

VARIOUS

NOTES AND QUERIES,
NUMBER 53, NOVEMBER
2, 1850

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Various Notes and Queries, Number 53, November 2, 1850

NOTES

SHAKSPEARE AND MARLOWE

A special use of, a use, indeed, that gives a special value to your publication, is the communication through its means of facts and conclusions for the information or assistance of editors or intending editors. I do not suppose that any gentleman occupying this position would be guilty of so much disrespect to the many eminent names which have already appeared in your columns, as would be implied in not giving all the attention it deserved to any communication you might see fit to publish; and with this feeling, and under this shelter, I return to the subject of Marlowe, and his position as a dramatic writer relative to Shakspeare. I perceive that a re-issue of Mr. Knight's *Shakspeare* has commenced, and from the terms of the announcement, independently of other considerations, I conclude that the editor will take advantage of this opportunity of referring to doubtful or disputed points that may have made any advance towards a solution since his previous editions. I have read also an advertisement of an edition of Shakspeare, to be superintended by Mr. Halliwell*, which is to contain the plays of "doubtful authenticity, or in the composition of which Shakspeare is supposed only to have taken a part." Neither of these gentlemen can well avoid expressing an opinion on the subject I have adverted to, and to them more especially I would address my observations.

I think I have observed that the claims of Marlowe have been maintained with something very like party spirit. I have seen latterly several indications of this, unmistakeable, though expressed, perhaps, but by a single word. Now it is true both Mr. Collier and Mr. Dyce are committed to a positive opinion on this subject; and it would be unreasonable to expect either of those gentlemen to change their views, except with the fullest proof and after the maturest consideration. But who, besides these, is interested in maintaining the precedence of Marlowe? These remarks have been called forth by an article in the *Athenæum*, containing the following passages:—

"All Marlowe's works were produced prior, we may safely assert, to the appearance of Shakspeare *as a writer for the stage*, or as an author, in print.

"It is now universally admitted among competent critics, that Shakspeare commenced his career as a dramatic author, by remodelling certain pieces written either separately or conjointly by Greene, Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele."

An anonymous writer commits himself to nothing, and I should not have noticed the above but that they illustrate my position. In the passage first cited, if the writer mean "as a writer for the stage *in print*," it proves nothing; but if the words "in print" are not intended to be so connected, the assertion cannot be proved, and *many* "competent critics" will tell him it is most improbable. The assertion of the second quotation is simply untrue; Mr. Knight has not admitted what is stated therein, and if I recollect right, an Edinburgh Reviewer has concurred with him in judgment. Neither of these, I presume, will be called incompetent. I cannot suppose that either assertion would have

* This communication was written and in our hands before the appearance of Mr. Halliwell's advertisement and letter to *The Times*, announcing that the edition of Shakspeare advertised as *to be* edited by him and published by the Messrs. Tallis, is only a reprint of an edition, with Notes and Introductions by Mr. Halliwell, which was commenced at New York some months ago.—ED.

been made but for the spirit to which I have alluded; for no cause was ever the better for allegations that could not be maintained.

In some former papers which you did me the honour to publish, I gave it incidentally as my opinion that Marlowe was the author of the *Taming of a Shrew*. I have since learned, through Mr. Halliwell, that Mr. Dyce is confident, from the style, that he was not. Had I the opportunity, I might ask Mr. Dyce "which style?" That of the passages I cited as being identical with passages in Marlowe's acknowledged plays will not, I presume, be disputed; and of that of such scenes as the one between Sander and the tailor, I am as confident as Mr. Dyce; it is the style rather of Shakspeare than Marlowe. In other respects, I learn that the kind of evidence that is considered by Mr. Dyce good to sustain the claim of Marlowe to the authorship of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedy*, is not admissible in support of his claim to the *Taming of a Shrew*. I shall take another opportunity of showing that the very passages cited by Mr. Dyce from the two first-named of these plays will support my view of the case, at least as well as his; doing no more now than simply recording an *opinion* that Marlowe was a follower and imitator of Shakspeare. I do not know that I am at present in a position to maintain this opinion by argument; but I can, at all events, show on what exceedingly slight grounds the contrary opinion has been founded.

I have already called attention to the fact, that the impression of Marlowe's being an earlier writer than Shakspeare, was founded solely upon the circumstance that his plays were printed at an earlier date. That nothing could be more fallacious than this conclusion, the fact that many of Shakspeare's earliest plays were not printed at all until after his death is sufficient to evince. The motive for withholding Shakspeare's plays from the press is as easily understood as that for publishing Marlowe's. Thus stood the question when Mr. Collier approached the subject. Meanwhile it should be borne in mind, that not a syllable of evidence has been advanced to show that Shakspeare could not have written the *First part of the Contention* and the *True Tragedy*, if not the later forms of *Henry VI.*, *Hamlet* and *Pericles* in their earliest forms, if not *Timon of Athens*, which I think is also an early play revised, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, &c., all of which I should place at least seven years distance from plays which I think were acted about 1594 or 1595. I now proceed to give the kernel of Mr. Collier's argument, omitting nothing that is really important to the question:—

"Give me the man' (says Nash) 'whose extemporal vein, in any humour, will excel our greatest *art masters*' deliberate thoughts.'

"Green, in 1588, says he had been 'had in derision' by 'two gentlemen poets' because I could not make my verses get on the stage in tragical buskins, every word filling the mouth like the faburden of Bow-bell, daring God out of heaven with that atheist tamburlane, or blaspheming with the mad priest of the sun. Farther on he laughs at the 'prophetical spirits' of those 'who set the end of scholarism in an *English blank-verse*.'

"Marlowe took his degree of *Master of Arts* in the very year when Nash was unable to do so, &c.

"I thus arrive at the conclusion, that Christopher Marlowe was our first poet who used blank-verse in dramatic compositions performed in public theatres."—*Hist. of Dramatic Poetry*, vol. iii. pp. 110, 111, 112.

This is literally all; and, I ask, can any "conclusion" be much more inconclusive? Yet Mr. Collier has been so far misled by the deference paid to him on the strength of his unquestionably great services, and appears to have been so fully persuaded of the correctness of his deduction, that he has since referred to as a *proved fact* what is really nothing more than an exceedingly *loose conjecture*.

Of the two editors whose names I have mentioned, Mr. Knight's hitherto expressed opinions in reference to the early stage of Shakspeare's career in a great measure coincide with mine; and I have no reason to suppose that it is otherwise than an open question to Mr. Halliwell. For satisfactory

proof in support of my position, time only, I firmly believe, is required; but the first stage in every case is to remove the false conclusion that has been drawn, to weaken its impression, and to reduce it to its true value; and that I have endeavoured to do in the present paper. In conclusion, I take the opportunity of saying, as the circumstance in some degree bears upon the present question, that the evidence in support of the priority of Shakspeare's *Taming of the Shrew* to the so-called older play which I withheld, together with what I have collected since my last paper on the subject, is I think stronger even than that which I communicated.

SAMUEL HICKSON.

October, 1850.

A PLAN FOR A CHURCH-HISTORY SOCIETY

The formation of a Society, having for its object any special literary service, is a matter so closely connected with the very purpose for which this paper was established, that we shall only be carrying out that purpose by calling the attention of our readers to a small pamphlet in which our valued correspondent DR. MAITLAND offers a few suggestions to all who may be interested in the formation of a "CHURCH-HISTORY SOCIETY, and willing to co-operate in such a design."

DR. MAITLAND'S suggestions are:

1. The collection of a library containing the books particularly required for the objects of the proposed society: and those who have not paid attention to the subject will perhaps be surprised to learn that in DR. MAITLAND'S opinion (and few higher authorities can be found on this point), "A moderate-sized room would hold such a library, and a very few hundred pounds would pay for it." On the advantage of this plan to the editors of the works to be published by the Society, it can scarcely be necessary to insist; but other benefits would result from the formation of such a library, for which we may refer, however, to the pamphlet itself.

The next points treated of are the works to be undertaken by the Society; which may briefly be described as

2. New and corrected editions of works already known and esteemed; critical editions, for instance, of such well-known writers as Fox, Fuller, Burnet, and Strype: and the completion, by way of "posting up," of such as have become defective through lapse of time, like Le Neve's *Fasti*, Godwin's *De Presulibus*, &c.

3. The compilation of such original works as may be considered desiderata. A General Church-History on such a scale, and so far entering into details as to interest a reader, is not to be found in our language; nor has the Church of England any thing like the *Gallia Christiana* or *Italia Sacra*. We mention these merely as instances, referring, of course, for further illustration to the pamphlet itself, merely quoting the following paragraph:—

"But on the subject of publication, I must add one thing more, which appeals to me to be of vital importance to the respectability and efficiency of such a Society. It must not build its hopes, and stake its existence, on the cupidity of subscribers—it must not live on appeals to their covetousness—it must not be, nor act as if it were, a joint-stock company formed to undersell the trade. It must not rest on the chance of getting subscribers who will shut their eyes, and open their mouths, and take what is given them, on a mere assurance that it shall be more in quantity for the money, than a bookseller can afford to offer."

DR. MAITLAND's fourth section, on the *Discovery of Materials*, tempts us to further extracts. After remarking that

"It would be a most important and valuable part of the Society's work to discover in various ways—chiefly by the employing fit persons to look for, inspect, and make known—such materials for Church-History as remain unpublished."

And

"That no person, not wholly illiterate and ignorant of Church-History, could go about the metropolis only, seeking after such matters during one month, without gathering into his note-book much valuable matter."

The Doctor proceeds:

"By those who have not been led to consideration or inquiry upon the subject, this may be deemed a mere speculation; but those who are even slightly

acquainted with the real state of things, will, I believe agree with me that if men, respectable and in earnest and moderately informed, would only set about the matter, they would soon be astonished at the ease and rapidity with which they would accumulate interesting and valuable matter. Transcribing and printing, it is admitted, are expensive processes, and little could be effected by them at first; but merely to make known to the world by hasty, imperfect, even blundering, lists or indexes, that things unsought and unknown *exist*, would be an invaluable benefit."

We pass over the section on *Correspondence*, and that on the establishment of *Provincial Societies*; but from the last, *On the Privileges of Members*, we quote at even greater length.

"It is but honest to confess in plain terms, that the chief and most obvious privilege of members at first, is likely to be little more than a satisfactory belief that they are doing a good work, and serving their generation. In a word, the nicely-balanced *quid pro quo* is not offered. It might be prudent for the present to confine one's self to a positive assurance that the Society will, at the worst, make as good a return as several other societies formed for the promotion and cultivation of other branches of knowledge. If subscribers will only be content to pay as much, and receive as little, as the fellows of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, the Church-History Society will thrive. But considering the nature and object of the proposed Society, I cannot help expressing my confidence that there are many Christian people who will give their money freely, and no more wish to have part of it returned, than if they had put it into a plate at a church-door—let them only be satisfied that it will not be embezzled or turned into waste paper.

"At the same time, the members of the Society might derive some legitimate benefits. They would have constantly increasing advantages from the use of their library, which would gradually become, not only rich in books, but in transcripts, catalogues, indexes, notices, &c., not to be found together elsewhere. Of all these they would have a right to as much use and advantage as joint-proprietors could enjoy without hindrance to each other. With regard to works published by the Society, they might reasonably expect to be supplied with such as they should choose to possess, on the same terms as if they were the authors, or the owners of the copyright. These, however, are details which, with many others, must be settled by the managers; they are not mentioned as matters of primary importance or inducement."

DR. MAITLAND concludes by observing, that he should not have ventured to publish his plan, had he not been encouraged to do so by some whose judgment he respected; and by inviting all who may approve or sanction the plan, to make known (either by direct communication to himself, or in any other way) their willingness to support such a Society, and the amount of contribution, or annual donation, which, if the design is carried out, may be expected from them. Of course such expressions of opinion would be purely conditional, and would not pledge the writers to support the Society if, when organised, they did not approve of the arrangements; but it is clear no such arrangements can well be made until something, is known as to the amount of support which may be expected.

We have entered at some length upon this *Plan of a Church-History Society*, and have quoted largely from DR. MAITLAND's pamphlet, because we believe the subject to be one likely to interest a large body of our readers, who might otherwise not have their attention called to a proposal calculated to advance one of the most important branches of historical learning.

BURNET AS A HISTORIAN

The following extract from Charles Lamb ought to be added to the *testimonia* already given by "NOTES AND QUERIES" (Vol. i., pp. 40. 181. 341. 493.):—

"*Burnet's Own Times*.—Did you ever read that garrulous, pleasant history? He tells his story like an old man past political service, bragging to his sons on winter evenings of the part he took in public transactions when his 'old cap was new.' Full of scandal, which all true history is. So palliative; but all the stark wickedness that actually gives the *momentum* to national actors. Quite the prattle of age and outlived importance. Truth and sincerity staring out upon you perpetually *in alto relievo*. Himself a party-man, he makes you a party-man. None of the cursed philosophical Humeian indifference, 'so cold and unnatural and inhuman.' None of the cursed Gibbonian fine writing, so fine and composite. None of Dr. Robertson's periods with three members. None of Mr. Roscoe's sage remarks, all so apposite and coming in so clever, lest the reader should have had the trouble of drawing an inference. Burnet's good old prattle I can bring present to my mind; I can make the Revolution present to me."—*Charles Lamb: Letters*.
GUSTAVE MASSON.

Hadley, near Barnet.

Bishop Burnet.—An Epigram on the Reverend Mr. Lawrence Eachard's and Bishop Gilbert Burnet's Histories. By MR. MATTHEW GREEN, of the Custom-House.

"Gil's History appears to me
Political anatomy,
A case of skeletons well done,
And malefactors every one.
His sharp and strong incision pen,
Historically cuts up men,
And does with lucid skill impart
Their inward ails of head and heart.
Lawrence proceeds another way,
And well-dressed figures does display:
His characters are all in flesh,
Their hands are fair, their faces fresh;
And from his sweet'ning art derive
A better scent than when alive;
He wax-work made to please the sons,
Whose fathers were Gil's skeletons."

From a *Collection of Poems by several hands*. London: Dodsley, 1748.

J. W. H.

EPIGRAMS FROM BUCHANAN

A beautiful nymph wish'd Narcissus to pet her;
But he saw in the fountain one *he* loved much better.
Thou hast look'd in his mirror and loved; but they tell us
No rival will tease thee, so never be jealous.

J.O.W.H.

There's a lie on thy cheek in its roses,
A lie echo'd back by thy glass,
Thy necklace on greenhorns imposes,
And the ring on thy finger is brass.
Yet thy tongue, I affirm, without giving an inch back,
Outdates the sham jewels, rouge, mirror and pinchbeck.

J.O.W.H.

MISTAKES ABOUT GEORGE CHAPMAN THE POET

Dr. W. Cooke Taylor, in the introduction to his elegant reprint of *Chapman's Homer*, says of George Chapman, that "he died on the 12th of May, 1655, and was buried at the south side of St. Giles's Church." The date here is an error; for 1655 we should read 1634.

Sir Egerton Brydges, in his edition of Phillip's *Theatrum Poetarum* (Canterbury, 1800, p. 252.), says of the same poet, "A monument was erected over his grave by Inigo Jones, which was destroyed with the old church." Here also is an error. Inigo Jones's altar-tomb to the memory of his friend is still to be seen in the churchyard, against the south wall of the church. The inscription, which has been imperfectly re-cut, is as follows:—

"Georgius Chapman
Poëta
MDCXX
Ignatius Jones,
Architectus Regius
ob honorem
bonarum Literarum
familiari
suo hoc mon
D.S.P.F.C."

There is no proof that Inigo Jones's tomb now occupies its original site. The statement that Chapman was studied on the south side of the church is, I believe, mere conjecture.

EDWARD F. RIMBAULT.

MINOR NOTES

Shakspeare and George Herbert.—Your correspondent D.S. (Vol. ii., p. 263.) has pointed out two illustrations to Shakspeare in George Herbert's poems. The *parallel passages*

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