An Historical and Metrical Introduction into the Study of Shakspeare's Works,

with

Particular Regard to his Julius Caesar,

by

Dr. Wilken.

> «To him we must ascribe the praise, unless Spencer may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened.»
>
> Dr. Johnson.

Part the First.

We take it for granted that the times preceding the great French Revolution, particularly the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are to be considered the foundation of modern history and civilization. The latter can by no means be understood without being thoroughly acquainted with those times, in which we find thriving in fresh vigor the literatures and ideas of ancient Greece and Rome, gradually combining with a new method of studying the laws of human Mind and external Nature, of thinking and expansion, as they are called by Cartesius. Besides him we further particularly mention Francis Bacon, distinguishing himself by pointing out the way of investigating Nature by means of the inductive method in his celebrated works: «De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum» and «The Wisdom of the Ancients». Therefore he who intends taking a share in the development of modern civilization, as young students should do, cannot forbear studying very earnestly the great authors of those ages who teach the very principles of modern art and science. This truth has been acknowledged by our Government in establishing the now so-called «Realgymnasia», in which modern languages and modern science are chiefly taught.

But it is unavoidable, that in such new institutions, according to the varying views of the respective principals, the way of teaching the different branches of modern knowledge, and the choice of the authors to be read in such schools should differ widely. Most judicious men however adopt the manner of teaching ancient languages and sciences in our schools termed «Gymnasia». I for my part, likewise following this example, take the opportunity of proposing a series of the following English authors, gradually to be read according to the wants in the different classes of «Realgymnasia».

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I. For the First Class (Prima).

a. *Prose*: Macaulay's History, Essays, alternating with some speeches of the greatest English orators and Gibbon's Decline and Fall etc. Add.: Locke's Essay on Human Unterstanding.

b. *Poetry*: Shakspeare's Merchant of Venice, King Lear; Milton's Paradise Lost, alternating with some poems of Dryden or of Byron, Walter Scott's Lady of the Lake.

II. For the Second Class (Secunda).

a. *Prose*: The easier parts of Macaulay's History and Essays, the easy speeches of the same author, alternating with Hume's History of England, and the Dialogues concerning Natural Religion of the same author.

b. *Poetry*: Shakspeare's Julius Caesar, alternating with Byron's Prisoner of Chillon, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage or Tennyson's Enoch Arden, Walter Scott's Lady of the Lake.

III. For the Third Class (Tertia).

Walter Scott's Tales of a Grandfather. Some poems dictated and learnt by heart.

As to great William Shakspeare, who is standing out among the authors of the first and the second class, we shall now attempt giving in the following pages an historical and metrical introduction into the study of his works, which we hope will prove very useful for the private studies of young men and an examination of his Julius Caesar, which will acquaint them with one of the most excellent plays of the greatest English poet.

The father of our dramatist, John Shakspeare, was successively a glover, a butcher, and a woolcomber or dealer in wool at Stratford-upon-Avon, where William was born on the 23 d of April 1564. The different forms of writing the name of Shakspeare exceed the number of fifty (See: Elze, Leben Shakspeare's), but there are five signatures of our poet which are presumed to be genuine autographs; Shakspeare signs upon each of the three briefs of his will: William Shackspere, W. Shakspere, William Shakspeare. After having learnt «his small Latin» at the free grammar-school of his native town, William Shakspeare married at the age of eighteen Anne, the daughter of Richard Hathaway, a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. Soon after he was father of one son and two daughters, and being prosecuted by Sir Thomas Lucy for having stolen deer on his property, Shakspeare wrote a lampoon*) upon the same gentleman, affixed it to his gate and then fled to London, where he embraced the occupation of a player, and subsequently of a writer for the stage; already by the year 1589 he became one of the proprietors of the Blackfriars Theatre. Afterwards Shakspeare with his friends, the actors Lawrence Fletcher, Richard Burbage and others established a

*) The offensive pasquinade begins with the following lines:

«A parliament-member, a justice of peace,
At home a poor scare-crow, at London an asse,
If lowsie is Lucy, as some volke miscalle it,
Then Lucy is lowsie, whatever befall it.»

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new theatre*), called the Globe, which burnt down in 1613. Stratford remained his real home, where he left his wife and children, whom he visited at least once a year. In 1596 Hamnet, his only son, died at the age of 12 years; his daughter Susanna married, in June 1607, Dr. John Hall, a physician settled in Stratford; Judith, the younger daughter survived the father till February 1661—2. After gaining a considerable property as an actor, Shakspeare returned to Stratford for ever in 1612, and died there on the 23 d of April 1616.

During the period of Shakspeare's acting and writing his immortal works, contemporary poets were altogether profuse in dramatic productions, but most of them did not reach the value and perfection of his elaborate plays. This period began after Elizabeth, the «virgin queen», succeeded to the throne of England, the works of Seneca and Euripides had been translated, and the first regular dramas set forth by Englishmen; this period lasted under the reign of James I (1603—1625) and Charles I, before whose execution the intolerant and strict views of the puritans with regard to religion caused all dramatic performances to be prohibited as «devil's service».

But here we take the liberty of drawing the attention of young students to the form of the Old English Theatre, which is adumbrated by Augustine Skottowe nearly in the following manner. — The playhouses were never all open at the same time, some of them being summer, other winter theatres. The roofs of summer-theatres extended only over the stage, passages and galleries, the area of the pit being open to the weather: the winter houses were completely covered, and their performances took place by candle-light. The shape of the English theatres derived from those buildings which experience had proved to be well adapted for the exigencies of the drama. Like the court-yard of an inn, three sides were occupied by balconies; these properly divided, were appropiated to the reception of different classes of the people: the fourth side formed the stage, and the centre area the pit, which unlike the same place in modern theatres was without benches. The common people who resorted thither, were standing up during the performance, and hence are called *groundlings* by Shakspeare, and by Ben Jonson the understanding gentlemen of the ground. Between this class of spectators and those that occupied the upper balconies or scaffolds, there was no distinction in rank, both being of the lowest and most disreputable description. The lower balconies or rooms, which answered to our boxes, were frequented by people of rank. The «lords' rooms» are often mentioned by the old dramatists, and appear to have been next to the stage.

An upper balcony, above what is now called the stage-box, constituted the orchestra.

The stage was separated from the auditory by palings, and previous to the commencement of the performance, was concealed by a curtain of wool and silk. Like the floors of private houses in the Elizabethan age, the stage was usually covered with rushes, but on extraordinary occasions it was laid out with matting. At the back of the stage there was a balcony or upper stage, on which the actors entered who were required to appear in elevated positions, such as Juliet in the balcony, and Romeo and Juliet aloft (R. J. III, 5). When not used for the purpose of the scene, the balcony-stage was concealed by a curtain. Where a

*) Compare Augustine Skottowe: «The Life of Shakspeare» Leipsic, Fleischer page 16 th: «They long enjoyed a sort of copartnership in the playhouse in Blackfriars with the «children», and subsequently became the purchasers of that house. — «Globe being the summer, Blackfriars the winter theatre of the company to which he attached himself.»

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play was performed within a play, the balcony was made use of either for the auditory present or as a stage for the performance of the auxiliary play. Shakspeare himself furnishes an instance of either practice. Sly would act in the balcony to see the Taming of the Shrew, and the mockplay in Hamlet was certainly acted on the upper stage. The first regular theatres were nearly as destitute of outward decoration as their beggarly predecessors (the court-yards of inns) had been. The absence of such essential articles as theatrical furniture is a decided proof of the excessive deficiency of the first dramatic establishments. The account books of Queen Elizabeth's «Master of the Revels» for 1571, and several subsequent years, clearly demonstrate the use of four varieties of scenery in almost every masque or play performed at court. 1) Temporary erections on the stage; 2) paintings on framed canvass; 3) mechanical contrivances; and 4) furniture and general properties.

A striking contrast was offered by the rich equipment of the royal stage and the destitute state of the other theatres.

Simple hangings of arras or tapestry was all the ornament the stage could boast of, and this, as it became decayed or torn, was clumsily repaired by the display of pictures over the defect parts. A plain curtain hung up in a corner, separated distant regions. A board on which was written the name of a country or a city, indicated the scenery, the change of which was proclaimed by the removal of one board and the substitution of another: a table with a pen and ink thrust in signified that the stage was to represent a counting house; if these were withdrawn, and two chairs put in their places, it was a tavern. It was not always thought necessary to clear the stage previous to putting up one of these most primitive expediences. When the theatres were entirely destitute of scenery, the protruded board indicated that the empty stage was to be considered a house, a city, a wood or any other place. — For a long time the theatres could not afford particular decorations for the different sceneries of a play; therefore it frequently happened that one painting had to represent the metropolis of different countries within a few hours. Special arrangements on the stage, necessary for the scene, were often made. Many of the ancient plays require for their performance the use of a somewhat complicated machinery, as for instance the entering of Ariel in Shakspeare's Tempest; the descending of Juno in the same play; the descending of Jupiter in Cymbeline; the rising ghost in Macbeth. They had also their contrivances to represent the «hell» and «heaven».

For the performance of masques and regular dramas at court, the dresses worn by the actors were remarkable for their elegance and splendour. Gold, silver, silk, satin, velvet, and feathers, in every variety of colour and combination, were wasted in adorning the actors. In spite of their great deficiencies, various circumstances contributed to enable the other-private theatres to emulate the Royal stage: the left off wardrobes of the noble and wealthy found here a welcome bargain for the theatres, and the dresses used at the performances at court were also taken possession of by them.

In order to announce to the public the entertainment prepared for them, the manager availed himself of the multiplicity of posts which formerly encumbered the streets of the metropolis: their conspicuousness being extremely favorable to the display of bills of the performance. The hour of performance varied at the different theatres from between one to three o' clock in the afternoon.

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At the Blackfriars and the Globe the public of the upper galleries and of the pit paid sixpence; at the Fortune twopence, and at some of the inferior houses, as little as one penny. The best rooms or boxes, at the Globe, were paid a shilling, at the Blackfriars apparently sixpence more, and the price was subsequently raised even as high as a halfcrown. On the night of a new play the prices were doubled, and occasionally trebled.

It was customary in the theatres denominated private, to admit that class of the spectators who frequented the boxes, on the stage, where they were accommodated with chairs, for which they paid according to the comparative eligibility of their situation, either sixpence or a shilling. Here the fastidious critic was usually to be met with, the wit ambitious of distinction, and the gallant studious of the display of his apparel on his person; they even regaled themselves with the pipes and tobacco which their attendant pages handed over to them.

Numerous methods were devised to wile away the tedious hour previous to the commencement of the performance: books and cards, nuts and apples, bottled ale and pipes. A band, composed of trumpets, cornets, hautboys, lutes, recorders, viols, and organs, announced by flourishes or soundings the near approach of the commencement of the performance: the third sounding was the signal for the entrance of «the Prologue», invariably dressed in a long black velvet cloak: his humble demeanour confessed the entire submission of the managers and actors to the public will. Only one dramatic piece was performed, but relief and variety were given to the entertainment by the feats of dancers, tumblers, and conjurers, and the introduction of music between the acts. The witlings and critics used to affect disgust at the performance by significant signs, and indecent indications of contempt (See Jonson's Every Man out of his Humour).

The transition of the drama from sacred (in the Mysteries and Miracle-plays and Moralities or Moral-plays) to profane and modern subjects effected a gradual change in the performance of plays, as well as in the place of performance. As the clergy receded from, the scholars and choir-boys advanced upon the stage, and under the designation of «the children» became, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, proficient and popular performers. The masters of the schools and chapels were even empowered to take up, and retain by force, such children as they deemed suitable to their purpose.

The earliest mention of professional players appears to be that of the «City Actors» in the time of Edward IV. From the first entertainment of royal companies by English sovereigns, the actors were subject to the authority of the Lord Chamberlain, as general superintendent of the recreations of the court. Henry VIII. called the «Master of the Revels» for their superintendence. Elizabeth extended his jurisdiction, and she granted a licence to Burbage and others, in 1574, for the exhibition of plays of every sort, on condition that they should be before seen and allowed by the «Master of the Revels».

The actors on the old stage were divided into two classes, *sharers* und *hirelings*. The sharer was remunerated by a proportion of the profits of the theatre, and an allowance of four, five, six shillings a week was given to his boy who played either juvenile or female characters. The hireling was engaged at a weekly salary, his stipend was naturally proportioned to his abilities. The actors, in Shakspeare's days, were both denominated and regarded as *servants*, and when the comedian's duty summoned him to attendance at the mansion of his noble patron, the *buttery* was the place to which he was admitted. It is improbable

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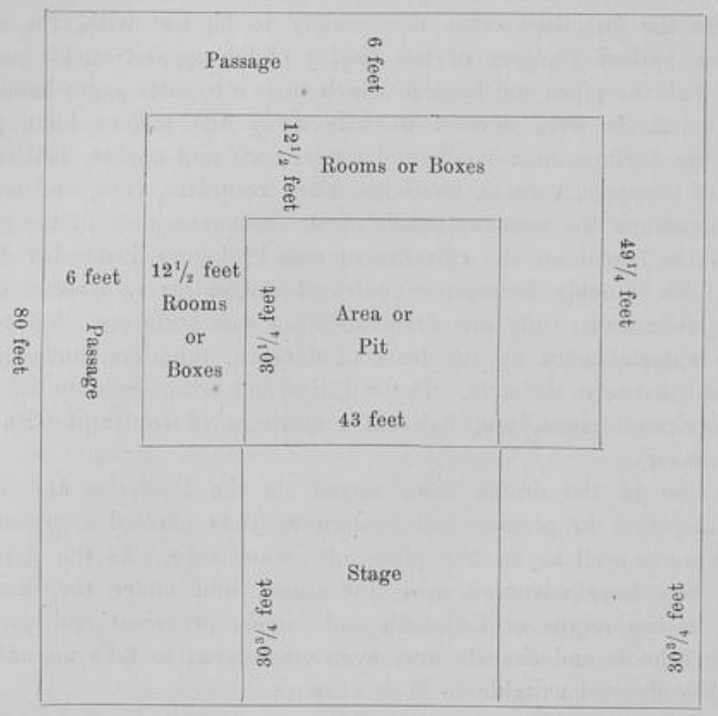
that Shakspeare ever obtained more than six shillings and eight pence a week for his services on the stage. In 1592 Shakspeare was well known as a writer for the stage, and the Two Gentlemen of Verona and the Comedy of Errors have been pointed out as the plays which stand at the commencing of his drammatic career. At the foot of this summary description of the theatrical relations of «Merry Old England» we add the groundplot of the Fortune playhouse, built like the Globe, though somewhat larger, as it is sketched by Augustine Skottowe in note k (to his Life of Shakspeare).



We return to Shakspeare and his works.

Shakspeare's predecessors (Christopher Marlowe, Green) and contemporaries (Ben Jonson, Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, Massinger, John Webster etc.) would form a very brilliant period without him, but his genius overshadows and supersedes them all. Of the numerous plays which have been ascribed to Shakspeare, thirty-seven are thought to be genuine, and eighteen of these have been printed in Shakspeare's lifetime: Titus Andronicus, Romeo and Juliet, Love's Labour Lost. A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado about Nothing, The Merchant of Venice, King Lear, Troilus and Cressida, Pericles, Richard the Second, First Part of Henry the Fourth, Second Part of Henry the Fourth, Richard the Third, Hamlet (in three different editions), The Merry Wives of Windsor, Henry the Fifth, and the Second and Third Parts of Henry the Sixth. The tragedy of Othello was also printed separately in 1622. All these separate editions are called the old *Quarto's*. The other remaining eighteen plays appeared for the first time in the so-called First Folio of 1623: The Tempest, The Two

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Gentlemen of Verona, Measure for Measure, The Comedy of Errors, As you like it, The Taming of the Shrew, All's Well that Ends Well, Twelfth Night, A Winter's Tale, King John, the First Part of Henry the Sixth, Henry the Eighth, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Cymbeline. The other Folios appeared in the years: 1632, 1664 (this edition is augmented by Pericles and 6 other spurious plays) and 1685. Hemynge and Condell, the friends of Shakspeare, who edited the first Folio, of the thirty-six plays which their edition contained, printed twenty-eight after manuscripts and eight after Quartos already existing. Of the former yet ten pieces exist in old Quartos, but they are not taken use of in the Folio-Edition.

The following editors and commentators are chiefly worth noting: Rowe (1709), Pope (1725 and 1728), Theobald (1733 and 1740), Johnson (1765), Steevens (1766), Reed (1785), Malone (1785), Chalmers, Singer, Knight (1839), Collier (1842), Halliwell's magnificent edition (1852 ff.), Dyce (1858), Clark and Wright (the so-called Cambridge edition 1863 ff.), Dyce (second edition 1868), and in Germany Delius (1854 ff.). Add.: Bowdler's Family Shakspeare and the editions for schools by Schmidt (Königsberg) and Meurer (Cologne).

Shakspeare's works have been very often translated in Germany, especially by: Wieland (1762), Schlegel and Tieck, Simrock, Ortlepp, Keller and Rapp, Bodenstedt, Dingelstedt, Ulrici (the Schlegel-Tieck edition revised). The Perkin's Shakspeare (Second Folio of 1632 with written marginal notes) ed. Collier 1852 under the title: Notes and Emendations to Shakspeare's Plays, is not genuine.

Shakspeare's plays are divided into three different groups: Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. Among the former (14) one has distinguished for their perfection: What you Will, The Merchant of Venice, A Midsummer Night's Dream, As you like it, The Tempest; The Merry Wives of Windsor are supposed to be written upon the special command of Queen Elizabeth*).

The ten plays, taken from English history (Histories) form a closely connected series: King John at the head, to be called, as it were, a prologue, then the history of a century in eight plays from Richard II (1377—1399) to Richard III (1483—1485), finally as an epilogue King Henry VIII. Out of the third division above all five great tragedies are to be mentioned: Romeo and Juliet, Othello, Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth. They are nearly reached in value by the three Roman tragedies: Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus.

About the order in which Shakspeare's plays made their appearance, little that is decisive is known; and the most ardent investigator of the subject, after a laborious search for contemporary notices of, and allusions to Shakspeare's dramas, and for indications in his works themselves, the celebrated commentator *Malone* has not ventured to designate the result of his labour by any other title than: «An *attempt* to ascertain the order in which the plays of Shakspeare were written».

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*) See Skottowe's Life etc. p. 16. «The delicacy of even «virgin queen» was not shocked by the grossness of that keen-witted voluptuary ‚Falstaff' and so thoroughly did Elizabeth relish the humour of the two parts of Henry the Fourth, that she commanded the appearance of Falstaff under the influence of love. To this incident in the poet's life the world is indebted for the Merry Wives of Windsor; a play, it is said, written in the short space of a fortnight. But Shakspeare did not receive any further «gracious marks» of Queen Elizabeth's favour.

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According to Malone's arrangement, Shakspeare's plays were composed in about the following order and succession: Second Part of Henry VI (1591), Third Part of Henry VI (1591), (Third Part of Henry VI (1591)), Two Gentlemen of Verona (1591), Comedy of Errors (1592), King Richard II (1593), King Richard III (1593), Love's Labour's Lost (1594), Merchant of Venice (1594), Midsummer Night's Dream (1594), Taming of the Shrew (1596), Romeo and Juliet (1596), King John (1596), First Part of King Henry IV (1597), Second Part of King Henry IV (1599), As you Like (1599), King Henry V (1599), Much Ado about Nothing (1600), Hamlet (1600), Merry Wives of Windsor (1601), Troilus and Cressida (1602), Measure for Measure (1603), Henry VIII (1603), Othello (1604), Lear (1605), All's Well that Ends Well (1606), Macbeth (1606), Julius Caesar (1607), Twelfth Night (1607), Antony and Cleopatra (1608), Cymbeline (1609), Coriolanus (1610), Timon of Athens (1610), Winter's Tale (1611), Tempest (1611). These thirty-four plays Malone supposes to be the indisputable productions of Shakspeare: the First Part of Henry VI, Titus Andronicus and Pericles are omitted, although Shakspeare's hand is visible in a few scenes of Pericles. Henry VI, 1 and Titus Andronicus were printed in the first (1623), Pericles for the first time appeared in the third Folio (1664), together with 6 other plays of undoubted spuriousness.

Malone grounds his arrangement on the philological principle that every author's works are the external expression of the gradual growth of his mental and moral powers, and we cannot help reminding here young students of the well-known arrangement of Plato's Dialogues by the celebrated philosopher Schleiermacher, from which all criticism of that ancient author originates. Besides his plays Shakspeare composed the following minor poems: Venus and Adonis (dedicated to his licencious friend, the Earl of Southampton, when he was just 20 years of age, 1593), The Rape of Lucrece (1594), The Passionate Pilgrim, The Lover's Complaint and 154 Sonnets (1609), which are all very important documents of the poet's inward life.

As to Shakspeare's Julius Caesar into which we purpose to give an introduction in particular, we must firstly observe upon the text that no modern editor has reprinted the plays of Shakspeare exactly as they stand in any of the old Folios or Quartos*). Neither the spelling, nor the punctuation, nor the words of any ancient copy have been left unaltered, even with the correction of obvious errors of the Press. Spencer may be supposed to have had some peculiar notions upon the subject of orthography; but apparently it was not a matter about which Shakspeare troubled himself. In departing here from the original texts (the archetypons), therefore, we lose nothing that is really his. Of much higher value is the observation that probably several plays of Shakspeare's, especially Romeo and Juliet (Compare the inquiries of T. Mommsen, Oldenburg 1859), and Hamlet, have obtained their present state of text by a later revision.

The sources from which Shakspeare has taken the fables of his plays, are chiefly ancient romances or novels, English Chronicles (Holinshed), Paynter's Palace of Pleasure, and for the three Roman Tragedies the Greek historian Plutarch, translated from a French translation (of Amyot 1579) by North. Several plays also are revisions of elder plays, even in their imperfect form frequently going over the stage. For his Julius Caesar Shakspeare

*) See Craik, Prolegomena, page 27 th.

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has made use of Plutarch's lifes of Caesar, of Brutus, and of Antony, following his author in most cases word by word, and expression by expression*).

The period which the fable of our drama comprises in ancient history, is of about two and a half years. The events of the 3 first acts take place in February and March of the year 44, the meeting of the triumvirs falls in the autumn of the year 43, and the two battles near Philippi in autumn 42. Shakspeare, by a remarkable anachronism, has contracted the two battles into one, which in reality are separated from each other by a period of 3 weeks. The celebrated editor Theobald is right in correcting Marullus for Murellus (of all the old Folios) which form must be a mistake, made in printing or transcription; but it is not worth while to change our familiar Portia into Porcia. The only form of the name of Caesar's wife, which was known to antiquity, is Calpurnia, a form that is likewise adopted by North; therefore «*Calphurnia*», the form of all the old copies, is to be rectified into the original ancient form, as Shakspeare is not likely to have committed such an apparent blunder. Precisely so *Decius Brutus* must be corrected into *Decimus Brutus*, if it were not already an error of the Greek Plutarch, produced by Henricus Stephanus in 1572 (*ἐν δὲ τούτῳ Δέκιος Βροῦτος ἐπίκλησιν Ἀλβῖνος*). This Decimus Brutus was the most intimate friend and favourite of Caesar, not Marcus Junius Brutus, the conspirator, as the play exhibits the fact. In this misconception Shakspeare has been followed by the great French dramatist Voltaire in his tragedy on the same subject.

It is very interesting to learn Malone's manner of proceeding in establishing a chronological order of Shakspeare's plays by a very significant example he gives in fixing the time in which Shakspeare composed his Julius Caesar**). His reasoning principally grounds on the fact that a rhyming play on the same subject by William Alexander, afterwards Earl of Sterline, has first been printed at London in the year 1607 (it has been originally printed in Scotland three years before) which, he thinks, may be presumed to have preceded the Julius Caesar of Shakspeare. «Shakspeare, we know, formed at least twelve plays on fables that had been unsuccessfully managed by other poets; but no contemporary writer was daring enough to enter the lists with him in his lifetime, or to model into a drama a subject which had already employed his pen, and it is not likely that Lord Sterline, who was then a very young man, and had scarcely unlearned the Scotch idiom, should have been more hardy than any other poet of that age.» Malone therefore concludes that Shakspeare composed his Julius Caesar later than 1607, or even at this date. But we may with full confidence rely upon Craik when adding: «but there is nothing to prove that it may not be of considerable earlier date.» The remarkable fact however is that many parallel passages in the two plays in question are found, which have not yet been explained sufficiently.

After having summarily surveyed the external relations of Shakspeare's works in general and of the Julius Caesar in particular, we pass to some metrical observations, or rather, we are now going to give the principles, on which the recent English versification is founded, with special application to Shakspeare.

In this description we refer chiefly to:

*) Compare the edition of *Delius* who gives in his introduction into the play large extracts to the single scenes from Plutarch, translated by North.

**) Compare *Alex. Schmidt* in his: Erklärende Anmerkungen zu *Sh. Craik*, Prolegomena, page 45 sq.

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1) Metre and Versification of Chaucer, by Richard Morris, in his edition of the Prologue, The Knightes Tale, The Nonne Prestes Tale;

2) Englische Metrik. Erster Teil: Altenglische Metrik, von Professor Dr. J. Schipper, Bonn 1881.

3) The English of Shakspeare, by George Craik, Prolegomena, page 30 th sq.

4) A Shakspearian Grammar, by Abbot, page 328 th sq.

In all modern European languages the law of verse is dependent upon the system of accentuation, established in the respective language. In these languages therefore verse may be defined to consist in a certain arrangement of accented and unaccented syllables. The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, like that of the Scandinavian and old Germanic races, was rhythmical and alliterative. Their poems are written in couplets (2 Halbzeilen), in such a manner that in each couplet there are three emphatic words, two in the first and one in the second commencing with the same letter. Schipper observes, in his book mentioned above: „Der regelmässige alliterierende Langvers besteht aus 2 durch den Halbreim verbundenen Gliedern oder Halbversen von je 2 Hebungen. Die Verteilung der dem Langverse für gewöhnlich zukommenden 3 Reimstäbe ist in der Regel die, dafs im zweiten Halbverse nur einer, der sogenannte Hauptstab steht, und zwar stets an bestimmter Stelle, nämlich in der ersten Hebung, die beiden anderen Reimstäbe aber, die sogenannten Stollen, auf die 2 Hebungen des ersten Halbverses fallen: Seolfe he gesette sunnan and mônan. Sat 4. Eine einfachere Art hat nur je einen Stab in den beiden Halbzeilen:

Us is riht micel, þœt we rodera weard etc.

May I be permitted to quote here the famous introductory lines of the Anglo-Saxon «Beówulf».

Hwät! we Gâr-Dena in geâr dagum
þeód-cyninga þrym gefrunon,
hû þâ äđelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scêfing sceađena þreátum,
monegum mægđum meodo-setla ofteáh.
Egsode corl, syđđan ærest weard
feá-sceaft funden: he þäs frôfre gebâd,
weôx under wolcnum weorđ-myndum þâh,
ôđ þät him æghwylc þâra ymb-sittendra
ofer hron-râde hŷran scolde,
gomban gyldan: þät wäs gôd cyning!
þäm eafera wäs äfter cenned
geong in ġeardum, þone god sende
folce to frôfre; fyren-þearfe ongeat,
þät hie ær drugon aldor-leáse
lange hwîle. Him þäs lif-freá,
wuldres wealdend, woruld-âre forgeaf,
Beówulf wäs breme (blæd wide sprang),
Scyldes eafera Scedelandum in.
Swâ sceal geong guma gôde gewyrcean,

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fromum feoh-giftum on fäder wine,
þät hine on ylde eft gewunigen
wil-gesidas, þonne wîg cume,
leóde gelæsten: lof-dædum sceal
in magda gehwære man geþeón.

Comp. M. Heyne.

Translation. Indeed! We heard tell the glory of the native kings of the Spear-Danes (gained) in the days of antiquity, how the princes showed (performed) heroic strength. Often Scyld Scêfing with bands of damagers (enemies) took away from many kinsmen the mead-seat. The Earl (suffered) horrors, since first he was found miserable: for which (calamities) he proved comfort, grew till under the clouds, throve by worthiness, until everybody of (the princes) residing about must obey him over the whale-road, (must) pay tribute: that was (a) good king! to him afterwards a young son was born in the residences, whom God sent (to be) a comfort to the nation, who had perceived the misery (inflicted) by hostile waylaying, that they had formerly lived a long time without a sovereign. For this the Lord of Life, the Lord of Glory gave them worldly honour; Beówulf was renowned, (glory spread wide), the son of Scyld, in the territories of Sceden-îg (Schonen). So shall a young man with good deeds and large estate-gifts deal with his father's friends that in old age again obedient companions may attend him, when war comes, (and) furnish soldiers: by deeds worth of praise man ought to thrive in every affinity.

The system of rhyming versification did not come into general use in England until after the Norman Conquest. Chaucer's (1328) celebrated Canterbury Tales are likewise written in rhyming verse, consisting of so-called heroic couplets, or lines, containing five accents, and ten (or eleven and occasionally nine) syllables:

«Whan that Aprillë with his schowres swootë
The draught of Marche hath percëd to the rootë.»

Chaucer's Prologue init.

Besides this rhyming decasyllable verse, we soon find an unrhymed, or what is called blank verse with the same number of syllables, the very verse in which the plays of Shakspeare are all composed, with the exception only of occasional couplets. On both verses, the rhyming or heroic, and unrhymed decasyllable verse and their struggle for life, we quote the following most significant passage from Professor Schipper. «Unter allen Versarten, die in der englischen Poesie zur Verwendung gelangt sind, muss unzweifelhaft dem fünftaktigen, jambischen Verse die erste Stelle eingeräumt werden.» «Dasselbe Verhältniss blieb auch in der Folgezeit bestehen, nur erhält das fünftaktige Reimpaar — heroic couplet oder heroic verse von den Engländern benannt — c. 180 Jahre später einen übermächtigen Concurrenten an dem fünftaktigen, reimlosen Verse, dem sogenannten blank verse, der im vierten Jahrzehnt des sechszehnten Jahrhunderts etwa vom *Earl of Surrey* (1414?—1547) mit seiner Uebersetzung des 2. und 4. Buches der *Aeneide* in die englische Poesie eingeführt wurde und im selben Jahrhundert noch in der mächtig aufstrebenden dramatischen Poesie zur alleinigen unbestrittenen Herrschaft gelangte*).

*) See Craik, Prolegomena, page 31st: «It was first employed in dramatic writing by *Thomas Sackville* (afterwards Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset) in his *Gorboduc* (or Ferrex and Porrex), produced in 1561.

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Im folgenden Jahrhundert griff dies Metrum dann sogar mit Milton's Paradise Lost und Paradise Regained in das bisher den gereimten fünftaktigen Rhythmen teilweise erhalten gebliebene Gebiet des Epos hinüber, doch ohne sich dauernd daselbst behaupten zu können. Ja, wenige Decennien später war es sogar in Gefahr, die Oberherrschaft im Drama an seinen unter französischem Schutz und unter Dryden's Anführerschaft zu einem kurzen Eroberungskriege sich aufraffenden Rivalen, den heroic verse, zu verlieren. Doch der blank verse ging schliesslich dennoch, da Dryden bei besserer Einsicht ihm alsbald seine Gunst wieder zuwandte, siegreich aus dem Kampfe hervor: ihm blieb das dramatische, dem heroic verse das lyrische, satirische und didaktische Gebiet unterworfen, soweit nicht die anderen Vers- und Strophenarten schon einzelne Teile davon occupiert hatten oder sich anzueignen suchten.

The dramatic (ut ita dicam) blank verse simply consisting of ten or eleven syllables, after the last syllable either an unaccented syllable, or two, may be added without any prosodical effect. Craik gives the following modifications of this law.

1) Excepting two adjoining feet, *the* usual *accent on the second syllable may be drawn back to the first syllable* (according to ancient metrics we may say: instead of a jambus, a trochaeus can be placed), which modification is particularly employed in the *fifth* and *sixth syllables.*

2) Every syllable before or behind a regularly accented foot (⏑ ⫠) may also be accented: accentus brevem syllabam longam reddere potest.

3) The syllables alternating with the accented ones may be accented also.

4) In any of the places which may be occupied by an unaccented syllable, even two or more such unaccented syllables may be introduced. Hence an anapaest (⏑ ⏑ ⫠) may be substituted for a jambus (⏑ ⫠); but this construction, habitually employed, crowds and cumbers the rhythm, and gives it a quivering and feeble character. These four modifications are in some measure to be compared with intermixture of dactyls and spondees in the Greek and Latin hexameter, and with logaoedical versification in the ancient languages.

5) In this place we quote the hemistichs i. e. any portion of a perfect decasyllabic verse, which is however perfect in itself, that is to say, of which every foot is regularly formed after the above mentioned laws.

For instance:

«Since Cassius did whet me against Caesar,
I have not slept.»

6) Wholly differing from these are such verses, as are wanting a syllable in the middle. For instance:

»Than the soft myrtle. (—) But man, proud man.»

This defect cannot be a pause, as it is held to be, for a pause nowhere may be substituted for a syllable. Craik is of opinion that in any case, where a corruption of the text is not to be maintained, the respective line must be divided into two distinct lines or hemistichs. Thus:

«Than the soft myrtle.
But man, proud man» etc.

The chief character of the English decasyllabic verse consists in being *poised* on *the tenth syllable,* in this mainly differing from the dodecasyllabic verse or Alexandrine, which is poised on the sixth and the twelfth.

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A peculiarity of English versification is still to be taken notice of, viz that even such light-weighing terminations as -ing (háppeníng), -ness (lázinéss), -ment (góvernmént), -y (énemý) are able of bearing a stress when standing at the end of an at least trisyllabic word and at the place of the tenth syllable. But these slight syllables may also bear a stress in the middle of the verse, of which fact we afford a very significant example (J. C. III, 2):

«But wére I Brútus
And Brútus Aítoný, there wére, an Ántony.»

Even monosyllabic words of little prosodical and syntactical value are fit for being accented in the tenth place, e. g.: care, sir; and, but, if, or, of; even the, a, an.

Such a *lengthening* of syllables and words commonly being of slight prosodical and syntactical value by means of accentuation, is little or not at all employed in Shakspeare's earliest works, but it is most frequently used in those plays which are undoubtedly the product of the latest period of his life. From this reason King Henry the Eighth cannot have been written throughout by Shakspeare, and the three Roman plays: Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, and Coriolanus are to be assigned to different periods of writing, because the unemphatic monosyllable bearing an accent in the tenth place, is in little use in the first play, of most frequent occurrence in the two others. The respective words in Julius Caesar are: be, is, should, are, may, shall, might, at (See Craik, Prolegomena, page 39 th); and we must add that the words quoted just now are poised with a considerably stronger pressure than «the winged words»: as, and, or, but, if, that, who, which, than, of, to, with, for, because of which state of facts one has recently dated back the play of Julius Caesar to the year 1601, immediately after «As you like it», and before Hamlet (comp. Breitinger, History of English Literature).

Besides the stress the caesura plays an important part in modern verse. Professor Schipper has found the following six caesuras with Chaucer. 1) Männliche Caesur nach dem zweiten Takte, sogenannte gewöhnliche Caesur, e. g.: „The dróught of Márche ‖ hath percëd to the roote". 2) Weibliche Caesur nach dem zweiten Takte, sogenannte epische Caesur, e. g.: «To Cánterbúry ‖ with ful devout corage». 3) Die Caesur zwischen den beiden Taktteilen des dritten Fusses, die gewöhnliche lyrische Caesur, e. g.: «And máde fórward ‖ érly for to ryse». 4) Gewöhnliche männliche Caesur nach dem dritten Takte, e. g.: «That slépen ál the níght ‖ with open eye». 5) Weibliche epische Caesur nach dem dritten Takte, e. g.: «Hous bóndes at chírche dóre ‖ sche hadde fyfe». 6) Die lyrische Caesur zwischen den beiden Taktteilen des vierten Taktes, e. g: «That tóward Cánterbúry ‖ wolden ryde». The same caesuras are to be found in the Shakspearian blank verse

To those general qualities of English Heroic and Blank verse, we have to add some select peculiarities in which Shakspeare's versification is immediately connected with that of his great ancient predecessor out of the Early English Period, — we mean Geoffrey Chaucer (1340?—1400), the father of English poetry and the celebrated author of the «Canterbury Tales»: not only Spencer but also Shakspeare has his «Chaucerisms».

1) With Chaucer the -ed of past participles is generally sounded, for instance: percëd, entunëd, i-pynchëd (Prol. 2, 123, 151). From Shakspeare we compare:

«Indeéd, it ís a stránge dispósëd túne.» J. C. I, 3.

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2) With Chaucer (who pronounces besides the French words in French manner) the syllable *ion* is to be pronounced as two syllables (having the accent on -ón); for instance:

«And maken al this lamentacioun.» Th. Knght. T. 77.

From Shakspeare we compare:

«And lét us sweár our résolútión.» J. C. II, 1.

Spencer has in his «The Faerie Queene»:

Whose yielded pride and proud submission,
Still dreading death when she had markëd long,
Her heart gan melt in great compassion,
And drizzling tears did shed for pure affection.»

See also Canto X, 46. It is the same case with *ïĕr* in soldier, earlier; marriage; conscience; partial; similarly the *e* is pronounced in: surgĕon, vengĕance, sergĕant, crĕature, plĕasure, trĕasure.

Necessity of versification has also induced Shakspeare to employ some contractions and lengthenings of words, when pronounced in verse; they are however written at their proper length.

I. *Contraction in pronouncing.*

1) The words (with th): either, neither, rather, whether, other; and likewise: ever, never, even, over and others are contracted into one syllable*). For instance:

«Either léd or dríven, ás we poínt the waý.» J. C. IV, 1.

2) The words: being, having, power, prayer, spirit are contracted. For instance:

«Being cróssed in cónference bý some sénatórs» (Note the French pronunciation of this word). J. C. I, 2.

3) Sometimes two syllables of different words are to be read as one. For instance:

«The ambítious ócean swéll and ráge und foám.» J. C. I, 3.

4) Er, el, and le final is often dropped or softened. For instance:

«Repórt should rénder him hoúrly tó your eár.» Cymb. III, 4.

5) Unaccented syllables of polysyllables may be almost ignored. Thus in: barbarous, remedy, implements, messengers, conference, majesty, necessary, sacrificers, innocent, sanctuary, innatural. Similarly polysyllabic names are shortened at the end of the line. For instance: Políxenes, Hermíone, Cleómenes, Cátherine, António, Férdinand, Próspero, Églamond, Cordélia, Ophélia, Valéria, Claúdio, Ángelo, Dórmio, Rómeo, Horátio, Búckingham, Nícolas, Northúmberland, Márgaret, Albany, Góneril, Emília, Antony, Ptólemy, Móntague; sometimes also in the middle of the line. There is altogether great licence taken in versification with proper names.

*) Compare Chaucer, Morris, Introduction, Metre 4.

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6) The terminations of the plural and of the possessive case are often not pronounced, and frequently not written in words ending in s, se, ss, ce and ge. For instance: cárcasses, services; sénse, vérse, Lawrence', míghtinéss, pláce, bálance, príncess, hóstess (poss. case). Compare: Coriol. III, 3. Coriol. II, 2. R. u. Jul. III, 2. Henr. V. v. 2, 28. Tempest I, 2. M. v. V. IV, 1. K. J. II, 1. etc.

II. *Lengthening of words in pronouncing.*

1) In the words: fire, fair, hair, hour, your, yours, desire, more, mere, sire, door, our, the vowel preceding the *r* is lengthened (zerdehnt) into two syllables, by adding an *e* in pronunciation. For instance:

«As fíre (pronounce fiĕr) dríves out fíre (pronounce fir), so píty píty.» J. C. III, 1.

«And wíth the bránds firé (pronounce fiĕr) the traítors' houses.» J. C. III, 2.

2) *Er* final is often pronounced with a kind of «burr», which produces the effect of an additional syllable. For instance:

«We'll teách you *Sír*, I'm too óld to léarn.»

Thus in: daughter, further, sister, dagger, murder, father, other, Dover, master, sea-monster, horrors, answer, better, suffer.

3) Shakspeare uses very often monosyllabic feet, whereas with Chaucer this occurrence is restricted to the first foot. For instance:

«Ó, 'tis trúe. Hó, bíd my trúmpet sound.»

«Try mány áll goód, serve trúly néver.»

«But coúld be wílling to márch ón to Cálais.»

«Yoú and your cráfts, yoú have cráfted faír.»

At the end of this sketch we mention some words in which the accent poises on another syllable than in modern times! abjéct, accéss, aspéct, charácters, comméndable, commérce, confíscate, consórt, contráry, contráct, compáct, différent, edíct, effígies, envý, executors, exíle, instínkt, intó, miséry, nothíng, obdúrate, oppórtune, outráge, perémptory, portents, precépts, prescience, recórd, sepúlchre, sinister, sojoúrn'd, something, sweethéart, triúmphing, untó, welcóme, wherefóre; the English tendency of accenting the first syllable is opposed to the Latin and French. The *i* in *ised* (for instance in advértised) is pronounced in the French manner with verbs ending in *iser*. Thus: cháslised, canónized, authórized, solémnised.

According to general English tendency the following words are accented on the first syllable: árchbishop, cómpell'd, cómplete, cónceal'd, cónduct, cónfessor, cóngeal'd, cónjure, cónsign'd, córrosive, délectable, détestable, dístinct, énginer, fórlorn, húmane, maíntain, máture, méthinks, mútiners, myself, Nórthampton, óbscure, óbservant, persever, pérspective, píoners, plébeians, púrsuit, púrveyer, quíntessence, récordér, rélapse, rhéumatic, sécure, séquester'd, súccessor, súccessive, tówards, útensils, wíthout.

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