echo in Hamlet—

> 'Tis now the very witching time of night,
> When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
> Contagion to this world; now could *I drink hot blood*,
> And do such bitter business as the day
> Would quake to look on.
>
> (*Hamlet*, III. ii. 406–410.)

Line 307 of the *Thyestes* of Seneca (Plate III. Fig. 13)—

> LEVE EST MISERIAS FERRE PERFERRE GRAVE

might well be freely translated—

> For thou hast been
> As one, in *suffering* all, that *suffers* nothing.
>
> (*Hamlet*, III. ii. 71.)

The manuscript note from *Thyestes* is a marginal one to a passage in "the Montaigne," bk. ii. cap. 13, fol. 354, Mor. 312, ii., expressing wonder at the calmness of Socrates awaiting death, while Hamlet is praising the stoicism of Horatio, and it is important to note the same play on words in both cases. Perhaps a more literal translation of this Latin is—

> Everyone can master a grief but he that has it.
>
> (*Much Ado*, III. ii. 29.)

These two passages from the *Thyestes* of Seneca, which are not referred to in the text of Montaigne, show that their writer had this Latin play in his mind while reading "the Montaigne." As the facts would naturally lead us to expect, the coincidences here, as they are in the great majority of instances I have already mentioned, are in *Hamlet*, for we know from the quartos of 1603 and 1604 Shakespeare was revising and enlarging this play just at the time of the publication of Florio's Montaigne.

The main fact in the plot of *Hamlet* is—

> Conjugem stupro abstulit regnumque furto
>
> (Seneca, *Thyestes*, line 222),

the translation of which is, "He seduced his wife and stole his kingdom."

How appropriately Shakespeare expands the last part of this passage is seen by the following:—

> A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
> That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
> And put it in his pocket!
> (*Hamlet*, III. iv. 98–100.)

The word "*incassum*" at the top of Plate I. has even a more striking translation in the words of *Hamlet*, I. ii. 133, "stale, flat, and unprofitable."

There is one more reference to Seneca in these notes (Plate IV. Fig. 2) where the writer gives chapter and line of a quotation from the *Clementia* of Seneca. The text of "the Montaigne," to which this is a marginal note, and can partially be verified by the photograph, is as follows. The first Latin quotation is the Seneca referred to—

> For that is the extremest point whereunto the cruelty of man may attain, *Ut homo hominem, non iratus non timens tantum spectaturus occidat*, "That one man should kill another neither being angry nor afeard." As for me, I could never so much as endure to see a *poor silly and innocent* beast pursued and killed which is harmless and void of defence, and of whom we receive no offence at all. And as it commonly happeneth when the *stag* begins to be *embossed*, and finds his strength to fail him, having no other remedy left him, doth yield and *bequeath* himself unto us that pursue him, with *tears* suing us for mercy *questusque cruentus atque imploranti similis*, with blood from throat and *tears* from eyes it seems that he for pity cries, was ever a grievous *spectacle* unto me.
> ("The Montaigne," bk. ii. cap. 2, fol. 249, Mor. 217, ii.)

The greater part of *As You Like It*, II. i., is an expansion of this idea. I quote a few of the most important lines, though all are worth considering—

> *Duke.* Come, shall we go and kill us venison?
> And yet it irks me the *poor dappled fools* . . .
> *First Lord.* The melancholy Jaques grieves at that;
> . . . a *poor* sequestered *stag*
> That from the hunters' aim had ta'en a hurt,
> Did come to languish; and, indeed, my lord,
> *The wretched animal heaved forth such groans,
> That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
> Almost to bursting; and the big round *tears*
> Coursed one another down his *innocent* nose
> In piteous chase: and thus the hairy *fool*,
> Much marked of the melancholy Jaques,
> Stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook,
> Augmenting it with *tears*.
> *Duke.* But what said Jaques?
> Did he not moralize this *spectacle*?
> *First Lord.* O, yes, my lord, into a thousand *similes*
> . . . . . .
> "thou makest a *testament*."
> *Duke.* And did you leave him in this contemplation?
> *Second Lord.* We did, my lord, weeping and commenting
> Upon the *sobbing* deer.
> (*As You Like It*, II. i. 20–70.)

* This sentence gives the meaning of "embossed." For the word itself, see II. vii. 66.

The number of likenesses, verbal and otherwise, between these passages makes it impossible to conceive that in this case at any rate Shakespeare did not borrow from Florio's translation, and is evidence that Shakespeare finished *As You Like It* after 1603; but the important thing, in relation to the point which I am trying to prove, is that there is a note against it in a book, namely, "the Montaigne," in which Shakespeare's signature appears, and that that note is a reference to Seneca in the original Latin and showing acquaintance with it. As the *mise en scène* of *As You Like It* is France, and Jaques is a philosopher and in no way mixed up with the plot, may he not be a portrait of Montaigne himself?

So we have three references to Seneca, presumably in Shakespeare's hand, which must have been got from the original, as they are in no way referred to in the pages of "the Montaigne," and, bearing this in mind, it is a singular coincidence that in a translation of Seneca in the Garrick collection of the British Museum before referred to, there should appear in the first flyleaf the writing (Plate III. Fig. 12)—

S. Graviora Tuli,

the translation of which is, "I have borne heavier things," and which is very like in writing to Plate III. Fig. 13, and has besides this a capital *S* not unlike that in Plate III. Fig. 3, with the same superfluous downstroke appearing in Plate III. Fig. 7, and reminds one forcibly of the words of the only passage where Seneca is mentioned by name in Shakespeare—

> Seneca cannot be too heavy.
>
> (*Hamlet*, II. ii. 419.)

Plate IV. Fig. 3 is a reference to Ovid on page 600 of "the Montaigne," and is the only reference I cannot in any way compare with Shakespeare, but by looking at the photograph the reader will see the idea is not a striking one. It is, however, hardly worth arguing that the author of *Venus and Adonis* had an acquaintance with Ovid when the introduction of that poem is—

> Vilia miretur vulgus; mihi flavus Apollo
> Pocula Castaliâ plena ministrat aquâ.
>
> (Ovid, *Am.* I. xv. 35.)

Plate III. Fig. 14 is a reference to Virgil. This stands on a different footing from the other references. It is the first on a list of omissions in "the Montaigne," all of which Ben Jonson inserted in ink in the text of his copy of Florio's Montaigne, also to be seen in the British Museum. Shakespeare seems to have begun to insert this list in "the Montaigne," but got no further than the first omission. There is no evidence here at any rate that Shakespeare was acquainted with Virgil in the original, because the reference is merely a copy, which the Seneca and Ovid references inserted by him are not.

We now pass to the last Latin quotation (Plate III. Fig. 9)—

SEMEL IN MENSE AD PURGANDOS RENES. HIPP.

The translation is, "Once in the month to purge the reins." There is no doubt this must be from Hippocrates, a famous doctor who lived in Cos B.C. 400, and under whose name many treatises on physic have come down to us, which have been translated into Latin. The quotation is of a medical nature, and it is surely more than a mere coincidence that the only passage in which Shakespeare uses the word "reins" in this particular sense should be—

> For my belly's as cold as if I had swallowed snowballs for pills to cool the *reins*
> (*Merry Wives*, III. v. 23),

and that the only passage where Hippocrates is mentioned should be in the same Act, where Sir Hugh Evans says of Doctor Caius—

> He has no more knowledge in Hibocrates and Galen.
> (*Merry Wives*, III. i. 64.)

There is now only one figure the subject-matter of which we have to consider, namely (Plate III. Fig. 11)—

ASSAIES.

This is important as showing the early age of these writings, the old form of essay being used even when in the Frontispiece of "the Montaigne" the more modern form is printed. Murray's Dictionary says—

> "In French the etymological essai has now quite ousted assai, and in English since the end of the sixteenth century."

That Shakespeare was devoted to the old form, is proved by the fact that out of the nineteen times where he uses the word, only twice does he use the more modern one, in *Lear*, I. ii. 37, and Sonnet 110. This is certainly relevant to the argument that Shakespeare's pen traced "assaies" on the fore-edge. The unevenness of the edges of the leaves is very well reproduced in the photograph, and we know also Shakespeare's partiality for the use of the form of *s* there appearing by its being in all the "legal signatures" except one.

CHAPTER IV

> By my life, this is my lady's hand: these be her C's, her U's, and her T's; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.
>
> (*Twelfth Night*, II. v. 98.)

So reasoned Malvolio hastily as to the forged letter of Olivia; but before entering on this process of discussing the formation of the letters so as to prove the genuineness of the autograph and also of the notes in "the Montaigne,"—I hope to better purpose than did Malvolio,—I shall quote some of the principal opinions on "the Montaigne" and the writings in it.

Sir Frederick Madden, in his pamphlet on the genuineness of the autograph in "the Montaigne," writes on p. 6 as follows:—

> "The present autograph challenges and defies suspicion, and has already passed the ordeal of numerous competent examiners, all of whom without a single doubt expressed their conviction of its genuineness."

On p. 9 he writes—

> "The copy of Montaigne's work in Mr. Patterson's hands has suffered in some degree from damp, so that the flyleaves at the beginning and the end have become loose and the edges somewhat worn. On the top of the same page which contains Shakespeare's autograph are written in a smaller hand, in my opinion a more recent hand, two short sentences from the *Thyestes* of Seneca. . . . The same hand has written, apparently, on the flyleaf at the end of the volume many similar Latin sentences with references to the pages of Montaigne's work, from which they are all borrowed."

He then ascribes the marginal notes to the same hand, but he does not mention the other references on the last flyleaf, nor the fact that the references to Seneca, Ovid, and Hippocrates imply knowledge of facts outside "the Montaigne." He does acknowledge, however, that the word on the fore-edge (Plate III. Fig 11) is "Assaies."

Mr. G. H. Rodman, the present Record Keeper of the Probate Division of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice, who has a vast experience in manuscripts, and to whom I showed the writings on the Plates, expressed his opinion to the effect that he was not so confident as to the authenticity of the signature, but had no doubt of the rest of the handwriting in "the Montaigne" being contemporary with Shakespeare,—in this differing from Sir Frederick Madden, who considered they were in a "later hand."

Halliwell Phillips in his pamphlet on the spelling of Shakespeare's name says, p. 14—

> "A signature in a copy of Florio's translation, of Montaigne, 1603, is open to the objection that the

verbal evidence as to its existence only extends as far back as 1780, after the publication of Stevens' facsimile of the last autograph in the will; of which it may be a copy with intentional variations."

How a book like "the Montaigne" could have a pedigree like a legal document I fail to see. It was about 1780 that the importance of possessing Shakespeare's signature came to be known, and the wonder is that more books of his have not been found.

As I have pointed out, Plate III. Fig 12 is strong evidence that the translation of Seneca, in which it appears, was his; and the probability is that more were discovered, but were put out of court as forgeries on account of the unlikeness of signatures, to which I shall refer hereafter, and some such inconclusive reasoning as appears on p. 15 of the same pamphlet of Halliwell Phillips—

"There was an inhabitant of Stratford—a poet Jordan—a person of some natural talent, who died in the year 1798. Jordan certainly manufactured one Shakespeare autograph on the flyleaf of an old edition of Bacon's Essays, which he showed to Mr. Wheeler, and the fabricator of one *may* have been the ingenious author of others."

Because it is certain that *one* is a forgery, to assume that all are is hardly logic. Toulmin Smith says of "the Montaigne"—

"Now the work is a goodly folio, and is a noted work in itself and an ornament to any library. Mr. Patterson must be presumed to have been a man of education. The name of Shakespeare had been greatly glorified in both the first and second halves of the eighteenth century, Garrick glorified it in the middle of the century, and yet we are asked to believe that Mr. Patterson, knowing of the signature, did not know, or care to let anyone else know, how he came by the book, and let it lie on the shelves unseen by any of those who were making the name and fame of Shakespeare resound through the world."

My experience is, that unless people want money they are generally reticent as to their treasures, that hardly anyone knows how books in an old library came into it, and that the great majority of them lie on the shelves without any investigation by their present owners as to the names of those who originally possessed them or otherwise. Mr. Toulmin Smith proceeds to show differences between the letters in this signature and those in the "legal signatures," pointing out especially the *W*, which in this alone comes below the line of the other letters. By this form of reason (Plate III. Fig 5) the signature to the deed in the British Museum might (if not from other sources it was proved to be genuine) be shown to be a forgery, as the *h* and *p* are different from all the other *h*'s and *p*'s in the "legal signatures." However, Toulmin Smith, writing in the *Times* of November 2, 1864, in favour of the genuineness of the signature in Shakespeare's Prayer-book, uses unconsciously very strong arguments in favour of the Montaigne signature—

"The writing of this signature is not identical with any known signatures of Shakespeare, but the character of the writing is the same, and the differences are strong proofs of the genuineness instead of the contrary. A forger or mere imitator would not have made differences of the sort that are here actually found. It must be borne in mind that there is a difference of sixteen years between the date found under the signature in this book and the date of Shakespeare's will."

It must always be remembered that the signature in "the Montaigne" was probably ten years before any of the "legal signatures."

Furnival merely says—

"The signature in Florio's Montaigne in the British Museum, and a prayer-book, have no pedigree, and therefore need not be considered."

If there is as little force in this argument against considering the genuineness of "the Montaigne" signature, I am sure steps ought to be taken to investigate further the genuineness of the prayer-book signature if it can be found.

Having thus dealt with the principal criticisms, I shall myself proceed to compare in detail the "legal signatures" with each other, and then with the disputed signature; next, I shall try to prove that there are characteristics common to both the "legal signatures" and the other manuscript notes in "the Montaigne" which though contemporary with Bacon have no other resemblance to his handwriting, a specimen of which is shown in Plate IV. Fig 1.

> I will this night,
> In several hands, in at his windows throw,
> As if they came from several citizens,
> Writings.
>
> (*Julius Cæsar*, I. ii. 319.)

Judging from the utter unlikeness between all Shakespeare's "legal signatures," nobody could have done that better than William Shakespeare. Looking at them from the point of view of character, nobody would say that Plate III. Figs. 3 and 5 were from the same pen, and written within a short time of one another, yet there is no doubt about this fact, as the two legal documents in which they occur are still in existence. The capitals *W* and *S* and the small letters *h*, *k*, and *p*, are formed in a totally different manner; the last line in the *m* of Fig. 3 is turned up in a curve, while that of Fig. 5 is turned down. In fact, the small *a* and *s* are the only two letters alike. This likeness appears in all the "legal signatures," except that the *s* is looped in Fig. 4, but after the *p* the letters in all of them are indecipherable and have no likeness the one to the other. This may have been an abbreviation or hurried way of writing *eare*, the spelling in the body of the deed in the British Museum and also in the quartos of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, which must have been published under the author's supervision. I do not think it has been suggested before that his signatures are abbreviated, but the spelling of his name could not have been of great importance to him, nor indeed can I see how it can be to anyone; although, judging from the plays, as variety seems to be their leading characteristic, it is not unlikely that Shakespeare may have liked his name to be spelt in as many different ways as possible. That is, however, hardly a tenable theory, for there is no trace in the "legal signatures" of his adopting the spelling Shackspeare of the body of the will.

As regards abbreviations, there are two others in the "legal signatures" besides the consistent dropping of the *e* after the *k* (if that formation is not really a contraction

for *ke*). There are many others in the notes, which show the writer's desire to save time, and account for the many obviously wrong readings in the First Folio, which, according to the preface, purports to be from manuscript, though this is a disputed point. In the two last-mentioned deeds, the signatures of which we are now comparing, it will be seen from the photograph that he had not room; and in the will and the great majority of the notes the writing is more shaky. In fact, it will be seen that in comparing all the "legal signatures" *difference* is the rule, likeness the exception. All the *W's* are different, except that there is some family likeness between the formations of those in Figs. 3 and 4, while the dot in the last curve of Fig. 7 does not appear in Fig. 4 but does in Fig. 3. The *i's* are all as different as possible; some dotted and some undotted, some round at the bottom and some pointed, some with a tag at the top and some without. The double *l's* are differently formed, though they are in all cases carefully looped (as to this note Plate II. Fig. 5). There is a family likeness between the capital *S's* of Figs. 3 and 5, and between those of Figs. 4 and 7, but really none between the two pairs. There is a family likeness between the *h's* of Figs. 5 and 7, though the latter comes well below the line; the *p's* of Figs. 3, 4, and 7 have some likeness, but that of Fig. 5 is quite unique. Bearing these facts in mind, one is drawn irresistibly to the conclusion that Shakespeare made his signature a field for experimenting in the forms of letters, and that the test of a genuine signature is in any case dissimilarity; while there ought to be family likenesses in the letters to those of the "legal signatures." Now let us apply this test to Plate III. Fig. 2. The capital *W* is the same formation as that of Fig. 7, with the straight line downwards with a dot after the last upstroke similar in character and place to that of both Figs. 3 and 7. Referring to the length of this *W*, and of the downstroke of the *p*, it may be seen from the "legal signatures" that he suited their size to that of the paper on which he had to sign; and this being a very large space, as we see by Plate I., he had room for those long strokes which he shows he had a partiality for by using three of them in Fig. 7, the only "legal signature" which is not in a cramped space.

The *i* has a small tag at the top like those in Figs. 4 and 6, and the same curious bend back at the bottom which is in Figs. 3 and 6 but not in Figs. 4 and 7.

The double *l* is like that in Fig. 6, with the two parallel upright lines and the points at the bottom, but unlike those of the other "legal signatures" except for the loop.

The *m* is like that of Figs. 5 and 6, the three strokes being of equal length and parallel, which is not the case in Figs. 3, 4, and 7.

The strokes of the capital *S* are like those of Fig. 4, though those of a much firmer hand, but this can be accounted for by the more advanced age of the writer.

The *h* is like that of Fig. 7, though the straight top is like that of Fig. 5.

The *a* is slightly larger than those of the "legal signatures," but too much stress cannot be put on that point, and it is broken at the top like the *a* in the surname of Fig. 7.

The *k* is not identical with that of any of the "legal signatures," but it is similar in formation to that in Fig. 3 with a tag on at the top.

The long *s* has the same fineness and delicacy as that of Figs. 3 and 5, with the same blot at the lower end.

The *p* is like that in Fig. 3, with a longer downstroke.

As I have pointed out, with the letters after *p* no deductions can be drawn except that indistinctness is common to them all. What forger could have devised so many likenesses and unlikenesses, especially at a time when all the signatures had not been made public?

In comparing the handwriting of the notes in "the Montaigne," the note in the Clarendon Press series to *Hamlet*, v. ii. 35 (which passage I have already quoted, p. 2), must be borne in mind. Ritson quotes from Florio's translation of Montaigne, ed. 1603, p. 125—

> "I have in my time seen some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprenticage, mar their pen, and affect their ignorance of so vulgar a quality."

Blackstone says—

> "Most of the great men of Shakespeare's time whose autographs have been preserved wrote very bad hands, their secretaries very neat ones."

This affectation of being an indifferent writer would apply more to the signatures than to the notes in "the Montaigne," which could only have been intended for the writer's own edification. This accounts for there being no archaic forms of letters, besides the well-known fact that in documents of that period, which are written in an archaic form, wherever a Latin quotation occurs the more modern letters are always used. For instance, Shakespeare may have affected the archaic form of the letter *p* only in his signatures, as we know that he sometimes used the more modern one from the specimen in Plate III. Fig. 5. See also Plate IV. Fig. 1.

Whatever apparent differences there may be between these notes in "the Montaigne" and the "legal signatures," I shall now give habits and characteristics common to both which go far to prove that they came from the same pen.

(1) The habit of turning up the downstroke of the long unlooped *s* at the bottom so as to often form a small blot is common to the long *s's* in the "legal signatures" and those in the notes, Plate II. Figs. 9, 13, and 14. The same habit appears in the *Æ* of Plate III. Fig. 14, and the *G* of Plate II. Fig. 9, and the *A* of Plate II. Fig. 2.

(2) The curve of the long *s* in *conscientiæ*, Plate II. Fig. 9, is almost identical with that in Plate III. Fig. 3, but very different from that in the *suæ* of Plate II. Fig. 7, which is like that in Plate III. Fig. 5.

(3) The double *l* of *vellere* in Plate II. Fig. 5 is carefully looped like all the double *l's* in the signatures (see my previous remarks on the double *l*, p. 30).

(4) The character of the capital *B* in Plate II. Fig. 5, and Plate III. Fig. 8,

is very much the same as the *By* of Plate III. Fig. 7 without the flourish at the beginning—

Fair as a text B in a copy-book.

(*Love's Labour Lost*, v. ii. 42.)

(5) There is the same tendency in Plate III. Figs. 8, 9, and 10, and Plate II. Fig. 6, to bring unnecessary straight lines below the line of the other letters, and as all the writing is somewhat shaky this habit may throw some light on the line in Sonnet 76—

That every word doth almost tell my name,

which seems to allude to a pun on his own name Shake spear, and becomes more probable when we consider the partiality for puns shown in the plays.

(6) The small upstroke starting from the end of the last curve of the *s* in *semel*, Plate III. Fig. 9, appears in the *s* of Plate III. Fig. 7.

(7) Note the dot in the *D* of Plate II. Fig. 11, which is similar to that in the *W* Plate III. Figs. 3 and 7.

(8) The indistinctness of the last part of Plate II. Fig. 10 is like that at the end of the signatures.

(9) There is the same difference between the appearance of one note and another as there is between one signature and another. Compare Plate III. Figs. 8 and 13, Plate II. Figs. 11 and 13.

None of these traits common to both the signatures and the notes, which, considering the paucity of the materials for comparison, the reader will allow to be striking, appear in Plate IV. Fig. 1. On the other hand, the writing in Plate IV. Fig. 1 is sufficiently like the notes in "the Montaigne" to prove them contemporary.

In any case, the objections to the theory that the signatures and the notes in "the Montaigne" are in the same hand are not sufficiently weighty to rebut the presumption raised by the internal evidence stated at length in Chapters II. and III.

CONCLUSION

On considering this accumulation of evidence it can easily be seen that the testimony is not of equal value in every case, but, on he other hand, how could it be so?

Supposing there had only been the sentence "*ipsa se velocitas implicat*" (see Plate II. Fig. 6) in a book which purports to have Shakespeare's signature in it, the fact that it has been twice translated in his plays in such a literal manner as "whose violent property fordoes itself" and "force intangles itself," would be strong evidence of the genuineness of the signature in "the Montaigne" apart from the question of the similarity of handwriting. But when it further appears that the word "intangles" is the same as that of the translation in the text of "the Montaigne" the evidence becomes so strong as to prove a *primâ facie* case.

There are several ways in which the Baconians may try to rebut the presumption, namely, by showing that the remainder of the manuscript notes had no relation to the plays, and that their writing was so unlike that of the signatures as to preclude all possibility of the same hand having written both. So far from this being the case, I have shown in Chapters II. and III. the close relationship of these notes and their context in "the Montaigne" to the plays, and in Chapter IV. that, even though signatures are not good guides to general handwriting, yet there are characteristics common to both which prove they came from the same hand. The evidence is therefore cumulative. I have no doubt that the Baconians also when at bay would contend that Bacon wrote these Latin sentences and marginal notes, and either forged the signature himself (for the extent of their ingenuity is measureless) or that it was forged afterwards. I have met this argument by giving a facsimile of a page out of Bacon's *Promus and Formularies*, by which Mrs. Pott has attempted to corroborate the Baconian theory; this serves the double purpose of showing that the notes in "the Montaigne" are not from Bacon's pen, for there are no leading characteristics common to both, and nothing like the same number of abbreviations; and also that the writing, though in no way the same, belongs to the same age, and corroborates Mr. Rodman's opinion to the same effect. The fact that none of these arguments were brought forward in support of the genuineness of the signature in "the Montaigne" when it was sold to the British Museum, makes any argument that there was a conspiracy to defraud absolutely futile.

Some may think that it detracts from the fair fame of our national poet to show that "he built his monument more durable than brass" on the thoughts of others without acknowledgment; but it must be remembered that the nature of his art forbade him from expressing his indebtedness to the writings of others, as Montaigne openly does to the authors whom he quotes, and that those thoughts gain, as I have shown, a fresh charm and dignity by passing through the poet's mind. The reverence of the reader ought also to be increased when he considers that not only the wisdom of Shakespeare, but also the "better part" of Plutarch, Hippocrates, Ovid, Seneca, Holinshed, Bacon, and Montaigne, and probably many others who had read a little of "nature's infinite book of secrecy," is distilled in these plays. Besides, in a marked passage of "the Montaigne" the author seems to excuse plagiarism, at any rate to a certain extent—

Quo mihi fortunam si non conceditur uti? "Whereto should I have much if I to use it grutch?" I who am ready to depart this world could easily be induced to assign the share of wisdom I have learned concerning the world's commerce to any man new come into the world.

("The Montaigne," bk. iii. cap. 10, fol. 604, Mor. 518.)

Could anything have pleased the cosmopolitan Montaigne more than to think that that man should be "the foremost man of all the world"—William Shakespeare—who was such a student of him?

Shakespeare in his turn, in Sonnet 76, admits his debt of gratitude to all the writers he borrows from—

So all my best is dressing old words new,

which line disarms the well-known criticism of one of his contemporaries that "he beautified himself with other men's feathers."

FINIS

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