VARIOUS

NOTES AND QUERIES, NUMBER 55, NOVEMBER 16, 1850

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NOTES

AUTHORSHIP OF "HENRY VIII."

In returning to the question of the authorship of *Henry VIII.*, I am anxious to remove a misconception under which MR. SPEDDING appears to labour relative to the purport of a remark I made in my last communication to you (Vol. ii., p. 198.) on this subject. As we appear to be perfectly agreed as to the reasons for assigning a considerable portion of this play to Fletcher, and as upon this basis we have each worked out a result that so exactly coincides with the other, I conclude that MR. SPEDDING, as well as myself, has rested his theory solely on positive grounds; that is, that he imagines there is strong internal evidence in favour of all that he ascribes to this writer. It follows, therefore that the "third hand" which he thought he detected must be sought rather in what remained to Shakspeare, than in that which had been already taken from him. I never for an instant doubted that

this was MR. SPEDDING's view; but the inequality which I supposed he had observed and accounted for in this way, I was disposed to refer to a mode of composition that must needs have been troublesome to Shakspeare. The fact is, that, with one or two exceptions, the scenes contributed by the latter are more *tamely* written than any but the earliest among his works; and these, different as they are, they recalled to my mind. But I have no doubt whatever that these scenes were all written about the same time; my feeling being, that after the opening Shakspeare ceased to feel any great interest in the work. Fletcher, on the other hand, would appear to have made a very great effort; and though some portions of the work I ascribe to him are tedious and overlaboured, no censure would weigh very strongly against the fact, that for more than two centuries they have been *applauded* as the work of Shakspeare.

As to the circumstances under which *Henry VIII.* was composed, it is an exceedingly difficult question; and if I venture, on the present occasion, to give the impression upon my mind, I do so, reserving to myself the full right to change my opinion whenever I shall have acquired more knowledge of the subject, or, from any other motive, shall see fit to do it. I consider this case, then, as one of joint authorship; in point of time not much later than the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, and in other respects similar to that play. If the conclusions of the article in the *Westminster Review*, to which MR. SPEDDING alludes, be accepted, the writer of the introductory notice to *Henry VIII.* in the *Illustrated*

Shakspeare, published by Tyas, will recognise the "reverent disciple" whom he hints at, but does not name. In short, I think that Fletcher was the pupil of Shakspeare; and this view, it appears to me, demands the serious attention of the biographer who next may study or speculate upon the great poet's life.

I don't know that I can add anything to MR. SPEDDING'S able analysis of *Henry VIII.* There are certain *tricks* of expression he, no doubt, has observed that characterise Fletcher's style, and which abound in the play. It might be useful to make notes of these; and, at some future time, I may send you a selection. I now beg to send you the following extracts, made some time ago, showing the doubts entertained by previous writers on the subject:—

> "Though it is very difficult to decide whether short pieces be genuine or spurious, yet I cannot restrain myself from expressing my suspicion that neither the prologue nor epilogue to this play is the work of Shakspeare. It appears to me very likely that they were supplied by the friendship or officiousness of Jonson, whose manner they will be *perhaps found exactly* to resemble."—*Johnson.*
>
> "Play revived in 1613." "Prologue and epilogue added by Jonson or some other person."—*Malone.*
>
> "I entirely agree with Dr. Johnson, that Ben Jonson wrote the prologue and epilogue to this play. Shakspeare had a little before assisted him in his *Sejanus*.... I think I now and then perceive his hand in the dialogue."—*Farmer.*
>
> "That Jonson was the author of the prologue and

epilogue to this play has been controverted by Mr. Gifford. That they were not the composition of Shakspeare himself is, I think, clear from internal evidence."—*Boswell.*

"I entirely agree with Dr. Johnson with respect to the time when these additional lines were inserted.... I suspect they were added in 1613, after Shakspeare had quitted the stage, by that hand which tampered with the other parts of the play so much as to have rendered the versification of it of a different colour from all the other plays of Shakspeare."—*Malone.*

"If the reviver of this play (or tamperer with it, as he is called by Mr. Malone) had so much influence over its numbers as to have entirely changed their texture, he must be supposed to have new-woven the substance of the whole piece; a fact almost incredible."—*Steevens.*

The double character of Wolsey drawn by Queen Katherine and her attendant, is a piece of vigorous writing of which any other author but Shakspeare might have been proud; and the celebrated farewell of the Cardinal, with his exhortation to Cromwell, only wants that quickening, that vital something which the poet could have breathed into it, to be truly and almost incomparably great.

"Our own conviction is that Shakspeare wrote a portion only of this play.

"It cannot for a moment be supposed that any alteration of Shakspeare's text would be necessary, or would be allowed; as little is it to be supposed that Shakspeare would commence a play in his old-accustomed, various, and unequalled verse, and finish it in the easy, but somewhat

lax and familiar, though not inharmonious numbers of a reverent disciple."—*Tyas's Shakspeare*, vol. iii. p. 441.

At the same time I made the following notes from Coleridge:—

"Classification, 1802.
3rd Epoch. Henry VIII. Gelegenheitsgedicht.
Classification, 1819.
3rd Epoch. Henry VIII., a sort of historical masque, or show-play."

"It (the historical drama) must likewise be poetical; that only, I mean, must be taken which is the permanent in our nature, which is common, and therefore deeply interesting to all ages."—*Lit. Rem.*, vol. ii. p.160.

What is said in this last extract might be applied (as Coleridge, I feel no doubt, had he gone one step farther into the subject, would have applied it) to the Shakspearian drama generally; and tried by this test *Henry VIII.* must certainly be found wanting.

Before I conclude I am anxious to make an observation with regard to the extract from Mr. Emerson's *Representative Men* (vol. ii. p. 307.). The essay from which this is taken, I presume to be the same, in a printed form, as a lecture which I heard that gentleman deliver. With abundant powers to form a judgment for himself, I should say that his mind had never been directed to questions of this nature. Accident, perhaps, had drawn his attention to the style of *Henry VIII.*; but, with reference to the general subject, he had received implicitly and unquestioned

the conclusions of authorities who have represented Shakspeare as the greatest borrower, plagiarist, and imitator that all time has brought forth. This, however, did not shake his faith in the poet's greatness; and to reconcile what to some would appear contradictory positions, he proposes the fact, I might say the truism, that the greatest man is not the most original, but the "most indebted" man. This, in the sense in which it is true, is saying no more than that the educated man is better than the savage; but, in the apologetic sense intended, it is equivalent to affirming that the greatest thief is the most respectable man. Confident in this morality, he assumes a previous play to Shakspeare's; but it appears to me that he relies too much upon the "cadence" of the lines: otherwise I could not account for his *selecting* as an "autograph" a scene that, to my mind, bears "unmistakeable traits" of Fletcher's hand, and that, by whomsoever written, is about the weakest in the whole play.

It is a branch of the subject which I have not yet fully considered; but MR. SPEDDING will observe that the view I take does not interfere with the supposition that Fletcher revised the play, with additions for its revival in 1613; a task for the performance of which he would probably have the consent of his early master.

SAMUEL HICKSON.

ON AUTHORS AND BOOKS, NO. IX

Eustache Deschamps. Except in the two centuries next after the conquest, contemporaneous French notices of early English writers seem to be of rather infrequent occurrence.

On this account, and on other accounts, the ballad addressed to Geoffrey Chaucer by Eustache Deschamps deserves repetition. Its text requires to be established, in order that we may be aware of its real obscurities—for no future memoir of Chaucer can be considered as complete, without some reference to it.

The best authorities on Eustache Deschamps are MM. Crapelet, Raynouard, and Paulin Paris. To M. Crapelet we are indebted for the publication of *Poésies morales et historiques d'Eustache Deschamps*; to M. Raynouard, for an able review of the volume in the *Journal des Savants*; and to M. Paulin Paris, for an account of the manuscript in which the numerous productions of the author are preserved. Of the author himself, the learned M. Paris thus writes:—

> "On pourroit surnommer Eustache Deschamps le Rutebeuf du XIV^{e} siècle.—Ses oeuvres comprennent des épitres, des discours en prose, des jeux dramatiques, des ouvrages latins, des apologues, un grand poème moral, et un infinité de ballades et rondeaux pieux, bouffons, satiriques," &c.

Two impressions of the ballad in question are before me; one, in the *Life of Geoffrey Chaucer by sir Harris Nicholas*, dated 1843—and the other in a volume entitled *Geoffrey Chaucer, poète anglais du XIV^e^ siècle. Analyses et Fragments par H. Gomont*, Paris, 1847.—I transcribe the ballad from the latter volume, as less accessible to English students:—

"BALLADE INÉDITE ADRESSÉE A GEOFFREY CHAUCER PAR EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS

O Socrates, plains de philosophie,
Senèque en meurs et *Anglais* en pratique,
Ouï des grans en ta poëterie,
Bries en parler, saiges en rethorique,
Virgiles tres haulz qui, par ta théorique,
Enlumines le règne d'Eneas,
Lisle aux geans, ceuls du Bruth, et qui as
Semé les fleurs et planté le rosier,
Aux ignorants, de la langue pandras
Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier.

Tu es d'amours mondains Dieux en Albie,
Et de la rose en la terre angélique,
Qui *d'Angela* Saxonne et (est) puis flourie
Angleterre (d'elle ce nom s'applique).

Le derrenier en l'éthimologique
En bon anglès le livre translatas;
Et un Vergier, où du plant demandas
De ceuls qui *sont* pour eulx auctorisier,
A ja long teams que tu édifias,
Grant tranlslateur noble Geffroy Chaucier.

A toy, pour ce, de la fontaine Helye
Requier avoir un *buvraige* autentique
Dont la doys est du tout en ta baillie,
Pour *rafrener* d'elle ma *soif* éthique
Qui men gaule seray paralitique
Jusques à ce que tu m'abuveras.
Eustaces sui qui de mon plant aras;
Mais pran en gre les euvres d'escolier
Que par Clifford de moy Bavoir pourras,
Grant translateur noble Geffroy Chaucier.

L'ENVOY

Poëte hauls loenge destynie
En ton jardin ne seroie qu'ortie
Considere ce que j'ai dit premier
Ton noble plant, ta douce melodie
Mais pour savoir de rescripre te prie,
Grant translateur noble Geoffroy Chaucier."

The new readings are in Italics, and I shall now repeat them with the corresponding words as printed by sir Harris Nicolas:—

> "Anglais=angles; Ouï des grans=Ovides grans; Virgiles=Aigles; d'Angela=dangels; sont=font; A ja=N'a pas; buvraige=ouvrage; rafrener=rafrecir; soif=soix; Qui men=Qu'en ma; En=Et."

After such an exhibition of various readings, arising out of only two copies of the same manuscript, it is evident that a re-collation of it is very desirable, and I am sure the result would be thankfully received by the numerous admirers of Chaucer.

BOLTON CORNEY.

Eustache Deschamps (Vol. ii., p. 376.).—J.M.B. is desirous of learning some particulars of this French poet, contemporaneous with Chaucer. He will find a brief notice of him in the *Recueil de Chants Historiques Français, depuis le XIIème jusqu'au XVIIIème Siècle*, by Le Roux de Lincy (2 vols. Paris, 1841, Libraire de Charles Espelin). He is there described as,

> "Ecuyer et huissier d'armes des rois Charles V. et Charles VI., qui resta toujours fidèle à la maison de France;"

And the editor adds:

> "Les œuvres d'Eustache Deschamps contiennent pour l'histoire du XIVème siècle des renseignemens précieux; on peut y recueillir des faits politiques qui ne sont pas sans importance, mais on y trouve en plus grand nombre des

détails précieux sur les mœurs, les usages, et les coutumes de cette époque."

His poems were published for the first time in one vol. 8vo., in 1832, by M. Crapelet, with this title:

"Poésies morales et historiques d'Eustache Deschamps, écuyer, huissier d'armes des rois Charles V. et Charles VI., chatelain de Fismes et bailli de Senlis."

As regards the "*genuineness*" of the poem cited, I am inclined, with J.M.B., to think that it admits of question, the orthography savouring more of the end of the fifteenth than of the close of the fourteenth century. I am sorry not to be able to explain the meaning of "*la langue Pandras.*"

D.C.

NOTES ON THE SECOND EDITION OF MR. CUNNINGHAM'S HANDBOOK OF LONDON

21. *New Tunbridge Wells, at Islington.*—This fashionable morning lounge of the nobility and gentry during the early part of the eighteenth century, is omitted by Mr. Cunningham. There is a capital view of it in Bickham's *Musical Entertainer*, 1737:

> "These once beautiful tea-gardens (we remember them as such) were formerly in high repute. In 1733 their Royal Highnesses the Princesses Amelia and Caroline frequented them in the summer time for the purpose of drinking the waters. They have furnished a subject for pamphlets, poems, plays, songs, and medical treatises, by Ned Ward, George Colman the older, Bickham, Dr. Hugh Smith, &c. Nothing now remains of them but the original chalybeate spring, which is still preserved in an obscure nook, amidst a poverty-stricken and squalid rookery of misery and vice."—George Daniel's *Merrie England in the Olden Time*, vol. i. p. 31.

22. *London Spa* (from which Spa Fields derives its name) dates as far back as 1206. In the eighteenth century, it was a celebrated place of amusement. There is a curious view of "London Spaw" in a rare pamphlet entitled *May-Day, or, The Original of Garlands*. Printed for J. Roberts, 1720, 8vo.

23. *Spring Gardens.*—Cox's Museum is described in the printed catalogue of 1774, as being in "Spring Gardens." In the same year a small volume was published containing *A Collection of various Extracts in Prose and Verse relative to Cox's Museum*.

24. *The Pantheon in Spa Fields.*—This place of amusement was opened in 1770 for the sale of tea, coffee, wine, punch, &c. It had an organ, and a spacious promenade and galleries. In 1780 it was converted into a lay-chapel by the Countess of Huntingdon, and is now known as *Northampton* or *Spa Fields Chapel*. Mr. Cunningham speaks of the burying-ground (originally the garden), but singularly enough omits to notice the chapel.

25. *Baldwin's Gardens*, running between Leather Lane and Gray's Inn Lane, were, according to a stone which till lately was to have been seen against a corner house, bearing the arms of Queen Elizabeth, named after *Richard Baldwin*, one of the royal gardeners, who began building here in 1589.

26. *Rathbone Place.*—In an old print (now before me) dated 1722, this street is called "*Rawbone Place*." The Percy coffee-house is still in existence.

27. *Surrey Institution, Blackfriars Road.*—This building was originally erected, and for some years appropriated to the *Leverian Museum*. This magnificent museum of natural history was founded by Sir Ashton Lever, who died in 1788. It was afterwards disposed of by way of lottery, and won by Mr. James Parkinson, who transferred it from Leicester Place to the Surrey

side of Blackfriars bridge.

28. *Schomberg House, Pall Mall*, (now, I believe, about to be pulled down), was once the residence of that celebrated "quack" Dr. Graham. Here, in 1783, he erected his *Temple of Health*. He afterwards removed to Panton Street, Haymarket, where he first exhibited his *Earth Bath*. I do not find any mention of Graham in Mr. Cunningham's book.

EDWARD F. RIMBAULT.

FOLK LORE

Laying a Ghost.—Frequent mention is made of the laying of ghosts, and in many localities the tradition of such an event is extant. At Cumnor, Lady Dudley (Amy Robsart's) ghost is said to have been laid by nine Oxford parsons, and the tradition is still preserved by the villagers; but nowhere have I been able to ascertain what was the ceremony on such an occasion.

Is anything known on the subject?

A.D.B.

Abingdon, Nov. 1850.

A Test of Witchcraft.—Among the many tests applied for the discovery of witchcraft was the following. It is, I believe, a singular instance, and but little known to the public. It was resorted to as recently as 1759, and may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of that year.

> "One *Susannah Hannokes*, an elderly woman of Wingrove, near Ayleshbury, was accused by a neighbour for bewitching her spinning-wheel, so that she could not make it go round, and offered to make oath of it before a majistrate; on which the husband, to justify his wife, insisted upon her being tried by the Church Bible, and that the accuser should be present: accordingly she was conducted to the parish church, where she was stript of all her cloathes to her shift and undercoat, and weighed against the Bible; when, to the

no small mortification of her accuser, she outweighed it, and was honorably acquitted of the charge."

A.D.N.

Abingdon, Nov. 1850.

MINOR NOTES

Quin's incoherent Story.—The comic story of Sir Gammer Vans (Vol. ii., p. 280.) reminds me of an anecdote related of Quin, who is said to have betted Foote a wager that he would speak some nonsense which Foote could not repeat off-hand after him. Quin then produced the following string of incoherences:—

> "So she went into the garden to pick a cabbage leaf, to make an apple-pie of; and a she-bear, coming up the street, put her head into the shop, and said 'Do you sell any soap?' So she died, and he very imprudently married the barber; and the powder fell out of the counsellor's wig, and poor Mrs. Mackay's puddings were quite entirely spoilt; and there were present the Garnelies, and the Goblilies, and the Picninnies, and the Great Pangendrum himself, with the little round button at top, and they played at the ancient game of 'Catch who catch can,' till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their boots."

L.

Touchstone's Dial.—Mr. Knight, in a note on *As You Like It*, gives us the description of a dial presented to him by a friend who had picked it "out of a deal of old iron," and which he supposes to be such a one as the "fool i' the forest" drew from his poke, and looked on with lacklustre eye. It is very probable that this species of chronometer is still in common use in the sister kingdom; for

my brother mentions to me that, when at school in Ireland some fifteen or sixteen years since, he had seen one of those "*ring-dials*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.