

assuredlie beleaving, through thonellie merites, of Jesus Christe my Saviour, to be made partaker of lyfe everlasting. . . ."23 Who but Marlowe possessed the reputation of being an atheist, of having been the object of Queen Elizabeth's benevolence, and the poetic genius capable of having written *Richard II*? And if the author of *Richard II*, then he must have been the author of the rest of the First Folio.

Who wrote the plays and sonnets attributed to Shakespeare? As a layman, perhaps I am not entitled to an opinion; but in so far as I am entitled, let me say that I am convinced that Marlowe must have written them and no one else. I believe the case for his authorship has already been established. Marlowe is the youth of the author of the First Folio, and the author of the First Folio is the maturity of Marlowe.

I could of course be mistaken, but it seems to me that the theory of Marlowe's authorship solves more mysteries than it creates, while the Shakespearean theory creates more mysteries than it solves. It seems to me that not to be able to recognize the towering genius of Marlowe, under the sheltering tent of Shakespeare's name, is like going to the circus and missing the elephant or not noticing the "tallest man in the world" on exhibition. At any rate, since no life of Shakespeare was written until nearly a hundred years after his death, and since today we have more facts about both the man from Stratford-on-Avon and the man from Canterbury than early biographers possessed, surely the whole controversial problem of authorship should be thoroughly re-examined and re-appraised.

Biblical scholars for over a thousand years insisted that the Pentateuch was wholly written by Moses, in spite of the fact that in one of the books constituting the Pentateuch, there is an account of Moses being buried on Nebo's lonely mountain. Today most Biblical scholars—Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish—agree on the multiple authorship of the Pentateuch. To reach this conclusion, it has not been necessary to locate and dig up the grave on Nebo's lonely mountain.

For over three centuries, Shakespearean scholars have insisted that the actor from Stratford-on-Avon was the author of the First Folio in spite of impossibilities, improbabilities, inconsistencies, and contradictions as glaring as any to be found in maintaining the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. It is high time that today's champions of the orthodox position should re-examine their conclusions in the light of the new clues.

Let us keep in mind that it was the orthodox mind which brought about the original tragedy in Marlowe's life, and it is the orthodox mind today which is most likely to delay the vindication of his early fame.

Those who have doubted the authorship of the actor because there is no documentary record of his ever having obtained a college education or its equivalent, and for other reasons, have been accused of snobbery. This is the illogical argument "ad hominem." Surely Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, John Greenleaf Whittier, Sigmund Freud, Mark Twain, Henry James, Charles Dickens, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were not snobs. All these, we re-emphasize, took the position that there was something incred-

ible in the actor's authorship.

If the actor was not the author, who was? Both Edward de Vere and Lord Derby had the necessary education for the role and the opportunity to become acquainted with the life of the English court at first hand, because they were part of that court; but their published writings under their own names show no literary genius. What about Francis Bacon? He had the necessary education also, and published works of high literary quality under his own name, but the Mendenhall study of these writings, subsidized by an enthusiastic Baconian, eliminates him as the likely author of the First Folio. Besides, not one of these men possessed an adequate motive for concealing his authorship of the works attributed to Shakespeare. The alleged motive—that to have publicly acknowledged such authorship would have been embarrassing to each because of the high office he held in the government—does not begin to compare in adequacy with the desperate motive which Marlowe had for concealing his identity.

The execration that was heaped upon Marlowe because of his alleged atheism while he was still living was mild in comparison with the sustained vilification that took place after the rumors of his early death were widely accepted. Then he became the special target of the Puritan pulpit.

"The Puritan tide of obloquy rose slowly," writes Charles Norman in his book, *The Muses' Darling*, "but it finally overwhelmed the memory of Marlowe. Their story of a divine visitation on the man and his works carried all before it. Within a century, even writers

attempting a critical estimate of his achievements were under the spell of his calumniators. The wrath finally spent itself, but the righteousness stayed. Those who had known him and might have defended him were dead; his books had all but disappeared. The outburst of Puritan wrath against Marlowe is without parallel in literature. No vile epithet was too vile for his detractors to use, yet most of them wrote only from hearsay, or merely embroidered one another's accounts, hardly one able to contain his gloating."⁴

If the authorship of the works attributed to Shakespeare had to be concealed behind a pseudonym, not only while the author was still living but also for many years thereafter, surely there were more compelling reasons for this concealment in regard to Marlowe than in regard to Bacon, Edward de Vere, or Lord Derby.

Marlowe was not the only literary genius to outwit the forces of religious intolerance by timely concealment of his true identity. In the eighteenth century François Marie Arouet adopted the same stratagem except for one difference. Instead of hiding behind his pseudonym—Voltaire—by which he was personally and widely known, he hid behind his original name at least in one instance and as citizen Arouet helped others to burn the books of the heretical Voltaire without being recognized. Some one has said, "It takes more brains to be a live prophet than a dead one." It must have taken considerable brains for Christopher Marlowe to avoid the awful fate that otherwise would have been his had he been a man of less resourcefulness.

It goes without saying that there remain many un-

solved, perhaps insolvable, problems concerning Marlowe's life, his work and his associations.

If he did not die on the date of his alleged murder, when did he die? Shortly before the death of Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon or shortly before the publication of the First Folio?

Where was he buried? If not in the churchyard at Deptford, could he have been buried in the same grave as Shaksper, or in the Walsingham crypt in Chislehurst. Or was he privately buried in some secluded spot on the Walsingham estate? A picture of a mysterious tomb on the Walsingham estate is shown in a recently published volume, titled *In Search of Christopher Marlowe*. The authors, A. D. Wraight and Virginia F. Stern, clearly suggest that this mysterious tomb may be the grave of Marlowe.²⁵

Who was the Dark Lady mentioned in the sonnets, and who the rival poet? Was the rival poet George Chapman, or someone else? Was Ben Jonson a witting or an unwitting agent in furthering the hoax of Shakespeare? Did Marlowe ever meet and have a private understanding with the man from Stratford to use his name, or did the idea of involving the latter in any way occur merely as an afterthought to Marlowe's friends in order to insure their own security from prosecution as accomplices of a heretic?

The First Folio is a fine example of the printer's art. Apparently no expense was spared in getting it published. Yet there is a badly garbled section of it with pages mis-numbered and filled with numerous parentheses, used more or less indiscriminately, none of which

was corrected when the Folio was republished several years later. This garbled section has been looked upon as a cryptogram concealing the real name of the author. Several attempts have been made to solve this cryptogram but no solution to date has been widely accepted. Surely with the invention of the electronic computer, the task of finding a solution should not prove too costly or too formidable.

These are merely a few of the intriguing problems awaiting further research.

The question arises as to what difference it makes who wrote the magnificent plays and sonnets. There they are to be read and enjoyed! Yes, to be read and enjoyed, but not to be adequately understood and appreciated without knowing as much as we can about the life and character of the author, who must have been acquainted with "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" and who wrote:

"The time is out of joint! O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right."

Why do we study the biography of any author if not to better comprehend and appreciate what he has written? For this reason, if for no other, we may be assured that the endeavor to solve the mystery surrounding the sudden disappearance of such a literary genius as Marlowe and the mystery surrounding the simultaneous and equally sudden appearance of "Shakespeare" as a literary genius of the same calibre will be carried on, until the scholars of the world have reached a more satisfactory

agreement as to what must have taken place than they have to date.

I believe that the sudden mysterious disappearance of the one, and the simultaneous and equally sudden appearance of the other, were something more than coincidental. I believe that it will be eventually found that they were related as cause and effect; in short, that the heresy of Marlowe led directly to the hoax of Shakespeare.

To sum up, there is abundant evidence that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was not uncommon for heretics to use the protective device of a pseudonym since heresy was often punished by death at the stake. There is evidence that Marlowe was arrested on suspicion of heresy before official charges were made, and that he was allowed to go temporarily free on bail. There is evidence that casts considerable doubt on the authenticity of the reports concerning his alleged murder at the age of 29. There is Marlowe's confession in his *Jew of Malta*, published long after he was charged with heresy, that his own friends have been guarding his name from their tongues. There is also a confession in the Sonnets that the author is a troubled soul under the necessity of concealing his real name, which can not be "Shakespeare," because that is the name to which the Sonnets are ascribed. In Marlowe, we have at last a worthy candidate for the authorship of the First Folio. One who did possess the poetic genius to have written it. Finally, we have a fingerprint of Marlowe's literary style which is identical with that to be found in the First Folio. Granted that it would be desirable and most interesting to know

more about the case of Marlowe versus Shakespeare than we do today. What more do we really need to know in order to reach a verdict beyond a reasonable doubt? It seems to me that what we already know is enough to reach such a verdict. Therefore, I feel no hesitancy in declaring: "Shakespeare, Thy Name is Marlowe!"

Hitherto, the chief difficulty in reaching such a verdict has been that scholars have accepted as a basic fact the assumption that the Coroner's Report of Marlowe's early death is authentic and then have had to explain away a multitude of other facts inconsistent with this assumption. The Report itself is a fact but its authenticity is an assumption. In the light of the multitude of other facts, this assumption must eventually be discarded and the Report recognized as part of a deliberately planned hoax deemed entirely necessary by those who planned it.

Whereas the original purpose of the hoax was to save the life of a great poet, today there are large commercial and institutional investments that have an enormous stake in the perpetuation of the hoax. Nevertheless, I make bold to prophesy that while the main celebration of the 400th anniversary of the author of the First Folio took place in Stratford-on-Avon, the celebration of the 425th anniversary may well be focused on Canterbury in Kent where Christopher Marlowe was born.

I have no illusions, however, that today's Shakespearean scholars, who have long championed the Stratford Myth, are going to abandon their championship tomorrow or even eventually. This is expecting too much of human nature. This is not the way in which progress in new ideas is usually achieved. The claim for Marlowe's au-

thorship of the First Folio is comparatively so recent that it is still a new idea. It takes time for a new idea to be accepted. As Max Planck, the distinguished scientist, has so well observed: "A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and enabling them to see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it." The same observation is relevant to any controversial new truth in the areas of religion and literary criticism. It is going to take time before a heretic is widely recognized as Shakespeare, but I am confident that this recognition will eventually come because it is the only adequate solution of the mystery involved.