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SHAKESPEARE'S EDITORS 1709-1857

A DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Martin Beller, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1973

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1: SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The present dissertation is a critical history of the editing of Shakespeare. What I mean by "critical" I will explain in my outline of methodology. What I mean by "history" is in part simply "chronological narrative," and in part "reconstruction based on the historical attitude,"—the awareness of vanished states of consciousness. In considering Shakespearean editing this means holding in abeyance our knowledge of the modern movement in textual criticism which goes under the name of "the new bibliography." Of course it would be both arbitrary and self-defeating to be too rigorous about this. Discoveries have been made from time to time in the history of Shakespearean editing, and they have been absorbed into our present textual theory. They will be noted when they occur. But not until the mind is cleared of preconceptions as to what the early editors should have been doing can the essential outline of what they were doing emerge. To take a simple example; we know a fair amount about the eighteenth-century editors but nothing at all about
those of the nineteenth century, because, I suggest, it is with the editors of the late eighteenth-century (Capell and Malone especially) that we arrive at the first formulation of the attitude towards the text which was to culminate, in this century, in the new bibliography. Since the nineteenth-century editors made little theoretical advance over Capell and Malone, they are not seen as part of the mainstream of Shakespearean editing. This view is both unfair to the later editors, and an unnecessary impoverishment of our ability to understand how we got to where we are today. To understand why the nineteenth-century editors did not pick up where Capell and Malone left off it is necessary to understand what the nineteenth-century editors thought about Capell and Malone.

I have considered only the major editions of Shakespeare, which has meant ignoring such extremely interesting figures as Jennens and Caldecott (who was nearly ninety when his specimen edition appeared)--figures who, because they were so far in advance of their times, had little influence on their own generations and whose achievements were not understood until it was far too late for them to receive the credit. I have ignored the voluminous literature of annotation and emendation which grew up around the editions, except where, as in the case of Theobald, such labors represented a major contribution
to textual criticism. My starting point is the edition of Rowe (1709); I had to decide very early on whether to treat the quartos and folios, and my decision not to was based on my feeling that the "historical attitude" forbade it. For the early editors the quartos and folios were simply "the old editions," "the common text," or "the players' text:" raw materials, as it were, out of which might be rescued an edition of Shakespeare. I have noticed, therefore, only as much about the early editions as each editor in his turn saw fit to notice. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the "Collier controversy"--the climactic moment of nineteenth-century textual editing. We can gauge the mid-nineteenth-century editors' analytical sophistication from their response to Collier's forgeries. The affair is also a turning point in Shakespearean textual criticism, since we can see the studies undertaken in an attempt to overthrow the forgeries leading to the intense bibliographical analysis characteristic of the present century; we can see the revulsion engendered by this attempt to rewrite Shakespeare leading to the establishment of editorial conservatism as the only responsible attitude towards the text; we can see, finally, the desire to prevent a recurrence of so deplorable a situation leading to the founding of the influential Globe and New Variorum editions.
The purpose of this dissertation is twofold. The first is the obvious one; to render a chronological account of the work of the editors of Shakespeare. The second is to establish threads of continuity which will enable us to see the history of Shakespearean editing as more than a mere catalog of editors and editions. Traditionally such a thread is found in the dichotomy between the "good" editors—termed "conservative," "scholarly," or "historical," and the "bad" ones termed "emendatory," or "regularizing," and said to be characterized by a "common-sense" attitude towards the text. I would like to isolate instead two elements of the Shakespearean editor's task: the search for a principle to govern eclecticism; and the choice of an attitude towards the difficulty of Shakespeare's text. The search for a principle to govern eclecticism—to enable us to determine which of several readings is the correct one in a given passage—was instituted by Theobald in response to Pope's edition, the first eclectic edition of Shakespeare, but one whose eclecticism was based on no principle.

The second element does seem to me to admit of a dichotomy: between what I have chosen to call conservatism and atavism. The former spirit commands that the words of Shakespeare be presented exactly as he wrote them. The latter is based on the feeling that
Shakespeare deserved to have his text cleared of the corruptions and blunders of playhouse and printshop. Each attitude has its characteristic vocabulary, diction, attitudes, and confirmatory evidence. Though in our century conservatism's triumph over atavism has seemed absolute, the last few years have witnessed a shaking of our confidence and a consequent relaxing of some of the strictures against emendation.

2: METHODOLOGY

Nobody will deny to scholarship, whether in its highest or in its humblest form, its own right, and as long as one carries on the daily work of interpretation, of textual criticism, of historical reconstruction one may expect approval; but to turn from that activity to reflection upon the past of scholarship and upon the scholars of bygone days may be deemed inopportune and unnecessary. Yet if such scepticism is by any means to be converted, it will surely be by confrontation with the very facts of history, and to make the important facts visible in their historical perspective is precisely our purpose. . . . The history of . . . scholarship, therefore, is scholarship in the making. And a book reconstructing its history under this aspect can claim to be regarded as an integral part of scholarship itself. . . .

The historian must become old in order to develop his art to the full' is one of Ranke's maxims; this is particularly true of the historian of scholarship. Only one who has practised scholarship all his life should dare to write about its history.

--Rudolf Pfeiffer, History of Classical Scholarship, 1968.

The history of scholarship is indeed not a subject for a young man. Accurately to evaluate the work of
scholars, one ought oneself to be a scholar so thoroughly familiar with the field under discussion that he can render sound judgments on the work of peers. I can only plead here that the project did not originate in any presumption of my fitness for the task. Some are born old, and others achieve old age. I had old age thrust upon me. This dissertation began as a complete review of the forgeries of J. Payne Collier, the nineteenth-century scholar and editor of Shakespeare. After some preliminary work I realized I would have to limit myself to forgeries bearing on either stage history, the biography of Shakespeare, or his text, and I chose the last as, to me, the most interesting. Having narrowed the topic I then had to broaden it again; Collier's textual forgeries could not be considered outside the textual tradition of his time. The response to them could not be understood without a thorough understanding of the textual theory then current. I therefore decided to begin with the famous Boswell-Malone Variorum edition of 1821. Here, I felt, I was on safe ground, for since R. B. McKerrow's 1933 British Academy lecture, "The treatment of Shakespeare's text by his earlier editors, 1709-1768," everyone has known all that was supposedly necessary to be known about the eighteenth-century editorial tradition.

It was not, in fact, until I began the actual writing of the dissertation that I realized that there
was nowhere in existence a full-scale treatment of even Shakespeare's earlier editors. McKerrow's address is a work of ripe judgment and critical penetration, but it is little more than a sketch, it ends with Capell, and it has the additional disadvantage of being written with one eye on the new bibliography. At this point I was faced with the necessity of going back to the beginning, a task I had never anticipated. If any indulgence is to be granted to this dissertation's inadequacies, let it be on the grounds that it was never intended to go this far.

The eighteenth-century editors proved so fascinating, their achievement so various, that they usurped a far greater proportion of my attention than I had anticipated. The pressure of time has meant that most of the story I set out to tell in this dissertation remains rather sketched in than filled out: that most of the analysis I wished to do has had to rely on impressions rather than on minute collations. In one way this has been all for the best. In a project of this sort, only two alternatives are available, and one of them is the way of computers and collators. Should this dissertation ever be released to the public it will be because I have had the opportunity to do just this sort of full-dress analysis. But given the necessity of completing it in
two years, I had to develop techniques for evaluating texts simply by reading through them with an eye for their general editorial characteristics. I am particularly pleased that I have been able to avoid extensive charts, tables, and lists: the few statistics I use are simply introduced to emphasize points in passing; no argument is ever based on them. Instead I have made an attempt to develop a vocabulary and methodology for making editions available to literary criticism and, in fact, it is as a work of criticism that this dissertation can best be judged.

My general procedure has been to describe each edition with an eye to its salient features. Every new edition of Shakespeare has had a purpose, and an intended audience. Each of the major editors has felt that his edition was an improvement over all other editions then available—has felt that his own edition supplied a need. I have attempted to find the rationale behind the text. In the eighteenth century this is fairly simple, since each edition is quite clearly called forth by its predecessor. In the nineteenth century it becomes more difficult, but by concentrating on a few high spots I feel I have been able to isolate the significant direction of Shakespearean editing.

The main advantage of such an approach is fairly
obvious; the edition under discussion is, in theory at least, allowed to speak for itself. The main drawback is equally obvious; such criticism can easily become mere impressionism. The temptation has frequently been strong to inflate the importance of irrelevant points, simply because they are interesting, or because they are, after all, there to be made. So much is the same from one edition to another that the critic of texts practically twitches with joy when he comes across an identifiable difference. Whether this temptation has been successfully resisted I leave to my readers to decide.

The criticism may tend to impressionism, too, because it does not rest on a firm basis of minute collation. I had at one time intended to collate some dozen passages from six plays—a total of about 150 lines—in all editions of Shakespeare. Such a scheme proved both impractical and valueless: impractical because, being unwilling to devise a computer program for the task, I was faced with the labor of hand-collating hundreds of editions, a labor which would have been enormously time-consuming, and liable to be rendered worthless by a few errors; valueless because it would have been impossible to speak confidently about the achievement of a given editor on the basis of a comparison of one-tenth of one per cent of the lines in his edition with those lines in
other editions, no matter how painstaking the collation. My method has been, instead, to turn through each edition in an attempt to capture its flavor, and then to point out examples of its most distinctive features. Again, this approach works nicely for the eighteenth century, when each edition is really quite perceptibly different from the others, better than it does for the nineteenth. For the later century, then, I have concentrated on the textually interesting plays Hamlet and King Lear to see what each editor has done in a difficult case.

3: FORM

I have assumed in my readers a general knowledge of what the quartos and folios were. The material is conveniently summarized by Gwynne Blakemore Evans in A New Companion to Shakespeare Studies (Cambridge, 1972). Since analysis of an edition is a slow, digestive process, I have had to use editions which would be available to me for several months at a time. This has meant, for example, that my quotations from Warburton are taken from the Variorum, 1821, since Warburton's own edition was available to me for only a few weeks, and that the edition of Knight from which I quote is the second (the "Library Edition," 1842), rather than the first, from which it differs superficially.
The weight of my analysis is supported by a framework of quotations from the editors: though I have not attempted to demonstrate every least assertion with citations--and though I have allowed a few controversial generalizations to float freely, I have quoted copiously, though I hope with obvious necessity. In this dissertation the words of the scholars are the primary sources. Since footnoting these single-space quotations in superscript is impossible I have resorted to isolating the numbers within parentheses.

I have used abbreviation sparingly, and only where I thought it promoted clarity: for example I abbreviate quarto and folio (Q and F) only in arguments where the words are frequently repeated, or in locating variant readings, but never in general discussion.

Quotations from Shakespeare, other than those clearly drawn from the edition under discussion, are from the Globe Shakespeare (the 1891 edition), and are identified by act, scene, and line. Quotations from editions under discussion are identified by volume and page. Thus, "Oh that this too too solid flesh would melt," in general discussion, is Ham I.i.129; in the discussion of Collier's edition it is "(Collier, VII,207)."

Quotations of the editors themselves are given in the spelling of the original editions, except that
the orthography has been adapted to the limitations of
a portable typewriter. This has created a certain amount
of awkwardness with brackets, but little difficulty other-
wise. I have tried to be "vigilant" in spelling the name
of Shakespeare as it appears in my copy, but perfection
in this is an achievement I dream not of.
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PART I: THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
CHAPTER I: NICHOLAS ROWE

The history of Shakespearean textual editing in the eighteenth century is a well explored area, and one with whose outlines most Shakespearean scholars are familiar. But, although most of the editors have been subjected to careful scrutiny, there nowhere exists a compendious treatment of the period as a whole. The present section of this dissertation makes no claim to original research, but only to bringing together scattered materials, occasionally difficult of access.¹

The sequence of eighteenth-century editions begins with that of Nicholas Rowe, whose texts appeared in 1709 and 1714.² Rowe's editorial intentions must be surmised from the nature of the edition he produced, for he left only the briefest of textual prolegomena. To Rowe, it is apparent, the task of the editor of Shakespeare was a serious one—nothing less than that of ensuring the survival of his works. Shakespeare's survival seemed to Rowe to be threatened in several ways. The first of these was the inconvenience and unavailability of the folio texts. These great, unwieldy tomes, ranging up to nearly 1,000 pages of double-columned type, were vir-
tually all that survived of Shakespeare's text by Rowe's time, excepting a few scattered quartos of individual plays, issuing from the theaters. Rowe's answer to this problem--essentially more a matter of publishing history than of textual criticism--was to bring out Shakespeare in an attractive handy-volume form. And Rowe's Shakespeare, with its engravings of scenes from the plays, its wide margins, single columns, and large type, is still a pleasure to handle and to read.

The second threat to the survival of Shakespeare was the corruption of the folio texts. Estimates of the quality of the folio's presswork have varied. One fifteen-year period in the nineteenth century, for example, witnessed the following judgments, all passed by responsible critics: "Perhaps in the whole annals of English typography, there is no record of any book of any extent and any reputation being dismissed from the press with less care and attention"; "The text of no author in the world is so immaculate as that of our great national poet, or stands in less need of emendation, or departs so little from the words of its original composer"; "This precious folio is one of the worst printed books that ever issued from the press"; and, "All things considered, I doubt that there ever was a book so correctly printed as the first folio of Shakespeare." Through much of the eighteenth
century, when the standard of correct printing was contemporary work, the quartos and folios were generally felt to be irredeemably corrupt. It is only in the present century, with our collators, our knowledge of the general standard of Elizabethan printing-house practices and proof-reading, and our consciousness of the low esteem in which dramatic literature was held, that we are able to understand the inadequacy of any simple judgment of the quality of the folio presswork. Rowe's task, then, was to find materials to supplement the hopelessly corrupt folio and towards this end he made the necessary first step: he asked around, in hopes of finding any surviving material. It is the failure of these hopes he reports in his dedication to the Duke of Somerset:

... that Shakespeare may still have the Honour to entertain Your Grace, I have taken some Care to redeem him from the Injuries of the former Impressions. I must not pretend to have restor'd this Work to the Exactness of the Author's Original Manuscripts: Those are lost, or, at least, are gone beyond any Inquiry I could make. ... (4)

Having exhausted this avenue of approach, he applied himself to the printed sources. Though Rowe was aware of some earlier texts (see below), he selected as the basis for his edition the fourth folio of 1685. This was, as has long been known, the most corrupt of the early texts of Shakespeare. Since each of the folios was printed
from its immediate predecessor, and thus has no value as an independent witness to Shakespeare's text, they differ from one another, as Johnson says, "only . . . by the printer's negligence . . . and by those diversities which mere reiteration of editions will produce," or, as Matthew Black and Matthias Shaaber demonstrate, by the more or less intelligent interference of the printers.

We now know that the progress of the text from the first folio of 1623 to the fourth of 1685 is one of gradual modernization, which means gradual corruption, since the men responsible for putting the text into print no longer fully understood the language of Shakespeare.

But here we must free ourselves of modern preconceptions in order to understand the reasonableness of Rowe's choice of text. He was choosing as the basis for his edition the most convenient text to hand: one which was, presumably, more nearly free than any other from the corruptions introduced early in its history, and one which would enable him to take advantage of the labors of his predecessors. The textual history of Shakespeare's plays was already more than a century old when Rowe undertook his edition, and the direction of the folio editorial work was towards making the text more comprehensible to its audience. In 1709 the fourth folio would have seemed a far better text than the first. If it did appear to
him that the folios varied significantly, all would still have appeared to him to be in such a severe state of textual dilapidation that the most recent (and hence the most competently printed) would be the clear choice.

Rowe's next task after the choice of a text on which to base his edition was actually to settle the text: that is, to decide what Shakespeare wrote. He had available to him a copy of the fourth folio. He knew that certain passages were missing from it which could be retrieved from other early texts; how he knew this, and how far he knew it, we cannot be sure. Rowe is reticent about his approach to textual problems, and only tells us that "in some of the Editions, especially the last the fourth folio, there were many Lines (and in Hamlet one whole Scene) left out together; these are now all supply'd." He knew that whatever Shakespearean manuscripts might have survived down to his time had disappeared. The way, then, was open to him to insert such passages as were lacking in the fourth folio from the sources available—the earlier folios and such quartos as were available to him—and to apply his own intelligence to the job of clearing the text of the obvious blunders which disfigured it. Being the first editor to attempt collation, Rowe had much to do; his choice of the fourth folio as copy-text does not indicate a pro-
found conviction of its value, but rather a cool judgment that it was the best basis for his reworking of the entire text. Rowe omitted seemingly redundant passages, attributed speeches to their correct speakers, reconstructed misligned prose and verse passages, ordered entries and exits, and corrected the more obvious errors so profusely that on any list of emendations of Shakespeare which have been received by all modern editors, Rowe's name appears far more often than any other. Although his correction of the text was based not on any settled principle of emendation but only on his private judgment of what passages required correction, and although he overlooked many corruptions of startling obviousness, he did bring the text to a state of clarity which made it possible to read Shakespeare with ease. In fact his edition alone is sufficient to justify Peter Alexander's remark, addressed to those who feel that editors are somehow "interfering" with Shakespeare, or "coming between" him and his readers: "Those who are oblivious of their debts, and yet exclaim against their benefactors, should be condemned to read their Shakespeare only in the original texts."10

The third threat to Shakespeare's survival to which Rowe responded was that the texts derived entirely from the theater. This means that the manuscripts on
which they were based had been created for actors and stage managers. In preparing them for the press, the printers and players made little attempt to adapt them to the convenience of a reading audience. The task of dividing the plays into acts and scenes, felt to be a necessity down to modern times, was attended to only spasmodically by the proprietors of the original texts. Lists of *Dramatis Personae* were absent from most of the plays; stage directions appeared only occasionally, since they would rarely have been a part of the manuscript. Since they were not the responsibility of the playwright, but would be worked out in the theater, they often exhibited such strictly theatrical peculiarities as massed entries or "prompt" directions several lines before they were to be enacted. All this combined to give the plays, as presented in the folios, an air of forbidding remoteness.

Rowe sought to rectify this situation by providing an apparatus specifically designed for the convenience of the reader. He divided the plays into acts and scenes, often inserted indications of place, and prefixed a list of characters to each play. Though it is no longer the fashion to deck the plays out with all this apparatus, we must realize the service done to Shakespeare by Rowe, in making him available to an eighteenth-century reader-
ship repelled by the uninviting appearance of the folios. And too, the modern reaction has been a long time coming; dividing the plays into acts and scenes, and indicating where these scenes take place, is a prerogative which has been seized on by all succeeding editors down to our time, and renounced only in recent years.

Rowe's achievement was, in fact, far from meager. He started with virtually no models for the editing of a modern author, and thus with no guidelines other than his own sense of what an edition should be. His diligence was greater than could have been expected under the circumstances; though his collation of the older texts hardly deserves the name, there is no reason to believe that even the little he did was demanded of him. It is only if we require of his edition qualities it was never meant to display that we find it inadequate. Again, Dr. Johnson puts it nicely:

Rowe has been clamorously blamed for not performing what he did not undertake, and it is time that justice be done to him, by confessing that though he seems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errors, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his successors have received without acknowledgement, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages, with censures of the stupidity by which the faults were committed, with displays of the absurdities which they involved, with ostentatious expositions of the new reading, and self-congratulations on the happiness of discovering it. (11)
Johnson glances here at what is perhaps the most winning quality of Rowe's edition, its editorial reticence. The edition is utterly without notes—textual, glossarial, or critical. Rowe's textual introduction comprises two paragraphs of the dedication, and the bulk of it has been quoted already. It is so negligible that, so far as I can ascertain, it has never been reprinted, even in the most scrupulous variorum edition. This absence of editorial apparatus points to the basic enigma of Rowe's editing: the fact that he did very little to the text of Shakespeare means that he allowed to stand in the text hundreds of readings which were to be altered by every subsequent editor until a fairly recent period—readings which we now agree are authoritative, and not to be tampered with. This happy ignorance of both the real and fancied difficulties of editing means that Rowe, despite his claim to many "firsts" in Shakespeare scholarship—first biography and first formal edition being only the most obvious—is not guilty of the first textual note, and has no part in the first Shakespearean controversy. For both these we must turn to Alexander Pope.
CHAPTER II

ALEXANDER POPE AND LEWIS THEOBALD

It is perhaps an indication of Rowe's contribution to Shakespeare's popularity that his edition was so quickly superseded. For the entire century following Shakespeare's death, the reprinted folios satisfied the demand for his text. But within a decade of Rowe's edition—which had been reprinted twice—a completely new one was called for, and the foremost poet of the day was commissioned to undertake it.

If it can be said that Rowe's greatest contribution to the editing of Shakespeare was his realization that the conventions of seventeenth-century typography and book-production were hindering Shakespeare's popularity in the eighteenth century, then Pope's was the corresponding realization that seventeenth-century standards of textual presentation were now a similar hindrance. Rowe having cleared up the form in which the text was presented, Pope now saw it as his task to clean up the text itself.

It is difficult from this point in time to appre-
ciate the extent of Pope's editorial labors. His achievement as an editor has been obscured by the controversy surrounding it, and his reputation as an editor has suffered severely from what is generally considered the eclipse of his editorial method by that of his rival editor Lewis Theobald. We are inclined to dwell on what we consider his absurdities and excesses--his relegating to the margin passages he considered beneath Shakespeare's genius, his fanciful emendations, his shining passages enclosed in quotes--and to treat ironically his protestation that he operated always with "a religious abhorrence of all Innovation, and without any indulgence to . . . his private sense or conjecture." Yet there is nothing ironical about his prophetic remark, so repugnant to us in its candid refusal to elevate textual criticism: "I have discharged the dull duty of an Editor, to my best judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks." He has not, in truth, received his due as an editor, and it is to his accomplishment rather than to his embroilment in controversy that the following discussion will call attention.

It is not really fair to say, as D. Nichol Smith does, that Pope approached the job of editing Shakespeare in much the spirit of a literary executor, for this is to isolate one feature of his editorial philosophy, though
admittedly not an insignificant one. Nor is it entirely fair to suggest, even in extenuation, that Pope was unable, because of his creative genius, to deal seriously with minute textual problems. Pope did much to advance the state of Shakespeare studies. His preface contains the first informed account of Shakespeare's text, and is in some places remarkably acute. Where he goes astray it is as often because the available knowledge of the conditions under which the early texts of Shakespeare were produced was insufficient or misleading, as because he does not trouble to investigate the matter.

Pope's critical judgment of Shakespeare has been carefully assessed by John Butt in his 1935 British Academy address, *Pope's Taste in Shakespeare*, and his conclusion is just: "Credit must be given him for his anxiety to increase Shakespeare's reputation amongst men of taste, and for his sympathy with poetry which is not only so widely different from his own in style and mood, but which seems on first consideration so ill-suited to the climate of the age in which he lived." It is remarkable that Pope, so often considered a figure defined and limited by the tastes of his own age, should have pointed with such emphasis to Shakespeare as the representative English author; though we may object to the judicial note in the following passage, we cannot dispute its aptness, nor fail to notice
the subtle complexity of its use of the usually flaccid "woodnotes wild" theory of Shakespeare's genius:

It is not my design to enter into a Criticism upon this Author; tho' to do it effectually and not superficially would be the best occasion that any just Writer could take, to form the judgment and taste of our nation. For of all English Poets Shakespeare must be confessed to be the fairest and fullest subject for Criticism, and to afford the most numerous, as well as the most conspicuous instances, both of Beauties and Faults of all sorts. . . . If ever any Author deserved the name of an Original it was Shakespeare. . . . The Poetry of Shakespeare was Inspiration indeed: he is not so much an Imitator, as an Instrument, of Nature; and 'tis not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks thro' him (Pope, IA^).

True as it may be that this does not improve materially upon Dryden, the idea is crucial to Pope's editorial stance. I wish however to postpone generalizations until we have had a closer look at Pope's own words about the text.

Pope discusses in considerable detail the state of Shakespeare's text. One reason he was able to and, paradoxically, one among the things that have been held against him as an editor, was the magnificent collection of folios and quartos he had accumulated or gained access to--^6^ the largest available to any editor before Capell. It is to Pope's credit that he saw the need for such a collection, and it is unjust to account him guilty for not having understood its appropriate use. That he an-
analyzed his old books with some care is demonstrated not only by the solidity of his judgments on them, but also by how easily available they are to his mind when he considers aspects of Shakespeare not strictly related to the text:

By . . . Shakespeare's fellow actors it was thought a praise to Shakespeare, that he scarce ever blotted a line. This they industriously propagated. . . . But in reality (however it has prevailed) there never was a more groundless Report, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable Evidences. As, the Comedy of the Merry Wives of Windsor, which he entirely new writ; the History of Henry the 6th. . . . and that of Henry the 5th, extremely improv'd; that of Hamlet enlarged to almost as much again as at first, and many others (Pope, I, viii).

When Pope comes to treat Shakespearean textual theory as such—and he is, of course, the first ever to do so—he achieves real distinction. His observations on the text deserve to be quoted extensively for several reasons beyond the intrinsic interest attached to their priority. For one thing, they make it apparent that the undoubted editorial superiority Theobald was to claim over Pope is based not so much on the former's finer grasp of the theoretical grounds of textual editing as on superior practical skill and greater tact and diligence. Theobald's textual theory, in its essential outlines, rests firmly on Pope's, as does, of course, his text itself. In fact, Pope's reconstruction of the conditions under which Shake-
spear's text had come down to the eighteenth century was accepted by all the editors of Shakespeare, with the exception (inevitable, as will soon appear) of Hazen, through Johnson; it achieved much the same status as Rowe's *Life* of Shakespeare. It is not until Capell and Malone that an extensive revision of Pope's picture was undertaken.

It is not certain that any one of his Plays was published by himself. During the time of his employment in the Theatre, several of his pieces were printed separately in Quarto. What makes me think that most of these were not publish'd by him, is the excessive carelessness of the press: every page is so scandalously false spelled, and almost all the learned and unusual words so intolerably mangled, that it's plain their either was no Correcter to the press at all, or one totally illiterate. If any were supervised by himself, I should fancy two parts of Henry the 4th and Midsummer-Night's Dream might have been so: because I find no other printed with any exactness; and (contrary to the rest) there is very little variation in all the subsequent editions of them. . . .

The whole number of genuine plays which we have been able to find printed in his life-time amounts but to eleven. And of some of these, we meet with two or more editions by different printers, each of which has whole heaps of trash different from the other: which I should fancy was occasion'd by their being taken from different copies, belonging to different Playhouses.

The folio edition (in which all the plays we now receive as his were first collected) was published by two Players, Heming and Condell, in 1623. . . . They declare, that all the other editions were stolen and surreptitious, and affirm theirs to be purged from the errors of the former. This is true as to the literal errors, and no other; for in all respects else it is far worse than the Quarto's:

First, because the additions of trifling and bombast passages are in this edition far more numerous. For whatever had been added, since those Quarto's,
by the actors, or had stolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all stand charged upon the Author. . . .

In the next place, a number of beautiful passages which are extant in the first single editions, are omitted in this: as it seems, without any other reason, than their willingness to shorten some scenes. . . .

This edition is said to be printed from the Original Copies; I believe they meant those which had lain ever since the Author's days in the playhouse, and had from time to time been cut, or added to, arbitrarily. It appears that this edition, as well as the Quarto's was printed (at least partly) from no better copies than the Prompter's Book, or Piece-meal Parts written out for the use of the actors. . . .

Sometimes the scenes are transposed and shuffled backward and forward; a thing which could no otherwise happen, but by their being taken from separate and piece-meal-written parts.

Many verses are omitted entirely, and others transposed; from whence invincible obscurities have arisen, past the guess of any Commentator to clear up, but just where the accidental glimpse of an old edition enlightens us . . . (Pope, I, xvi-xviii).

Pope concludes by mentioning evidence of doubling of parts to suit plays to the limitations of Shakespeare's company, misattribution of speeches, confusion of verse and prose, and the intrusion of undoubtedly spurious plays into the canon, as further evidence of the great damage done to Shakespeare's works (and hence his reputation) by their association with the playhouses.

It will be noticed to begin with that Pope blames almost everything on the actors; other than mentioning the scandalous state of the quarto and folio spelling, he ignores the possibility of printing-house contamination.
Though his strictures on the players received a prompt rebuttal (by "A Strolling Player"), Pope is hardly the last critic to fix the blame on them. It is now only thirty years since Alfred Harbage, in Shakespeare's Audience, felt called upon to combat the orthodox opinion, represented by Robert Bridges, that the "faults" in Shakespeare—the "foolish . . . the filthy . . . and the brutal"—were traceable to the influence of the Elizabethan audience.

Pope understands, simply from the evidence of the quartos, that Shakespeare had no hand in the publication of his plays. Today, when we know so much about both the conditions under which the Elizabethan playwright worked, and the nature of copyright and literary property at the time, we accept it is a general rule that playwrights had nothing to do with their plays after they sold them to the companies. The exceptions to the rule—like Jonson and Daniel—announce themselves clearly. Though Pope is working without the facts, his reasoning is correct. And though we would now hold that a poorly printed play may be more likely than a clean one to have derived from a manuscript very close to Shakespeare, we would still agree that an author overseeing the publication of his works would be unlikely to allow them to escape with so many literal faults uncorrected.
Pope reaches a conclusion about Elizabethan book production that our more precise knowledge has modified but not overthrown: that proof correction in the printing-house was not up to modern standards; and he has seen that some of the plays are better printed than others. He correctly surmises that 2 Henry IV, and Midsummer-Night's Dream were printed from the quartos in his possession (missing only 1 Henry IV, of which he possessed the quartos of 1599, 1604, and 1608, but which was printed from the quarto of 1613), and raises doubts about three of the four quartos available to him which would now be classified as "bad"—the 1600 Henry V, and the second and third parts of Henry VI—and recognizes the early Taming of a Shrew, and Troublesome Raigne of King John as non-Shakespearean (Pope, Vol. VI.).

Pope calls attention to the much-discussed problem of whether the quartos were, as Heminge and Condell aver, "stol'n and surreptitious," and, by an ingenious conjecture is able to accept that they were unauthorized and at the same time believe that they provide superior texts. His resolution of his paradox is that, though somehow stolen, they preserve the text in a form much closer to that which Shakespeare wrote than the folios, with their accumulations of playhouse additions.

The imaginative fertility behind this interpreta-
tion is not to be wondered at in Pope, and, as it represents him reconciling contraries, it is a characteristic of his preface as a whole. It is what allows him to extract Shakespeare from his time and profession so that while he lavishes praise on Shakespeare, he is able to heap scorn on the age that nurtured him. In particular his idea of the acting profession—perhaps encouraged by his own unfortunate dramatic venture—seems to have been drawn from the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*; he considered all Elizabethan players to have been little better than itinerant beggars, on a social level with tinkers and minstrels. Yet Shakespeare was somehow immune from the uncouthness of his age and the degradation of his craft. The note is struck again and again in the preface. The thesis is first stated:

It must be own'd that with all these great excellencies he had almost as great defects; and that as he has certainly written better, so he has perhaps written worse, than any other. But I think I can in some measure account for these defects, from several causes and accidents; without which it is hard to imagine that so large and so enlighten'd a mind could ever have been susceptible of them (Pope, I, iv.).

Then comes the recital of the disadvantages under which Shakespeare labored:

It must be allowed that Stage-Poetry of all other, is more particularly levell'd to please the Populace, and its success more immediately depending upon the Common Suffrage. One cannot therefore wonder, if
Shakespeare having at his first appearance no other aim in his writings than to procure a subsistence, directed his endeavours solely to hit the taste and humour that then prevailed. The Audience was generally composed of the meaner sort of people; and therefore the Images of Life were to be drawn from those of their own rank... (Pope, I, v.).

Another Cause (and no less strong than the former) may be deduced from our Author's being a Player, and forming himself first upon the judgments of that body of men whereof he was a member. They have ever had a Standard to themselves, upon other principles than those of Aristotle. As they live the Majority, they know no rule but that of pleasing the present humour, and complying with the wit in fashion; a consideration which brings all their judgment to a short point. Players are just such judges of what is right, as Taylors are of what is graceful. And in this view it will be but fair to allow, that most of our Author's faults are less to be ascribed to his wrong judgment as a Poet, than to his right judgment as a Player (Pope I, vii-viii.).

From what has been said, there can be no question but had Shakespeare published his works himself (especially in his latter time, and after his retreat from the stage) we should not only be certain which are genuine; but should find in those that are, the errors lessened by some thousands (Pope I, xx.).

The purpose of this theory is plain; it is to exonerate Shakespeare from the charge of having written so badly:

If we give into this opinion how many low and vicious parts and passages might no longer reflect upon this great Genius, but appear unworthily charged upon him?

And even in those which are really his, how many faults may have been unjustly laid to his account (Pope, I, xxi.).

Or, in a more proto-romatic vein:
... his Genius in those low parts is like some Prince of a Romance in the disguise of a Shepherd or Peasant; a certain Greatness and Spirit now and then break out, which manifest his higher extraction and qualities (Pope, I, v-vi.).

Even Pope's sensible observations about the possible extent of Shakespeare's learning are meant not to prove Shakespeare either a scholar or an ignoramus, but to relieve him of the responsibility for the illiterate Latin (and French and Welsh) and the anachronisms and false names in his text: "Nay the constant blunders in proper names of persons and places are such as must have proceeded from a man who had not so much as read any history, in any language: so could not be Shakespear's." This is a position which does not require the apology of historical remoteness, or vanished Weltanschauung. It is a position alive for E.K. Chambers to flay two hundred years later, in words that might as easily have been directed at Pope:

We have all of us, in the long run, got to form our conception of the 'authentic' Shakespeare by means of an abstraction from the whole of the canon; there is no other material. Mr. Robertson abstracts through a series of rejections. He is repelled by childish work, by imitative work, by repetitive work, by conventional work, by unclarified work, by clumsy construction, by baldness or bombast. He idealizes. He looks for a Shakespeare always at the top of his achievement. (13)

And as recently as 1965 we were being exhorted by Alfred
Harbage to combat "the myth of perfection" in Shakespeare. Clearly the impulse lives still. All this is not meant to excuse Pope's tampering with the text, but only to reveal that the philosophical buttress of his editorial method has endured better than the superstructure—that is, his text.

When we turn from Pope's preface—so full of good sense, ingenious theory, and mistaken notions—to his text, our enthusiastic interest shrivels. It is not that he failed to lavish as much care on his text as he should have; his labors in this area are obvious. It is that the words of which his theory is composed turn out to have meant different things to him than they do to us. A look at the editions of Elizabethan poetry produced between the Restoration and the beginning of the nineteenth century reveals that the editors found nothing inconsistent in indulging in what we would consider wanton tampering with the text, while professing scrupulous adherence to it. Lacking our helpful distinction between the "accidentals" of the text—punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and orthography—and the "substantives"—the words themselves—they availed themselves of a quite considerable editorial freedom. Earl R. Wasserman, basing his conclusions on an examination of "a large portion of the minor Elizabethan poetry reprinted before the nineteenth
century,\textsuperscript{15} finds that in the typical edition, "Diction and grammar are modernized . . . meter and syntax are regularized . . . and both 'vulgar' and 'affected' diction and sentiments are levelled to a dignified plane."\textsuperscript{16} This is a fair summary of Pope's behavior with Shakespeare. If we add to the eighteenth century's lack of sympathy with the styles and conventions of the Elizabethan poets the manifest corruption of Shakespeare's texts, we may be able to understand, at least in great part, why Pope considered himself so broadly mandated to meddle.

Pope's text is the first truly eclectic one. Although Rowe, true to his claim, consulted other texts than the fourth folio, it is obvious that he collated only to make good a few glaring omissions--the overwhelming likelihood is that he had heard somehow of a few specific passages (such as the prologues to acts I and II of \textit{Romeo and Juliet}) which were available in the quartos, and recovered them from there. There is not even the pretence in Rowe of collating texts to uncover authorial variants. But Pope seems to have made a substantial effort to construct the best possible text from all the sources available to him. Although he does not anticipate Theobald in comparing Shakespeare explicitly to a classic author, the analogy is not far from his mind. He notes, for example, that the texts of Homer and Aristotle are less
corrupt than that of Shakespeare. And he observes that the Shakespearean quartos are in the position of the "originals" of Shakespeare's works, since the manuscripts have disappeared.

Much of the failure of Pope's edition can be traced to the amount of labor he expended in constructing the text. He describes a method of group collating, in a letter to Gay\(^{17}\) that is essentially the method followed by Edmond Malone.

As John A. Hart demonstrates,\(^{18}\) his collation, at least of *King Lear*, was quite thorough, though the resulting text displays all the worst problems of unprincipled eclecticism. If the folio represents the authentic text of Shakespeare as it was left after many years of playhouse alteration, and the quartos are "stol'n and surreptitious," but uncontaminated, then readings from either text can be supported or rejected entirely at the editor's judgment, and his own emendations can be introduced at pleasure, in an effort to resolve real or fancied corruption. The faults of Pope, thus, are the consequences of his virtues: his collation had revealed to him the extent, but not the true nature, of the textual problems surrounding Shakespeare's text.

Pope's edition called forth one of the most important works of Shakespearean scholarship ever written:
Lewis Theobald's *Shakespeare Restored*. Theobald (1688-1744: precisely contemporary with Pope) has had one of the most peculiar reputations in the history of literature. No fewer than three scholars in one twenty-four year period undertook substantial rehabilitations of his name.\(^{19}\)

Two of them anticipated failure--one in strains nearly elegiac:

> No interest can attach to the fortunes of an obscure scholar whose cause will receive its only support from that sense of justice which appeals to but a limited number. By the few his worth may be recognized; but by the many he will continue to be either disregarded or calumniated. The fate of Theobald is likely to remain for all time a striking instance, in the annals of literary history, of how successfully, to use the words of the author he did so much to illustrate, malice can bear down truth. (20)

In a way, of course, Theobald's rehabilitation has been accomplished. No one now talks disrespectfully of Theobald's contribution to English studies: which is to say little more than that no one talks of Theobald at all now. His name is no longer a byword for dullness. I suspect that insofar as Theobald's name lives, and his achievement continues to receive examination, it is greatly because he was the victim of one of the most devastating personal attacks in the annals of literary controversy, Pope's *Dunciad*. Yet even this fame is tenuous, since few, even of the few who still read *The Dunciad,* know more of him than the scattered references to him in the
poem's final version, in which his throne has been usurped by Colley Cibber. I would venture to suggest that what reputation remains to him among those most likely to be interested in him for himself--students of English Drama of the Tudor and Stuart period--attaches to his great emendation, "'a babl'd of green fields," for "a table of Greenfields," in Henry V. And when Theobald is thought of, he is thought of as an emendator of the text.

Shakespeare Restored was the first book of its kind in English, a fact of which Theobald was well aware. The work is not, as it is often assumed to be, simply a hostile review of Pope's edition of Shakespeare. Rather it is a discussion of the text of Hamlet in general, taking its impetus from the appearance of the edition. It seems extremely likely, considering Theobald's later references to the length of time that he had been studying Shakespeare's text, that the work had been long contemplated. Considering the materials available to him, it was a temerarious undertaking. To begin with, Theobald had not yet gained access to a copy of the first folio; his main staffs were the quarto Hamlet of 1637 and the edition of "Mr. Hughes," (1703). By collating these editions with the text as presented by Pope, Theobald was able to suggest ninety-six amendments. About thirty of these are variants in which Theobald's choice differs from Pope's,
or in which Theobald rejects one of Pope's emendations. A casual check reveals that approximately eighty percent of Theobald's choices have been approved by modern editors. He also hits at Pope's habit of regularizing the meter by leaving out redundant words, as in, "That father his, and the survivor bound," for "That father lost lost his and . . . " or "My father's brother, but no more . . . " Another twenty-two are conjectural emendations. Predictably, Theobald does not fare so well here. No doubt the most famous and widely accepted change is the substitution of "bawds" for "bonds" in Polonius' phrase "sanctified by pious bonds" (I.3.186). It was also Theobald who was the first to suggest that it was God's "canon" (law), rather than his "cannon" (artillery), which was fixed 'gainst self slaughter. But against these he is guilty of such indifferent, unnecessary, or over-literal emendations as "roast in fire" for "fast in fires," "swoop to my revenge" for "sweep to my revenge," "this is one Lucio, nephew to the Duke," for "nephew to the King," and "that of a brother's murder" for "a brother's murder."

Theobald had been too bold in undertaking what Pope understandably felt was an attack on his competence. The result was a virulent literary controversy which
extended for several years—in fact, to the end of the rivals' lives. Theobald was not, however, aroused to immediate action by The Dunciad: just as Pope was shrewdly aware that he had no hope of besting Theobald on his own grounds, so Theobald must have realized at once that he had no hopes of besting Pope on his.*

*That Pope was unable to reply in kind to Shakespeare Restored was a fact recognized by Theobald and others, and one of which Pope actually managed to make capital. The writer of a letter to Mist's Journal (June 8, 1728), signing himself "W. A.", had noted that Pope had resorted to personal ridicule of Theobald because, given the ineptness of his editorial work and the effectiveness of Theobald's attack, it was "impracticable to expose any errors in" Shakespeare Restored. The implication is plain that the task would be "impracticable" not because the work was impeccable, but because for Pope to confront it point by point would be for him to risk a serious embarrassment, by giving greater publicity to his incompetence. Pope parlayed his quotation with Theobald's earlier response to the news that Pope was working on a second edition of his Shakespeare: "... as my remarks upon the whole works of Shakespeare shall closely attend upon the publication of his edition, I'll venture to promise without arrogance that I'll then give above five-hundred more fair emendations that shall escape him and all his assistants" (Mist's Journal, April 27, 1728. N.B. The word "emendation" is here being used in its modern sense of "any change in the base text," and thus includes Q or F variants from the edition being used as copy. The boast is indiscreet, and perhaps unintentionally revealing, but, given Theobald's understanding of Pope's methods, hardly arrogant or even unreasonable. Pope produced an essentially false and thoroughly misleading picture of the controversy in his note (Dunciad 1729, I.106.n.): "What is still in memory, is a piece now about a year old, it had the arrogant Title of Shakespeare Restored: Of this he was so proud himself, as to say in one of Mist's Journals, June 8, "That to expose any Errors in it was impracticable." And in another, April 27. "That whatever care for the future might be taken either by Mr. P. or any other assistants, he would still give above 500 Emendations that shall escape them all."
His only recourse was to continue his patient attempt to construct a text of Shakespeare. This took time—and it is seven years from *Shakespeare Restored* to Theobald's edition. In the meantime, the field belonged to Pope, with results familiar to all students of eighteenth-century satire.

It is not difficult to understand how Theobald was able to restrain himself from rushing into print. For one thing, he did realize that the course on which he had embarked, though it did not at first include an actual edition of Shakespeare, would necessarily be time-consuming if it was to produce worthwhile results. For another, he must have been conscious of a sense of righteousness in his undertaking which, together with his faith in the judgment of posterity, would have sustained him through many days of persecution and doubt. For a third, the very nature of Pope's attack on Theobald was proof to the latter that he had been correct, for he realized that if *Shakespeare Restored* had been vulnerable to a direct attack, it should most certainly have received one. For a fourth, though he was the butt of the Scriblerians, he was fully aware that his book had made its point, and had been warmly received by the scholarly community. And for a fifth, he had been able to attract to himself
a small constellation of learned assistants, ready to place at his disposal such materials as they had gathered.

Chief among these was William Warburton, with whom Theobald entered into a laborious and searching correspondence which extended almost without intermission from early 1729 to mid-1730, and which continued sporadically until well beyond the appearance of Theobald's edition in 1734. Of this correspondence only Theobald's share survives, and it is from these letters that we must attempt to reconstruct the entire course of the relationship. Professor D. Nichol Smith does so and reaches the following verdict:

It would have been more fortunate for Theobald's reputation had... his share of the correspondence perished. The cruel contempt and bitterness of Warburton's references to him after their final estrangement may be offensive, but the correspondence shows that they were not without some justification. Theobald submits his conjectures anxiously to the judgement of Warburton, and again and again, Warburton saves him from himself. In one of the letters Theobald rightly condemns Pope's proposed insertion of 'Francis Drake' in the incomplete line at the end of the first scene of Henry VI Part I; but not content with this flawless piece of destructive criticism, he argues for inserting the words, 'and Cassiopeia.' The probability is that if Warburton had not condemned the proposal it would have appeared in Theobald's edition. 'With just deference to your most convincing reasons,' says Theobald, 'I shall with great cheerfulness banish it as a bad and unsupported conjecture.'... and this remark is typical of the whole correspondence. A considerable share of the merit of Theobald's edition—though the share is mostly negative—belongs to Warburton, for Theobald had not taste enough to keep him right when he stepped beyond collation of the older editions or explanation by parallel passages. Indeed, the letters to Warburton, besides helping to
explain his reputation in the eighteenth century, would in themselves be sufficient to justify his place in *The Dunciad*. (24)

In this judgment I am unable to concur. The passage quoted by Smith is typical only in the deference Theobald accords to Warburton's opinion; in fact there are very few instances of Theobald withdrawing emendations on Warburton's advice. Many more instances exist in which Theobald thanks Warburton for his warm praise, and still others in which Theobald deferentially rejects Warburton's conjectures (Nichols II 242-44, 628). (In fact, it is one of the minor entertainments of a reading of this correspondence to observe the agile maneuvering of Theobald as he heaps Warburton's suggestions with praise, while rejecting them: "This conjecture, like all you advance, is truly ingenious and refined; but, if I am not mistaken, struck out in the flame of an unbounded spirit" [Nichols, II, 340], or, on the "school of night" "I come entirely into your improvement upon my stole of night, as your guess is both nearer to the traces of the letters, and more consonant to the other metaphors: but, I presume, instead of scroul, as you in both places write it, you intended scowl" Nichols, II, 347.)

What evidence there is of Warburton's share in the correspondence tends little to the conclusion that
his influence was a restraining one. The few references Theobald makes to his letters are generally promises to reconsider emendations proposed by Warburton which Theobald had already rejected, but Warburton refused to relinquish (Nichols II, 255,490).

More important, the mere fact that only a very few of the many emendations suggested by Theobald appear in his edition does nothing to prove that Warburton was a leavening influence. What an emendation-crazed scholar will confide to a fellow-addict in a private letter, and what a sober editor will commit to the posterity of a major edition are two very different things.\(^25\) That my language here is not excessive can be amply demonstrated from the correspondence: in fact, one way of defining the difference between Pope and Theobald as editors is to point out that Theobald regarded the duty of an editor as anything but dull:

I wish earnestly I could be favoured with ... your emendations of Cymbeline, if possible, by the next post; which would in no kind break in on my measures, if it does not intrude on your conveniency. You bring back to my mind the time of a love-correspondence: and the expectation of every fresh Letter from you is the joy of a mistress to me. But when I am growing wanton it is time I should break off abruptly, though not without confessing myself, as I ought, dear Sir, Your most affectionate and obliged humble servant, (Nichols, II, 257).

Anthony, as you observe, is very fruitful in error, and it is a joy to me that you have hoarded up such a crop of emendations upon it. I am like an avar-
ocious husbandman, that want my harvest in, perhaps before its season. *Verbum sat sapienti* (Nichols, II, 285).

Near the end of their review of the entire text of Shakespeare: I am drawing so near the end of my task, that, like a boy with a dear sweet morsel, I am afraid of eating it quite up; and am for extending my pleasur in spite of gluttony (Nichols, II, 557).

What the letters reveal is not, as professor Smith would have it, Theobald's dunce-hood, but rather the workings of a mind fixed relentlessly and lovingly on a single purpose. Each letter reveals evidence of new reading—all such reading as was, before Theobald made it mandatory for editors, never read. What is most wonderfully conveyed in these letters is the sense of excitement which must have attended the first days of Shakespearean scholarly editing, when everything was yet to be discovered: the complete roster of Shakespearean texts (Theobald was particularly fluttered by the unearthing of the 1602 *Merry Wives of Windsor*—the only other early edition then known was the "1619"—since it lent credence to the tradition that Shakespeare wrote it at Queen Elizabeth's behest); the popular literature of Shakespeare's time; the most widely read classics and translations; the gossip and news of Elizabethan England, along with its customs, attitudes and mores; the very vocabulary of Shakespeare;
and, of course, the basic principles of textual editing of modern literature.

The final impression left by a reading of the Theobald-Warburton correspondence today must be, I think, one of sadness. We are well past the time when it is possible for us to chuckle indulgently at the stolid un-imaginativeness of these eighteenth century scholars, or to become infuriated by their smug inability to understand Shakespeare's genius. What is left is our knowledge that the love and passion that Theobald poured into his letters, Warburton was so soon to reject brutally. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the situation were--and I have deliberately refrained from judgment here--the human sadness is inescapable, and Theobald remains, if not one of the most misunderstood and underrated figures in literary history, at least one of the most pathetic.

One final reason why Theobald was able to exercise such great patience in building his counter-attack on Pope (see p. 30) is that he had "grounds more relative" than his own self-conviction for believing that victory would ultimately be his. This was the positive encouragement, from the most important quarters, that he should cease to envision his labors as forming an appendage to Pope's text, but rather as tending towards a complete text of Theobald's designing. As late as the publication
of the *Dunciad Variorum*, Theobald is confident that his remarks (on Pope's second edition) will be ready shortly. But within six months he is venturing to consider a complete edition:

I have obtained the honour of His Royal Highness's name now lately: and my Lady Delawarr has befriended me with such a list of Quality as were well worth waiting for. Theobald is here referring to the subscription list for his Remarks. I know you will not be displeased if I should tell you in your ear, perhaps I may venture to join the Text to my Remarks. But of that more a little time hence (Nichols, II, 254).

Four months later, in March of 1730, he is sounding Warburton about the idea of publishing a pamphlet which will explain to the public that the reason for the delay in the appearance of his Remarks is that he has formally decided to edit the whole of Shakespeare (Nichols, II, 551-52). Near the end of April negotiations have gone so far:

By the way, ... Tonson and I are coming to a Treaty together. He has been with my friends, the Lady De la Warre, & submits to make her the Arbitress of Termes betwix us for my publishing an edition of Shakespeare. He says, a brace of hundreds shan't break agreement. This is talking boldly; & I wish heartily his name was John. I shall know the Issue of this Proposition in about a fortnight; and so soon as known, with great pleasures communicate it (Jones, 266).

A broken arm, which confined him to his bed at a crucial period, necessitated a postponement to the
conclusion of the agreement (Jones, 273-74), but by the end of 1731 Theobald is able to inform Warburton that arrangements have been completed, on terms highly favorable to Theobald (Jones, 277-78). It is the edition which resulted from these arrangements which we are now to consider.

Theobald is, as I have mentioned, remembered essentially for his emendations. In one sense this is just. For although Theobald's understanding of the transmission of Shakespeare's text was a great advance over that of his predecessors, it was an understanding that had little influence in his own time, and had to be re-discovered by a later generation: only his emendations were handed down intact. It is little short of astonishing how many of the most characteristic Shakespearean lines actually represent conjectures offered by Theobald--how many lines which have either passed into the language of daily life, or been taken as crucial to the plays in which they appear are due to him. I offer the following garland of emendations as a hint of Theobald's facility at the game. I give the lines first in the form in which they have become familiar to us—that is, as emended by Theobald—and follow them with the word or words which Theobald found in the text:
The bud bit with an envious worm
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.

(Shakespeare, "Romeo and Juliet", I.1.150: "same") VII,132

Fairies be gone, and be all ways away.
(Shakespeare, "A Midsummer Night's Dream", IV.1.40: "always") I,125

Titania, music call, and strike more dead
Than common sleep of all these live the sense.

(Shakespeare, "A Midsummer Night's Dream", IV.1.81: "fine") I,127

So is Alcides beaten by his page.
(Shakespeare, "The Merchant of Venice", II.1.35: "rage") II,19

-O, had I but followed the arts!
-Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair.
-Why, would that have mended my hair?
-Past question, for thou seest it will not curl
by nature.
(Shakespeare, "Twelfth Night", I.3.89: "cool my nature") II,465-66

Let it be known to him that we are here.
He sent our messengers, and we lay by
Our appertainings, visiting of him.
(Shakespeare, "Troilus and Cressida", II.3.75: "sent") VII,48

I do desire to learn, sir; and I hope, if you have
occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find
me y'are.
(Shakespeare, "Measure for Measure", IV.2.53: "y'are": "yours,"
Rowe and Pope) I,370

Wouldn't drink up eisile, eat a crocodile?
(Shakespeare, "Hamlet", V.1.263: "Eisile") VII,352

The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about, . . .
(Shakespeare, "Macbeth", I.3.32: "weyward") V,392

We have scotch'd the snake, not killed it.
(Shakespeare, "Macbeth", V.2.13: "scorch'd") V,425-26

What harm can your besom conspecurities glean out of
this character?
(Shakespeare, "Coriolanus", II.1.59: "besom") VI,33
You gods! I prate,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted. Sink, my knee, i'th'earth;
(Coriolanus, 5.3.48: "pray") VI,109

This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
Goes to and back, lacuying the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion.
(Antony and Cleopatra, 1.4.46: "lacking") VI,227

But let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
The ne'er-lust-wearied Antony.
(Ibid. 2.1.38: "near-lust-wearied") VI,234-35

His face was as the heav'ns, and therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course and lighted
The little 'O' o' th'earth.
(Ibid. 5.2.81: "little o'th'earth," now usually printed
"little 'O' th'earth") VI,323

For his bounty
There was no winter in't: an autumn'twas
That grew the more by reaping: . . .
(Ibid. 5.2.87: "Antonie") VI,324

"Theobald had," as John Churton Collins was the
first to observe, "what none of . . . the other eighteenth-century editors possessed--a fine ear for the
rhythm of blank verse, and the nicest sense of the nuances
of language as well in relation to single words as to
words in combination." To put a finer point on it,
Theobald is often in close touch with the characteristic
Shakespearean voice, as these corrections and emendations attest:
The liquid drops of tears that you have shed
Shall come again, transformed to orient pearl,
Advantaging their love with interest
Of ten times double gain of happiness.
(Richard III: "Oftentimes") IV,489

This wimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy,
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid, . . .
(Love's Labor's Lost, 3.1.169: signior Junio's) II,120

So he nodded,
And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,
Who neighed so high that what I would have spoke
Was, beastly, dumb'd by him.
(Antony and Cleopatra, 1.5.50: "Was beastly dumbe") VI,230

Such accomplishment is, in terms of the history
of scholarship, its own reward. It also carries with it
its own snares, and Theobald, for all his studious ways,
succumbed to the demon raised in him by his unusually
fine sensitivity to the Shakespearean voice. An emenda-
tion was for him the fatal Cleopatra; though he allowed
many of them to remain in obscurity—in private letters,
journal articles, and text notes—he also is the first
of the truly emendatory critics. Rowe, of course, insti-
tuted many changes in the text, but virtually all of them
were, at least in Rowe's judgment, merely the setting right
of errors in the press. Pope too made many textual changes,
but again his work was more in the nature of tinkering
than of wholesale emending; Pope's intention was to tidy
up the obvious rough edges of the text. Theobald, however,
set himself to work over the text in earnest, drawing
upon all the resources of the trained classical scholar.

From whence this intention derived it is difficult to say at this point. Theobald was wholeheartedly critical of Pope's wantonness in emendation as late as the period of Shakespeare Restored; the book contains relatively few conjectural emendations, and the majority of them are of the most sober sort, and are advanced with diffidence. There is, though, an ominous note struck in the "Appendix" where Theobald enunciates the principle upon which the book is based:

The Design of this Work was an honest Endeavour to restore Shakespeare from the Corruptions, that have taken Place in all his Editions: And, to this End, I gave it as my Opinion, that an Editor of Him, ought to be a Critick upon him too. The want of Originals reduces us to a Necessity of guessing, in order to amend him; but these Guesses change into Something of a more substantial Nature, when they are tolerably supported by Reason or Authorities. There is certainly a Degree of Merit in a good Conjecture; tho' it be not so thoroughly satisfactory and convincing, as the Party, who advances it, flatters himself it must be (Shakespeare Restored, p.233).

Was it that Theobald was unable to believe—what he himself had conclusively demonstrated—that the work of Pope had been so inadequate that a new edition of Shakespeare was called for as a reassertion of the poet's true text? and thus felt that he was obliged to dazzle the public with something more spectacular than just a return to the old texts? Was it a desire to overwhelm Pope in
an area of editing which should have been impossible for one who—as Pope made him out—lacked "spirit, taste, and sense?" Theobald's emendations reveal an abundance of these qualities, yet as a weapon in a controversy he hoped would be decided by posterity they certainly could not have served; successful emendations are swallowed up by the text, and unsuccessful ones either lapse into merciful obscurity, or become inscribed in the history of error, forever attached to the name of their author.

Commentators on the history of Shakespearean editing have traditionally divided editors of Shakespeare into two camps, stemming, respectively, from Theobald and Pope. The dichotomy sets Pope off to one side as the originator of the "irresponsible" school of editing—making Shakespeare write what you would have had him write—, while Theobald is seen as the fountainhead of all responsible editing—going to school with Shakespeare. Though this is, as I shall show, a myth, I would not wish to deny the fundamental opposition between Pope and Theobald. Indeed the bitterness of their controversies—a bitterness which has in some measure infected many of the historians of their struggle—assures us that there was a fundamental difference of approach dividing them, a difference in their conceptions of what an edition should be. Pope's edition—though he himself would probably
have called attention to its "taste"—is what we today would term "neat," or "clear." Its spacious pages invite the eye, its few notes are demurely arranged at the lower margin. Attention is called to them by inoffensive and unobtrusive symbols, and the notes themselves are models of brevity, if not of wit. Not until the chaste pages of Capell's edition would margins be so uncluttered; and the cleanliness of Capell's pages was dearly bought—-it cost him his reputation for almost two hundred years, since the voluminous notes and variant readings were buried in two supplementary volumes, published posthumously, and since the key to Capell's system of textual symbols was located even more obscurely in a book brought out seven years before his edition began to appear.\textsuperscript{29} Theobald's edition, when compared to Pope's, in addition to being blighted by insistently controversial annotation, fairly bristles with notes of all sorts—-in this, as in so many other ways, setting the style for the rest of the century. Theobald's edition, though it may have been directed to essentially the same audience as Pope's, was directed to different expectations in it. These expectations are the ones which will determine the course of Shakespearean editing for nearly the next century: that an editor of Shakespeare will not only establish the text, but will also provide a running commentary on the text,
glossing obscure and obsolete words, explaining recondite allusions, and so forth.

This fact imposed upon him certain responsibilities with regard to both the treatment of the text and its presentation. As Richard Foster Jones has shown so convincingly, Theobald was strongly influenced by the great classicist Richard Bentley in both these areas. Theobald applied the tools of classical textual criticism to Shakespeare, and he modelled his notes on those which appeared in classical editions. His practice differs from Pope's then in being directed towards a different end, rather than simply in proceeding from a different method.

His understanding of the nature of Shakespeare's text is a bit deeper than Pope's, though it recapitulates it in outline:

We are to consider him as a Writer, of whom no authentic Manuscript was extant; as a Writer, whose Pieces were dispersedly perform'd on the several Stages then in Being. And it was the Custom of those Days for the Poets to take a Price of the Players for the Pieces They from time to time furnish'd; and thereupon it was suppos'd they had no farther Right to print them without the Consent of the Players. As it was the Interest of the Companies to keep their Plays unpublish'd, when any one succeeded, there was a Contest betwixt the Curiosity of the Town, who demanded to see it in Print, and the Policy of the Stagers, who wish'd to secrete it within their own Walls. Hence, many Pieces were taken down in Short-hand, and imperfectly copied by Ear from a Representation: Others were printed from piece-meal Parts surreptitiously obtain'd from the Theatres, uncorrect, and without
the Poet's Knowledge. To some of these Causes we owe the train of Blemishes, that deform those Pieces which stole singly into the World in our Author's Life-time (Theobald, I,xxxviii).

He goes on to point out, for the first time, that the folios were printed from each other in succession. But neither here nor elsewhere in his edition does he do what we are waiting for him to do: begin the process of evaluating the relationships between, and the relative authority of, the surviving texts. This is consistent with his absorption in the principles of classical editing, since it meant that he regarded the text as a series of readings, occasionally impossible and occasionally variant, each awaiting editorial confirmation. One of the things this meant—and it is what makes it so laborious a task to follow the traces of the eighteenth-century editors—is that, the early texts being of relatively equal authority, the editor was not responsible to inform the reader at every point what text he was deriving his readings from.

Perhaps the best way to achieve an understanding of what Theobald's edition was all about is to take a close look at a representative passage from it. For this purpose I have selected the first 500 lines of The Tempest—the opening pages of his first volume, as of every first volume before Edmond Malone's edition of 1790.
The first thing to be noticed is that, although Theobald's edition is much more heavily annotated than Pope's, it is not nearly so lavishly annotated as any modern edition with notes. Though Theobald's notes, when he has recourse to them, tend to length, his page is essentially clear. The entire edition contains fewer than 1400 notes—an average of about forty per play—and only seven of the plays contain more than fifty notes. The edition extends to about 3500 pages, so there are fewer than two notes for every five pages of text. The opening 500 lines of The Tempest contain twelve notes. Three of them are glossarial, one is a trifling emendation ("full-poor cell," for "full poor cell"), and one refers to the transfer of the "Abhorred slave" speech from Miranda to Prospero, a transfer adopted by almost all editors until fairly recently. One restores a first folio reading which had been lost in the second folio, the error persisting through the succeeding folios and the editions of Rowe and Pope. One chides Shakespeare gently for a slip ("Here seems a slight forgetfulness in our Poet: No body was lost in this wreck, as is manifest . . . : and yet we have no such character introduced in the fable, as the Duke of Milan's son"). Two of them controvert editorial interferences of Pope (an emendation and an instance of Pope's degrading passages of which he did
not approve to the bottom of the page). The remaining three introduce emendations of Theobald's, one of them only suggested, the other two adopted. The longest of the notes--some twenty-one lines--justifies the restoration of the passage degraded by Pope, demonstrating that the lines are necessary to an understanding of the plot. The next longest note is that on Theobald's emendation "still-vext Bermudas," for "still-vext Bermoothes," and it deserves to be printed in full, for it will go far to explaining Theobald's reputation:

(9) From the still-vext-Bermoothes So this word has hitherto been mistakenly written in all the books. There are about 400 islands in North America, the principal of which was called Bermuda, from a Spaniard of that name who first discover'd them. They are likewise called summer islands, from Sir George Summers, who in 1609 made that voyage; and viewing them, probably, first brought the English acquainted with them, and invited them afterwards to settle a plantation there.—But why, still-vext Bermudas? The soil is celebrated for its beauty and fruitfulness; and the air is so very temperate and serene, that people lived there to a great age, and are seldom troubled with sickness. But, then, on the other hand, these islands are so surrounded with rocks on all sides, that without a perfect knowledge of the passage, a small vessel cannot be brought to haven. Again, we are told, that they are subject to violent storms, sometimes with terrible clattering of thunder, and dismal flashing of lightning. And besides, Sir George Summers, when he made the discovery, was actually ship-wreck'd on the coast. This, I take it, might be a sufficient foundation for our Author's using the epithet still-vext (Theobald, I,13-14).

This, it must be admitted, does take us rather far from the text, and it is no miracle of brevity. Yet in its
defense it might be pointed out that someone had to ferret out these facts, and present them at length in some form or other, so that future editors and commentators of Shakespeare could either dispute them or take them for granted.

Much more upsetting about Theobald's notes is that he omits so much. He has nothing to say about the meaning of any of Prospero's difficult early speeches, a silence particularly noticeable when one is looking for some guidance in passages like:

He being thus lorded,
Not only with what my revenue yielded,
But what my power might else exact; like one,
Who having into truth, by telling of it,
Made such a sinner of his memory,
To credit his own lye, he did believe
He was, indeed, the' Duke; from substitution,
And executing th' outward face of royalty,
With all prerogative. Hence his ambition growing--
Dost thou hear? (Theobald, I,9)

Another shocking silence is evident from this passage: there are in it two significant emendations: "into truth" for "unto truth;" and "from substitution" for "out o'th'substitution." In fact, a rudimentary collation of Theobald's text with the folio text reveals nearly fifty unrecorded deviations in these 500 lines. These are, in approximately equal parts, inheritances from Rowe, inheritances from Pope, and original emendations, some, as is obvious from the above passage, at
least as significant as the substitution of "Bermudas" for "Bermoothes."

In this same 500 lines which yield Theobald the stuff of 12 notes, modern editors will find more material and less to say about it. The laconic Neilson-Hill edition (1942) has 71 notes, 5 being acknowledgements of emendations, and the rest one- or two-word glosses. The Signet Classic Shakespeare (The Tempest edited by Robert Langbaum, 1964) has 108 notes, the Kittredge-Ribner (1969) 183, and the New Arden (edited by Frank Kermode, 1954) 196, in addition to frequent references to the introduction and the appendixes.

Theobald's purpose in annotating is peculiar to his edition. Indeed, one of the points that emerges most clearly from a study of the history of Shakespeare's text is that it was a long time before the basic question—what should an edition of Shakespeare be like?—was answered in a way capable of commanding widespread assent. Not until Johnson does an editor establish a form and content for his edition which is adopted by future editors: Johnson's format remained constant in all major editions for the next sixty years, serving the same function for the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries that the Globe did for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
For Theobald it was no part of the purpose of annotation to present a register of textual variants: he calls attention to variant readings when they strike him as really significant, or as opportunities to display his acumen, or as amusing blunders of the early printers, worth sharing with his audience—-or when they provide an occasion to strike out at Pope. Theobald's annotations are pre-eminently a form of revenge on Pope. Hamlet, for example, contains seventy-eight annotations in Theobald's edition, and of them fully one-third mention Pope, all but a very small handful with asperity, generally in the form of lumbering sarcasm:

I don't pretend to know what glossaries Mr. Pope may have consulted and trusts to; but whatsoever they are, I am sure, their comment is very singular in the word alledd'g'd (VII,253).

But what a precious collator of copies is Mr. Pope! ... Here again, Mr. Pope approves himself a worthy collator (VII,299,300).

... Mr. Pope has a strange fatality, whenever there is a various reading, of espousing the wrong one. The whole tenour of the context demands the word degraded by that judicious editor (VII,313).

But why, in the passage before us, has Mr. Pope given us a reading that is warranted by none of the copies, and degraded one, that has the countenance of all of them? (VII,317)

Mr. Pope takes notice, that I replace some verses that were imperfect (and tho' of a modern date, seem to be genuine) by inserting two words. But to see what an accurate and faithful collator he is! I produc'd these verses in my Shakespeare Restor'd, from a quarto edition of Hamlet printed in 1637, and happened to say,
that they had not the authority of any earlier date in print, that I knew of, than that quarto. Upon the strength of this Mr. Pope comes and calls the lines modern, tho' they are in the quarto's of 1605 and 1611, which I had not then seen, but both of which Mr. Pope pretends to have collated (VII,321).

But of course there was more than mere personal animosity involved here: Theobald felt that Pope had simply not done the work of an editor, and that he himself had. He knew that his edition would encounter strong resistance, both because he was the laughing-stock of the wits, and because there already was on the market an edition of Shakespeare which was adequate for most purposes. Theobald's opening salvo, then, not only puts Pope in his place, but also established the new principle for an edition of Shakespeare:

. . . if want of industry in collating old copies, if want of reading proper authors to ascertain points of history, if want of knowledge of the modern tongues, want of judgment in digesting his author's own text, or want of sagacity in restoring it where it is manifestly defective, can disable any man from a title to be the editor of Shakespeare, I make no scruples to declare that hitherto Mr. Pope appears absolutely unequal to that task. (31)

These defects of Pope's were also, Theobald hoped to show, the merits of his own edition. He was the first editor to prepare himself for the editing of Shakespeare.

Apart from animadversions on Pope, Theobald's notes were of three sorts: those displaying the extent
of his reading and general knowledge; those advancing, for a variety of reasons, parallel passages; and those supporting emendations. Theobald's *eruditio*—that is, his knowledge of Latin and Greek literature—though hardly astonishing for his time, was substantial and solid. He used it, like all the other means at his disposal, partly as an aid in the establishment of Shakespeare's text, partly as a way of solidifying his position as a significant scholar, and partly as a weapon against Pope. Though the learning is not infrequently obtrusive in Theobald's edition, it is easy to forgive; Theobald was fighting an uphill battle and needed all the help he could get. Though Shakespeare was considered by the judicious to be the greatest of English authors, the editing of his text was a task too pedestrian for a poet, and too mean for a scholar. It is also, perhaps, not entirely creditable to indulge in too rich a chuckle of condescension over Theobald's humorlessness as he examines with a perfectly straight face the allusions of such a character as Nathaniel in *Love's Labours Lost*. The scholarly jokes Shakespeare is making were still capable of being thought funny in themselves when Theobald was editing, whereas today, lacking the secure knowledge of the classics which could be taken for granted among Theobald's audience, we content ourselves with a generalized
recognition of the absurdity of the Pedant. Theobald's learning is a subject to which I shall return in my consideration of his edition's reception.

The pointing out of parallels is a tricky business, one which depends on delicate poise and tact, a capacious memory, a broad sensitivity to nuance and to the alternative semantic possibilities latent in a line of Shakespeare, and an inexorable pursuit of the germane. Theobald has, perhaps, less to apologize for in this area than is usually charged against him. His (to us) irrelevant parade of classical analogues (which he considered to be sources) is excused by the state of knowledge at the time—for it must be understood that Theobald had made but a beginning in the exploration of Elizabethan popular literature and drama. Theobald advances his parallels with restraint, generally avoiding both the superfluity which we will find in such later commentators as Alexander Dyce, and the supersubtlety of C. M. Ingleby and the compilers of The Shakespeare Allusion-Book. The consideration of parallel-hunting, however, is inextricably bound up with the question of emendation, as Theobald himself, an editor who lays most of his cards on the table, makes clear:

... whenever I have taken a greater Latitude and Liberty in amending than "the addition or alteration
of a Letter or two, or a Transposition in the Pointing", I have constantly endeavoured to support my Corrections and Conjectures by parallel Passages and Authorities from himself, the surest means of expounding any Author whatsoever (Theobald, I,xlii11).

There is much to be said for the use of parallel passages as a guide to the emendator; at the very least it stops him from going too far wrong. But it is only too easy for the search for parallels to become an exciting substitute for the effort of understanding the text at hand, and this is Theobald's besetting sin as an emendator. For Theobald, despite his sensitivity to the nuances of Shakespeare's language, and despite his attempt to understand the principles of Shakespeare's grammar, rather than to set him to school with the eighteenth century, was often unable to accept the latitude Shakespeare allowed his characters in the use of the language.

Theobald mouths the pieties, already becoming formulaic, of fidelity to the text:

I have ventured on a Labour, that is the first Assay of the kind on any modern Author whatsoever. . . .
Shakespeare's genuine Text is for the most part religiously adher'd to, and the numerous Faults and Blemishes, purely his own, are left as they were found (Theobald, I,xxxii1-xl).

But he is willing to admit that he has, on occasion, found it necessary to alter the texts:
Nothing is alter'd but what by the clearest Reasoning
can be proved a Corruption of the true Text; and the
Alteration a real Restoration of the genuine Reading
(I,xl).

Where, through all the former Editions, a Passage has
laboured under flat Nonsense and invincible Darkness,
if, by the addition or alteration of a Letter or two,
or a Transposition in the Pointing, I have restored
to them both sense and sentiment; such corrections,
I am persuaded, will need no Indulgence (I,xliii).

Even this rule, as Theobald's observation on the value of
parallel passages attests, admits some stretching, however.

The best way to understand Theobald's techniques
of emendation will be to look at what he does in one play
and, in this case, Hamlet is an especially appropriate
choice. In Shakespeare Restored, Theobald had advanced
twenty-two emendations, but of these only eight appeared
in his edition, including "canon" for "cannon" and "sanctified and pious bawds" for "... bonds." But while
dropping fourteen of his suggestions between 1726 and
1733, Theobald added more than as many new emendations:
he introduces himself eleven major alterations into the
text, and accepts five more from Rowe and Pope, and three
from Warburton. I am, of course, leaving out of the ac-
count the falsification of the texture of Shakespeare's
writing which was the inevitable consequence of the
eighteenth-century style of editing, and which Theobald
inherited from Pope along with his text.
Let me first simply list the eleven new readings which Theobald admits to having introduced into the text:

1. And prologue to the _omen'd_ coming on (VII.229 "omen")
2. And _with't_ no less nobility of love (VII.235 "with")
3. The dram of base
   Doth all the noble substance of _worth out_
   To his own scandal
   (VII.248 "eale . . . a doubt")
4. To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most _beatified_
   Ophelia (VII.268 "beautified")
5. ... an Aiery of children, little _eyes_, that cry out on the top of question (VII.275 "Yases")
6. ... and fall a-cursing like a very drab, a _cullion_ (VII.282 "stallyon," Q2; "scullion," F)
7. And my imaginations are as foul
   As Vulcan's _smithy_ (VII.295 "stithy")
8. Know thou a more horrid _bent_ (VII.304 "hent")
9. That of a brother's murder. Pray I can not (VII.307 The words in italics do not appear in the quartos or folios)
10. The terms of our estate may not endure
    Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
    Out of his _lunes_ (3.3: "broves, "Qq; "lunacies," F)
11. Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
    And let them know, both what we mean to do,
    And what's untimely done; _for, haply, slander_,
    Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
    As level as the cannon to his blank
    Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name
    And hit the woundless air (4.1: the words in italics do not appear in the quartos or folios.)

The first two of these are obviously attempts to improve the logical relationship of the words: number
1 relieves the text of a tautology and number 2 resolves a sentence fragment. Numbers 6, 7, and 8 are equally obvious as indications of Theobald's insecure grasp of the Elizabethan vocabulary, while number 9 shows Theobald attempting to tidy up Shakespeare's metrics. Number 3 is probably the most famous crux in the entire Shakespeare canon. Since it does not appear in the folios, and was not uncovered by Rowe's collation of the play, Rowe had no problem with it. Pope's Gordian gesture was to relegate the entire speech ("So oft it chances in particular men") to the lower margin; he felt justified in some part because of the very difficulty under discussion. Theobald, thus, is the first editor to grapple with the lines. That he was is a measure of the new spirit he brought to Shakespearean editing: but how he did so is a measure of the distance between Theobald and the present:

I do not remember a passage, throughout all our Poet's works, more intricate and deprav'd in the text, of less meaning to outward appearance, or more likely to baffle the attempts of criticism in its aid. It is certain there is neither sense, nor grammar, as it now stands: yet, with a slight alteration, I'll endeavour to cure those defects, and give a sentiment too, that shall make the Poet's thought close nobly. What can a dram of ease mean? Or, what can it have to do with the context, supposing it were the allow'd expression here? Or, in a word, what agreement in sense is there betwixt a dram of ease and the substance of a doubt? It is a desperate corruption, and the nearest way to hope for a cure of it, is, to consider narrowly what the Poet must be supposed to have intended here. The whole tenour of this speech is, that let men have never so many, or so eminent, virtues,
if they have one defect which accompanies them, that single blemish shall throw a stain upon their whole character: and not only so, (if I understand right) but shall deface the very essence of all their goodness to its own scandal: so that their virtues themselves will become their reproach. This is not only a continuation of his sentiment, but carries it up with a fine and proper climax. I have ventur'd to conjecture that the Author might write . . .

The dram of base, i. e. the least alloy of baseness or vice. . . . (VII, 248)

Not merely the length of the note, but also its tenor mark it as the product of an earlier time. Note particularly the full and fair display of the difficulty posed by the passage before us, and the fancy that not only does the emendation render the passage comprehensible, but it adds a beauty to Shakespeare; this technique of creating a new reading and then pointing out how splendid it was of Shakespeare to have written it, is one we meet with on occasion in Pope, Theobald, and Hamner. For Warburton, as we shall see, it ceases to be a technique and becomes a controlling purpose, or even an obsession.

But the reason that Edward Hubler, editing Hamlet for the Signet Classic Shakespeare, can reprint the lines as they stand in the folio, commenting only "though the drift is clear, there is no agreement as to the exact meaning of these lines," is not that Edward Hubler is less expansive than Lewis Theobald, but that the work begun by Theobald has culminated in a text whose cruxes are comfortable to us. Edward Hubler, along with the
other modern editors, is taking no chances with his note--a note that merely reassures us of the correctness of our own impression. But we know that the "dram of eale" crux is insoluble in great part because Theobald did take a chance.

In Hamlet, Theobald's technique and rationale of emendation are displayed most fully in the emendations numbered 4 and 11 on the above list. In the former, "beautified" is a vile phrase to Polonius--like Hamlet a critic of style--because it is both affected and ambiguous. Both Hamlet's use of the word and Polonius's objection to it are seen as touches of character, by readers of Shakespeare today. For Theobald the question of character never arises, except as an adjunct to intellectual history:

After objecting to "beautified" because of its ambiguity: But a stronger objection still, in my mind, lies against it. As celestial and soul's idol are the introductory characteristics of Ophelia, what a dreadful anticlimax is it to descend to such an epithet as beautified? On the other hand, beati

fied, as I have conjectur'd raises the image: but Polonius might very well, as a Roman catholick, call it a vile phrase, i.e. favouring of prophanation; since the epithet is peculiarly made an adjunct to the Virgin Mary's honour, and therefore ought not to be employ'd in the praise of a meer mortal (VII,268).

Notice here the emphasis on the rhetorical organization of the line, even though it is the superscription of a
love-letter, passed between two young lovers, and though it stands at the head of a poem of the most profound naivety and unoriginality. Note also the praise of the emendation ("raises the image"), and the conception of Shakespeare's techniques of characterization implicit in the emendation and the comment.

The final emendation, which is actually a version of an alteration proposed in Shakespeare Restored, is the insertion of three whole words into the text of Shakespeare—a liberty no editor of this century would more than dream of taking (see p.56, emendation #11). Theobald's note attempts to justify his daring:

The verses carry the very stamp of Shakespeare upon them. The coin, indeed, has been clipt from our first receiving it; but it is not so diminish'd, but that with a small assistance we may hope to make it pass current. 'Tis plain, the sense, as well as one of the verses, is defective: and a sentence beginning with the relative Whose, without any preceding substantive to which it can refer, it is as plain that the latter part of the hemistich fell out in the printing, or was so blind in the manuscript as not to be guess'd at, and therefore necessarily came to be omitted. We have not, indeed, so much as the foot-steps, or traces, of a corrupted reading to lead to an emendation; nor any means of restoring what is lost, but conjecture. I am far from affirming, therefore, that I have given the Poet's very words; but the supplement is such as the sentiment naturally seems to demand . . . (VII,321).

This is plain talk, and far from stupid. What is most interesting about this emendation is that a fossilized form of the error on which it rests is still to be seen
in editions of Shakespeare—one of the few remaining
eighteenth-century misunderstandings, most of them having
been swept from the text by the new bibliographers, or
their predecessors. Though it seems evident that "Whose"
must refer to "what's untimely done" (the sense then being,
"The rumor of Hamlet's crime is bound to spread everywhere
with the usual speed and effectiveness of malicious gos­sip, but we can avoid the entire consequences if we pub­lish an official version of it"), and though it seems
equally evident that the huddle of images excuses the
grammatical confusion, and that the sentiment, without
any additions, is perfectly in keeping with Claudius'
mood of the moment, modern editors persist in considering
the line defective. Both the Pelican and the Signet Classic
editions fill out the hemistich with ellipsis periods,
and the Kittredge-Ribner text contains a version of Theo­bald's emendation (by Capell) in brackets. The literal­mindedness, the inability to consider alternatives, the
desire to pin Shakespeare down to a standardized grammar--
though we consider them as the defining sins of eighteenth­
century editing--are impulses whose energy is far from
exhausted even today.

I have attempted (above, pages 38-39) to show
Theobald at his best as an emendator, and it is fair to
show him at--if not his absolute worst, then--his most
hapless. In taxing Theobald with a pedestrian literal-mindedness (page 28) I mentioned the emendation, "That of a brother's murder," for "A brother's murder." The emendation is based on a simple misreading of the text:

Oh my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon it:
A brother's murder. Pray I can not. . . .

The emendation is easily accounted for; instead of reading, "Oh my offence--A brother's murder!--is rank . . ." Theobald reads--but let him explain it:

The last verse, 'tis evident, halts in the measure; and, if I don't mistake, is a little lame in the sense too. Was a brother's murder the eldest curse? Surely, it was rather the crime, that was the cause of this eldest curse. We have no assistance, however, either to the sense or numbers from any of the copies. All the editions concur in the deficiency of a foot: but if we can both cure the measure and help the meaning without a prejudice to the Author, I think, the concurrence of the printed copies should not be sufficient to forbid a conjecture. I have ventur'd at two supplemental syllables, as innocent in themselves as necessary to the purposes for which they are introduc'd (VII,307).

It is the note, not the emendation, which must ultimately unsettle our favorable judgment on Theobald: to misunderstand Shakespeare's characteristic expressions is no high crime, even for an editor if he be an early one, but the lip-smacking self-satisfaction, the serene certitude that his readers are obediently following him along his masterly demonstration, the so-patient
didacticism of tone, seem today, as they no doubt seemed in the eighteenth century, the marks of a mind more subtle than sympathetic, and more keenly fixed on personal glory than on Shakespeare.

The history of Shakespearean editing is generally seen as a struggle between two methods, one deriving from Theobald, and ultimately triumphing, the other deriving from Pope, and ultimately discredited. The latter is usually described as "common-sense" (pejoratively), "ingenious," or "emendatory," while the former is described as "historical," or "scholarly." The common-sense style of editing is said to be characterized, as in Pope, by failure to collate and by (the deadliest of the editorial sins) that lust for emendation that places the editor on a level with the creator. The virtues corresponding to these sins are generally attributed to the adherents of the presumed rival method. The adherents to the common-sense method—Rowe, Pope, Hanmer and Warburton—are seen as being overthrown by men of deeper scholarship: Theobald is their fore-runner; Johnson the transitional figure, and Capell and Malone the great exemplars, with Steevens a throwback to the discredited older method.

It has been my intention to show, thus far, that this dichotomy is a false one. Theobald's pruritus emendandi is far more advanced than Pope's—in fact, except
among textual scholars, Theobald's name survives today essentially as a result of the few really great emendations he created, and even this modest fame is slowly evaporating as twentieth-century conservatism rescues more and more of the original text. And Theobald's textual theory is little improvement on that of Pope. If instead of trying to establish neat categories which will enable us to describe Pope's edition as unscholarly, we consider it as an exemplar of what I have termed "unprincipled eclecticism" (above, pp. 24-25), it takes on a new position in the history of Shakespeare studies. From this point of view the most significant effort of Shakespearean editors from Pope to the present day--the effort that binds into unity the whole range of the textual history of Shakespeare--is the quest for a principle to guide eclecticism or to abolish it. Pope, then, is the first eclectic editor and Theobald's attack on his edition plainly demonstrated the inability of unprincipled eclecticism to help settle the text. In the attempt to establish such a principle, Theobald gathered parallel passages, Johnson determined the relative authority of the folios, and Capell brought together the finest private Shakespeare library ever owned. To culminate the eighteenth century's contribution to Shakespeare studies
the first variorum editions were compiled, in an attempt
to make public the grounds on which the search was pro-
ceeding.

In the nineteenth century it was on this quest
that Knight so vigorously championed the textual purity
of the first folio, and that Collier, in his first edi-
tion, adhered so often to the quartos. And it was of
course against this tradition that Collier was rebelling
in supporting the emendations of the Perkins folio.

In our own century it is this search for a prin-
ciple which has led us to embrace with such eagerness the
bibliographical approach to Shakespeare's text, for what
is its appeal if not that it promises us a way to deter-
mine which of two texts is the more likely to preserve
the intentions of the author? It is for this that McKerrow
wrote the theoretical part of his Prolegomena, and it is
to this that Greg directed his extremely influential "Rat-
tionale of Copy-Text."

It may even be permissible to suggest that herein
lies one major reason for the neglect of the nineteenth
century by historians of Shakespeare's text. For if that
history is seen in Manichaean terms, then the forces of
"good" represented by Theobald, Capell, and Malone, had
utterly demolished the "evil" legions of Pope, Hanmer,
and Warburton. The struggle between editorial
responsibility and irresponsibility was over by the end of the eighteenth century, and if the principle which is seen to animate history becomes a dead issue, then subsequent history is likely to be a rather dull affair. Simply by shifting the focus to the quest for a principle to govern eclecticism, we are enabled to see that the nineteenth-century editors were continuing a tradition which began at the outset of Shakespearean editing, and has continued to the present, and which has had implications for almost every facet of the job of producing an edition of Shakespeare.

Seen from this viewpoint, the conflict between Pope and Theobald may not seem to be much altered: the change I propose is hardly revolutionary, but is directed towards greater precision. The difference between Pope and Theobald was not that Pope was an irresponsible amateur of editing while Theobald was a responsible scholar, but that for Pope the task of the editor only negligibly involved textual matters. Pope exhibited what appears to me a fine resoluteness in doing what collation he did. When he says, "I have discharged the dull duty of an Editor to my best judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks," we are conditioned to hearing a mean-spirited untruth. But the statement is not a polite fiction for Pope--a half-hearted excuse for having botched a job he
was little suited for. It was literally true. The dull duty of an editor was, for Pope's audience, as for Pope himself, the least interesting and important part of his work. If lines and scenes could be retrieved from previously uncollated texts—so much the better. But the well known disappointment with which Pope's edition was met was not generated by textual irresponsibility, but by the very opposite. Pope's edition was eagerly awaited as a major literary event; the public expected to be dazzled by the results of this collision between the two greatest English poets. What we should be hearing, then, in Pope's words, is a rather manly confession that he was more concerned to preserve the text of Shakespeare than to apply his ingenuity to it. His method was to present the text as he found it, except that he made what he felt were obligatory adjustments of meter and vocabulary as the occasion demanded. It may not be widely realized that one of the things which Theobald criticized Pope for constantly was his unwillingness to emend the text:

Mr. Pope has curtail'd... this speech to little or nothing, because it has not the sanction of the first old copy.... But there was another reason, I suspect, for curtailing: certain corruptions started, which requir'd the indulging his private sense to make them intelligible, and this was an unreasonable labour (VII, 206).
Such notes as this could be multiplied almost at pleasure from Theobald's edition.

What distinguished Theobald's method from that of Pope was that Theobald applied the tools of textual criticism to the establishment of the text. Though this may seem too obvious to call attention to, it was hardly what was expected in an edition of Shakespeare. Theobald's desire to elucidate Shakespeare by means of textual criticism must have seemed, to all but the cognoscenti, as arbitrary and pedantic in his time as has, in our own, the application of the full range of modern textual bibliography to the works of such writers as Hemingway and Fitzgerald—with this difference: that the subject of Theobald's labors was nowhere the object of serious study among respected scholars.

There is one further reason why it is misleading to see Theobald as the vanguard of the new spirit of Shakespearean editing (see pp.63-64), and this is the fact which I alluded to in the beginning of my discussion of Theobald: simply that his work disappeared almost without a trace, and that his discoveries had to be discovered afresh decades later. It was not a matter of his work itself being eclipsed for a time, and later recovered, nor was it greatly a matter of his work being plundered by those who professed to condemn it (this was to be the
fate of Capell). Rather, Theobald's edition came to be conceived of as a repository of futile stupidity, not worth the searching of any but the most diligent. What the diligent found there, searching as they were for absurdities, confirmed their prejudices, and discredited the many fine insights, comments, and emendations of the editor. Emendations from *Shakespeare Restored* which had been used without credit by Pope in his second edition (1728) were attributed to Pope. Others from Theobald's edition, appropriated by Warburton in his edition (1747) attached to Warburton's name. Even so important an insight as that Shakespeare could be explicated, and his text established by reference to his contemporaries was forgotten by the immediately succeeding editors. Johnson re-established the principle, and to him went the credit for founding it.  

One of the reasons Theobald was so thoroughly forgotten was that the editors who succeeded him—the men who could have built on the foundations he laid (or at least could have laid foundations on the ground he had cleared), cared nothing for his work. Thomas Hanmer, Bart. and The Reverend William Warburton (later Bishop of Gloucester) conceived of an edition of Shakespeare in a way that would have made Theobald think his work had been for nothing.
CHAPTER III
SIR THOMAS HANMER AND WILLIAM WARBURTON

The relationship between the editions of Sir Thomas Hanmer (1677-1746) and William Warburton (1698-1779) will be most clearly seen if we begin by looking at the two alongside each other. Although in many senses diametrically opposed, their editions have in common one feature which is crucial to a historical judgment on them: this is that neither of them is what I would call a "textual" job of editing. This assertion may seem a bit peculiar in regard to Hanmer's edition because he makes an explicit statement that he has established the text, and in regard to Warburton's because he devotes so much of his attention to the text. What I mean is that the methods they used to establish the text did not evolve, as had those of Pope and Theobald, from an analysis of how the text got to be the way it was.

Hanmer was, quite simply, what we have traditionally taken Pope to be, the first amateur of Shakespearean editing. He states plainly in his preface--the briefest of any after Rowe's:

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One of . . . Shakespeare's great admirers hath made it the amusement of his leisure hours for many years past to look over his writings with a careful eye, to note the obscurities and absurdities introduced into the text, and according to the best of his judgment to restore the genuine sense and purity of it. In this he proposed nothing to himself but his private satisfaction. . . . But other gentlemen, equally fond of the author, desired to see them. (1) emphasis supplied

The story is a familiar one, but is not usually told in connection with an undertaking as substantial as a complete edition of Shakespeare. Shakespeare's text has been the leisure or retirement occupation of more than a few peers with similarly obliging friends, but the typical result of this dabbling has been a slim volume of emendations. The note of amateurism in Hanmer's enterprise extends even to the arrangements for its publication: alone among eighteenth-century editors of Shakespeare, Hanmer does not accept any payment for his labors, electing, instead, to underwrite the entire cost of the venture himself. Hanmer made a present of the edition and whatever proceeds might be realized from its sale to the university of his adoption--Oxford--and thus achieved a kind of immortality as the editor of the first Oxford edition. Perhaps I should say, of the first "Oxford Edition"; since it appeared anonymously it is referred to always, in the literature of the time, by that title.

In Warburton's case it was the quality of his
mind which precluded his understanding the true nature of the editor's task. In discussing his edition I will attempt to demonstrate that he clung to an editorial purpose which, for him, overrode any considerations of textual theory; an unspoken premise which colored—or perhaps poisoned—his understanding of the text. This was his desire to demonstrate that Shakespeare's writings were a repository of wisdom and truth, theologically sound, and morally unobnoxious. We must remember that not until Dr. Johnson did a Shakespearean editor grapple with the unpleasant fact that Shakespeare is not a source of infallible moral guidance in a world of Christian--Anglican--certitude. Though his villains, for example, generally meet a bad end, it is often only after they have done the damage they set out to do. And his scoundrels often prosper. But Warburton, lacking Johnson's overpowering intellectual integrity, while sharing the limitations of Johnson's age, chose a more congenial way out—to remake Shakespeare in his own image.

Suffice it to say here that it simply would have appeared absurd to Warburton that the way to understand Shakespeare's text was to grub about in the minor literature of the Elizabethan period. Warburton possessed an ample mind, heavily furnished with various learning, but perhaps a bit too ponderous and dignified to sport at
the level at which Shakespeare habitually frolicked. This consideration, in fact, may suggest a reinterpretation of Theobald's advice to Warburton when informed that the divine was about to undertake an edition of Shakespeare:

To say a word to your intention of composing a full & compleat Critic on Shakespeare, I own, it would be a treasure to me to see it: but to speak for the World, & throw off these prepossessions which I have for our Author, I am afraid, the generality will regard him as too irregular a Writer to deserve such a critic. (2)

Warburton's most recent biographer calls these words "most disingenuous" and suggests that they might have derived from Theobald's fear that Warburton's textual criticism would surpass his own. 3 This may be so, but it seems far more likely to me that Theobald was, in his characteristically gingerly way, hinting that the textual criticism of Shakespeare was a task which demanded a mastery of studies it would have been beneath the learned Warburton's dignity to cultivate.

Another point to consider while we have both editions before us, is the controversial engagement between Warburton and Hanmer. As in the breach between Warburton and Theobald, the bone of contention seems to have been the textual notes of Warburton. Though the precise details of who did what to whom may never be established
beyond a doubt, the nature of the affair seems to be tolerably clear. Their original meeting was arranged through the offices of a mutual friend and, as Giles Dawson has pointed out, each of them probably had reason to believe that it was the other who had made the advances. This ritualistic avoidance of expressing any commitments seems to have led to a more serious misunderstanding, for neither really believed that the other was working on an edition. Or rather, each, knowing his own intentions, considered the other to be a sort of junior partner. The insensitiveness with which Hanmer expresses his distaste for the idea that he might have anything to do with an edition which would make money for another man gives eloquent expression to his unself-conscious conviction of nobility --a nobility which puts out of the question any possibility that he could have thought of himself as Warburton's assistant editor. And Warburton, in the very act of expressing his delighted approval of Hanmer's way with Shakespeare, conveys strongly his sense that Hanmer's share in a joint edition would comprise some trifling with readings (an activity for which, Warburton felt, Hanmer had a real flair), with all the serious work being left in Warburton's hands.

The issue of this misunderstanding was a conflict which did not erupt publicly until after Hanmer's death.
in 1746. Writing in his Preface (1747), Warburton offers his version of his dealings with both Theobald and Hanmer:

... as it was my ill Fortune to have some accidental Connexions with these two Gentlemen, it will be incumbent on me to be a little more particular concerning them.

The One was recommended to me as a poor Man; the Other as a poor Critic: and to each of them, at different times, I communicated a great number of Observations, which they managed, as they saw fit, to the Relief of their several Distresses. As to Mr. Theobald, who wanted Money, I allowed him to print what I gave him for his own Advantage: and he allowed himself the Liberty of taking one Part for his own, and sequestering another for the Benefit, as I supposed, of some future Edition. But, as to the Oxford Editor, who wanted nothing but what he might very well be without, the Reputation of a Critic, I could not so easily forgive him for trafficking with my Papers without my Knowledge; and, when that Project fail'd, for employing a number of my Conjectures in his Edition against my express Desire not to have that Honour done unto me... To conclude with them in a word, They separately possessed those two Qualities which, more than any other, have contributed to bring the Art of Criticism into disrepute, Dulness of appre­hension and Extravagance of Conjecture.

At the hands of both eighteenth-century specialists and Shakespearean scholars, Warburton has tended to fare badly. J. C. Collins boldly denounced him, while Hanmer's integrity was vigorously upheld by a reviewer of his collected correspondence. Warburton's first biographer (in the course of a persistently hostile account of his Shakespearean labors) notes that Hanmer, like Theobald, was dead at the time that Warburton unleashed his attack, "so that there might be no ... testimony producible
against him. 'Dead men' as the Greek proverb says, 'do not bite,' and Warburton might calumniate Hanmer with equal exultation and security." On the other side of the question, Nichol Smith, with characteristic perci-pience, suggested that Warburton's behavior might not be so bad as it looked, and A. W. Evans has presented both evidence and a strongly reasoned reading of that evidence, which tends to exculpate the Bishop entirely.

Probably the main reason Warburton has been tra-ditionally considered to be the guilty party, or at least the unjustified aggressor, is that he was so generally outrageous. It is difficult to write of him, in connection with Shakespeare, without frequent resort to ad-mirative punctuation, for he is entirely excessive and displays throughout his career an uncontrollable itch for controversy. Then of course we remember that he had similar problems with Theobald--so here he is, at it again! It is an unspoken premise of many of the discus-sions of Warburton that he must have been what we would today call paranoid. But it seems to me likely that people were, in fact, stealing his notes. For despite his low boiling point and suspicious nature, Warburton was a remarkably ingenuous man, and seems more than once to have given unstinting help to people, then become en-raged when he did not get the full credit for it--or even
when his help was not accepted in toto, and in the precise form in which it had been offered. The original breach with Theobald had its inception over a small body of notes which Warburton had communicated to Theobald, but which Theobald had not seen fit to insert in his edition. Warburton remonstrated genially but firmly with the editor, even going so far as to provide him with a publishable "official" version of why the emendations and notes had not appeared in Theobald's edition: they were to appear, according to Warburton's plan, in a supplementary volume containing the poems of Shakespeare, with an explanation that they had been mislaid when the plays were going through the press. (Such was the informality of Shakespearean editing in 1733.) But the notes never did appear, and Warburton seems to have become possessed by the idea that Theobald was hoarding the notes as a hedge against a possible second edition.

Similarly with Hanmer, Warburton seems not to have reckoned with the aristocrat's languid disdain for the conventions of literary property. Hanmer approached the text of Shakespeare, and the labors of his predecessors, like a manorial lord touring his domains, secure in the knowledge that there was nothing he could see that was not rightfully his--the more secure because his intentions were so benevolent. He meant only to present
a beautiful, correct, inexpensive edition of Shakespeare.
It is difficult not to feel sympathy for Warburton's helpless anger, for against Hanmer's insouciance and faint contempt he was virtually without weapons.

The justifications for Warburton's anger have been obscured by two factors. The first is his unfortunate habit, already alluded to, of carrying his grudges beyond the grave; in Hanmer's case as in Theobald's our sympathies are naturally engaged by the spectacle of the helpless dead being calumniated. Second, there is Warburton's characteristic intemperance—nay violence—of language:

Sir Thomas Hanmer's letter from Mildenhall to Oxford . . . is one continued falsehood from beginning to end . . . The thing speaks for itself. It was publicly known that I had written notes on Shakespeare, because part of them were printed. Few people knew that Sir Thomas Hanmer had; I certainly did not know; nor, indeed, whether he was living or dead.

The falsehood is viler still (because it skulks under an insinuation) that I made a journey to him to Mildenhall, without invitation . . . (14)

The same forcefulness permeates his response to Johnson's edition (conveyed in private correspondence):

The remarks he makes in every page on my commentaries are full of insolence and malignant reflections, which, had they not in them as much folly as malignity, I should have had reason to be offended with. (15)

I might suggest, with the greatest diffidence,
the possibility of a third force operating against Warburton: our prejudice in favor of the aristocrat over the social climber who is self-made, has neither manners nor good taste, and cares not whom he bruises on his upward journey.

Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition of Shakespeare, printed at his own expense, with sumptuous (Warburton liked to refer to them as "pompous") engravings commissioned and likewise paid for by himself, appeared anonymously in 1744, bearing the imprint of the University Press at Oxford. The munificence of the gift and, perhaps, the growth of Shakespeare's stature during this period, induced the University to make amends for its previous disdain for Shakespeare. In doing so it was venturing where less magisterial publishers had evidenced a strong disinclination to tread, for the copyright laws enacted under Queen Anne were not yet widely enforced nor in all cases clearly understood; and Tonson, the publisher of all the eighteenth-century editions of Shakespeare to this time, was claiming, essentially, a monopoly, or perpetual title to the works of Shakespeare. On this occasion Tonson was able to effect no legal action, but he did not, in fact, allow the incident to pass without his peculiar form of retaliation. He had responded to Robert Walker's efforts to publish a cheap Shakespeare by publishing a cheaper
one of his own.\textsuperscript{18} He now pirated the Oxford text—already a piracy, according to Tonson—and further attempted to discredit it, even in the form in which he offered it for sale, by noting all the places where Hanmer (as was his wont) had appropriated, without acknowledgement of indebtedness, the emendations of earlier critics—especially of Warburton.\textsuperscript{19}

Hanmer's edition is generally considered to be the most beautiful ever published of the works of Shakespeare, a judgment I have no wish to dispute. Its beauty, such as it is, is of a particular sort: precisely the sort we would expect of Sir Thomas Hanmer, Baronet, one of the wealthiest men in the realm. It is beauty too rich for use. Anyone who has ever tried to read—or even lift—the edition will feel how empty a praise it is to call it beautiful, for the tomes are simply unwieldy. The same inability to comprehend the concerns of mere men which plagued his relations with Warburton, was the undoing of his magnificently good intentions with regard to the works of Shakespeare. For the edition, though priced so as to be available to all lovers of Shakespeare, was an expression not only of the taste which venerated the Bard, but also of the taste which went into the formation of a baronial library. (That this aspect of Hanmer's work was not lost on Warburton is strikingly revealed
in Warburton's bitter note on one of Hanmer's emendations. Hanmer, balking at Hamlet's, "Let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables," proposes, "a suit of ermines." Warburton's comment, "You could expect no less when such a critic had the dressing of him," can hardly be bettered.)

The text, too, of Hanmer's edition reveals an almost complete failure to understand the demands made upon an editor of Shakespeare. It is, no doubt, such a text as would have appealed to Hanmer had somebody else produced it, and I am little inclined to question the veracity of his account of its inception, conventional though that be. In readings, the text is completely up-to-date; Hanmer adopted virtually every emendation in his copy-text--the edition of Pope—which means he adopted most of Rowe's readings as well. He ignored the work of Theobald, for reasons not far to seek. He originated several readings himself, relying entirely on his feel for the sense of Shakespeare's text. Only one of his alterations finds a place on the roster of generally accepted major emendations, the really acute "spaniell'd" for "pannel'd," in Marc Antony's "that pannel'd me at heels."

In almost every way Hanmer's is the least important edition of the eighteenth century. It is the only
edition of the century which did not at least strongly influence any subsequent edition, though it is to Capell that belongs the melancholy distinction of being the editor of the only edition of the century never to have been reprinted. Yet, along with Warburton's, Hamner's edition has had one important consequence in its effect on our understandings of the progress of Shakespearean editing. Hamner's edition relied on Pope's, approved of and adopted its style and scope of annotation, and was directed towards approximately the same audience. Warburton's claimed descent from Pope's, and took up Pope's war with Theobald. Both these editions, thus, reach back to Pope's. And, I suspect, the contempt that these offspring have aroused has been in some measure transferred to the parent edition. At least, it appears to me, this is why Pope is considered to be the ancestor of the "common sense" school of editing Shakespeare. Though he shared neither Hamner's dilletantism, nor Warburton's aggressiveness, he is damned for the same sins. I would like to suggest that although both the later editions display traits illustrative of the literary temper of the time, they are essentially outside--and Pope's is essentially within--the mainstream of Shakespeare studies as they were developing in the eighteenth century. Hamner's edition is not a contribution to knowledge--is indeed not so much a book as, almost
literally, a monument raised in tribute to Shakespeare.

Warburton's edition is something quite different. As I have said, Warburton attempted to re-create Shakespeare after his own image. I think it is safe to say that Warburton's edition of the plays has never been praised by anyone not a personal friend of the editor. Since the day of its appearance it has been subjected to continual derision and dismissal. It called forth a piece of satire far more devastating, as criticism of an edition, than The Dunciad: Thomas Edwards' Canons of Criticism.²¹ And one writer has recently been pleased to call Warburton, "without a doubt the stupidest man ever to edit Shakespeare."²² Yet, although his blunders of both emendation and annotation are colossal, it is neither fair nor accurate to call him stupid. For his blunders were not those of a man of slender intelligence, but rather those of a man of intellectual pre-eminence who simply knew nothing about the way life is lived--either in his own or in Shakespeare's time. Warburton's own life was a great success story, and its success was carefully engineered, the means being learning, controversy, preferment, and marriage.²³ Of common life he knew little, and his misinterpretations on this count provide plentiful amusement to the reader of his text. Probably the most famous, indicating both the profundity of Warburton's ignorance
of common life, and the extent of his inability to understand Shakespeare's humor, is his note on the gag, "The oats have eat the horses," from Taming of the Shrew. "Oats is the distemper so called." Warburton constantly confounds himself and delights readers susceptible to such amusements, with wildly erroneous information—always offered with majestic assurance—about trades and crafts, customs, slang, folklore, and popular belief.

In fact he continually levels his heaviest artillery (he had no other) at targets insignificant or frivolous: when Hamlet swears by St Patrick, Warburton, puzzled that a Danish prince should behave thus, reassures himself of the epithet's propriety: "at this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this saint. But," Warburton carefully notes, "it was only said at random; for he makes Hamlet a student at Wittenberg" (Warburton, 8,144). When Hamlet requires his friends to swear by his sword, Warburton is ready with a citation from "Bartholinus, De Causis contempt. mort. apud Dan." to support his contention that with the ancient Danes, whose manners Shakespeare has preserved, "it was Religion to swear upon their swords" (I,145).

Warburton's approach to Shakespeare will be most clearly represented if I give him his head for a moment. The
only emendation of Warburton's which has received general praise and has been widely adopted is his alteration "a God kissing carrion," for "a good kissing carrion" in Hamlet's first conversation with Polonius. This emendation, claimed Johnson, put the critic "almost . . . on a level with the author." (James Thorpe has recently pointed out that in fact the equality is complete—that Warburton has here assumed authorial power.24) But Warburton is careful to honor his introductory promise to observe "the severe canons of literary criticism, as may be seen from the reasons accompanying every alteration of the common we would say "received" text." He explains:

The editors seeing Hamlet counterfeit madness, thought they might safely put any nonsense into his mouth. But this strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his hero's mouth throughout the whole play. We will first give the true reading, which is this: "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion---." As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle shows the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, "to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand." Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding evil. In the next speech, therefore, he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose, --"But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion---" Here he stops short, lest
talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case, that the effect follows on the thing operated upon and not the thing operating why need we wonder, that the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead car-rion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors say, but with what they think. The sentiment too is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural.

Hardly stupidity; the emendation is ingenious, the tracing of Hamlet's thought intriguing, and the concluding obser-vation about Hamlet's character acute. But the trouble with Warburton's conception of Shakespeare is crystallized in his reference to the "schools of divinity," introduced, as it is, with no consciousness of its inappropriateness to Shakespeare. That this is no random remark, but War-burton's settled opinion, may be seen in his response to one of the attacks upon his announced design to edit Shake-speare; he had been charged with, "suffering himself to be diverted from his purpose completing his major theo-logical work by matters of another kind, less suitable to his clerical function." Warburton's reply, full of his customary fine vivacity along with less attractive qualities, deserves to be printed in full:
But will the good man be so kind to tell us what this diversion is? As things are now carried and left in the dark, who knows but the reader, in excess of charity, may take it to be a horse race, or a good job of simony, a party pamphlet, or levee-hunting, or Exchange Alley, or, in short, twenty things besides, each of them sufficient to discredit the mere unorthodox man? With this good luck, I have no doubt that he would wipe his mouth, and applaud his innocent address. Well, then, since the meanness and malignity of his heart will not suffer him to tell, I will. The diversion he hints at, and yet dare not name, is a critical defence and illustration of the writings of one of the greatest geniuses of this, or indeed of any age, to convince the prejudiced and ignorant that the incomparable writer hath been always on the side of truth, virtue, and religion. And now the secret is out. (25)

It is important to realize that Warburton would no more have agreed than Pope that the failure of his edition was rooted in ignorance—of Shakespeare or of editorial technique or of common life. If even the omnivorous Steevens was capable of curtailing his documentation of an assertion because he would otherwise be required to refer to books "too mean to be formally quoted," can we be surprised that Warburton is incapable of quoting from books not in Latin (or at least French)? Or that he responded to Johnson's strictures on his emendatory wantonness with a cavalier dismissal of "that trifling part of the public which pretends to judge of this part of literature in which boys and girls decide"?

The business of editing Shakespeare in the mid-eighteenth century was characterized by a fierce competi-
tiveness and combativeness. It was just this spirit which enabled Shakespeare studies to advance so far, so quickly. Each editor truly and deeply felt that his edition was urgently called for by the inadequacy of his predecessors, and by the new approach or technique devised by the editor. Consider for a moment: Rowe's case is obvious; Pope was the first to apply textual thought to an edition of Shakespeare; Theobald effected wholesale restoration of the text, and instituted the practice of illustrating Shakespeare by himself, or his contemporaries; Johnson, among other contributions, provided a magnificent annotation, and completely revised the punctuation then being applied to Shakespeare; Steevens provided a copious historical and antiquarian annotation; Capell returned to the (textual) source for a fresh start; Malone provided an edition in which every aspect of Shakespeare studies—metrical, critical, textual, canonical, biographical, historical, theatrical, and more—was expertly rendered. Even Hanmer and Warburton are not outside this mainstream, for each felt, with reason, that he was providing a text of Shakespeare which represented a desirable advance. In the case of Hanmer the advance was to be embodied in an edition worthy of the Immortal Bard.

Warburton's situation is more complex, but I think that the key to his editorial method is to be found in
one of its most curious and even outrageous manifestations: his glosses. Running through his edition is a series of brief glosses on words, a great many of which are simply wrong, and most of which are distinctly tangential to the issue at hand. They are presented with no explanation, but rather with dictatorial assurance, and they provided Edwards with a rich supply of ammunition for his attack. Edwards was able, in fact, to compile a separate section of his Canons, entitled "Essay towards a glossary," comprising 111 glosses, not one of which reflects well on Warburton's reputation for sober sense. It seems clear, however, that these glosses present, as if in code, a message about Warburton's understanding of Shakespeare, and they show him conscious of a sense of almost mystical communion with the poet, for the glosses are offered less as definitions than as explications. A few examples should make this clear.

When Prospero, having told Miranda the story of their arrival on the enchanted island, prepares to set his plot in motion, he announces portentously, "Now I arise." It is clear that the announcement heralds a new turn in the action, but Warburton casts his observation to this effect in the form of a gloss: "Arise: a word used to usher in a matter of importance" (Warburton, I.13). Many of his glosses attempt to lay bare the general idea
behind a phrase which expresses the same idea in an unusual way; these tend to look like misleading definitions. For example when Warburton glosses "curiosity" in the opening lines of King Lear as "scrutiny" (VI.3) he is not offering an incorrect definition, he is cutting through a complex expression to give a simple, if inadequate, sense of its meaning. A similar explanation will account for his glossing of "power" in the line "come betwix our sentence and our power," also from Lear, as "execution of a sentence (VI.10). Occasionally Warburton, acting on his correct understanding of a Shakespearean image, will apply to the key word a definition applicable only to this particular use of it; thus "flout" in the expression "Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky," is defined as "to dash any thing in another's face" (VI.335).

These habits are not confined to glossarial notes but are evident in the more extensive ones as well. Often Warburton's feeling of communion with Shakespeare is capable of prompting him to intrude an emendation and then give the word, at his pleasure, an unheard-of definition (in a sense this is, of course, a device of Shakespeare's); the simple expression, "The very Gods," in Cymbeline, provokes Warburton to comment:

The very gods may indeed signify the Gods themselves, immediately and not by the intervention of other agents or instruments; yet I am persuaded the reading
is corrupt, and that Shakespeare wrote—"the warey Gods"—warey here signifying, animadverting, forewarning, and ready to give notice; not, as in its more usual meaning, cautious, reserved (VII.323).

His almost painful confidence that he is marching right along with Shakespeare is well illustrated, as is his plodding literalness, by his note on Hotspur's line, "By this hand, if I were now by this rascal, I could brain him with his ladie's fan." Warburton: "The fans then in fashion had very long handles" (IV.128). Again and again the reader is stunned by Warburton's smug incomprehension, as when, in commenting on the lines in Macbeth, "Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act, Threaten this bloody stage," Warburton confides:

One might be tempted to think the poet wrote strage, slaughter. But I, who know him better, am persuaded he used Stage for act. And because stage may be figuratively used for act, a dramatic representation; therefore he uses it for act, a deed done. Threatens a tragedy (VI.370).

This last note reveals another peculiarity of Warburton's approach to Shakespeare, one which is consonant with what I have already described as Warburton's feeling of mystical communion with Shakespeare, and which I can best describe as a technique of free association. What the editor has done in the above note is to play with the word act, and the images suggested by act and stage. This same technique is applied to Thersites'
imprecation, "thou thing of no bowels, thou!." Warburton suggests: "Though this be sense, yet I believe it is not the poet's--I should imagine the true reading was, Thou thing of no vowels, i.e. without sense; as a word without vowels is jargon, and contains no Idea" (VII.398). Perhaps Warburton's most startling use of the technique of free association does not involve an emendation. It occurs in *The Winter's Tale* (4.3.353) where the "four threes of herdsmen" are being described by a servant. Referring to their being gotten up as satyrs, he calls them "men of hair." Warburton rises to a pinnacle of self-indulgent ingenuity in his explanation: "i.e. nimble, that leap, as if they rebounded. The phrase is taken from tennis balls, which were stuff'd with hair" (III.347).

A similar glossarial habit of Warburton's is to isolate what I can only call ambiguities in particular words--ambiguities, in the Empsonian sense, which he disentangles with Empsonian relish. When Polonius, for example, warning Ophelia to be wary of Hamlet's attentions to her, calls her,

>a green girl

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance,

Warburton comments, "Unsifted for untried. Untried signifies either not tempted, or not refined; unsifted signifies the latter only, though the sense requires the former"
(VIII.135). This habit is nicely parodied by Edwards in commenting on Warburton's gloss "prejudiced" for "sick" in the phrase, "By sick interpreters:" "Whether prejudiced signifies hurt, or partial, and if partial whether for or against, Mr. Warburton does not say" (Warburton, V.136: Edwards p.159).

Examples of Warburton's seeming vagaries of definition and explication could be adduced almost endlessly. It is only too easy to hold him up to ridicule, and to expose his inaptitude, but more important to account for his aberrations in a way which takes into account his undoubted intelligence.

Warburton himself leaves what I consider to be a false trail, when he says of his notes, "Such as they are, they were among my younger amusements, when, many years ago, I used to turn over these sorts of writers to unbend myself from more serious applications; and what certainly the public at this time of day had never been troubled with but for the conduct of the two last editors, and the persuasions of dear Mr. Pope, . . . ." Though this may be a veracious account of how Warburton got his start in Shakespearean commentary, it is not an accurate description of the impulses that lay behind his design to edit the whole works. He was too sober and dignified a figure to dabble publicly. Hanmer's edition had been
precisely what it had affected to be—the idle amusement of a gentleman's leisure, but Hanmer had, in a sense, earned his dilletantism. Though I don't believe Johnson was taken in by these words he did manage to turn them to account in rationalizing the criticisms he was forced to make of Warburton's notes: "... he cannot be... very solicitous what is thought of notes which he ought never to have considered as part of his serious employments, and which, I suppose, since the ardour of composition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effusions" (Johnson, I, liii). Malone, on the other hand, surmised that "the learned editor... had so little respect for the greatest poet that has appeared since the days of Homer, as to use a commentary on his works merely as 'a stalking-horse, under presentation of which he might shoot his wit' (Malone, I).

Closer to the truth, I suspect, is the passage from an apology for Scaliger adduced by one of Warburton's friends in his defense:

Je ne sais si on ne pourrait pas dire que Scaliger avait trop d'esprit, et trop de science, pour faire un bon commentaire; car a force d'avoir de l'esprit, il trouvait dans les auteurs qu'il commentoit, plus de finesse, et plus de genie, qu'ils n'en avaient effectivement; et sa profonde litterature etoit cause qu'il voyoit mille rapports entre les pensees d'un auteur et quelque point rare d'antiquite. De sorte qu'il s'imaginoit que son auteur avoit fait quelque allusion a ce point d'antiquite, et sur ce pied-la il corrigeoit un passage. Si on n'aime mieux
Although the passage is apt as a defense of Warburton, it will hardly bear the construction placed upon it by Warburton's supporter: "as to what concerns the emendation of the text, the abler the critic, the more liable he is to some extravagance of conjecture, ... it being dulness, and not judgment, that best secures him from this sort of imputation." The point is not that "extravagance of conjecture" is a testament to the wit and learning of the critic, but that one is as liable to err out of a super-abundance of learning as out of a lack of it.

I would suggest, finally, that Warburton, in his glosses, is not so much trying to explain words whose meanings had changed or which had fallen into disuse, as he is trying to reveal as clearly as he can the subliminal significance of Shakespeare's language. It is a method of glossing which partakes more of eighteenth-century ideas of psychology than of any linguistic or philological thought.

Warburton's textual theory is outlined in a preface...
remarkable both for its ferocious contempt for Hanmer and Theobald, and for its *esprit*. Though it is hardly in a class with Johnson's as a work of criticism, in many ways it surpasses the later preface in interest as a personal statement. Though Warburton, like the other eighteenth-century editors up to Capell, accepts as settled Pope's reconstruction of the descent of Shakespeare's text, he does so with a fresh and lively sense of the human side of it:

'It hath been no unusual thing for Writers, when dissatisfied with the Patronage or Judgment of their own Times, to appeal to Posterity for a fair Hearing. Some have even thought fit to apply to it in the first Instance; and to decline Acquaintance with the Public till Envy and Prejudice had quite subsided. But, of all the Trusters to Futurity, commend me to the Author of the following Poems, who not only left it to Time to do him Justice as it would, but to find him out as it could. For, what between too great Attention to his Profit as a Player, and too little to his Reputation as a Poet, his Works, left to the Care of Doorkeepers and Prompters, hardly escaped the common Fate of those Writings, how good soever, which are abandoned to their own Fortune, and unprotected by Party or Cabal. At length, indeed, they struggled into Light; but so disguised and travestied, that no classic Author, after having run ten secular Stages thro' the blind Cloisters of Monks and Canons, ever came out in half so maimed and mangled a Condition (Variorum 1821, I.46).

The crucial passage of Warburton's preface, for our present purposes, seems to me to be that in which he details the duties of an editor:
The whole a Critick can do for an Author who deserves his Service, is to correct the faulty Text; to remark peculiarities of Language; to illustrate the obscure Allusions; and to explain the Beauties and Defects of Composition. . . . The first sort of Notes to this Edition is employed in restoring the Poet's genuine Text; but in those Places only where it labours with inextricable Nonsense. In which, how much soever I may have given Scope to critical Conjecture, where the old Copies failed me, I have indulged nothing to Fancy or imagination; but I have religiously observed the severe canons of literary Criticism, as may be seen from the Reasons accompanying every Alteration of the common Text. . . . The second sort of Notes are Glosses of Obscurities caused by either a licentious use of Terms, or a hard or ungrammatical Construction; or lastly from far-fetched or quaint Allusions (Voriorum 1821, I.50).

The entire absence of any textual system is to be observed in Warburton's prospectus, especially in the light of the bold statement on the title page of his edition, assuring the reader that what he has is "The Genuine Text (collated with all the former Editions, and then corrected and emended)." Nichol Smith calls this a "detestable quibble."\(^{29}\) Warburton, in consonance with the general opinion of his time, implicitly trusted Theobald to have done the job of collating, and relied entirely on the text Theobald had provided—and thus, through Theobald's, on Pope's, and so on back to the inevitable fourth folio which stood for sixty years as an impenetrable barrier between the eighteenth century and a true text of Shakespeare.
CHAPTER IV
JOHNSON AND THE JOHNSON TRADITION

To find new matter for critical discussion in the Shakespearean editing of Samuel Johnson is no easy task. As long ago as 1956, a reviewer of a book which attempted to do so was moved to chide its author thus:

Perhaps one of the main obstacles to reading is the slant in the materials induced by Mr. Sherbo's presiding notion that he is uttering, or ought to be uttering, some kind of novelty—a new vision—a reassessment. Johnson as editor of Shakespeare is surely a topic from which the bloom has been largely removed—that is, if one insists on finding scientifically, factually, original, conclusions. It is a topic which did want cleaning up, tabulating, indexing, . . . The bottom of this barrel did deserve, perhaps, to be well scraped. Some kind of obsessive researcher's conscience about pushing back horizons seems to operate with Mr. Sherbo, however, to give him a more ambitious view of the whole task. (1)

And the years since this remark was made have seen: the separate publication of virtually all of Johnson's notes on Shakespeare; a reprint of D. Nichol Smith's edition of his Preface to Shakespeare, with a new introduction and notes; a reprint of Sir Walter Raleigh's essay on Johnson and Shakespeare; and several articles on the subject, not to mention major reviews of these editions
and studies. I disclaim here with particular vehemence any attempt to find a new approach to Johnson on Shake-
speare.

Yet I cannot simply refer the reader to the available sources of information. I do believe that these sources are so readily accessible that to retell the entire tale here would be supererogatory, but I shall bring forward those points about Johnson's work with the text of Shakespeare which can only be fully understood in the present context—that is to say, with the prior progress of Shakespearean textual editing fresh in our minds.

The story of the long gestation of Johnson's edition begins with his Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth: with Remarks on Sir T. H.'s Edition of Shakespear. To which is Affix'd Proposals for a new Edition of Shakeshear sic, with a Specimen. (1745) The proposed new edition was withdrawn from consideration under pressure applied to Cave, Johnson's publisher, by Tonson, who was already seeing to Hanmer's edition. In the interim Johnson learned of Warburton's intention of bringing out an edition (it appeared, it will be remem-
bered, in 1747) and his own energies were absorbed by the production of his Dictionary (1755). He returned to Shake-
speare in 1756 with his Proposals, which contained the
following mouth-filling catalog of reasons for the textual corruption of Shakespeare:

... he sold them, not to be printed, but to be played. They were immediately copied for the Actors, and multiplied by Transcript after Transcript, vitiated by the blunders of the Penman, or changed by the affectation of the Player; perhaps enlarged to introduce a Jest, or mutilated to shorten the Representation; and printed at last without the concurrence of the Author, without the consent of the Proprietor, from Compilations made by chance or by stealth out of the separate Parts written for the Theatre: and thus thrust into the world surreptitiously and hastily, they suffered another depravation from the ignorance and negligence of the Printers, as every man who knows the state of the Press in that Age will readily conceive.

It is not easy for invention to bring together so many Causes concurring to vitiate a Text. No other Author ever gave up his works to Fortune and Time with so little care: no Books could be left in Hands so likely to injure them, as Plays frequently acted, yet continued in Manuscript: no other Transcribers were likely to be so little qualified for their Tasks as those who copied for the Stage, at a time when the lower Ranks of the People were universally illiterate: no other Editions were made from Fragments so minutely broken, and so fortuitously reunited; and in no other Age was the art of Printing in such unskilful Hands. (5)

Johnson obviously anticipated a speedy completion of his labors, but in fact the task stretched over a perfectly respectable eight years, with the edition finally appearing on October 10, 1765. To it was attached a preface which has regained in our own century the reputation it had in its own, but lost in the nineteenth— as one of the greatest pieces of critical prose in English.

The Preface deals with the text with great clarity.
and fulness. Johnson begins by rejecting the "woodnotes wild" cliche—one of the bulwarks of eighteenth-century textual theory:

... the power of Nature is only the Power of using to any certain purpose the materials which diligence procures, or opportunity supplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and when images are collected by study and experience, can only assist in combining or applying them. Shakespeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; ... (Johnson, I, xxxix).

Johnson also softened considerably his criticism of the process by which Shakespeare's plays had been transmitted. Though the strictures are still sufficiently harsh, even a cursory comparison reveals his mellowing attitudes:

Had the author published his own works, we should have sat quietly down to disentangle his intricacies, and clear his obscurities; but ... his works were transcribed for the players by those who may be supposed to have seldom understood them; they were transmitted by copyers equally unskilful, who still multiplied errors; they were perhaps sometimes mutilated by the actors, for the sake of shortening the speeches; and were at last printed without correction of the press.

In this state they remained, not ... because they were unregarded, but because the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our ancestors were accustomed to so much negligence of English printers, that they could very patiently endure it (Johnson, I, xlvii-xlviii).

The effect of these new attitudes is to allow Johnson to rely more fully on the received text than any other early editor. This point must not be pushed too
far, however. For one thing, by "received text," I do not mean the quartos or the folios; I mean the editions Johnson used as copy-texts. For another, though Johnson did not pride himself on his emendations (and thus, like Pope, underwent criticism for not having done the real work of an editor), this simply means that he did not seek out opportunities to display his ingenuity. He did, nonetheless, continue the process, which had been instituted by Rowe, of whipping the text into shape, applying his rigorous intellect especially to the punctuation as it then stood. He did this not by returning to the old texts, but by devising a new system, much looser and freer than that which prevailed in editions of Shakespeare at the time, but still thoroughly tailored to the genius of the English language in Johnson's time. It is not difficult to believe that this was a task which would have seemed to require attention, but it is now a bit late in the day to be regarding this as any more than another of the eighteenth-century's contributions to Shakespeare's popularity. For a third, Johnson does emend rather extensively. In fact, counting only the emendations he felt were important enough to call attention to, Johnson introduces more new readings into the text than he restores old ones.

Probably the most influential statement Johnson
made in his preface about the text of Shakespeare is the judgment he passed on the relative authority of the successive folios:

In . . . Theobald's enumeration of editions, he mentions the two first folios as of high, and the third folio as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the first is equivalent to all others, and that the rest only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting those diversities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards used only the first (Johnson, I,1).

Among other ironies to be observed about Johnson's edition, one is that, though he has been extravagantly praised for having enunciated this principle, the implications of the last sentence have rarely been admitted: simply that, after an unspecified period in which Johnson presumably collated all the folios, he determined, as he admits, that it was no longer necessary to collate the second through the fourth folios. In fact, in our haste to endorse his conclusion, we seem to have forgotten to evaluate the process by which he reached it: it is as Black and Shaaber have proved, simply false to say that "the rest only deviate from it by the printer's negligence." Malone's clever remark that "The editor of the second folio and Mr. Pope have been the great corruptors of the text of Shakespeare," revealing as it does, a consciousness
of intentional rather than negligent variation, is much more to the point here.

The result of this dismissal of the later folios is that Johnson lost the opportunity to recover several acceptable readings from them, and that he incorrectly attributed others to his predecessors which had actually originated in the later folios.

A second irony of Johnson's edition is introduced by the editor's famous advice to the reader of Shakespeare:

Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness; and read the commentators (Johnson, I, lxxii-lxxx).

Yet this dictum is embodied in an edition which, for the first time, incorporates the notes—almost all the notes—of the earlier commentators. The irony—it hardly rises to the importance of a paradox—is resolved when we recognize that Johnson had developed a new conception of what an edition should be. With his edition we reach a turning point in Shakespearean editing. If it can be suggested—
however stupidly—that Warburton was the stupidest man ever to edit Shakespeare, it can, with greater propriety, be suggested that Johnson was probably the most intelligent in his century: this does not exclude Malone. Blunders, even howlers, there are, but they must be culled carefully out of page after page of Johnsonian good sense.

Johnson's edition had an idea behind it, an idea about what an edition of Shakespeare should provide. He meant his edition to be definitive, and so he took it upon himself to supply the needs of every reader. For the "general reader"—the ordinary lover of Shakespeare—there was to be a text which would be established once and for all by a rigorous collation. For the scholar of Shakespeare there would be the best notes of all the commentators on Shakespeare: really all of any value that had ever been said on particular passages. For those interested in problems of the text, a full and fair relation of all variant readings would be a part of the apparatus. In other words, Johnson's text would present in compendious form virtually everything that anyone could wish to know about Shakespeare's plays. It is our first variorum edition.

And it served. Despite Johnson's grand failure to prosecute his grand design to completion, the edition was, in one form or another, to dominate all other
editions until the appearance of the Cambridge Shakespeare, almost exactly a century later. George Steevens was the first inheritor, supervising the editions of 1773 and 1778, before turning over his labors to Isaac Reed for the 1785 edition. Edmond Malone, who had contributed supplements to the last two editions, based his 1790 text on that of 1785. Steevens, having second thoughts, brought out a version in 1793, drawing deeply on the second folio, but based on the 1785, and Steevens' edition was, in turn, the matrix for the variorums of 1803 and 1813. These editions, finally, were superseded by "The" Variorum edition of 1821, supervised by James Boswell the younger, who worked from the papers left by Malone. This edition was to dominate the textual scene for the next half-century. It was current in the 1850's when Collier used it as the exemplar of the received text; it was current in the 1870's when Horace Howard Furness called his edition a New Variorum; and, in view of the chronic (and worsening) incompleteness of the Furness Variorum, it is still in some senses the "best" edition. And this colossal edition was (with what irony will eventually be shown) based on the Variorum of 1803.

Naturally in the sixty years between Johnson's edition and the "Boswell-Malone" Variorum (as it came to be known), the text itself underwent severe modification.
Malone himself claimed to have effected almost seventeen hundred changes in the received text, and Capell's edition of 1768, though it did not actually provide the copy-text for any subsequent edition, had a profound influence on the texts which followed it. What is being claimed here is not that Johnson's text itself provided the copy-text for all those which came after: in fact it simply took its place in the long line of eighteenth-century texts from 1709 to 1821, each flowing into the next. Rather, Johnson established the ruling idea for the next several generations of editions, an idea which was not to be varied in a major edition until 1826. Gone was the spirit of spite and vendetta; an edition was no longer to be a counterblast to its immediate predecessor. In its place was instituted a dialogue among the editors; on each controversial point all relevant opinions would be canvassed and the current editor would attempt to adjudicate. Never again—in this tradition—would the personality of an editor dominate his edition. In fact, this has held true up until the New Cambridge edition—the most controversial major re-working of the text since Warburton's—which bears on every page evidence of the personality of its editor.

In accord with Johnson's intention to make his edition compendious, he summarized briefly the
contributions of the earlier editors. Such summaries had, it is true, become almost obligatory in scholarly editions, but Johnson's has the distinction of being the first which does not constitute a more-or-less blatant self-advertisement. Pope had had an easy time demonstrating the inadequacies of Rowe's edition. Theobald had toyed with Pope. Hanmer, in his way, had not condescended to notice any of his predecessors. Warburton's preface had been particularly offensive in its contemptuous dismissal of Theobald and Hanmer—the contempt is announced on the title page itself, making it the only edition before Collier's of 1853 to have a controversial title:

The works of Shakespear in Eight Volumes. The Genuine Text (collated with all the former Editions, and then corrected and emended) is here settled: Being restored from the Blunders of the first Editors, and the Interpolations of the two Last: with a Comment and Notes, Critical and Explanatory. By Mr. Pope and Mr. Warburton.

It was left to Johnson to establish the convention of sincere evaluation of former editors, rather than of attack. His generous—and perceptive—remarks on Rowe have already been quoted (page 9). Towards Pope he reveals an equal generosity. He has no patience with Theobald and reveals a large blind spot in his evaluation of that editor, calling him, "weak and ignorant . . . mean and
faithless . . . petulant and ostentatious," and accounting for his high reputation thus: "So willingly does the world support those who solicit favour, against those who command reverence; and so easily is he praised, whom no man can envy" (Johnson, I,li).

Yet even here, his criticism is obviously not motivated by personal malice, or by a desire to enhance his own reputation at another's expense. He accepted, it is clear, a biased account of the Theobald-Pope controversy, but it is unreasonable to think Johnson could have done otherwise than side with Pope. And his remarks on Hanmer and Warburton are perhaps the most flattering ever accorded either of them--certainly no fellow-editor has ever esteemed them so highly. In each case he is judicious, suave, and aware of their shortcomings, but he manages to penetrate beneath the faulty surface to reach conclusions reasonable and just about why they went wrong. As we have already discovered, the case of Hanmer is generally simple: that of Warburton more complex:

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for such emendatory criticism, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately discovered, and that dexterity of intellect which despatches its work by the easiest means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with customs, opinions, and traditions, seems to have been large; and he is often learned without shew. . . . But, by inserting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page without any notice of
varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predecessors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence indeed, both in himself and others, was too great; he seems not to suspect a criticism of fallibility, and it was but reasonable that he should claim what he so liberally granted.

Of the last editor it is more difficult to speak. Respect is due to high place, tenderness to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but he cannot be justly offended at that liberty of which he has himself so frequently given an example, nor very solicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have considered as part of his serious employments, and which, I suppose, since the ardour of composition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effusions.

The original and predominant error of his commentary, is acquiescence in his first thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by consciousness of quick discernment; and that confidence which presumes to do, by surveying the surface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom (Johnson I, li-liii).

We see Johnson, then, taking stock of the work of his predecessors. This is, of course, a pervasive characteristic of the edition as a whole. Having run a course through the slashing enmities of Pope, Theobald, Warburton, and Hanmer, it is delightful to repose for a moment in the warm light of Johnson's remarks on scholarly controversies:

It is not easy to discover from what cause the acrimony of a scholiast can naturally proceed. The subjects to be discussed by him are of very small importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the interest of sect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a passage, seem to be questions that might exercise the wit, without engaging the passions. But, whether it be, that small things make men proud, and
vanity catches small occasions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in those that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentaries a spontaneous strain of invective and contempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the most furious controvertist in politicks against those whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightness of the matter may conduct to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be investigated is so near to inexistence, as to escape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: That to which all would be indifferent in its original state, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has indeed great temptations to supply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a spacious surface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to spirit (Johnson I, lvii-lviii).

Behind these words lies what I feel to be Johnson's outstanding contribution to Shakespearean editing, a contribution having little to do with the text itself. To this point I will return in a moment, but it will be necessary first to look briefly at Johnson's textual theory.

What Johnson does in his prefatory comment on the text is to return to the earlier efforts of Pope and Theobald to ascertain the true basis for an edition; this is, as has been shown, the mainstream outside of which the work of Hanmer and Warburton must be located. Johnson's contribution to this effort was that he made the first serious attempt to adjudicate among the different texts. Johnson's decisions are not as significant as the footing on which he placed the whole discussion of texts. Earlier editors, including the "scholarly" Theobald, had essentially
endorsed Pope's wholesale devaluation of the early texts, and had seized on this warrant to emend at will. Johnson realized that this method suffered from one crippling drawback:

It has been my settled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvement of the sense. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right than we who read it only by imagination (Johnson, I, lxiii).

Johnson returns to this point, in one or another guise, frequently. For example, in his comment on the propriety of restoring "hugger-mugger:"

All the modern editions that I have consulted give it: "In private to inter him--."
That the words now replaced are better, I do not undertake to prove: it is sufficient that they are Shakespeare's: if phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost: we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning (Johnson, VIII, 260).

Johnson himself, however, could not countenance Hamlet's "grunt and sweat:" He substituted "groans" noting: "... grunts is undoubtedly the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears" (Johnson, VIII, 209).

Johnson further realized that more was demanded
of a textual theory than picturesqueness. I would suggest, in fact, that his crucial contribution to textual theory was his insistence that a theory of transmission not only account for the state of the text, but also dictate editorial technique.

We must be careful here not to draw from Johnson more than he intended, nor to credit him with more ingenuity than he possessed. One deplorable tendency of textual critics in our own times is to consider almost any sensible remark made by an early editor as evidence of a "bibliographical" approach: to apply, that is, the term "bibliographical" to any effort to think carefully and responsibly about editorial technique—or even worse, to any conclusion reached in the eighteenth century which has been subsequently confirmed by bibliographical analysis. Thus Robert Scholes, in an intriguing but ultimately unconvincing article, suggests that Johnson is a "pioneer" of "bibliographical criticism." He claims, in particular, that Johnson anticipated modern scholarship in his references to possible mistakes of the eye and ear of the compositor, or of reading Elizabethan handwriting, and in his preference of the first folio over all the others. But in fact there is nothing inherently "bibliographical" in preferring the first to the subsequent folios. And certainly typography, paleography, and mishearing, in addition to being
major props of any true bibliographical study of textual transmission, have also been the rallying-cry of the long-forgotten legions of emendatory critics, led by Zachary Jackson (floruit 1819), himself a printer.

It may be noted in this connection that the effort to link Dr. Johnson with contemporary textual theory is part of a wider tendency to find the present mirrored in the past. Hanmer and Warburton are, in this sense as in so many others, unique among the early editors of Shakespeare in not having been presented as candidates for the title of "first bibliographical critic." Pope, Theobald, Johnson, Capell, Malone, and even the commentator Joseph Ritson, have all been so advanced. 12

Johnson realized, in short, that he had to make up his mind about each text as he approached it. What is remarkable about Johnson's insight into the editions is that his own collection of early texts was paltry—incomparably the smallest any of the major editors had to work with since Rowe. He was not bothered overmuch by this lack, for his eye, as ever, was on the general principle, not the particular application. It is for this reason that his text itself is simply one of the long line of texts condemned by their ultimate reliance on the fourth folio.

This assertion may seem a bit peculiar in light
of my earlier statement that Johnson relied exclusively on the first folio, and the reader will perhaps welcome a brief recapitulation here. Each editor from Rowe to Johnson based his text on that of one or more of his prede­ cessors. That is, he chose an earlier edition of Shake­ speare as the base-copy for his; he annotated it, revised it, and sent it to the printer as his printer's copy--whence the term "copy-text." Thus when I say Johnson relied on, or used as copy-text a particular edition, what I mean is that it was this edition, as he revised it, which he sent to the printer. When I say he used only the first folio I mean that, when, for one or another reason, he felt the need to collate his copy-text with an authoritative edition, he turned to the first folio to see what it read, but he did not also turn to the succeeding folios.

In this tradition Rowe based his text on the fourth folio, Pope based his on Rowe's second edition, Theobald and Hanmer based theirs on Pope's second edition, Warburton on Theobald's, and Johnson on Warburton and on a late re-issue of Theobald's; and on Johnson's edition were based the "Variorum" editions of 1773, 1778, and 1785. The process actually continued down to the Boswell-Malone Variorum of 1821. Rowe's edition was based on a text entirely lacking authority so his edition incorporated
the emendations, sophistications, and modernizations of
the compositors and editors (if such they were) of the
second, third, and fourth folios, and still more, the
trivial or imperceptible blunders of those texts. When
these made sense they would only emerge under intense
and continuous collation—under the sort of collation
that was, in fact, humanly impossible. This was the great
insight of Capell: that no amount of care could rescue
the text which had its origin in such a corrupt copy as
the fourth folio, and that a complete fresh start had
to be made (see Chapter II, n.7.).

The point was made in Chapter II that to differentiate Pope and Theobald as, respectively, "common-sense"
and "scholarly" editors was misleading. This is so be-
cause, though Theobald applied a scholarship Pope was
not the master of to the business of preparing an edition,
this scholarship did not greatly affect the text itself.
It was far more concerned with illustration of manners
and customs depicted in the plays than with the transmis-
sion of the text. The parallel passages were far more
often adduced in support of an emendation than in support
of a restoration. Theobald did, it is true, collate more
editions than Pope, and did so more efficiently, but this
was simply a greater display of diligence, and in no sense
an advance in method. Theobald did not institute textual
regimens unknown to Pope. His triumph was to cover the same ground recently traversed by Pope, and to return with a much greater harvest of variants. Faced with these variants, Theobald did just what Pope would have: he chose the ones he liked better.

The term "common-sense" does, however, have a certain usefulness in a consideration of Johnson's editing—and is, in any case, inevitable in any discussion of his work—but its use should be carefully limited. Johnson's common sense manifested itself not so much in his choice of readings as in his textual theory. His judgment on the relative values of the folios is a remarkable example of this, based, as it must have been, on a sudden flash of understanding rather than on patient analysis. But equally exemplary of this trait is the apparatus he chose for his edition. Scholarship—his own and others'—had revealed a state of variancy in several plays of Shakespeare which, while by no means so rich as to promise a great reward to minute textual criticism, was yet not so inconsiderable as to justify neglect. Common sense, not advancing scholarship, suggested that the fairest way to present the results of collation would be to advise the reader, by means of notes, whenever a significant variant reading occurred. The editor still had the responsibility to prepare a text, and to choose among all the variants,
but the reader was free to disagree with his choices. The chances were, Johnson seems to have felt, that given the demonstrable corruption of all forms of the text, the reasons behind many of the variants were unlikely to be forthcoming, so that the task of the editor was not to be the impossible one of "establishing" for all time the exact words of Shakespeare, but rather to make something out of the jumble which he had left behind, while giving the materials for the reader to work out his own solution to the puzzles.

Common sense made it clear that no incorrect choice of variant, or even emendation, would actually change the text of Shakespeare, since the original quartos and folios remained available. The ultimate extension of this attitude is embodied in a statement made by Steevens, concerning his acceptance of Rowe's emendation, adopted by all the intervening editors, of "Pull" for "Put" in Romeo's line, "Put not another sin upon my head,/By urging me to fury" (5.3.62-63). Steevens reports the reading of the quartos and folios, as well as that of the first quarto ("heap"), but prints the emendation over the comment, "it may be discontinued at the reader's pleasure."12 To this comment Ritson responded, with justifiable acidity, "The editors duty, however, and not the readers pleasure ought to have determined the matter. The reader has it not in
his power to discontinue any thing, but the perusal of the book. 13 Note how, even in this comment, the duty of an editor is assumed to be that of making correct decisions about the text.

But absurdities similar to Steevens' inevitably result from the modern attitudes, conditioned by the "scholarly" approach; one wonders what Ritson would have said of a text of Hamlet in which appeared the line:

And either . . . the devil or throw him out,

or the lines (discussed above, pages 58-60)

And what's untimely done . . .
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter etc.

Yet both these lines appear in what is surely the best one-volume Shakespeare in print at this date, The Complete Pelican Shakespeare, with instructions to the reader to refer to an appendix of supplementary notes to the play. Surely this is scholarly responsibility carried to the point of intellectual cowardice, just as Steevens' remark is editorial bravery carried to the point of irresponsibility.

Common sense, not advancing scholarship, suggested that the reader would wish to know when a portion of a play appeared in only one of the surviving copies, so Johnson devised the technique of printing in italics all
passages missing from the folio, and between "crotchets" (square brackets) those absent from the quarto.\textsuperscript{14} It was to be seventy-five years before advancing scholarship, in the person of Charles Knight, would develop a rationale for the use of these conventions of textual presentation. Johnson was motivated by no horror at the thought of conflation of copies: he calls attention to those occasions when conflation enables him to piece a line together from fragments in two different texts.

Basically, common sense revealed to Johnson that the course on which Shakespearean editing was headed was a blind alley. The fact that each of the early eighteenth-century editions was specifically a response to the one before it, while it may have lent them a raison d'etre and an individuality missing from editions of the present day, also meant that each of these early editions was rendered suspect by its own pretentions, and worthless by those of its successor: of every two editors, at least one had to be a fool if not a knave.

Johnson's idea--not a bad one when we consider how much better his edition was than any before it--was to put an end to Shakespearean editing by absorbing into his own edition all the commentary worth preserving from the earlier ones, while leaving out the rancour, the digressions, the remarks of merely topical interest. This
idea seems to have grown on him even as his edition was passing through the press, as the cancels witness: Johnson, in an attempt to save his edition from the fate of the earlier ones, softened many of his most severe strictures on Warburton.15

I have, perhaps, stacked the deck here: Johnson not only displays "common sense" in the way I have just been talking about, he also applies it in the way the term has traditionally been used—as an excuse for rejecting what appears in the old texts, or as a standard for choosing between variants. Thus, when Johnson fails to comprehend a characteristic Shakespearean locution, he candidly admits it and hazards a guess:

**Enobarbus.** Go to then: your considerate stone.
This line is passed by all the editors, as if they understood it, and believed it universally intelligible. I cannot find in it any very obvious, and hardly any possible meaning. I would therefore read,
Go to then, you considerate ones.
You, who dislike my frankness and temerity of speech, and are so considerate and discreet, go to, do your own business (Antony and Cleopatra 2.2.114).

**Capulet.** She is the hopeful lady of my earth.
The lady of his earth is an expression not very intelligible, unless he means that she is heir to his estate, and I suppose no man ever called his lands his earth. I will venture to propose a bold change, She is the hope and stay of my full years.
(Romeo and Juliet, 1.2.15)

Thus too, even as Pope, Johnson seized on the warrant provided by certain confusing phrases' being absent from
one or another text to omit them from his own: "the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' th' sere"—which appears only in the folio text of Hamlet—draws from Johnson the comment, "This passage I have omitted, for the same reason, I suppose, as the other editors. I do not understand it."

But common sense, even in this usage, is not to be casually dismissed. Lacking the techniques and tools available to us, tied to the errors and corruptions of a textual tradition reaching back to the fourth folio, Johnson was well served by common sense. Bibliographical analysis could hardly improve upon notes like the following, which abound in Johnson's edition:

Kent. Think'st thou, that duty shall have dread to speak
When pow'r to flatt'ry bows? To plainness honour's bound,
When majesty falls to folly. Reserve thy state,
And in thy best consideration check
This hideous rashness; answer my life my judgment,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least . . .

I have given this passage according to the old folio, from which the modern editions have silently departed, for the sake of better numbers, with a degree of insincerity, which, if not sometimes detected and censured, must impair the credit of antient books. One of the editors, and perhaps only one, knew how much mischief may be done by such clandestine alterations.

The quarto agrees with the folio, except that for reserve thy state, it gives reverse thy doom, and has stoops instead of falls to folly.

The meaning of Answer my life my judgment is let my life be answerable for my judgment, or I will stake my life on my opinion.
The reading which, without any right, has possessed all the modern copies is this,

\[\text{to plainness honour} \]
\[\text{Is bound, when majesty to folly falls.} \]
\[\text{Reserve thy state; with better judgment check} \]
\[\text{This hideous rashness; with my life I answer,} \]
\[\text{Thy youngest daughter, &c.} \]

I am inclined to think that reverse thy doom was Shakespeare's first reading, as more apposite to the present occasion, and that he changed it afterwards to reserve thy state, which conduces more to the progress of the action. (16)

2. ÉDUARD CAPELL

The years between Johnson's edition and the vari-orum of 1821 are more difficult to chart then those leading up to 1765, for the careers of the editors overlap in an unprecedented way--the editions themselves, in fact, overlap. Rowe had had the field to himself; Pope and Theobald had been clear-cut antagonists; Hanmer and Warburton too squared off, and then had come Johnson. But the situation becomes more confused thereafter. Johnson took an ever-diminishing role in his own edition, turning the main responsibility for it over to Steevens for the versions of 1773 and 1778. Malone made his appearance as the compiler of a supplement (1780) and appendix to the supplement (1786) to the 1778 edition, the appendix actually ranging in size with a new edition of the Johnson-Steevens text, supervised this time by Isaac Reed (1785). Malone commenced editor in his own right with the edition of 1790
which in turn drew Steevens out of retirement to produce the edition of 1793, founded, like Malone's, on the 1785 Reed text. Malone continued to work on the text for twenty years, while Reed and others refurbished the 1793 edition in the variorums of 1803 and 1813. Steevens died in 1800, Reed in 1807, Malone in 1812. It is only fitting that Malone's literary executor should have been the son of James Boswell.

But not only do the careers overlap. As the above sketch indicates, the editions themselves form parts of an ongoing series: they are interim reports on the current state of Shakespeare studies, rather than the emanations of rival approaches to the text. The effect of the early variorum editions is not so much to give us a picture of the development of Shakespearean criticism and commentary, as to give us the impression of a literary club whose members gather periodically to address themselves in concert to this or that problem in Shakespeare. Thus we have Steevens disapproving of Malone's demurral from Johnson's admirative comments on an emendation introduced by Warburton. Or we have Malone and Stevens calling clamorous attention to the reluctance with which they are exposing each other's errors. We half expect Reed to comment, "This correspondence is now closed."

The impression of a club is reinforced by the
exclusivity of it all. Capell, for example, was positively unwelcome in the pages of all the editions, not only those which appeared before his notes, but even the all-inclusive 1821. Ritson was allowed in occasionally by Steevens, but Malone, who was deeply offended by Ritson's attacks, did all in his power to exclude him, recognizing him only as "Anon" or as "a certain anonymous Remark," and when Steevens, partly in pique at Malone, founded a new edition, Ritson was warmly welcomed into its pages. I do not mean to suggest that these texts are not to be taken seriously, only that they are not as clearly distinguishable from one another as, say, Theobald's is from Warburton's. Johnson had established a rationale for variorum commentary, and a model for its presentation, and also a level of competence below which no edition could fall which wished to be taken seriously, and these were little disturbed by his inheritors.

It will be convenient to deal with Capell first, since he is not part of the circle, and since his edition was to prove a quarry for the "club" editors. It is no longer proper to speak of Edward Capell as the most underrated editor of the eighteenth century. He simply has a reputation for being underrated which has persisted in the face of a steadily growing appreciation
of his work since the mid-nineteenth century. But in his time he was certainly the victim, if not of a conspiracy of silence, at least of a concerted effort to dismiss his work.

He was himself not free from responsibility for his failure. His edition appeared in 1768 in ten volumes, duodecimo, only three years after Johnson's. Though it was based on a thorough, and brilliantly perceptive, re-evaluation of the early texts, its principles could not be assessed since it was virtually devoid of editorial apparatus. Thus Steevens was able to say, in 1773:

"It will be expected that some notice should be taken of the last editor of Shakspeare, and that his merits should be estimated with those of his predecessors. Little, however, can be said of a work, to the completion of which, both a large proportion of the commentary and various readings is yet wanting. The Second Part of King Henry VI. is the only play from that edition, which has been consulted in the courts of this work; for as several passages there are arbitrarily omitted, and as no notice is given when other deviations are made from the old copies, it was of little consequence to examine any further ("Advertisement")."

The variant readings and commentary finally appeared in 1774--in the face of Steeven's edition--and was in a different format from the edition itself. It was hastily withdrawn and did not appear in its final form until 1779-81 (Capell died in 1781). By this time the original edition was virtually forgotten. In any case few but textual scholars could have been willing
to take the trouble to use the notes—trouble well described
by Alice Walker in her British Academy lecture on Capell:

In each of the four parts of Volumes I and
II the matter falls into three sections: first ex-
planatory notes, then errata lists, and then the
Various Readings. This makes his matter less use-
ful than it might have been, for, in order to get
an integrated picture, the reader has to go to and
fro between the Notes and Various Readings and has
to relate both sections to Capell's own text to which
reference is by page and line number, though the lines
of his text are not numbered. (15)

Yet it is to Capell that the credit belongs for
giving textual criticism some of its most modern charac-
teristics. His most impressive insight was derived from
his collation of all the modern editions, with each other,
and with the early texts: simply the realization, common-
place today, but never understood before Capell, that the
text of Shakespeare had never recovered from Rowe's choice
of the fourth folio as copy-text. Capell was able to
trace the descent of the text from Rowe all the way down
to Johnson, and was satisfied that each editor had derived
his text from that of his predecessor. Let him report
in his own words the force with which the realization
struck him:

In 1709 . . . Rowe put out an edition . . . which,
unhappily, is the basis of all the other moderns;
for this editor went no further than to the edition
nearest to him in time, which was the folio of 1685,
the last and worst of these impressions: this he re-published with great exactness . . . Capell goes on to evaluate . . . the intervening editors; Other charges there are, that might be brought against these modern impressions, without infringing the laws of truth or candour either; but what is said, will be sufficient; and may satisfy their greatest favourers,—that the superstructure cannot be a sound one, which is built upon so bad a foundation as that work of Mr. Rowe's; which all of them, as we see in succession, have yet made their cornerstone: The truth is, it was impossible that such a beginning should end better than it has done: the fault was in the setting-out; and all the diligence that could be us'd join'd to the discernment of a Pearce, or a Bentley, could never purge their author of all his defects by their method of proceeding,

The editor now before you . . . possessed himself of the . . . modern editions, the folio's, etc. . . . Thus furnish'd, he fell immediately to collation,—which is the first step in works of this nature . . . first of moderns with moderns, then of moderns with ancients, and afterwards of ancients with others more ancient: 'till, at the last, a ray of light broke forth upon him, by which he hop'd to find his way through the wilderness of these editions into that fair country the poet's real habitation. He had not proceeded far in his collation, before he saw cause to come to this resolution;--to stick invariably to the old editions, (that is, the best of them,) which hold now the place of manuscripts, no scrap of the author's writing having the luck to come down to us; and never to depart from them, but in cases where reason, and the uniform practice of men of the greatest note in this art, tell him—they may be quitted; nor yet in those, without notice. (17)

Because of Capell's rigorous collation he was able to put into effect the dictum enunciated but not followed by Johnson, that the textual history of each play had to be reconstructed before a decision could be made regarding its editing. Possessed of a magnificent library, he was the first editor in a position to do this
with some hopes of success. (Alice Walker notes that Capell possessed fifty-nine different Shakespeare quartos before the folio, and that since his time only seven new ones have been unearthed.) The graceless medium of Capell's prose is still able to reveal how far textual criticism had come since the days when the early texts could be indiscriminately denigrated:

Let it then be granted, that these quarto's are the poet's own copies, however they were come by; hastily written at first, and issuing from presses most of them as corrupt and licentious as can be produc'd, and not overseen by himself, nor by any of his friends: and there can be no stronger reason for subscribing to any opinion, that may be drawn in favour of this from the condition of all the other plays that were first printed in the folio; for, in method of publication, they have the greatest likeness possible to those which preceded them, and carry all the same marks of haste and negligence; yet the genuineness of the latter is attested by those who publish'd them, and no proof brought to invalidate their testimony. If it be still ask'd, what then becomes of the accusation brought against the quarto's by the player editors, the answer is not so far off as may perhaps be expected: it may be true that they were "stoln;" but stoln from the author's copies by transcribers who found means to get at them: Capell's note: "But see a note at p. 123, which seems to infer that they were fairly come by: which is, in truth, the editor's opinion, at least of some of them; though, in way of argument, and for the sake of clearance, he has here admitted the charge in that full extent in which they bring it and "maim'd" they must need be, in respect of their many alterations after the first performance. . . . It were easy to add abundance of other arguments in favour of these quarto's;--such as, their exact affinity to almost all the publications of this sort that came out about that time; of which it will hardly be asserted by any reasoning
man, that they are all clandestine copies, and publish'd without their author's consent (Capell I).

The note referred to, which "seems to infer that they were fairly come by" consists of extracts from the Stationers' Register, including the entry of all the quartos and that of the previously unpublished plays for the first folio. We really might be, in this long quotation, present at the birth of the 'new bibliography.' But since Capell, to an even greater degree than Hanmer and Warburton, was outside the mainstream of Shakespearean editing in his time, his discoveries and techniques were not absorbed into textual theory, for over a century, and his methods of editing did not lead to further improvements along the same lines. The rehabilitation of his fame did not commence until the 1850's when first Halliwell and later the Cambridge editors began the difficult takes of giving Capell his due.

3. George Steevens

Although in his own lifetime George Steevens was widely regarded as the outstanding Shakespeare scholar of the eighteenth century, since that time he has never enjoyed a high repute among scholars. For one thing it soon became difficult to isolate his contributions to Shakespeare studies, since his first two editions--those
of 1773 and 1778—are reprints of Johnson's with additional notes by Steevens. Secondly he tends to be obscured—first overwhelmed by Johnson, then superseded without ever having become firmly established, by Malone. Thirdly he suffers under the 'hardly unfair imputation of having been the "Puck of commentators." Finally, his achievement is more various and less compact and uniform than that of any other Shakespearean scholar of the century. Seek for the contribution of Johnson, of Capell, of Malone, and you find it embodied in their respective editions. But Steevens was master of a scholarship appreciated only by those who felt its impact, who lived in its climate. Steevens' contribution is nowhere embodied, but lies scattered. It is known that he contributed some notes to the Appendix to Johnson's edition. The following year (1766), at the age of thirty, he produced an edition of Twenty of the Plays of Shakespeare, being the whole number printed in quarto during his lifetime, or before the Restoration, Collated where there were different copies, and published from the originals. This was the first venture of its kind in English literature. At this point in his career Steevens aligns himself with those other editors who were content to subscribe to Pope's description of the descent of the text. He does embellish the tale somewhat, however, by way of retraction:
... confining myself to note the minutest variations of the copies... soon convinced me that the oldest were in general the most correct. Though no proof can be given that the poet superintended the publication of any one of these himself, yet we have little reason to suppose that he who wrote at the command of Elizabeth, and under the patronage of Southampton, was so very negligent of his fame, as to permit the most incompetent judges, such as the players were, to vary at their pleasure what he had set down for the first single editions: ... 

Steevens then undertook the revision of Johnson mentioned above, but when a third revision was called for, Steevens, confiding to Malone his bitterness towards the publisher, declined to supervise it. He handed the job over to Isaac Reed. Not until Malone, who had published three volumes of valuable supplements to the earlier editions, saw to completion his own edition in 1790, was Steevens moved to undertake a relatively independent edition. "Steevens' own," as it came to be termed, appeared in 1793, and in one sense it sealed Steevens' fate. For Steevens, liked Pope as an editor, has been the victim of a myth.

The accepted story seems to run essentially as follows: Steevens edited two responsible editions of Shakespeare, and then retired; Malone stepped into the place he had vacated and, being Malone, produced an edition which utterly superseded that of Steevens; the latter, actuated by resentment and jealousy, resolved to win back his lost laurels, and produced a new edition; but since Malone had already taken editorial responsibility as far
as it could go in the eighteenth century, Steevens' only choice was to turn his back on thirty years of progress and, to gain private satisfaction, revive long-discredited doctrines, most notoriously the contention that the second folio contains authoritative variants. But since, as Steevens must have been guiltily aware (the story continues), the second folio is worthless textually, he had actually out-smarted himself. His edition was a failure, and his own reputation, painstakingly built up over many years, had been squandered on a peevish self-indulgence.

This is certainly how Malone saw the issue. At the time Steevens' 1793 edition appeared he wrote to Percy, editor of the Reliques:

--- all that we have been contending for these twenty years, is endeavoured to be overturned in Mr. Steevens's late edition: the heart is once more changed to the right side; a new system is set up; and the more capricious alterations, omissions, and interpolations adopted under pretense of rectifying the metre. According to the new code, Sir T. Hanmer's ought to be considered as a standard edition. It is easy enough to see from whence all this has arisen. A genuine text having been obtained by the laborious collation which I made, no more credit was to be obtained on the score of fidelity: accordingly not one word is said in the late edition ... concerning the text adopted by him, though I know his book was actually printed from mine. (20)

And even after Malone's initial anger has had a chance to subside, the bitterness still rankles; he writes to Percy in 1802, two years after Steevens' death:
... after maintaining for near 30 years, that the settlement of the text by a diligent collation of the original copies was a matter of the utmost moment, and that all arbitrary and capricious changes were to be carefully avoided, he on a sudden wheeled round; and finding that by collating the original quartos and the first folio, word for word, I had established a text beyond all controversy, and discovered above 1600 deviations from it, in his and all former editions, he then for the first time maintained, that collation was of no value; that it only served to restore the blunders of the ignorant printers & editors of the quartos and folio; ... Proceeding on this new principle, he has made his last edition the most unfaithful perhaps that has ever appeared. ... Finding no more credit was to be got on the score of collation, it was quite necessary to start this new doctrine:--so that our great poets editors seem to move in a circle; and the licentiousness of Pope and Warburton and Hamner, after having been censured and decried for 40 years, must now be allowed to be not only harmless, but perfectly justifiable & necessary. (21)

Such is not the case. For one thing, Steevens' "liberal" tendencies can be observed well before Malone's appearance on the editorial scene. As early as 1773 he was saying that the edition of 1632 is "not without value; for though it be in some places more incorrectly printed than the preceding one, it has likewise the advantage of various readings, which are not merely such as re-iteration of copies will naturally produce." For another, Steevens' deviation represents not an atavistic yearning for the old truths, but a logical continuation of a process always going on in textual criticism: the re-evaluation of the sources. It is our own century which has seen the first full-length treatment of the textual status of the later
folios--an indication that, at least, there was something to be said about them, if nothing for them. We tend to regard Johnson's confident dismissal of the later folios as the last word on the subject, essentially because we agree with it. We forget, however, that the issue could not be settled by fiat, which was all Johnson offered.

We must also, in dealing with Steevens' 1973 text, account for its enormous popularity and prestige, not only in its own time but for many years after. It was the basis, in one way or another, for all the major editions from 1793 to 1821, and for a sizable proportion of reprint editions after that, up to 1897. It was the text chosen by Alderman Boydell for his sumptuous Pictorial Gallery edition (1795-1802). It was the preferred text of the Bowdler family. As late as the 1830's the great bibliographer Lowndes was able to say of it, without attaching any comment in contradiction, "This . . . is by many considered the most accurate and desirable of all the editions."

This remark is carried without change into the 1863 edition.

Steevens' popularity was, as I shall attempt to show, easily explained, and richly deserved: it rested on his erratic brilliance, and on his determination to keep constantly in mind the essential justification of an edition which was, and is, to make this author more available to the public. At the very outset of his
editorial labors Steevens fastened on the insight which was to be a guiding principle for him through all his editions. This was, in response perhaps to Capell's insistence on fidelity to the original copies, an understanding of an inherent absurdity, or at least paradox, in the philosophy of editing Shakespeare, as it was then developing—one which, by the way, is still unresolved. If it is the infidelity of the old copies to Shakespeare's intentions that makes editing necessary, and if it is the depth of this corruption which makes it such a difficult art, whence derives the editorial commandment to follow the old texts? If the old texts are so bad, in short, what is so good about adhering to them? The idea appears in embryonic form in the Advertisement to the edition of 1773:

The labours of preceeding editors have not left room for a boast, that many valuable readings have been retrieved; though it may fairly be asserted that the text of Shakespeare is restored to the condition in which the author, or rather his first publishers, appear to have left it.

It has been developed into a philosophy of editing by 1793:

To revive the anomalies, barbarisms and blunders of some ancient copies, in preference to the corrections of others almost equally old, is likewise a circumstance by no means honourable to our author, however secure respecting ourselves. For what is it, under pretence of restoration, but to use him as he has used the Tinker in The Taming of a Shrew,—to re-clothe him in his pristine rags? To assemble parallels in
support of all these deformities, is no insuperable labour; for if we are permitted to avail ourselves of every typographical mistake, and every provincial vulgarism and offence against established grammar, that may be met with in the coeval productions of irregular humorists and ignorant sectaries and buf-foons, we may aver that every casual combination of syllables may be tortured into meaning, and every species of corruption exemplified by corresponding depravities of language; but not of such language as Shakespeare, if compared with himself where he is perfect, can be supposed to have written.

The truth is, that from one extreme we have reached another. Our incautious predecessors, Rowe, Pope, Hanmer, and Warburton, were sometimes justly blamed for wanton and needless deviations from ancient copies; and we are afraid that censure will as equitably fall on some of us for a revival of irregularities which have no reasonable sanction, and few champions but such as are excited by a fruitless ambition to defend certain posts and passes that had long been supposed untenable. The 'wine of collation' indeed, had long been 'drawn,' and little beside the 'mere lees was left' for very modern editors 'to brag of.' It should, therefore, be remembered, that as judgment, without the aid of collation, might have insufficient materials to work on, so collation, divested of judgment, will be often worse than thrown away because it introduces obscurity instead of light. To render Shakespeare less intelligible by the recall of corrupt phraseology, is not, in our opinion, the surest way to extend his fame and multiply his readers.

It is unlucky for him, perhaps, that between the interest of his readers and his editors a material difference should subsist. The former wish to meet with as few difficulties as possible, while the latter are tempted to seek them out, because they afford opportunities for explanatory criticism.

--We do not therefore hesitate to affirm, that a blind fidelity to the eldest printed copies, is on some occasions, a confirmed treason against the sense, spirit, and versification of Shakespeare.

All these circumstances considered, it is time, instead of a timid and servile adherence to ancient copies, when (offending against sense and matter) they furnish no real help, that a future editor, well acquainted with the phraseology of our author's age, should be at liberty to restore some apparent meaning to his corrupted lines, and a decent flow to his
obstructed versification. The latter (as already has been observed) may be frequently effected by the expulsion of useless and supernumerary syllables, and an occasional supply of such as might fortuitously have been omitted, notwithstanding the declaration of Hemings and Condell, whose fraudulent preface asserts that they have published our author's plays "as absolute in their numbers as he conceived them." Till somewhat resembling the process above suggested be authorized, the publick will ask in vain for a commodious and pleasant text of Shakespeare. Nothing will be lost to the world on account of the measure recommended, there being folios and quartos enough remaining for the use of antiquarian or critical travelers, to whom a jolt over a rugged pavement may be more delectable than an easy passage over a smooth one, though they both conduct to the same object.

These are not words to be dismissed, for they strike at the root of the problem: in insight and care for the author's fame—and the audience's enjoyment—they are not inferior to the strictures of Edmund Wilson and Lewis Mumford on modern textual editing; and in wit, reason, and temper, they excel the more recent.  

Steevans goes further; he uses arguments which are, for once, as valid for manuscript as for printed texts to demonstrate the shaky basis on which textual criticism stood in his time. Again his words strike chords familiar to our ears:

But the worth of the second folio also seems to be questioned, because the authority on which even such changes in it as are allowed to be judicious, is unknown. But if weight were granted to this argument, what support could be found for ancient Greek and Roman MSS. of various descriptions? The names of their transcribers are alike undiscovered; and
yet their authority, when the readings they present are valuable, will seldom fail to be admitted. (23)

The point is not the discredited one that Shakespeare is "in the condition of a corrupted classic" and that the same methods should be used to restore his text as would be used on the classic. It is rather the more fatalistic one that with Shakespeare as with the classics, we have little enough reason to repose confidence in the purity or authenticity of any surviving text. When nescience is the inevitable result of a close study of Shakespeare's texts, how can we simply reject any text from consideration?

There remains the question of Steevens' motives for his reliance on the second folio, for it is his use of it which has poisoned his reputation. It is only too easy to believe that Steevens chose to draw on the second folio out of spite against Malone. But is this really likely? Malone's testimony in this instance is not of the highest value, for, despite his famous honesty, he is the plaintiff and he was, as is also well known, extremely touchy about criticism. Not that Malone's remarks are consciously insincere; the very fact that they appear only in private correspondence precludes any intention on his part to deceive the public. I am only saying that Malone (with good reason, as I shall show) was convinced
that Steevens' edition was a slap in his face. Malone was personally grieved to see a friend become a fierce rival, and professionally wounded to see a fellow editor trying to undo the work that the two of them had so pains-takingly collaborated on.

For the crucial issue, why did Steevens choose the second folio as a major source of readings?—his reliance on the second folio has been shown to rest on grounds as reasonable as those for his other objections to contemporary textual theory. Our dismissal of Steevens is based on an equivocation in the terms by which we judge the early editors. We congratulate Capell for formulating a principle that the history of each text must be reconstructed before we can be sure which exemplar of that text we should rely on: but we condemn Steevens for doing just that, because he arrives at an answer with which we have since found acceptable grounds for disagreeing. To our minds the salient textual characteristic of the editions from Rowe to Johnson was their reliance on the fourth folio tradition. Convinced by Johnson's no-nonsense dismissal of all the folios subsequent to the first, and dazzled (as we ought to be) by Capell's realization that a fresh start was necessary, we perhaps think that the matter should have been settled then and there.

We fail to understand the instability of ideas
which had neither established themselves yet, nor yielded tangible results. The wholesale deprecation of the early texts, enunciated by Pope and accepted by all editors, except Capell, down to Malone, had at least the advantage that it enabled the editors to take the liberties necessary to put the text in some kind of order. Had the standard of fidelity to the text which today obtains been in effect in Theobald's time, we would be without Theobald's priceless emendations; and though we have decided against many of them, and may yet reject the rest, they have earned their place these two hundred years. Now Steevens was attempting to controvert the conservative sentiment which was threatening to foreclose the editorial options hitherto open: in fact it must have seemed to him that it was Capell and Malone, and not himself, who represented the textual rearguard of the eighteenth century.

We must realize that Steevens did not see himself as turning his face away from the advances of modern scholarship to league himself with Pope and Hanmer. Rather he was responding to a controversial new idea by suggesting arguments against it, and a return to an earlier position, though on radically different grounds from those on which the position had once rested. There is nothing strange about this: there are, after all, only a limited number
of attitudes one can take towards the early texts of Shakespeare, and since there is so much evidence to interpret, from so many different sources, it is inevitable that highly sophisticated analysis will often yield the same results as the most crudely uninformed ones—consider for a moment the fortunes of the reading "sanctified and pious bonds" in Hamlet: Rowe and Pope print it; Theobald rejects it for what he feels is a better reading. Faced with these two alternatives, some editors have followed Theobald, others Rowe. But, as must be obvious, the twentieth-century editor who prints "bonds" does so with a far deeper understanding of what he is doing than had Rowe.

4. The Variorums

Johnson had founded much more than a text when he created his edition of Shakespeare; he had founded an institution. In format, Johnson's was the first reference text: the first scholarly edition which was not also a controversial document. His technique of explaining any line in the text which he felt required an explanation (rather than only those which would allow him to display some specialized knowledge) opened a continuing dialogue of interpretation among the succeeding editors. His habit of calling attention to points in the text which were
incomprehensible to him similarly initiated an intense search for materials to illuminate these dark areas. The years 1765-1795 were a period of almost unparalleled productivity in Shakespearean scholarship: witness Heath's Revival (1765); Farmer's Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare (1767); Morgan's Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff (1777); Ritson's Remarks (1783); Richardson's and Whately's books on Shakespeare's characters (1784 and 1785 respectively); and, to culminate a great age of criticism instituted by Johnson, Whiter's Specimen of a Commentary (1794). This is to say nothing of the advances in knowledge made by the editors themselves. Merely the annotations of Steevens; merely the detached dissertations of Malone, would have been sufficient to mark the age out as no ordinary one in Shakespeare studies.

(This great age in Shakespeare studies does not come to an end in 1795; but at that point the impetus to scholarship provided by the Ireland forgeries renders other explanations unnecessary, and turns those studies into new channels.)

Johnson's method provided a map for the explorers of Shakespeare. Steevens' great achievement was to fill in the details and correct the outlines, with such skill and energy that the original became both altered out of recognition and over-dense with information. When we
look today at the editions of the later Johnson tradition, we find them dull. We know that for a long time they have been found dull, and perhaps we assume that they have always been found dull. But these editions were more highly esteemed when new than any former editions had been. Johnson had given editors a proud conception of the task of the editor which did not depend on skill at emendation and, though he sacrificed himself to do it, he had educated the public to expect more of an editor than a string of ingenious conjectures. This new learning was joyfully received by lovers of Shakespeare:

    Mr. Steevens's name seems to be the only one that deserved to be united with Dr. Johnson's in an edition of Shakspeare. To that Acuteness of understanding, and elegance of taste, so necessary to form a true critic, he hath added that perseverance of investigation and accuracy of research, which were essential to a clear and minute illustration of a variety of passages in Shakspeare; which owe all their force and beauty to some local and temporary circumstances. Of these circumstances former commentators were ignorant, in a very great degree, through a want of those resources of which Mr. Steevens hath availed himself equally to the gratification of the Reader, and the credit of his own sagacity and diligence. (23)

    It is Steevens' very excellence in this new type of learning which leads to the next development in Shake-sperean editing. There is a limit to how much disjointed commentary a text can support, and still be comprehensible as a text. And there is a limit to how many disjointed comments can be absorbed by a reader before they start to
crumble into meaningless fragments. One begins to gag on morsels of "B. & Fl." "8vo. 1598," "bl.1." There are notes on notes:

cautel: So, in the second part of Greene's Art of Coneycatching, 1592: "—and their subtil cautels to amend the statute." To amend the statute, was the cant phrase for evading the law. (24)

There are notes which are, by their own admission, unnecessary:

That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel, It is probable that Shakespeare introduced his ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters; though it was really the custom of the Danish Kings to be buried in that manner. Vide Olaus Wormius, cap 7. "Struem regi nec vestibus, nec odoribus cumulant, suæ cuique arma, quorundam igni et equus adjicitur." —sed postquam magnanimus ille Danorum rex collem sibi magnitudinis conspicue extruxissed, cuipost obitum regio diademate exornatum, armis indutum, inferendum esset cadaver," &c.

There are notes which, in more words, say less than the notes they are meant to supersede:

To take it again perforce!/ He is meditating on the resumption of his royalty. Johnson.

He is rather meditating on his daughter's having in so violent a manner deprived him of those privileges which before she had agreed to grant him. Steevens.

--neat slave,/ You mere slave, you very slave. Johnson.

"You neat slave," I believe, means no more than you finical rascal, you are an assemblage of foppery and poverty. Ben Jonson uses the same epithet in his Poetaster: "By thy leave, my neat scoundrel." Steevens.
There are notes which strain for the distant, while overlooking the immediate, as when several notes on "plaited cunning" fail to mention that the reading is an emendation of "plighted cunning", or when Lear's speech, "Take physic, pomp" suggests a parallel passage in *Pericles*, but not Gloucester's lines a few scenes later, "Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man."

It is, however, impolite to grumble; one has been invited to a feast. From the outset of his career, Steevens' effort was to make the materials of Shakespeare study generally available. As early as 1766 we find him saying, in introducing his quarto reprints:

\[\ldots\] future editors, \ldots\ will now be in possession of by far the greatest part of what they might have enquired after for years to no purpose; for in respect of such a number of the old quartos as are here exhibited, the first folio is a common book. This advantage will at least arise, that future editors having equally recourse to the same copies, can challenge distinction and preference only by genius, capacity, industry, and learning.

As I have only collected materials for future artists, I consider what I have been doing as no more than an apparatus for their use. \ldots\n
Given the gradual and then rapid increase in the price and rarity of the old quartos and folios of Shakespeare, and the old books in general, and given the almost complete absence of books of reference for scholars of English literature, such an effort was becoming absolutely necessary. Thus Steevens' reprinting of the quartos--
however inadequate a job he did, by modern standards. Thus the gradual transformation of the editions of Shakespeare into treasure-houses of random information, randomly conveyed.

And there are compensations to the reader of these texts. There is the humor which enlivens a dull page—the fun Steevens had with "Ammer" and "Collins" was too good for even the sober Boswell to leave out of his edition: Steevens contrived perfectly straightforward (though often quaintly phrased) notes on passages featuring words like "do," "luxury," and "incontinence," and printed them over the names of two clergymen, who had offended him in some now-obscure way. Or the dialogue among editors and commentators may itself flash occasional richness:

\[\text{Whose face between her forks presageth snow}/\] The construction is not "whose face between her forks," &c. but "whose face presageth snow between her forks."


To preserve the modesty of Mr. Edwards's happy explanation, I can only hint a reference to the word \text{fourcheure} in Cotgrave's Dictionary. Steevens. (26)

Finally, it should not be forgotten that it was in these editions that the world first learned how to read Shakespeare. The constant prying and peering into the text—another technique instituted by Johnson means that desultory reading is virtually impossible. I
can report that many lines I had never really examined, but had always assumed I understood, were made clear to me for the first time as I reviewed these editions: I had simply not understood them.

Steevens' indefatigable research had revealed the limitations of the Johnsonian style of editing. The notes simply could not be kept in a reasonable compass. As early as 1785, the note of apology begins to be heard:

The works of Shakspeare, during the last twenty years, have been the objects of publick attention more than at any former period. In that time the various editions of his performances have been examined, his obscurities illuminated, his defects pointed out, and his beauties displayed, so fully, so accurately, and in so satisfactory a manner, that it might reasonably be presumed little would remain to be done by either new editors or new commentators . . . ('Advertisement' to Reed's edition).

The ultimate solution to the problem of a surfeit of annotation is that of the twentieth century: the abolition of critical notes from the standard editions. Almost any edition in general use today among teachers of Shakespeare will contain only glosses and indications of departure from copy. The only exceptions to this rule that come readily to mind are the "self-teaching" texts such as the Folger General Readers' series; the variorum-manqué Arden edition; and the New Cambridge edition of J. Dover Wilson, whose notes, so placed as not to inter-
fere with the text, are enlisted in support of a controversial approach to the text.

The nineteenth-century way-stations towards this destination are editions whose longer notes are separated from the main body of the text (like Knight's), or editions which omit all controversial notes, and condense even those admitted (like Singer's), or editions which limit the annotations, for the most part, to a register of variant readings (like Collier's).

But the immediate eighteenth-century solution was the one provided by Malone. As a textual editor Malone has long been acknowledged as without peer in his time. But few have thought it worth mentioning that he adapted the Johnsonian frame to the advancing scholarship which Johnson himself had set into motion. Malone cut back the undergrowth of notes and began the task of cross-referencing them, and he gathered scattered and incoherent bits of information into detached essays to which the reader could be referred when he wanted to know all that modern scholarship had discovered on such topics as the biography, metrics, canon, and text of Shakespeare.
CHAPTER IV
EDMOND MALONE AND THE END OF THE
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TRADITION

The edition of Edmond Malone (1741-1812) can be
dealt with briefly. His achievement lies hidden by no
mystery; his place is secure and has long been so. Though
he, along with most of the other eighteenth-century edi-
tors, was devalued by the next few generations of editors
--scholars who were breaking free of the Johnson tradi-
tion and founding one of their own--he was restored to
well deserved eminence in the present century. First
D. Nichol Smith, later Greg and the new bibliographers,
and quite recently S. Schoenbaum, have all accorded to
Malone a place among the first in Shakespearean scholar-
ship.

Malone's superiority is many-faceted and con-
stantly manifest, but the common judgment of our century
has been that Malone's outstanding qualities are dili-
gence and--this is insisted upon by almost all--honesty.
While hardly wishing to appeal this latter verdict, I
would suggest that what really commends Malone to our
admiration, especially when he is compared with his con-
temporaries, is another quality which pervades his work, and for which I can find no better name than "sanity." This is not to imply that Malone's fellow-editors were half-mad, but that Malone's editorial work exemplifies at every moment a cheerful mental balance and manliness, a straightforwardness and freedom from idiosyncrasy characteristic of none of his colleagues.

This sanity appears in his very conception of what an edition should be. One of Malone's greatest contributions to Shakespeare studies was, as I have suggested, his systematization of the scholarship which had been produced up to his time—much of it done by him. Rowe's "firsts" are sufficiently impressive, but of course they have more to do with his having been the first formal editor of Shakespeare than with any intrinsic merit in him: naturally everything he did in this labor was being done for the first time. Malone arrived on the scene after almost seventy-five years of Shakespeare study, and in the midst of a virtual explosion of knowledge. Yet he was the first to offer a systematic account of the chronology of Shakespeare's plays; the first to attempt a scholarly biography of Shakespeare; the first to offer more than scattered observations about Shakespeare's authorship of such disputed plays as the Henry VI
trilogy, and to attempt to fix the Shakespearean canon; the first to give a fully reasoned account of the superiority of the first folio over the second.

In his notes Malone's sanity makes itself felt in the qualities that most serve to distinguish the true scholar from the crank and the eccentric: a sense of proportion and a keen instinct for the relevant. The sense of proportion is partly simply a matter of understanding that a small point can not justify a large note, and that points requiring large notes are worthy of separate discussions, where they do not have to interfere or compete with the text. It is partly too a matter of understanding precisely how important is what he is doing: rather important, but not among the most important things that can be done. Malone's instinct for relevance is also multi-faceted: his notes manage to be both relevant to the immediate context (as Steevens' were not always), and appropriate to Shakespeare himself (as Warburton's hardly ever were).

In general, both in his extended discussions and in his isolated comments Malone shuns picturesqueness for sobriety, sentimentality for realism, rancor for dignity. Though he doesn't hide from controversy, he indulges in no feuds. His one significant aberration was his untenable theory that Shakespeare used such words
as "learn," "shake," "arm," "where," and many others, as dissyllables when the meter required. This quirk, though it was the grounds for much of the nineteenth-century's contempt for him, is not, after all, hard to understand: it is plain that Malone was groping towards a rationale for adhering to the old texts but was not able to accept the metrical looseness of much of Shakespeare's dramatic poetry. He resorts to the theory almost exclusively in defending the text of the first folio from the regularizing tendency of the second.

What I have been calling Malone's sanity is best exemplified in his general discussions. To prove the point by means of isolated comments would require far too many notes. But observe for example, in the following passage, the balance between Malone's respect for Johnson and his consciousness that he is right, Johnson wrong:

. . . After summarizing Johnson's remarks on the descent of Shakespeare's text: Though Dr. Johnson has here pointed out with his usual perspicuity and vigour, the true course to be taken by an editor of Shakespeare, some of the positions that he has laid down may becontroverted, and some are indubitably not true. It is not true that the plays of this author were more incorrectly printed than those of any of his contemporaries: for in the plays of Marlowe, Marston, Fletcher, Massinger, and others, as many errors may be found. It is not true that the art of printing was in no other age in so unskilful hands. Nor is it true, in the latitude in which it is stated, that "these plays were printed from compilations made by chance or by stealth out of the separate parts written for the theatre:" . . . I do not believe that words were then adopted at pleasure
from the neighbouring languages, or that an antiquated
diction was then employed by any poet but Spenser.
That the obscurities of our author, to whatever cause
they may be referred, do not arise from the paucity
of contemporary writers, the present edition may fur-
nish indisputable evidence. And lastly, if it be
true, that "very few of Shakespeare's lines were dif-
cult to his audience, and that he used such expres-
sions as were then common," (a position of which I
have not the smallest doubt,) it cannot be true, that
"the reader is embarrassed at once with dead and with
foreign languages, with obsoleteness and innovation." (3)

Observe, for another example, in his evaluation of Theo-
bald's editing, despite its rather snappish opening, the
refusal to indulge in orotundity, the absence of smugness
or cleverness, the clear evidence that he is relying on
no one else's opinions but has analyzed Theobald's work
for himself:

That . . . Theobald's work should at this
day be considered of any value, only shows how long
impressions will remain, when they are once made;
for Theobald, though not so great an innovator as
Pope, was yet a considerable innovator; and his edi-
tion being printed from that of his immediate prede-
cessor, while a few arbitrary changes made by Pope
were detected, innumerable sophistications were si-
lently adopted. His knowledge of the contemporary
authors was so scanty, that all the illustration of
that kind dispersed throughout his volumes, has been
exceeded by the researches which have since been made
for the purpose of elucidating a single play (Malone,
I,lxvii).

It is this last quality—his refusal to take any-
thing on faith—which, I suspect, most endears him to
modern scholars. He is, not coincidentally, the first
editor since Pope to start afresh the job of reconstructing
the process by which Shakespeare's text was transmitted through the quartos and folios:

The difficulties to be encountered by an editor of the works of Shakespeare, have been so frequently stated, and are so generally acknowledged, that it may seem unnecessary to conciliate the public by this plea that "whatever imperfections or errors... may be found... will... be imputed to any other cause than want of zeal": but as these, in my opinion, have in some particulars been overrated, and in others not sufficiently insisted on, and as the true state of the ancient copies of this poet's writings has never been laid before the public, I shall consider the subject as if it had not been already discussed by preceding editors (Malone, I, i).

Because he looked with fresh eyes, Malone was able not merely to trace the progress of corruption, but to understand the essential—perhaps I may call it the bibliographical—nature of the evidence to be drawn from an analysis of the process: The first quarto of 1 Henry IV contains the line,

I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot.

instead of which, in the fifth quarto, 1613, we have—

"I was not born to yield, thou proud Scot."

This being the copy that was used by the editor of the folio, instead of examining the most ancient impression, he corrected the error according to his own fancy, and probably while the work was passing through the press, by reading—

"I was not born to yield, thou haughty Scot" (Malone, I, xv).

Here Malone has been able to reconstruct the transmission of the text through progressive corruption and unauthoritative correction. This is precisely the sort of hard
evidence required for a sound basis on which to judge the relative authority of the different copies. In other cases, his understanding of the process enables him to choose the best reading:

In the quarto copy of . . . Romeo and Juliet, published in 1599, we find--

"O happy dagger,

"This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die."

In the next quarto, 1609, the last line is thus represented:

"'Tis is thy sheath," &c.

The editor of the folio, seeing that this was manifestly wrong, absurdly corrected the error thus:

"'Tis in thy sheath: there rust and let me die"

(I, xv).

He is even able to lay under contribution a text he knows to be without authority, in fine display of scholarly tact:

The other instance in . . . Romeo and Juliet is not less remarkable. In the quarto, 1599, the Friar, addressing Romeo, is made to say,

"Thou puts up thy fortune, and thy love."

The editor of the folio perceiving here a gross corruption, substituted these words:

"Thou puttest up thy fortune, and thy love;"

not perceiving that up was a misprint for upon, and puts for pouts, (which according to the ancient mode was written instead of pout' st,) as he would have found by looking into another copy without a date, and as he might have conjectured from the corresponding line in the original play printed in 1597, had he ever examined it:

"Thou frown' st upon thy fate, that smiles on thee"

(I, xvii).

One of the points on which Malone was most insistent
was the utter valuelessness of the second folio. Looking backwards we can see that his attitude towards it was almost precisely the same as ours: though entirely lacking in authority, it makes some obvious corrections, and some shrewd and attractive conjectures which demand admittance to the text. Malone's position was not generally understood in his time, however. This is, ironically, because of the very scrupulosity with which he displayed the folios' program of metrical regularization. There were two unfortunate consequences to this strategy of piling up example upon example. The first was that, since Malone had adduced so many bad guesses from the second folio, he was felt to be unfair in not adducing as great a number of good guesses. The second was that since his way of accounting for the seeming metrical irregularity of the first folio--flexible rules of syllabification--could be easily refuted, it was felt that the entire theory was discredited. But Malone was not arguing, in the first instance, that the first folio was in some vague way better than the second. He was saying that the first folio was the only folio of authority, and that this could be demonstrated, and that the very act of demonstration revealed some of the consequences and implications of the second folio's lack of authority. To select a reading which
originated in the second folio, Malone was trying to show, was no different from accepting one of Warburton or Johnson's conjectures.

Actually, everyone seems to have been fairly well aware that the second folio was not an authority in the same sense as the first; no one seems to have gone so far as to claim that the later book was printed with reference to any source of authoritative readings other than the first. But not until Malone's stringent metrical and linguistic analysis was anyone able to articulate the grounds of the second folio's inferiority. Johnson, it will be remembered, offered only an editorial fiat. Malone understood that more was required:

It may seem strange, that the person to whom the care of supervising the second folio was consigned, should have been . . . ignorant of our poet's language: but it should be remembered that in the beginning of the reign of Charles the First many words and modes of speech began to be disused, which had been common in the age of Queen Elizabeth. . . . That Sir William D'Avenant, who was born in 1605, did not always perfectly understand our author's language, is manifest from various alterations which he has made in some of his pieces. . . . In the second edition of Gascoigne's Poems printed in 1587, the editor thought it necessary to explain many of the words by placing more familiar terms in the margin, though not much more than twenty years had elapsed from the time of their composition; so rapid were, at that time, the changes in our language (Malone, I,xliii).

Malone's rationale for the proliferating commentary may stand as the summary statement of one aspect of the
eighteenth century's contribution to the study of Shakespeare:

"I wish (says Dr. Johnson) we all conjectured less, and explained more." When our poet's entire library shall have been discovered and the fables of all his plays traced to their original source, when every temporary allusion shall have been pointed out, and every obscurity elucidated, then, and not till then, let the accumulation of notes be complained of. I scarcely remember ever to have looked into a book of the age of Elizabeth, in which I did not find something that tended to throw a light on these plays. While our object is, to support and establish what the poet wrote, to illustrate his phraseology by comparing it with that of his contemporaries, and to explain his fugitive allusions to customs long since disused and forgotten, while this object is kept steadily in view, if even every line of his plays were accompanied with a comment, every intelligent reader would be indebted to the industry of him who produced it. . . . Let us then hear no more of this barbarous jargon concerning Shakespeare's having been elucidated into obscurity, and buried under the load of his commentators. . . .

(Malone, I,iv).}

Finally there is a startlingly shrewd and accurate assessment of the total effect of all this commentary on the position of Shakespeare in the literary life of the English. I, for one, had often nodded my head in sage agreement with Johnson's rather depressing judgment on the matter:

It is not very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this author's power of pleasing. He was read, admired, studied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him. (15)
I ceased nodding after reading Malone's rejoinder:

He certainly was read, admired, studied, and imitated, at the period mentioned; but surely not in the same degree as at present. The succession of editors has affected this; it has made him understood; it has made him popular; it has shown every one who is capable of reading, how much superior he is not only to Jonson and Fletcher, whom the bad taste of the last age from the time of the Restoration to the end of the century set above him, but to all the dramatick poets of antiquity: ... Every author who pleases must surely please more as he is more understood, and there can be no doubt that Shakspeare is now infinitely better understood than he was in the last century.

So much better was Shakespeare now understood that the editions of the late-eighteenth-century were soon of little use. Although we no longer have the patience and leisure to read Shakespeare in this way—although indeed we do not conceive of this sort of study as reading Shakespeare at all—we are much to blame if we harbor the comfortable illusion that these editors were somehow out of touch with Shakespeare. And is this not, at base, what we are suggesting about them?—that no truly sensitive reader of Shakespeare could be led into such barren pedantry as this? We are to blame for a lapse of self-knowledge: what, one wonders, would Shakespeare think of Hinman, poking around in the type-case of 'prentice compositor E?

More importantly we are to blame for failing to recognize that our present sophistication has been
prepared for by the eighteenth-century pedants. Shakespeare scholarship was not then so diffuse that it could not be considered an appendage to an edition of his text—though admittedly an edition which grew to a score of substantial volumes. And it was sufficiently generalized for the whole of it to be considered the province of every lover of his works.

The editorial tradition of the early eighteenth-century comprises the texts of Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton, and culminates in the edition of Samuel Johnson, the first variorum editor. The editorial tradition of the later eighteenth century, leaving Capell to one side (as did his fellow editors) is founded by Johnson and includes the many editions of Steevens and Malone. This tradition culminates in "Boswell's Malone"—the Variorum of 1821.

Nurtured, as we have been, on the New Variorum edition of the Furnesses and the MLA, we may be surprised to find that The Variorum does not indicate textual variants. In the text of King Lear, for example, there are nearly 200 substantive variants between the quarto and folio texts of what is, in modern editions, Act I: precisely twenty of these are marked by asterisks as variants in Boswell's Malone. Perhaps a dozen more are noticed in the variorum commentary.
A more surprising element in the editing of this massive edition is that, though it embodies Malone's final thoughts on almost every aspect of Shakespeare studies, it is not based on his text, but rather on that of the 1803 variorum, which was based, in turn, on Steevens' extremely influential edition of 1793. The result of this blunder—for such it must be called—is that the posthumous edition authorized by Malone to provide a capstone to his career, is a reflection of the rival editorial methods of Steevens.

5. The Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century, the textual criticism of modern literature became a respectable profession. Earlier in the century it was the editor who lent his prestige to the publishing venture: Rowe and Pope at least were selected for their own eminence, and not for their intrinsic fitness for the job of editor. By the end of the century it is the profession "editor of Shakespeare" which carries the intellectual cachet. It was now possible for a man to make his name as an editor of and commentator for Shakespeare. Reservations about the achievement of these editors is inevitable and proper: several felt by the nineteenth-century editors will be introduced in the following pages. But the praise owing
to the founders of Shakespeare studies cannot be denied them: in an age remarkable for its constant controversy among English scholars, there was a group of them who embarked on a thirty-year course of co-operative studies to the end of elucidating the text of Shakespeare. They did their work so well that it has never required to be done again. Let us not flatter ourselves that we are entitled to belittle this achievement, for here too Malone has a ready retort:

Dryden is said to have regretted the success of his own instructions, and to have lamented that at length, in consequence of his critical prefaces, the town had become too skilful to be easily satisfied. The same observation may be made with respect to many of ... those who object to the great mass of commentary contained in the recent editions, to whom the meaning of some of our poet's most difficult passages is now become so familiar that they fancy they originally understood them "without a prompter" and with great gravity exclaim against the unnecessary illustrations furnished by his Editors (Malone, I,lvii).

The effect of the research activities of the eighteenth-century editors and commentators was to establish the range of characteristic concerns and operations of their nineteenth-century successors. To take but a few examples: it was the earlier scholars who realized that one key to understanding Shakespeare was to be found in the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries, and it was they who brought forward the particular passages bearing
on this assertion; it was the later scholars who instituted a strenuous course of making the complete works of Shakespeare's contemporaries available. Again, the effect of Farmer's demonstration that virtually every classical allusion and story in Shakespeare was available to him in translation was that the question was considered closed by the scholars of the succeeding century--though Farmer himself came in for a deal of ill-natured abuse.

The one area of editing in which the eighteenth century had the least influence on the nineteenth was, however, the most crucial: textual theory. Though discoveries, both theoretical and factual, made by Capell, Steevens, and Malone, were ultimately to prove as significant to the study of the text as they had immediately proved to its explication, the textual discoveries were not seized on in the same way. This is, in essence, because the one lesson that the eighteenth-century editors never learned--despite the "woodnotes wild" theory which even Johnson could not banish--was that Shakespeare's language and metrics were not susceptible to rigorous analysis along strictly logical lines. It was the dogged seriousness and awkward relentlessness with which the early scholars pressed this search that made their names emblems of persistent stupidity for more than a century to come.
PART II

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
CHAPTER VI
SAMUEL WELLER SINGER

In the history of Shakespearean editing the eighteenth century begins in 1709 and ends in 1821. The nineteenth century, consequently, gets off to a much slower start. The long reign of Steevens and Malone was not challenged until 1838 and not terminated until the 1860's. The 1821 variorum was able to survive the successive challenges of Charles Knight (whose first edition of Shakespeare appeared 1838-1842), John Payne Collier (1841-44), James Orchard Halliwell (1853-65), Alexander Dyce (1857), and Howard Staunton (1858-60), and of the Americans Henry Norman Hudson (1851-57), and Richard Grant White (1857-65). Not until the Cambridge and New Variorum editions appeared did "Boswell's Malone" endure its final eclipse. It is to the interim that we must direct our attention--the seeming abyss between 1821 and 1863--a period largely ignored by historians of the text of Shakespeare.

I say "largely ignored" facetiously. In fact the period has been shockingly neglected--its criticism in general, but its textual studies particularly. A careful search through the Shakespeare bibliographies of
Jaggard, Ebisch and Schucking, Gordon Ross Smith, and T.H. Howard-Hill has yielded only three articles written in this century on the nineteenth-century editions of Shakespeare. And none of them is written from a strictly textual point of view. Together with these there are some discussions of related matters. S. Schoenbaum's Shakespeare's Lives (1970), for instance, treats all the Britons named above, Collier and Halliwell in considerable detail. John Gross has well described the general milieu in which literary journalism was conducted in The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters (1968); several of the journals themselves have been the subject of independent treatment. A fine book exists on American Shakespeare criticism, including textual criticism.¹

But on the whole, the materials for the chapters to follow are drawn of necessity from the editions themselves, and from the reviews and commentaries they generated. This material exists in plenty; Dyce, for example, published three complete books commenting on the successive editions of Collier's Shakespeare (1844, 1853, 1858). And fifty to sixty-page reviews of editions were not uncommon in the quarterlies.

How, then, to account for the lack of modern interest in the nineteenth-century text? Certainly it is not for a dearth of controversy; the Collier controversy
(as it was then called) rivals in intensity the brawls of Warburton, and reveals the Malone-Steevens affair as what it was—a polite rivalry between colleagues. I would suggest three reasons. First, the quality, if not the intensity, of nineteenth-century Shakespearean controversy represents a falling-off from the standards of the previous era. Though sufficiently bitter, the controversies lack the broad contrasts of principle common earlier. Pit Pope against Theobald, Hanmer against Warburton, and you see two different ways of being--two styles of life--brought into irritable conjunction; the points over which they clashed were large matters of taste and style, or of the most basic principles of textual editing. The conflicts of the nineteenth century were waged over small points--over atoms and particles. It is important to realize, however, that it is just these particles which have continued to make up the main matter of contemporary textual bibliography. That is, though the techniques of textual analysis may have changed dramatically since 1865, the questions to which we are applying those techniques are precisely those to which Collier, Dyce, and Halliwell addressed themselves.

Secondly, less individual personality is revealed in the editions of this period. The impress of Pope's prim elegance, or Warburton's ferocious contempt for
authority, of Johnson's ponderous majesty or Capell's crabbed brilliance, of Malone's antiquarian zeal or Steevens's vivacious malice, is apparent on every page of their editions. The editors of the nineteenth century allowed themselves no such luxuries of self-expression. Cheaply mass-produced, typographically undistinguished, their editions do not invite reader to commune with editor. The drily factual style of annotation too is at variance with the prevailing characteristic of the previous age. The now-acknowledged complexity of the state of the text rules out the sort of self-indulgent exuberance of Pope and Warburton, and has a sobering effect on editorial prose, robbing it of its flavor.

Third, and most important, our own sense of Shakespearean textual history precludes our taking the nineteenth-century editors very seriously. We see the history of the text as progressing from Rowe, Pope, and Theobald, through Johnson, to a glorious culmination in Capell and Malone. Since the latter pair in so many ways anticipated the "New Bibliography" we call them the fathers of modern textual theory. The nineteenth century is, then, only a dreary and boring interlude between the false dawn of the late eighteenth century and the splendid brightness of our own day. But we must take the nineteenth-century editors on their own terms, and their history of
the descent of the text has a quite different emphasis. They obviously did not appear to themselves to be interim figures; rather, they were the rescuers of Shakespeare—perhaps the heirs, in this sense, of Theobald (and in fact Theobald's stock has never been higher than it was in this period). Shakespeare seemed to them to be in as much danger as he had seemed to Rowe to be. No longer were the enemies time and public indifference: Shakespeare was too well established for that. This time the enemies were the commentators themselves, who had buried Shakespeare under the accumulated weight of black-letter learning; dimmed his brilliance by annotating him into obscurity; and drowned him out altogether with their shrill squabbles in the footnotes.

The editors of the nineteenth century also emphasized different aspects of the eighteenth-century achievement. Just as we are inclined to discount the importance of, or ignore altogether, the elements of Malone's work which have become antiquated either by advancing scholarship (his dissertation on *Henry VI*: his metrical theories) or by changing styles (his parade of parallelisms), just so the nineteenth-century editors discounted or ignored Malone's achievement and concentrated on what they felt to be his weaknesses. One thing they found—in Malone, Capell, and wherever else they looked in the
eighteenth-century text—was clear evidence of editorial irresponsibility in the form of wanton tampering with the text. It is difficult for us to understand, conditioned as we are to picturing Capell and Malone as the avatars of textual fidelity, just how far they were willing to depart from the text. Capell indeed introduced more original readings into the text than any other editor (including Rowe)\(^2\) and Malone, though not greatly an emender, accepted most of Capell's work as foundation and model for his own.

These, then, were some of the tasks the nineteenth-century editors set themselves: to restore the text of Shakespeare to the greatest degree of purity it was susceptible of; to rid the text of its traditional and ever-growing burden of commentary; to rescue Shakespeare from the coterie of scholars and free his pages from the purely private bickering of his editors. That they succeeded in their own eyes may be seen from the summary statement of the nineteenth century's summary edition: the editor and commentator, is H. H. Furness. Writing in 1873, he points out that Shakespearean criticism has advanced so far that for present purposes the variorum of 1821 is "merely rudimentary" and he continues:

In the fifty years that have elapsed since its publication, Shakespearean criticism has made great
progress, greater in fact than during any preceding half century; and, although in the list of recent editors are found no such world renowned names as Pope and Johnson, yet Shakespeare has never had critics who brought to their task greater learning, keener critical sagacity, and more reverential love than have been shown by his more modern editors. The student of Shakespeare is no longer offended by the patronizing tone in which it was the wont to refer to 'our author' or 'our poet'. Obscure passages are no longer termed 'nonsense' which 'must be reformed,' and the cry of 'bad grammar' is hushed. The art of writing notes by exclaiming at the 'asinine tastelessness' of preceding critics, so wittily described by Dr. Johnson, is happily become one of the lost arts, and scathing invective over matters which might seem to 'exercise the wit without engaging the passions' has disappeared before a single desire to make clear what is obscure. (3)

This is not, perhaps, heady stuff; yet it has implications that are truly stunning. Furness seems to be doing no more than praising the nineteenth-century editors for gentlemanly deportment. In fact he is enunciating the central creed of the century's textual criticism. It may be said that the underlying assumption of the eighteenth-century editors was that the form in which the text of Shakespeare survived was desperately corrupt. The note is struck in edition after edition: the actors with their improvised additions which somehow crept into the text; the barbarous and uncouth audience; the infantile stage with its puerile spectacles; the generally low esteem in which the drama had been held; the crude ignorance—almost amounting to illiteracy—of the compositors; the litany is almost endless. The natural--
almost inevitable—result of such a theory was that few even of the editors who professed faith in the early texts of Shakespeare scrupled to alter his text constantly to suit modern ideas of correct style.

What Furness sees, however, as the animating spirit of nineteenth-century Shakespearean study—the reverential attitude enunciated so often—blends into a generalized reverence for anything that might have "a little touch of" Shakespeare in it. Instead of handling the early texts as if they were dead rats, the nineteenth-century editors saw them as living links with Shakespeare himself, and to be treated with according respect. The philosophic structure of modern bibliographical textual criticism is based on this reverential attitude towards the *ipsissima verba* of the author. The foundations for this structure were laid in the nineteenth century—initially by Knight and Collier, later by Dyce and R. G. White. And just as the eighteenth century culminates in an edition which makes available all the comments of the editors, the nineteenth century culminates in an edition in which the materials for forming the text are displayed as prominently as the text itself.

The first true nineteenth-century edition is that of Samuel Weller Singer (1783-1858), which appeared in 1826, and though the text itself need hardly detain us—
it was not, as we shall see, a critical edition—its format and the tone of its preface are arresting. In the 1820's—
it is safe to say after the appearance of the Boswell-
Malone variorum—there is a perceptible rise in the clamor
against the commentators. There had always been a ground-
swell of discontent with their pedantry and obscurantism,
but it began now to be reiterated with unprecedented ve-
hemence in the weekly and quarterly reviews, and at last,
with Singer, invaded the citadel itself; it is made the
rallying cry of an editor in his own edition.

That the edition is not critical is admitted by
Singer himself in his description of his editorial methods:

It will be seen that the Editor has not thought with
some of his predecessors, that the text of Shakespeare
was 'fixed' in any particular edition 'beyond the
hope or probability of future amendment.' He has
rather coincided with the opinion of Mr. Gifford 'that
those would deserve well of the public who should
bring back some readings which Steevens discarded,
and reject others which he has adopted.' The text
of the present edition is formed upon those of Steevens
and Malone, occasionally compared with the early edi-
tions; and the satisfactions arising from a rejection
of modern unwarranted deviations from the old copies
has not infrequently been the reward of his labours
emphasis supplied.

No edition is formed so casually that its editor and the
author of its prefatory biography, William Watkiss Lloyd,
were unknown to each other—so completely unknown that
they occasionally espouse contradictory principles and
support different readings in disputed passages. The
significance of the edition does not, then, lie in any advance it makes in textual principles. It lies, rather, in the spirit the edition represents—in the audience it addresses, the information it provides, the task it undertakes—the image of an edition, in short, it wishes to fulfill. The edition is devoid of personality and essentially free of argument. What Singer has done is to winnow the Variorum 1821 for uncontroversed comments. Thus what is offered is not a report on the continuing progress of Shakespearean studies, but rather an attempt to fix the permissible limits of those studies, for the time. For the first time since Johnson a full scale edition is directed at the "general reader;" Singer is the first editor we hear using the term. Singer condenses, rewords, and conflates the contributions of the various commentators. His notes have a corporate identity rather than a personality.

With its composite notes, its essentially clear text, and especially its dismissal of the vast accumulated weight of eighteenth-century learning, Singer's edition represents a retreat from the luxuriance of commentary readers of Shakespeare had become accustomed to (not, it must be admitted, an abject retreat: the edition is in ten volumes). The Boswell-Malone Variorum contains, aside from its endless annotations, well over 2,000 pages of
prose in the form of preface, criticisms, bibliographies, documents, and dissertations. Singer unceremoniously drops all of this.

Similarly new is his picture of the history of Shakespeare's text. Only four years after the appearance of the edition meant to establish for generations the fame of Malone, Singer is considering that editor and Steevens as belonging to the past. Though he accepts, and amplifies, Malone's description of Steevens as the man who was willing to sacrifice his fame on the altar of his vanity, he also begins the process of denigrating the reputation of Malone himself—a process which will continue through much of the century. This must not be thought of as merely the child revolting against the father. Though the desire to unseat the established monarch of Shakespeare studies must have been a goad to many of the editors, there is too, as they perceived, a weak spot in Malone's indisputably magnificent achievement, and Singer is merely the first of the nineteenth-century editors to attack it. The basic charge against Malone—in whatever form it might be couched—was that he lacked outstanding intelligence: however diligent he may have been in gathering materials, his ability to order them was deficient. That this is not simply cavilling—though it may be unfair—is documented in Schoenbaum's narrative
of Malone's efforts to complete the biography of Shakespeare for which he had accumulated an unrivalled body of documents. It seems quite clear, in any case, that Singer's strictures on Malone, like Knight's and unlike Collier's, are not motivated by either greed for reputation or by spiteful envy:

Malone was certainly not so happily gifted as Steevens . . . . An amiable and accomplished gentleman and a scholar . . . there seems to have been a want of grasp in his mind to make proper use of the accumulated materials which his unwearied industry in his favourite pursuit had placed within his reach: his notes on Shakespeare are often tediously circumlocutory and ineffectual: neither does he seem to have been deficient in that jealousy of rivalship or that pertinacious adherence to his own opinions, which have been attributed to his competitors Singer, (I,xvi).

Singer's text heralds the new century also in its attitude towards Johnson as a critic. In the decades since 1765 Johnson's notes, but more especially his preface and so-called "General Observations" had become so closely identified with Shakespeare that they virtually formed a part of the received text. Singer went so far as to drop the preface, but even he lacked the temerity to dispense with the Observations. It remained for the nineteenth century's first critical edition to do this.
Charles Knight (1791-1873), a reformer and an advocate of Christian Knowledge for the working classes, edited and supervised a long series of editions of Shakespeare in a wide variety of formats, though with a relatively stable text. His first and most popular edition was The Pictorial Shakespeare (1838-41).\(^1\)

If Knight falls short of being a great editor it is only because his most outstanding talent was that of the popularizer rather than the researcher. He had a knack of incorporating other people's hypotheses into his own arguments, a knack which occasionally got so far out of hand that the theories would have been repudiated by their originators had they been recognizable to them. But Knight's earnest attempts to come to grips with the problems of the text made him one of the most interesting editors of his time, and made his the best edition of Shakespeare produced before the Cambridge. As late as the 1890's his edition was spoken of as one which could not be ignored by textual scholars\(^2\) and, if only to witness the rigor of Knight's application of textual theory...
to textual practice, the statement retains some truth today. He anticipates modern textual thought at many points though without, of course, our more thorough understanding of the publishing history of the early texts. Though he rejected as pathetically silly John Payne Collier's suggestion that a collation of all surviving exemplars of a given edition might reveal printing-house correction—a suggestion which, when its time arrived, was to become a cornerstone of textual criticism—his modernity of temper is displayed in the coherence of his general theory, in the rigor with which it is pursued, and concurrently in the flexibility with which it is applied.

Knight was best known in his own time for his fierce adherence to the text of the first folio—he was considered to be, in this respect, not merely stubborn but even irrational—but this was merely the result of his firmly held theory that Shakespeare personally revised his work, and edited his literary remains with scrupulous care.

Knight's adherence to the first folio is boldly and frequently asserted. He first announces it in his preface. It is in the context of a discussion of editorial procedure for those plays for which the folio text is taken from the quarto that he insists we must "make
the later copy i.e. the folio the foundation of the text" (Knight, I,xvii). He makes his reasons for this assertion quite plain:

We have thus seen that of the fourteen plays originally published in Quarto, which may be considered authentic, nine of that number contain very unimportant differences from the text in the Folio. The differences, however, are not merely the typographical changes which always creep into any new edition; they are in many cases either the corrections of the author, or the corrections of those who represented the plays. The Theatre, there can be no doubt, possessed a manuscript copy, as Heminge and Condell expressly tell us; and the variations, especially in the metrical arrangement, even in those plays which appear the most alike, afford satisfactory evidence that in the republication some manuscript was referred to (Knight, I,xvii).

Thus it will be seen that Knight's reliance on the first folio cannot be discussed without reference to his opinion that Shakespeare continually revised his plays. In a way this is appropriate, for it means that Knight's textual theory is pre-eminently an attempt to answer the two traditional questions of Shakespearean textual criticism: how has Shakespeare's text been transmitted; and how did he compose? These problems are first posed in the Folio itself, although Heminge and Condell do not see them as questions to be answered but as facts to be established. In considering the transmission of the text, or more precisely the relationship between the quartos and the folio, they tell us that,
where (before) you were abus'd with diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious impostors, that expos'd them: even those, are now offered to your view cur'd, and perfect of their limbes; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them.

This had long been taken to mean that all the quartos were pirated; not until Halliwell did a major editor consider the alternative meanings of "divers" and the implication of "all the rest."3 Other early editors, beginning with Pope, had considered the statement to be a tipoff that the folio was not to be trusted since its nominal editors were careful not to let their left hand know that their right hand was using these very quartos as copy for many of the plays. Knight's interpretation, certainly unique, is that only some (divers) of the stolen and surreptitious copies had survived long enough to abuse anybody; other similarly piratical texts had been suppressed before publication (I,xi).

Heminge and Condell also bring up the question of Shakespeare's method of composition when they report that they received his papers with "scarse . . . a blot." One way to deal with this claim is to assert that it is merely conventional praise.4 Another way--Knight's way--is to take this as confirmation that Shakespeare did, in fact, lavish great pains on his manuscripts, taking
care that the copies he prepared for posterity were clean and accurate representations of his final thoughts.

With the inevitable exception of Hanmer, no editor of Shakespeare has failed to address himself to these twin questions. In the early editions the question of transmission was answered by a reference to the unspeakable standards of Elizabethan dramatic publication, while it was taken as axiomatic that quartos which varied widely from each other represented early and late versions of the same play by Shakespeare. In our own time, the questions remain, though the kinds of answers given, or approaches taken to them, are utterly different. We are able to speculate confidently about the idiosyncrasies of the compositors who set each page of the folio—and of many of the quartos—but the question of Shakespeare's method of composition has dwindled to the status of a judgment on the nature of the copy handed to the printers. The question has become ancillary to printing-house studies.

For Knight too the questions really resolve themselves into a single enquiry. He chooses, unfortunately, the wrong end to proceed from, and becomes entangled in a subtle but ultimately devastating petitio principi. Knight wishes to demonstrate that the variations between the quartos and the folio are the result of authorial intervention. In order to do so he must analyze the
variants, to which end he examined all the plays which appeared first in quarto. His analysis, however, proceeds on the assumption that the variants are in fact authorial—the very point he is trying to prove. He uses, for example, prejudicial language in his descriptions: the neutral term "variant" rarely appears; instead we are told of Shakespeare's "augmentations," his "additions," "omissions," "erasures" (the general term, at the time, which included blotting or crossing out), and "corrections." At other times, Knight quietly assumes, for the sake of argument, that his conclusion is proved: "The variations between these nine quartos and the folio texts are only such as an author, having his printed works before him during at least sixteen years, would naturally make." (This passage does not occur as part of an argument, but only in the midst of a reassurance to the reader that the textual problems of Shakespeare are not essentially formidable.) Again, commenting on the 1602 and 1619 quartos of Merry Wives: "... These editions present only the sketch of that play as we now have it from the Folio. The improvements and additions in this case are as numerous and important as in the Henry V." The first quarto of Hamlet is "a sketch as compared with the finished play" (I,xiv). Yet again: "Richard III in the folio, presents an example of constant verbal alterations, evidently made with a most
note how, in the last quotation, Knight, by assuming that
the folio is the authoritative text, is able to make a
fact usually taken as evidence that the quarto is superior—
namely that it preserves scenes missing from the folio—
work instead to support his assumed conclusion. Current
textual theory holds (in general agreement with editors
since Capell) that when the quarto and folio texts are
virtually identical throughout, the folio was obviously
printed from the quarto. Knight, inhibited by the irre-
versible temporal relationship of the texts, is unable
to claim that the quarto was printed from the folio.
Instead he denies the major: quarto and folio vary so
little in some cases, he says, "that we can scarcely doubt
that each was printed from the author's unaltered copy."

The search for evidence of Shakespeare's conscious
artistry in every peculiarity of the first folio is an-
alogous to the same search by the literary critics of
the bardolotrous nineteenth century. Just as for those
who believed Shakespeare could commit no wrong (but with
just cause), every inconsistency was a delicate stroke
of characterization, or an audacious bit of dramatic license, so for Knight every indifferent variant, or even orthographic peculiarity reveals the sure hand of the mature Shakespeare. Thus, observing that in the opening scene of The Tempest Alonso calls upon the boatswain and Antonio upon the bosun, according to the folio, Knight observes:

In the first edition . . . Antonio here uses the sailor's word boson, instead of the more correct 'boatswain,' which is put in the mouth of the King of Naples. The modern editors have made no distinction; although the language of the king, throughout the play, is grave and dignified, and that of the usurping duke, for the most part, flippant and familiar. The variation in the first edition could scarcely be accidental. (13)

The same assumption is evident in Knight's comment on the expression "stayers of sand" (Merchant of Venice. 3.2) printed by all editors, generally without comment, "stairs." Knight complains of the change, calling attention to the "remarkable" distinction Shakespeare makes between the two words.

Knight's textual theory is stated with concise explicitness:

The folio of 1623 contains 36 plays; of these, thirteen were published in the author's lifetime, with such internal evidences of authenticity, and under such circumstances, as warrant us in receiving them as authentic copies. These copies are, therefore, entitled to a very high respect, in the settlement of the author's text. But they don't demand an
exclusive respect; for the evidence, in several instances, is most decided, that the author's posthumous copies in manuscript were distinguished from the printed copies by verbal alterations, by additions, by omissions not arbitrarily made, by a more correct metrical arrangement. To refer these differences to alterations made by the players has been a favourite theory with some of Shakespeare's editors; but it is manifestly an absurd one. We see in numerous cases, the minute but most effective touches of the skilful artist; and a careful examination of this matter in the plays where the alterations are most numerous is quite sufficient to satisfy us of the jealous care with which Shakespeare watched over the more important of these productions, so as to leave his 'fellows' more complete and accurate copies than had been preserved by the press (I, xvi).

Though there are elements here which may strike us as naive, we cannot fail to be struck by the modernity of Knight's conclusions, which are not all that far from those of Pollard, seventy-five years later: that the folio texts, far from being the end product of twenty years of corruption, were in all probability printed directly from Shakespeare's manuscripts, or from manuscripts at only one remove from them. Knight believes that the folio was printed from Shakespeare's own manuscripts, which he had occasionally, or even systematically, revised. If we can overlook, as Knight's contemporaries were able to, the circularity of the reasoning by which he was able to arrive at this conclusion, we will find it, probably, the most exciting textual theory we have yet encountered. Knight pressed large claims for his textual theory. Its chief recommendation, in fact, is
that if we choose it we are enabled to make strong assertions about Shakespeare's creative processes--this being, of course, the pivot on which the circular reasoning turns. For one thing it proposes to put us in direct contact with the very words Shakespeare himself wrote, with his own hand. For another it allows us to watch Shakespeare "in the workshop"; to see him actually in the process of refining his art from its spectacular but erratic beginnings to the supreme mastery of his maturity. Knight takes some entertaining turns with this material:

The Hamlet of 1603 is a sketch of the perfect Hamlet, and probably a corrupt copy of that sketch. Mr. Caldecott believes that this copy exhibits, "in that which was afterwards wrought into a splendid drama, the first conception, and comparatively feeble expression, of a great mind." We think, further, that this first conception was an early conception; that it was remodelled,--'enlarged to almost as much again as it was,'--at the beginning of the 17th century; and that this original copy being then of comparatively little value was piratically published.

The highest interest of the first quarto consists... in the opportunity which it affords of studying the growth, not only of our great poet's command over language--not only of his dramatical skill,--but of the higher qualities of his intellect--his profound philosophy, his wonderful penetration into what is most hidden and obscure in men's characters and motives. . . . And first, let us state that all the action of the amended Hamlet is to be found in the first sketch. . . . After comparing Act I scene ii in first and second quartos We would ask if it is possible that such a careful working up of the first idea could have been any other work than that of the poet himself? Can the alterations be accounted for upon the principle that the first edition was an imperfect copy of the complete play 'published in haste from a short-hand copy taken from the mouths of the
players Collier's theory?" Could the players have transformed the line--"But I have that within which passeth show," into, "Him have I lost I must of force forgo." The haste of short-hand does not account for what is truly the refinement of the poetical art.

It appears to have been no effort to . . . Shakespeare to have changed the whole arrangement of a poetical sentence, and to have inverted its different members; he did this as readily as if he were dealing with prose.

The character of Hamlet is fully conceived in the original play, whenever he is in action . . . It is the contemplative part of his nature which is elaborated in the perfect copy.

The suppression of . . . the scenes in Q1 in which the queen explicitly denies her guilt and agrees to participate actively in the exposure of Claudius is another instance of his admirable judgment. She does not redeem her guilt by entering into plots against her guilty husband; and it is far more characteristic of the irregular impulses of Hamlet's mind, and of his subjection to circumstances, that he should have no confidences with his mother, and should not form with her and Horatio any plans of revenge. The story of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is told in six lines.

. . . The expansion of this simple passage into the exquisite narrative of Hamlet to Horatio of the same circumstances, presents, to our minds, a most remarkable example of the difference between the mature and youthful intellect (Knight, VIII,8-12).

Knight's sensitivity to Shakespeare's development is perhaps called into question by his belief that the Roman tragedies (Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Troilus and Cressida, and Julius Caesar) are his final efforts, while A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Winter's Tale, and The Tempest form a coherent group among his earliest. Still, the textual theory is not without its attractions, and, (it may be in amends for the circularity of the reasoning with which he propounds it) he applies it with a logical
rigor which sorts well with modern techniques. If the history of textual criticism may be seen as the search for a principle to govern eclecticism, then Knight's contribution to it was to promote the thoroughly modern contention that where the variants of one of a group of texts can be demonstrated to be on the whole superior to the variants in any other of the group, there is a good case for accepting them en bloc except in cases of manifest typographical error.

It is in his attitude to the quartos that Knight makes his real breakthrough. He realized, despite his prejudices in favor of the folio, that there were certain passages where the quarto had the advantage; the most obvious instance is provided by those passages which are omitted in the folio—about 225 lines in King Lear, for instance—or by those readings where the folio preserves irredeemable nonsense to the quartos' perfect sense. Here, Knight recognized, whatever his theory might dictate in general, that he was powerless to resist the principle that an edition of Shakespeare must present all that Shakespeare wrote. But rather than simply print the quarto text where it is preferable to that of the folio, Knight felt he must advise the reader of the interpolation. He did this by placing the interpolation inside square brackets. Knight is hardly the first to use the
brackets for this purpose. But until Knight their use was limited to those cases in which the editor wished to call particular attention to the fact that certain lines appear only in one of the texts being reproduced.

Another part of Knight's important contribution to textual practice is again a result of his conviction that Shakespeare personally revised the manuscripts from which the folio was printed. If this was indeed the case, then the version of a play represented in quarto and that represented in folio, no matter how close, would be essentially independent texts, with, in Knight's judgment, the later one being the more authoritative. The result is Knight's insistence that a text could not be made up by conflation. This had been a universal recourse for editors from the first, but Knight rejects the practice in terms with a startlingly modern ring to them:

... we utterly object to the principle which has too often guided the modern editors,—of making up a text, when the variations are considerable, out of the text of the quartos and that of the folio. If any part of the variation demonstrates that it is the author's improvement, we are bound to receive the whole of the improvement with the exception of any manifest typographical error (Knight, I, xviii).

Although directed to a different end, McKerrow's words come irresistibly to mind:

the nearest approach to our ideal... will be produced by using the earliest 'good' print as copy-text
and inserting into it, from the first edition which contains them, such corrections as appear to us to be derived from the author. . . . We are not to regard the 'goodness' of a reading in and by itself, or to consider whether it appeals to our aesthetic sensibilities or not; we are to consider whether a particular edition taken as a whole contains variants from the edition from which it was otherwise printed which could not reasonably be attributed to an ordinary press-corrector, . . . and once having decided this to our satisfaction we must accept all the alterations of that edition, saving any which seem obvious blunders or misprints. (15)

Though the elisions here are deliberately designed to emphasize the parallel between Knight and McKerrow, there needs no straining to demonstrate that Knight brings us very close to the conservative spirit which animated McKerrow's textual criticism, and that, in fact, Knight, with his brackets and his refusal to conflate, presents us with a conceptual framework not far from that provided by the modern theory of copy-text. All that is lacking is the strongly-conceived rationale, and the policy that any reading—even so small as a single word—not appearing in the copy text, should be advertised by brackets. No longer could Shakespeare be considered "in the condition of a corrupted classic," for Knight had firmly established the dividing line between manuscript and printed textual criticism. It was simply that the printing process did not permit the same sort of widely distributed authority that is common in manuscripts. If, let us say, twenty manuscripts of a given work survive, varying in quality
from excellent to virtually worthless, in the case of a disputed reading even the worst of them may be the only one to preserve the authoritative word. The judgment of general quality may be useful in choosing a copy-text--a "best" text--and may tip the balance in a handful of indifferent variants. But, since every manuscript is by nature unique, each one has a unique combination of readings, and, indeed, represents a unique version of every reading in the work. This is, of course, not true of printed texts. Since every copy of a given printing of a work will be almost or wholly identical with every other copy of that printing, the "families" into which they form are much more closely knit than those of manuscripts. If it can be demonstrated, for example, that a member of one family of Shakespeare texts (say the fourth folio text of *Midsummer Night's Dream*) was printed from a member of another family (the same play in the third folio) with no authorial intervention or reference to another authoritative source of readings, then there is no possibility that the fourth folio will contain any reading of superior authority to the third folio. The same is not true of manuscripts since even a garbled version, copied in its entirety from an exemplar of an earlier, notoriously worthless, line of manuscripts, may preserve authorial readings not present in any of the surviving exemplars of the latter
line, but present in the particular manuscript copied from.

Knight has, in this way, isolated for the first time some of the conventions which have since come to rule Shakespearean editing: that one copy must be made the basis of a reprint; that all departures from it must be noted; that passages introduced from a copy other than the copy-text must be taken entire, rather than conflated. Knight has, in fact, made a distinct advance over Capell and Malone in theory.

I do not mean to suggest, however, that if Knight had only had our superior technical resources he would have used them as we do. It seems likely to me that the "bibliographical approach" was not only technically beyond the grasp of Knight and his contemporaries; it was also an idea whose time had not yet arrived. To Knight the purpose of textual criticism was, as it has remained, the establishment of the author's text. But while today its rationale is the attempt to reconstruct the physical process of its transmission in the various forms in which it survives, for Knight its rationale was the attempt to reconstruct Shakespeare's creative act. The vocabulary of textual criticism today is made up of words like "compositor," "casting off," "foul papers," and "justification." For Knight it was made up of words like "revision,"
"erasure," "early draft," and 'artistic maturity." Just as Pope and Warburton considered black-letter research paltry and trivial, Knight, though himself a printer, would have rejected as silly the suggestion that the key to establishing Shakespeare's true text could be found in the print shop. The point is clearly expressed (though not, it is true, by Knight) in the Athenaeum (5 Aug. 1843, #823):

... it strikes us forcibly, that for a popular edition of the works of our greatest poet there is something too much of mere verbal criticism in the notes, and of dry discussion about folios and quartos, and entries in Stationer's registers in the introductions. ... we feel satisfied that the Shakespearian page ought not to be encumbered with little, not to say paltry, controversies between rival copies, or rival commentators, on microscopic points, utterly beneath the consideration of true criticism. ... we can see no more reason for perpetuating ... this system than there would be for maintaining around some stately edifice, which has received some architect's last embellishments, each individual pole of scaffolding by the aid of which it was erected.

When we turn to Knight's conspectus of textual history we see a combination of his shrewdness and the prejudices of the time. His accounts of Steevens and Malone are consistent with his era's persistent denigration, but reveal Knight's characteristic independence of mind. His judgment on Steevens is pungent:

... Steevens, grown bold amidst the incense of his coteries, and the encouragement which his acute but
most prosaic mind received from the spirit of the age... established for himself the character of the most daring innovator upon the text of Shakespeare; and his innovations, extensive beyond all precedent, are in great part founded upon the conviction that he was born to reduce the versification of Shakspere to a standard of regularity—to the 'laws of metre' as he informs us... It is impossible to form any notion of the extent to which the corruption has reached through this dogged pertinacity—and, we add with pain, besotted ignorance... on the part of an editor whose natural acuteness, elegant acquirements, and neat style gave him an influence over the public of his day, of which we inherit the evil fruits (Knight, I, xxiv).

This drew from Whitwell Elwin, reviewing in The Quarterly Review, the rebuke that

... Knight attacks Steevens in particular, to whom he lies under greater obligations than he has always acknowledged, with a venom and pertinacity that savours more of a personal quarrel or a living rivalry than a difference about words and commas with the dead (Quarterly Review, 79 (1846-47), 316).

The shrewdness of his judgment on Malone is manifest in his observation that Malone and Steevens "were of the same school" of editors. For Knight's purposes they were, since, although Knight realized that Malone was reluctant to tamper with the text, he also realized that Malone was one of the tribe of editors who had attempted to impose a metrical regularity on Shakespeare. Here too Knight represents an advance, since, though he is hardly the first editor to complain that earlier editors have placed Shakespeare in a metrical straitjacket, he is the first
to do something about it. In fact this is one of the most striking points about Knight's editing: how often he refused to content himself with the pious platitudes of Shakespearean editors since Pope.

What is revealed by all this—the respect for Shakespeare's metrical irregularities, the refusal to conflate, the almost exclusive reliance on a single text, and the ease with which he accepts the folio's often difficult punctuation—is Knight's deep reverence and love for Shakespeare. Though in literary criticism this temper leads directly to the unedifying adulation characteristic of much post-Coleridgean commentary, it is, faute de mieux, both a sane and a helpful attitude for an editor, for it forces him to put his own intelligence entirely in the service of his author. The attitude is summed up in Knight's final introductory remarks:

When circumstances . . . placed the conduct of an edition of Shakespeare in the hands of the present editor, he determined to approach his task in the new spirit of the new school, as far as a humble disciple might interpret that spirit. The new school . . . is not the school of innovation; that dispraise belongs to those who have altered and interpreted Shakespeare in the confidence of their own superiority. We sit at the feet of the teacher and listen (Knight, I,xxix).

Knight's editorial method, and his concept of what an edition should provide are best understood through an
examination of some of the plays. I have chosen to look at King Lear and Hamlet.

King Lear is introduced by fifteen pages of prefatory material. First comes "State of the text and chronology of King Lear": a transcription of the title page of the "Pied Bull" quarto; a reference to the fact that Malone and Steevens' collation of the quartos revealed no significant differences among them; a comparison of the folio and the quarto texts. Next are sources: generous extracts from the Gesta Romanorum and Holinshed, one stanza from Spenser, the first scene of The True Chronicle History of King Leir and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella . . . (1605); an undated, untitled ballad from Percy; and an excerpt from Sydney's Arcadia containing the hint for the Gloucester subplot in "The Pitiful State and Story of the Paphlagonian Unkind King and his Kind Son." Finally there is a page on the "Period of the Action and Manners."

In this play, at least, Knight's adherence to the first folio has predictably beneficial results for the text. The currently accepted judgment that the first quarto was a "bad" quarto has, of course, forced the modern editors to rely greatly on the folio just as Knight did, though for slightly different reasons. Frequently Knight anticipates the orthodox reading of today, permitting it
into the text for the first time since Rowe, or since the folio itself. He is the first editor since Rowe to have Cordelia ask "What shall Cordelia speak," instead of "What shall Cordelia do," or to have Lear refer to Cordelia as "our last and least," rather than "last not least," or to have Cordelia anticipate the "plighted" rather than "plaied" cunning of her sisters, or to allow Lear to announce himself as "not an hour more or less" than four-score and upwards. Knight's respect for the folio also led him to restore many of its metrical arrangements. Editors had made such difficulty over the short line, "Hear nature, hear deare goddess, hear!" Pope had eked out the line by adding "a father!" to the end of the line, and had been followed by editors until Malone, who rearranged the printing of the lines. The folio reads:

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Lear. It may be so, my Lord.
Heare Nature, heare deere Godesse, heare:
Suspend thy purpose, if thou did'st intend
To make this Creature fruitfull:
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Malone, followed by Steevens and Boswell, prints:

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It may be so my lord. Hear, nature, hear;
Dear goddess hear! Suspend thy purpose, if
Thou didst intend to make this creature fruitfull
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Knight restores the folio lineation. He even re-installs several obsolete words into the text—words which earlier editors had modernized, but which Knight recognized as
authentic additions to the Shakespeare lexicon. From Johnson to Knight the gods had kept a "dreadful pother o'er our heads." It was Knight who restored "pudder," now the familiar reading, just as it was Knight who allowed a contrast to Cordelia's tears to be provided by "smilets," rather than the "smiles" which Pope substituted.

A few statistics may serve to make clear the extent of Knight's reliance on the Folio. In Act I of Lear there are about 200 substantive variants between the quarto and the folio. Since all the eighteenth-century texts to Capell derive from Rowe's, which derives in turn from the fourth folio, it is not surprising that the editors of the Rowe tradition choose the folio variant in the majority of cases. Pope, closest to Rowe, admits only 17% of the quarto variants into his text. No doubt more would have appeared had his collation been more diligent. Capell, making a fresh start, selects the quarto variant in more than one-third (34%) of the cases, and Malone betters this with 39%. Collier is in this tradition, choosing 32% of the quarto variants. The Cambridge text is generally based on the quarto, and this is reflected in its choice of 42% of the quarto readings. The modern conviction that the folio is the only reliable basis for a text is anticipated in the Furness Variorum which chooses only 16% of the quarto readings, and is clearly exemplified
in the Complete Pelican edition which chooses only 8%. Knight, who chose the folio as his copy not for our reasons but simply because he always chose it, admitted an uniquely low 5% of the variant readings from the quarto.

There are few problems. One of Knight's idiosyncrasies is his occasional failure to provide a gloss for a notoriously difficult word or passage. It is tempting to believe that Knight was simply reacting with disgust to the convoluted ingenuity of the standard explanations of the passages. In Lear, for example, a phrase which has been the occasion of more than its share of nonsensical speculation is that concerning "the most precious square of sense." Furness records a century of explanation before Knight. Knight's decision to print the phrase with no note may represent on the glossarial level the same sort of spirit which, on the textual level, allowed the famous "dram of eale" crux to stand. Yet, though Knight is himself rarely guilty of blundering or tortured glosses, his text is not free from unhelpful ones. These, and other criticisms to which his text are vulnerable, are negligible and, for the most part, mere carping. Knight's text of Lear is the best of its time.

Hamlet presents a different case. The question of the relative authority of the second quarto and the folio is still unsettled, as is that of the propriety of
admitting occasional readings from the first quarto into the text. Predictably Knight's foliolatry yields mixed results here. Dyce, who was generally hostile to Knight's editorial work, called it "beyond all doubt the worst text of Hamlet that has appeared in modern times."6

Knight first considers the available sources of the text of Hamlet. His version of the play's textual history is that the first quarto, written as early as 1589, represents an early draft which surreptitiously entered the market after Shakespeare had rewritten it (thus robbing it of its value to the company). His argument has a familiar circularity: that the first quarto is not a garbled version of the same text as the second quarto is guaranteed by its very inferiority to the later text. "Is it possible," Knight asks, "that such a careful working up of the first idea could have been any other work than that of the poet himself?" (Knight, VIII,12) The point is that the second quarto is so much better than the first that it is inconceivable that its superiority could be merely an effect of its being a more authoritative version of the same play. This is, however, to throw out of court the very question at issue: how to account for the second quarto's superiority.

Yet, given the information available to him, Knight's theory is hardly bizarre. We tend to see the unevenness
of the quality of first quarto Hamlet as resulting entirely from its method of transmission. Knight, starting out with the assumption that Shakespeare wrote Hamlet, as it appears in the first quarto, early in his career, accounts for the unevenness in lines quoted above (pp184-85) by suggesting that the young Shakespeare was capable of creating the plot of Hamlet but not the complex, thought-ridden character familiar to us from the later version. He has, it must be admitted, a plausible case. Certainly the omission of the scene in which Gertrude declared her innocence and joins with Hamlet and Horatio in plotting against the King deepens and darkens the play. As for the unlikelihood that Shakespeare could have written even the first quarto of Hamlet in 1589: "Let it be remembered that in that very year, when Shakespeare was 25, it has been distinctly proved by Mr. Collier that he was a sharer in the Blackfriars theatre, with others, and some of note, below him in the list of sharers" (Knight, VIII,12). In just this way did Collier's forgeries gain their currency; urged forward with the greatest restraint by their author, they were seized upon by other scholars as convenient pegs from which to hang arguments or, as in this instance, gratefully received as confirmatory evidence.

Knight's reverence for the folio had the courage of its convictions. He is willing to give the folio its
head in some extreme cases. For example in several instances the folio elides words clearly called for, and present in the second quarto. Knight allows the elisions to stand:

This brave oerhanging firmament
I the son of a dear father murdered
Yet cannot you make it speak

Knight defends these lapses of the folio with what Dyce calls "a dreadful subtlety." Knight also admits into his text the following controversial readings:

let it be treble in your silence still/ "Hamlet imposes a threefold obligation of silence."

The air bites shrewdly. Is it very cold?/
a most instant tetter bak'd about
I prithee, when thou seest that act a-foot
Even with the very comment of my soul
Observe mine uncle; /

Even for Knight there are limits—not always where we would expect to find them. Though, in line with his general policy, Knight adheres to the text for such usually regularized words as "caviarie," "dead waste" (for "dead vast"), and "bestilled" (for "distilled"), he (along with most editors other than Malone) makes the fretful animal a porcupine (from the quarto of 1676) rather than a
porpentine. The following examples should give a fair idea of Knight's divergence from the folio. I have shown the source of each reading as it appears in Knight, and the rejected folio reading:

The cock that is the trumpet to the morn (Q:day F)
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast (Q:newsesF)
When Roscius was an actor (Q:omitted from F)
The mobled Queen (F2:InobledF)
The proud man's contumely (Q:poorF)
Could beauty have better commerce that with honesty (Q:with your honestyF)
to see a robustious, periwig-pated fellow (Q:hearF)
and sets a blister there (Q:makesF)
Their defeat/Does by their own insinuation grow (Q:debateF)
Here Hamlet, take my napkin (Q:here'sF)

A few figures should make clear the general extent of Knight's reliance on the folio, and also show his awareness that he was being daring. Knight's text of Hamlet contains 256 notes. Of these, 120 (about 47%) are explanatory, most being glosses. Of the remaining notes, 109 (80%) justify the retention of readings from the folio, eleven (8%) justify the retention of second quarto readings, twelve (9%) justify the rejection of received emendations,
and only four (3%) justify the retention of emendations—all four, curiously, coming in Act I.

One final point about Knight's mistrust of the quartos may be noted. He seems to have been unaware that several folio plays were printed from late quartos. Thus he credits nine quartos with providing copy for the folio, and in every case but one the quarto cited is a first; the one exception is Romeo and Juliet whose first quarto is today recognized as "bad," and which Knight considered an early draft of the play. We now believe—and feel confident we can prove—that five folio plays are based on quartos later than the first. Of these five Knight points to the first quarto as copy text in three cases, the second quarto in one (when the first was a "bad" quarto and the third the actual copy-text), and says that the folio text of the fifth play was independent of any quarto. It seems to me more likely that Knight's prejudice in favor of the folio led him to scant the later quartos than that his ignorance of their significance led him to underestimate the folio's indebtedness to them. Knight demonstrates constantly his knowledge of the contents of the early texts. I believe that since he understood, correctly, that the intervening quartos, when there were any, were entirely derivative, he discounted their value utterly. But since the folio text of these five plays
was based on a late quarto, the quarto from which the folio text derived (and any other quarto going back to the authoritative first) is of the greatest interest in enabling us to form a judgment on where the readings of the folio were first introduced.

We have seen in Charles Knight the first example of a coherent textual theory being used to give us an insight into Shakespeare's creative methods. Knight not only developed a highly sophisticated theory: he also applied it to an extremely wide range of material. In one sense Knight's position in nineteenth-century textual criticism is analogous to that of A.W. Pollard in the twentieth—in the sense that the unrest stirred by their theories was felt by several succeeding generations of editors. Pollard's most exciting theory was that the plays were printed from Shakespeare's autograph manuscripts, or from manuscripts very close to them: "What follows if . . . ?" must have been a heady game in the 1920's. Knight, though hardly the originator of the idea that Shakespeare's plays underwent authorial revision (Pope treats it as a given) must be credited with revitalizing it by showing its important consequences for the study of Shakespeare.

Knight also has long notes, of an antiquarianism neither esoteric nor profoundly original, but devoted,
like all else in the edition, to the edification of a general audience. The notes, ranging from a few lines to a page and a half, are gathered at the end of each act. This is ironic for an editor who was at such pains to restore both the letter and the spirit of the early texts, for it lends a tremendous emphasis to the act-divisions, many of which are eighteenth-century interpolations.

Though Knight's enthusiasm for new ideas, and his eagerness to promote them, make him on occasion a dangerous guide for the uninitiated, the virtue of this fault is far more significant. No man can edit Shakespeare without revealing himself, and, though Knight's edition, like those to follow, was not a vehicle for presenting the editor, his personality comes through. He reveals himself as, of all editors of Shakespeare, the one most passionately in love with him.
CHAPTER VIII
JOHN PAYNE COLLIER

Knight's solitary eminence did not last long. Even as his edition was appearing a rival had announced himself. John Payne Collier had been invited to undertake an edition as early as 1832, after his sudden and resounding success with A History of the English Stage (1831). He declined the honor at the time, saying he was not yet ready, but he believed he would be within two or three years; his friend Charles Lamb advised him that ten years of preparation would more likely be required, and Lamb proved correct.¹

Collier announced his edition to the world in 1841 in his Reasons for a new edition of Shakespeare's works, containing notices of the defects of former impressions, and pointing out the lately acquired means of illustrating the plays, poems and biography of the poet (London, Whittaker, 1842 second edition). To any reader familiar with Collier's career, the title has a sinister ring; Collier is indeed referring to his forged documents, and to a less well known specimen of his handiwork, a copy of the first folio in the possession of the...
Duke of Devonshire, containing "certain corrections, in the margin . . . probably as old as the reign of Charles I."

As Collier's later textual forgeries (in a copy of the second folio) were so extensive, these few notes have been forgotten. Since these later forgeries will be discussed in some detail below, the small-scale activity of this period need not detain us here.

The Reasons was a substantial pamphlet which was re-issued in a slightly expanded form in 1842, the year that also saw the appearance of the first two volumes of Collier's edition. It is a volume of great interest to the historian of the text: Its most striking feature is Collier's repeated insistence on the necessity of collating multiple copies of the same edition. For the first time an editor has shown that significant variants emerge from the collation of a single text. The matter is broached in the opening pages, when Collier says:

Early impressions of plays, even of the same edition, not unfrequently differ, improvements having been made, and errors corrected while they were going through the press. . . . This point has never been at all attended to, and the difficulty in some instances of procuring more than a single copy of a play, has led to the repetition of important mistakes (Reasons, p.11).

Collier goes on to point out press variants in the first quarto of Love's Labours Lost and the Heyes quarto of The Merchant of Venice.
Collier returns to the point in a footnote in the second edition. He has just claimed that Malone "abandoned the true for a spurious reading, and by a gross mistake passed off the one for the other." In the interim between the two editions of his pamphlet Collier took the opportunity to collate the edition Malone used in this instance, and found, to his surprise, that Malone's copy supported his reading, while the four others Collier had seen contradicted it. The lesson of the story:

This difference, never hitherto suspected, between copies of the same edition is remarkable, and shows that it is impossible to collate too many of them. The corrections must have been made as the poems passed through the press (Reasons, p. 39 and note).

Unfortunately, aside from the honor of having brought this crucial fact to light, Collier is unable to make much use of it. The inference he draws from it--that Shakespeare was personally involved in the publication of his plays--is a cul-de-sac; and a moment's reflection would have made it plain that the inference is unwarranted as well, since Shakespeare could not have taken a hand in the production of a book which first appeared seven years after his death. Nor does Collier analyze enough examples to evolve a procedure for deciding which of two variants is the correction and which the original, or on what authority the revisions were
made. He fails, in short, to develop a cogent rationale for treating press-variants.

This is the besetting sin of Collier's edition as a whole: his utter inability to arrange facts into a meaningful pattern. For problems that would yield to diligence and patient sifting of evidence, Collier had a flair: thus he achieves a very substantial degree of success in determining which quarto, if any, a given folio play was printed from, for he was able to trace significant errors from one text to another. But problems whose solutions demanded the interpretation and synthesis of evidence left him stranded. Thus he was helpless even to approach the question of which text, quarto or folio, preserved the closest association with Shakespeare's manuscript. Knight's questing intellect sent him in search of a principle, and he found one in his absolute trust in the first folio. Collier's caution—in fact his refusal to juxtapose or otherwise manipulate the facts—forced him back upon his own taste at every textual turn.

The interest of the prospectus does not end with Collier's discovery of press variants, for, in the absence of a textual introduction to his edition, the Reasons is his only statement of editorial policy before the period of the Perkins Folio. The policy outlined is one of strict adherence to the old copies. This is, of course, the same
policy advocated by every editor of Shakespeare from Pope on, but Collier meant it in a way which would have seemed overzealous even to Capell and Malone—the same editors who had been thoroughly ridiculed by Steevens for their conservatism. Collier professes no allegiance to particular early texts—it must not be thought that he championed the quartos as against Knight's support of the Folio—but adheres with dogged persistence to the primary texts as a group. In his outline of editorial resources, a significant omission is any discussion of earlier editors. Aside from some faint praise for Knight, and a curt dismissal of the value of previous collations, Collier simply abolishes the history of Shakespearean textual criticism from consideration. His resources, thus, do not include the work of his predecessors. He will rely instead on the old copies, on the manuscript emendations in the Duke of Devonshire's first folio, on certain manuscript commonplace books—presumably containing authentic playhouse variants, and on the second folio. Of this last he notes:

Although . . . it is not to be considered a decisive authority . . . it is by no means to be so slightly treated as Malone was disposed to do, in opposition to Steevens: Steevens was certainly willing to rely too much upon it; but although it is not uniformly well corrected, and although a few of the plays appear to have entirely escaped attention, it is indisputable that it was not a mere reprint, left to the mercy of compositors, but that some editorial care was exercised in the production of considerable portions of it. Its
changes are nevertheless not to be invariably adopted; and although the supervisor of it might possibly have resorted to then existing manuscripts, I do not think it probable that he did so (Reasons, pp. 19-20).

(This is, by the way, a representative sample of Collier's prose, and it reveals much about his approach to the text. His edition, like his prose, is characterized by an inability to come straight to the point, and by a refusal to affirm or deny any proposition in unequivocal language.)

A comparison of the editorial techniques of Knight and Collier reveals that each has characteristic excellences and defects. Knight's have already been discussed; his principled reliance on the first folio; the accessibility of his commentary; the inventiveness of his reconstruction of the descent of the text, together with his occasional waywardness of interpretation and illustration, and his lapses of scholarship. Collier was probably the best prepared editor up till his time: in respect of black-letter learning he stands as far above Knight as Theobald did above Pope—and this in an age with a much more vigorous antiquarian tradition. Yet Collier makes surprisingly little use of his lore. The format he chose for his edition did not, it is true, encourage promiscuous illustration the way Knight's did, but even within this format, Collier could easily have provided more information. Collier's reticence in this area is both a strength
and a weakness, for though it tended to allow the text to stand forth, the fact remains that few men who have undertaken an edition of Shakespeare could have been better qualified to produce a full-scale antiquarian commentary; the age has now passed when such a commentary could be considered appropriate in an edition. Collier's chief editorial virtue--his fidelity to the old texts--is characteristic as it represents his caution and his dislike of decisions. In fact it is this desire for certainty and a corresponding anxiety when forced to choose between alternatives that make his notes so exasperating and irritating. Their tone is either dogmatically confident or helplessly indecisive, and in neither instance does he provide the reader with the evidence on which he bases his decisions.

This consideration suggests Collier's chief weakness as an editor: his wholly unprincipled eclecticism. Although he accepts few readings into the text which are not warranted by the quartos or folio, he offers no justification for his choices between the readings of the early texts. Thus, though his willingness to accept good readings from any text with a claim to authority should have enabled him to display more editorial flexibility than Knight, in fact he is at all points thrown back on his taste. This editorial technique also makes his edition both
difficult to evaluate and dull to analyze: all one has
to work with is a series of choices, and one rarely even
knows Collier's reason for making the choices. The task
is dull as driving through a desert is dull; Collier's
landscape is all but featureless except for the three
or four notes on each page informing us that this or that
reading is drawn from this or that quarto or folio.

The matter is not improved by the style of Collier's
notes. The absence of a system of sigla, together with
the lack of a firm copy text means that his notes have
no consistent point of view. At times they are so garbled
as to be virtually indecipherable:

as by the same co-mart
And carriage of the article design'd
The folio, 1623, has cov'nant and design for
"co-mart" and "designed." The latter improvement
was not made till the folio, 1632. The quartos
have "co-mart."

So you must take your husbands, i.e. for better
for worse. The Quarto, 1604, &c. and the folios,
have mistake for "must take," which last is a
reading suggested by Theobald. It is authorized
by the quarto, 1603, where it stands, "So you
must take your husband."

and Master the devil; Master is the reading of
the undated quarto, of the quarto, 1611, and of
that of 1637, so that we need not resort to any
conjectural emendation such as Malone introduced.

(This last must be followed up: Q2Q3 read "And either
the devil;" Q4 1611 reads "And Maister the devil;" Q5
n.d. and Q1676 read "And master the devil," a reading
followed only by Rowe and Knight before Collier. Pope has one emendation, Capell a second, Malone a third, and over two dozen others are recapitulated by Furness. The enitre point of the note is to have a slap at Malone, and we are not even told what the slap is for.

At other times the notes are tendentious without supplying the grounds for their judgments—indeed, implying that the judgments are simply observations of accepted facts. The notes which follow are drawn from four consecutive pages in King Lear, and are among the seventeen notes on those pages:

In all the folios this speech is mistakenly assigned to Cordelia. The quartos have it rightly.

This is the better reading of the folio: the quartos have "Cover'd with our curse."

The folio, less forcibly, "The best, the dearest;"

So the quartos. The folio, erroneously, "will in­ tend." In the next line it is probably right in changing may know of the quartos to "make known."

The quartos, unnecessarily, "is it no more but this?"

So the quartos, (excepting that "cover" by a very common error, is misprinted covers) correctly; and the folio, corruptly, "at last with shame derides" (VII, 263-66).

And at still other times, they are merely otiose. One is tested when he comes across a note like this:

By letters conjuring / All the quartos have congruing. The same word occurs in the quartos of Henry V which
the folio there alters to *conceiving*. The text of the folio seems preferable, although the quartos may be right.

or like this:

> Which bewept to the grave did not go / The quarto 1603, and the folio have "grave," the other quartos ground; but all authorities read "did not go," which may possibly be so.

One feels the editor must be sitting on some reasons for believing the rejected reading may deserve a place in the text. But when the device is repeated over and over, in play after play, it becomes obvious that it is merely formulaic—and the suspicion is aroused that the tendentious notes are likewise written to a formula. Collier is not sitting on anything; he is simply adding the spice of variety to his otherwise maddeningly lifeless register of textual variants.

For all this it must not be thought that Collier's edition was not a major achievement. It is easy to concur with the judgment of the Athenaeum reviewer that between the editions of Knight and Collier,

> it would be impossible to determine . . . in behalf of either, without possessing a Shakespeare approaching as nearly to perfection as his text is capable of being brought by the mere exertion of skill and labour in the collation of old editions. In this respect, we are inclined to believe that the race of commentators upon our illustrious bard is likely
to close with the able editions of the works before us. . . . it will be long, in our opinion, ere learning will collect sufficient additional materials to disturb the public repose and satisfaction in the labours of Messers Knight and Collier.

What Collier—along with Knight—had done was to advance textual criticism to a point where it was now possible only for a professional to undertake an edition of Shakespeare. And in fact it was to be a full fifteen years before a rival worthy of them was to arise.

Collier's chief editorial virtues are two: his patient exploration of the textual history of each play, and his firm resolve to adhere to the old copies in all but the most hopeless cases. His judgments about the descent of the text are startlingly perspicacious when we consider how little he had to work with in the way of scholarly aids.

His theory of the bad quartos too is revolutionary for its time, and is forthrightly stated, though never in one place. On Hamlet:

As an accurate reprint was made in 1825 of "The tragical Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke," 1603, it will be unnecessary to go in detail into proofs to establish as we could do without much difficulty, the following points:—1. That great part of the play, as it there stands, was taken down in short-hand. 2. That where mechanical skill failed the short-hand writer, he either filled up the blanks from memory, or employed an inferior writer to assist him. 3. That although some of the scenes were carelessly transposed, and others entirely omitted in the
edition of 1603, the drama, as it was acted while the short-hand writer was employed in taking it down, was, in all its main features, the same as the more perfect copy of the tragedy printed with the date of 1604.

On Henry V, Merry Wives of Windsor, and Romeo and Juliet Collier speaks similar good sense, though he does admit a strong suspicion that the plays may have been revised by Shakespeare subsequent to their unauthorized appearance in quarto. (However, on one of the most convincing pieces of evidence that the first quarto of Henry V is an early version—the absence of the choruses—Collier makes the interesting suggestion that their absence may be accounted for by the difficulty of transcribing such long speeches as they were being delivered.)

That these views were far from orthodox in his time is evident from the incredulous tone of William Spalding in his generally excellent article on the editions of Knight and Collier (Edinburgh Review 81 (1845) 329-384).

We understand Collier to maintain some such theory as the following:—That in each of the four instances the early and incomplete edition is, in substance, nothing else than an imperfect copy of the very same play which appears in the later and complete edition; that the discrepancies between the two editions are sufficiently accounted for by the imperfections of the sources from which the copy for the earlier edition was derived; and that these discrepancies do not, in any of the four instances, entitle us to infer the play to have been, when the copy was taken
for the earlier edition, materially different from what it was when the copy was taken for the later.

... After making the fullest allowance for all the discrepancies which can be accounted for by the most unfavorable theory as to the origin of the quartos, we must say we are quite satisfied that in each of the cases, the copy for the first quarto had been procured from a work differing most materially from that which was copied for the later edition. Indeed, so clear does the internal evidence seem, we cannot help being surprised that its force is resisted.

Collier's suggestion that the short-hand account may have been eked out from memory, or with the help of a hack versifier, is recorded in incredulous italics. Spalding harrumphs,

Upon this conjecture we make but two remarks. ... This opinion is a remarkable example of the evil effects produced by pertinacity of adherence to a pre-conceived opinion.

Spalding does, however, have one perfectly valid point to make in this connection: as usual Collier has failed to provide even the slightest scrap of confirmatory evidence for his controversial thesis.

In his willingness to depart from the received text to restore the early readings, Collier also stands—with Knight—in strong opposition to the prevailing trends of his time. In some respects he is more conservative than modern editors in his choice of readings, as a comparison of the following list with the major editions in print will make clear. It will be most convenient to
present a simple list of representative restorations effected by Collier, together with some indication of how original Collier was in choosing them.

In few, they hurried us aboard a bark, Bore us some leagues to sea, where they prepared A rotten carcass of a butt, not rigg'd, Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats
Instinctively have quit it:

butt) FF1-3, Knight, Collier, but) F4. boat) Rowe etc. have) FF, Collier. had) Rowe etc.

Full of straying shapes, straying) QFF, Rowe-Malone. Collier strange) Capell, etc.

like to a silver bow Now bent in heaven Now QFF Collier. New bent) Rowe, etc.

Or dedicate his beauty to the same same) QqFF, Rowe, Pope, Malone, Collier. sun) Theobald, etc.

Have you so slander any moment leisure moment) Qq2,3, Rowe, Collier. moments) Qq4,5, moment's) Pope, etc.

I sent thee sixpence for thy lemon. lemon) Ff, Rowe, Pope, Johnson, Collier. leman) Theobald, etc.

No, faith, lords and great men will not let me;
If I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't; and loads too,
on't, and loads too) Q2, Collier. on'E and Ladies too) Q1, Jennings. on'T; nay the ladies too), Pope-Malone, etc. omitted, FF, Rowe.

Since I have referred to the "prevailing trend of his time" perhaps it is well here to glance at an exemplar of that trend. Alexander Dyce is generally con-
sidered to be the outstanding editor of the English classics in the 1830's and '40's: his editions were for long standard, and some of them (his 1843 Skelton, for example) have yet to be superseded. The story of his troubled relations with Collier is a tangled one, and has yet to be fully told.* But whatever the impetus, his response

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*The story may warrant a brief digression here, however. The Dyce-Collier feud has been discussed in recent years by S. Schoenbaum (Shakespeare's Lives, 1970) and Richard Schrader (The Reminiscences of Alexander Dyce, 1972). Schoenbaum suggests that the motive force behind Dyce's disaffection from Collier may have been "principle" (p.358), and Mr. Schrader leads us to a similar conclusion. He tells us that Dyce's 1844 Remarks on Mr. J.P. Collier's and Mr. C.Knight's editions of Shakespeare were "justly critical" (p.17), and goes on to say that Dyce's real outburst of anger at Collier did not come until 1853: "But everything was in the open by the time Dyce published A Few Notes on Shakespeare . . . (London, 1853). What must have particularly irked Dyce was that he and several other scholars had previously accepted and used Collier's fraudulent material without question." p.18 In fact, however, the Remarks was savagely critical of Collier's competence as an editor, as will appear from my text. The Few Notes were not nearly so denunciatory as the earlier work, and only about one-quarter of the book is devoted to the Perkins folio. Though some of the emendations in it are termed "wanton" and "tasteless" (and others are admitted to be self-evident improvements) nowhere does Dyce suggest that they are fabrications. In 1853 the emendations, though controversial, were being widely hailed or else, when rejected, being rejected as the conjectural blunders of a seventeenth-century scholiast. Not only was the taint of forgery far from everyone's mind: hardly any of the reviewers even recognized the issue of their authority as being crucial. Or rather, their authority (derivation from authoritative sources) along with their genuineness (origin in the seventeenth century) was felt to be guaranteed by their sheer number and minuteness. So thorough was public confidence in the genuineness of the Perkins folio that the Edinburgh Review's correspondent felt free to exaggerate the degree of incredibility
to the appearance of Collier's edition was his Remarks on Mr. J.P. Collier's and Mr. C. Knight's Editions of Shakespeare (London, 1844). The book is a remarkable document which deserves to be examined with some care in attaching to the story of its recovery: "If we were told by some scholiast of ancient days, that Aristarchus the critic, while wandering in the market-place of Alexandria with his head full of Homer, had purchased a bargain of figs, and, on returning home, found them wrapt up in a papyrus containing the genuine text of the poet, we should smile at the simplicity of the myth; and yet the romance of Mr. Collier's discovery is almost as marvelous" (CIII 1856 360).

Only one voice, that of the 80-year-old Singer, had been raised against the authenticity of the Perkins emendations, and from Singer's charges the critics averted their eyes with embarrassment--for Singer. Not until 1859 did a public controversy arise over the emendations. Neither Schoenbaum nor Schrader makes any reference to Collier's privately printed "Letter to the Rev. Alexander Dyce: with a few notes upon his edition of 'The Woman's Prize'" (London, 1845). Schoenbaum relies on diary entries of 1876, Schrader on Collier's Triology (1874) for Collier's version of his estrangement from Dyce. But the 1845 letter corroborates this version in advance, as it were: "It is now seventeen years since first, at your own instance, you were introduced to me; it is two years since we exchanged a word, excepting at councils of the Shakespeare Society; and a year since, notwithstanding our long and almost brotherly intimacy, you passed me in the streets without recognition" (p.3). Collier goes on to provide a circumstantial account of the events leading up to this coldness, charging it to Dyce's irritation that he had undertaken an edition of Shakespeare before Dyce. Considering that Collier maintained this story for over thirty years, and in the absence of any counter-statement from Dyce, we may be justified in crediting it. Nonetheless one can never receive Collier's own report about himself with easy confidence. Perhaps Prof. Dewey Ganzel's forthcoming biography of Collier will resolve the ambiguities.
but for now it will suffice to look at a few of his comments on Collier's restorations.

**Tmp I.2.**
"carcass of a butt" (see above)
A BUTT . . . big enough to contain, not only Prospero and his infant daughter, but "food," "fresh water," "rich garments, linens, stuffs, and necessaries," and several "volumes" from Prospero's library!!--it must have been the Great Tun of Heidelberg, borrowed for the occasion (p.3).

**H5 I.2.**
"And all our vineyards, fallows, meads, and hedges, Defective in their natures, grow to wilderness."
According to the monstrous reading and punctuation which are here brought back into the text, Burgundy first dwells on the wretched state of the country,--of its vines, hedges, fallow leas, and meads,--and then, AS IF HE HAD NEVER EVEN MENTIONED THEM, adds;
"And all our vineyards, fallows, meads, and hedges, Defective in their nature, grow to wilderness."!!!(p.122).

**Mac I.3.**
Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor; or not Those in commission yet return'd?
Away with this restoration! Could any boarding-school girl read over the speech of Duncan, and not immediately perceive from the arrangement of the words that "or" is a misprint for "are"? (p.189).

**Ham I.3.**
Have you so slander any moment leisure
It is absolutely necessary to print "moment's."
Would Shakespeare have employed such a ridiculous inversion, when "leisure moment" suited the metre as well? (p.209).

**Ant III.9.**
The full supremacy thou knew'st
Read, with the other modern editors, "Thy."
In such a case as this, the authority of the old eds. is nothing (p.247: emphasis in the original).
Perhaps Collier's daring can best be appreciated in the light of comments like these.

But along with this conservatism--perhaps even a corollary to it--there is a rather churlish refusal to acknowledge the contribution of the earlier editors. Collier, though he doesn't actively war with them, does manage to slight them whenever he can. He will generally, when he accepts a standard emendation, credit it in a brief note, but often so offhandedly ("The obvious correction was made by Theobald," "The error was rectified by Pope") as to suggest that only his finicky scrupulosity has urged him to include this information. The point can be illustrated by referring to the list (above, pp.37-39) of some of Theobald's most striking emendations. Of the sixteen suggestions presented there, Collier introduces four into his text without any comment ("Ne'er lust-wearied," "You shall find me yare," "be all ways away," and "all these five the sense")). Three are routinely credited to Theobald ("bisson", "prate," and "So is Alcides beaten by his page"), and two are called "happy" ("An autumn 'twas," and "curl by nature"). "Dedicate his beauty to the sun" is rejected by Collier, with no mention of the conjecture, while "He shent for "sent" our messenger" is rejected in favor of the old reading, but with a subterfuge: Collier inserts an unannounced
emendation of his own, making the text read "We sent our messenger." (The crowning irony, in this instance, is that Theobald himself had originally suggested "we sent" in a letter to Warburton Nichols, II, 536.) Two are credited to Theobald with cavils that withdraw the credit from Theobald:

lackeying is Theobald's change for lacking of the old copies, and not for lashing as he erroneously asserts; no folio has lashing. The corruption . . . was very easy.

little O' the earth) This is substantially Theobald's amendment, the Folios reading, The little o' th'earth, and he altering it to The little O o' th'earth. There seems no necessity to add to the text, especially as The little o' th'earth may, after all, be the true reading.

And then there is another technique, one which comes very close to dishonesty. It is the trick, not unknown to the eighteenth-century editors, of appropriating another editor's emendation without attribution, and making it one's own by advancing new support for it. Collier does this, for example, with the "weird sisters" in Macbeth:

All authorities agree that "weird" (spelt weyward in the folio, 1623) is of Saxon origin, viz. from wyrd, which has the same meaning as the Latin fatum; "weird" is therefore fatal. In the ballad of "The Birth of St. George," in Percy's "Reliques," vol. iii. p. 275, edit. 1812, we meet with the expression of "The weird lady of the woods;" and the same word occurs twice in the old Scottish drama of "Philotus," printed in 1603 and 1612, and reprinted in 1835 . . . etc.
Similarly with "scotch'd the snake" (for "scorch'd"):

i.e., Wounded it. This word is best illustrated by a passage in "Coriolanus,"
"He scotched him and notched him like a carbonado."

And with Hamlet's "Eisil:" Collier manages to ignore Theobald's suggestion (which makes the passage easily comprehensible) while offering the reader no help with the difficult reading he allows to remain:

Woul't drink up Esill?) We print this word "Esill," as it stands in the quarto, 1604, &c. There is no doubt that eyesel is the old word for vinegar, although there is considerable doubt whether that be meant here. Some of the commentators suppose Hamlet to challenge Laertes to drink up the river Ysell, or Eisell, and Sir T. Hanmer went so far as to change it to Nile. The quarto, 1603, affords us no aid here, for it reads, "Wilt drink up vessels?"

Another technique of Collier's for minimizing the contribution of earlier editors is to call attention to blunders in the quartos and folios without providing any indication that these blunders were long since set right. G.H. Lewes, in his review of Knight's and Collier's editions, is properly severe:

So obvious and so unimportant a typographical error needs in itself no note. The editor wherefore who looked only to his function would silently correct the error; we should regard his mention of it as an impertinence. But an editor who was only actuated by devout reverence might deem this variation between two copies not altogether unimportant. Mr. Collier has accordingly made us acquainted with the fact of
the variation: and we applaud his plodding diligence dictated by profound homage. We forgive the tediousness for the sake of the implied accuracy of collation. Unfortunately this correction of the first folio, so scrupulously noted, has also been made by all the modern editors. Mr Collier says not a word of this... We had given him the credit of the correction, as of many similar corrections, till our suspicions being roused, we consulted the modern editions and found that they all contained these corrections, but without triumphant registration... If this be reverence, then is reverence a very tiresome and not very honest quality. The truth is that so far from reverence being the motive to this careful tediousness, it is a desire to impress the world with a sense of unwearied diligence, and lynx-eyed accuracy (Westminster Review 43 (1845)47-48).

Along with this general attempt to exaggerate his own importance in the history of Shakespearean editing, there is a specific enmity towards Malone. Schoenbaum has noted as an element of Collier's forgeries that they were an attempt to outdo Malone as a scholar. A few examples may suffice to illustrate the sort of antics Collier was willing to perform to make Malone appear silly as an editor:

As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood, Disasters in the sun;) There is evidently some corruption here, which it is perhaps impossible now to set right. Malone imagined that a line had been accidentally omitted (Collier VII,200).

In fact, Rowe re-wrote these lines, in which he was followed by all the eighteenth-century editors. It was Jennens who first suggested that a line had been dropped, and Hunter, in the very year Collier's Hamlet volume appeared, suggested a line to fill the presumed gap.
glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue) Malone makes a difficulty of nothing, as if glass-gazing did not mean gazing in a glass, with reference to Oswald's vanity and conceit (Collier VII,396).

When Edgar, in the guise of Tom o' Bedlam, says, "Poor Tom, thy horn is dry," Collier uncharacteristically appends a long antiquarian note, drawn, with acknowledgement, from Malone. The sole purpose of the long note is to call attention to the fact that Malone mistakenly transcribes the title of the pamphlet he is quoting, "Coach and Sedan pleasantly disputing," instead of "A pleasant dispute between Coach and Sedan." And recall Collier's note above, p.215, on "Master the devil."

A minor peculiarity of the edition is the frequency with which words are misprinted--a frequency that is particularly damaging to Collier's pose of omniscience. A few of the misprints pointed out by Dyce:

I am yours with all (for "withal")
You bid me ("me")
bodily creation ("bodiless")
goodness growing to a pleurisy ("plurisy" i.e. overabundance)
I'll go bed at noon ("go to bed")
This is better than the man he slew ("This man is better")

But the chief peculiarity of the edition is its failure to define its audience. The text is essentially a clear one, taking up all of each page except for the
three or four laconic notes of variant readings. The introductions are brief. In appearance then the edition seems to be directed at lovers of Shakespeare rather than at scholars. The luxuriant foliage of antiquarianism and controversy, the legacy of the eighteenth century, is not simply trimmed, but lopped off altogether. Yet it would have to be an extremely well prepared general reader; the inadequacy of Collier's glosses is almost shocking. To take examples only from King Lear, "sectary astronomical" is unglossed; "Not in this land shall he remain uncaught; and found--dispatch" is unexplained; Kent's outburst against Oswald, containing such phrases as "three-suited, hundred-pound . . . knave, one-trunk-inheriting slave . . . I'll make a sop o'th'moonshine of you" draws only the above-quoted sneer at Malone; and such difficult speeches as Kent's "Nothing almost sees miracles but misery," Edgar's "Yet better thus and known to be contemn'd," and Lear's "Behold yond simpring dame, whose face between her forks presageth snow," are offered with no comment beyond the register of variants. Yet Collier is capable of glossing Hamlet's, "By heaven I'll make a ghost of him that lets me," with the ineffable comment:

i.e. that hinders or prevents me. See Vol. vi. p. 409. The word hardly requires a note (VII, 221).
Collier's edition is the acting out of a fantasy of editing Shakespeare, and its true audience is Collier himself. What I mean by this may be made clear by an analogy. Imagine a person who had created a world inside his mind--the way a novelist does, but without the element of novelistic control: the way we did as children. Such a person would create all the inhabitants of this world, and control all its events. He would stand in relation to it as a god, able to create or destroy at pleasure, and if he imagined himself as a part of it, or identified himself with one of its members, his achievements would be the wonder of the world. This, it seems to me, is what Collier did in the little world of Shakespearean scholarship. The notes sneering at previous editors are jokes so private that he doesn't even bother to provide the punchlines. The absence of a glossary, the exaggeration of the labor expended, the total reliance on personal taste, the dependence on sources unavailable to others, the refusal to credit earlier editors, the magnification of this edition's importance—all are of a piece, all go into the creation of Collier's solitary world of scholarship. I don't think it is too much to suggest that a similar impulse lay behind his forgeries: that they represented an attempt to document his private world, or perhaps to create a link between that world
and the world of "reality." Such a link would enable Collier to be as dominant in the real world as he was in his fantasies. In fact it seems to me that the forgeries can only be understood in this way. For with them Collier did not merely elevate himself to the first rank of Shakespeare scholars of his time: by implying that the emendations of the Perkins folio were protected by copyright he made Shakespeare his private property; by establishing his prior claim to most of the great emendations of the past he abolished the accepted history of Shakespearean textual criticism; and by establishing a new authority which gave answers to so many of the vexed problems of the text, he obviated all future textual study. Ultimately, by altering the texture of Shakespeare's plays so thoroughly, he created a new Shakespeare all his own.
CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION: THE COLLIER CONTROVERSY

With the editions of Knight and John Payne Collier in the early 1840's we have turned a corner in Shakespearean textual criticism. Fifty years have elapsed since the edition of Malone, twenty since the Variorum of 1821; in twenty years the Cambridge Shakespeare will appear, and in a little more than fifty, Pollard, Greg, and McKerrow will be founding the new bibliography. In many ways the advances claimed by the bibliographical approach of our own time over the time of Collier and Knight are no more significant than Collier's and Knight's advances over the time of Capell and Malone. It would require little effort to show, for example, that the text of Shakespeare presented by the nineteenth-century editors is far closer to that of our own day than it is to that of the eighteenth century. A mere glance at the page convinces us at once that the concept of an edition was, for the nineteenth-century editors, much closer to our own than to that of the eighteenth-century. In substantive readings too Collier and Knight have taken the crucial step of meaning what they say about fidelity to the
text, and thus, again, aligning themselves with—and in part creating—the modern canons of textual responsibility. We can find in Malone, Capell, and Steevens the seeds of the new bibliography—essentially an attitude towards the history of the text. But it is to Knight we must look for the discovery and first analysis—however rudimentary—of press variants, and for the first account of what we now call the "bad quartos" which manages to account for the evidence. And it is to both these editors we must look for a fidelity to the text which is more than just an announcement of good intentions. How decisively they broke with the editorial tradition of their time is evident from both the gratitude and grumbling of the reviewers. Though their editions were received with respect, and generally agreed to be the best that had yet appeared, the reviewers could not resist chiding the two editors for their adherence to the "nonsense" of the early editions, in preference to the universally received emendations of the eighteenth century.

I would identify the issue between Knight and Collier, on the one hand, and the reviewers, on the other, as a conflict between textual conservatism and textual atavism. The conservatives were the editors who agreed with Johnson that "they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right than we who read
it only by imagination." The atavists were those who longed—not for the readings of the folios and quartos—for the "good old" text, containing the readings they learned as children. I hope this does not sound like name-calling; textual atavism need not be an irresponsible attitude and, as I hope I have shown in my discussion of Stæevens, reveals no less love for Shakespeare than does conservatism. The irony implicit in this schematization is that the editors and scholars I am terming atavistic in fact saw their conservative brethren as the true primitives. The tipoff that an atavistic approach is being used is the presence of such phrases as "a superstitious reverence for the old copies" or "a pertinacious adherence to the blunders of the early editions" to characterize the conservative editors: the accusation, in other words, that conservatism is identical with atavism. The ruling creed of the conservatives on the other hand is most explicitly rendered by Halliwell: no emendation will be acceptable, he says, if either "good sense can satisfactorily be made of the passage as it stands in the original, even though the correction may appear to give greater force or harmony to the passage," or if "a similar turn of language can be produced in any contemporary writer." In its most basic form the conflict between conservatism and atavism is present throughout the history of
Shakespearean editing—where we see a perpetual struggle between the desire to recover precisely what Shakespeare wrote and the desire to have Shakespeare in a readable form. Of course this conflict is not strictly a matter of editor versus editor; it is a tension present within every editor even to the present day.

This conflict has affected every aspect of editing Shakespeare, including the very conception of the editor's function. To Rowe, Pope and Theobald, the editor was one who took the surviving fragments of Shakespeare and worked them into readable form. The liberties they took were, they felt, negligible when compared with the corruption of the originals. For the editors of the Johnson tradition, editorship was a matter of accumulating and presenting huge piles of literary material which would illustrate the text and, in the case of individual readings, vindicate the text or overthrow it. For Knight the editor was the guardian of the text— one who made sure that there would always be an edition of Shakespeare which would accurately reflect what Shakespeare had written. As Knight put it, "If . . . the first folio had been reprinted with a literal attention to punctuation even, up to the present hour we should have had a better copy than England possesses in a hundred shapes." This attitude leads
directly to the great effort of the Cambridge editors to establish the precise progress of the editorial tradition.

There is in Collier, for all his conservatism in the matter of readings, a noticeable tendency towards atavism. It appears most clearly in his abandoned eclecticism where he reveals that his idea of editorial responsibility is that the editor must simply and quite bluntly make a choice whenever a variant is found and consider the matter settled. This freedom from any objective standard, this demand that the public accept the editor's taste as the final arbiter of readings, though it was capable of co-existing with the most rigorous self-denial in the matter of editorial emendation of the text, was also perfectly consistent with an attempt to rewrite Shakespeare completely.

2. The Perkins Folio

Had events fallen out in the usual way, the years following the appearance of Knight's and Collier's editions would have seen a series of similar editions and of scholarly books feeding and supporting those editions. In Shakespearean textual studies, as in most other fields of study where knowledge is cumulative, periods of intense originality alternate with periods of consolidation. The editors who followed Johnson, for example, developed
the techniques he had set forth, and adhered to the conception of editor which he had established. By the time of Steevens, as I have shown, these techniques and this conception had become obsolete, and the Variorum of 1821, in many ways the culmination of eighteenth-century editing, also represented its last expiring cry.

It was the achievement of the first generation of nineteenth-century editors to forge a new conception of the task of the editor and of the nature of an edition. Singer led the way with curtailed notes free from controversy. It was Knight and Collier, however, who embodied the new century's advances in textual studies. Alexander Dyce, Joseph Hunter, J.O. Halliwell, and the other founders of the Shakespeare Society were a group of dedicated and accomplished scholars and antiquarians, worthy to be placed alongside Steevens, Malone, Farmer, Ritson, and Isaac Reed. As the earlier group had ransacked the pages of the Elizabethan dramatists and pamphleteers for materials to illustrate the text of Shakespeare, the later group devoted itself to a program of "publication or re-publication of works connected with and illustrative of the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries; and of the rise and progress of the English stage and English dramatic poetry, prior to the suppression of theatrical performances in 1647."^2

But this peaceful productivity was not to continue
for long. In 1852 Collier shocked the world of Shakespeare studies by producing a copy of the second folio which contained, "manuscript alterations of the text . . . in an old handwriting--probably not of a later date than the Protectorate." In the ensuing controversy Collier quite clearly tied his reputation as an editor to the acceptance of a large portion of the emendations. Although enthusiasm for them was generally high among the literary community at large, as reflected in the cordial reception they were granted in the periodicals, no Shakespeare scholar, other than Collier himself cared to become identified with them. Singer and Knight repudiated them at once, Dyce labelled most of them "tasteless and wanton," and Halliwell subjected them to a withering analysis, while discharging his darker suspicions in a flippant anonymous pamphlet.

Though a full-scale treatment of "The Collier Controversy" would be out of place here, and could not in any case be compressed into a chapter, it can be considered briefly and appropriately as a conclusion to the present study. For the generation of editors who grew up under the Variorum 1821 the central event was the "finding" of the Perkins folio, and the business of working out an appropriate response to it. All of them considered it very deeply, and all responded to it in
print. It is perhaps ironic—or it is perhaps significant—that all but one of them elected to take no part in the "exposure" of Collier. This is one reason I feel it is necessary to treat the matter here: I cannot say, as can Giles Dawson, "Since all this is readily available in Sir George Warner's admirable account in The Dictionary of National Biography and all the details may be read in Ingleby's Complete View, I may perhaps be excused for skipping the background matter in the interests of brevity ("John Payne Collier's Great Forgery" SB 26 (1973) 1-26). From the point of view of textual criticism the facts are not readily available from Ingleby or elsewhere. Though Ingleby's Complete View is, in many ways, an enduring contribution to knowledge, it is also, inescapably, itself a document in the Collier controversy. Though S. Schoenbaum makes a brief for it as conclusive, and though Dawson seems, also, to consider it the final work, such is not the case, especially insofar as the Collier controversy is a textual matter—which is to say, most of the way. I will give one simple example of this. Ingleby, along with several of the controversialists against Collier, made a great deal of the search for a "test word"—i.e. a word which appeared in the Perkins folio which was demonstrably not a part of the English language at the time the supposed "old corrector" wrote his emendations.
Singer began it, it was continued by A.E.Brae, and pursued with characteristic relentlessness by Ingleby. But, even leaving aside the obvious difficulty of proving a negative, there remains the fact that the mid-nineteenth-century scholars were working without either a reliable historical dictionary of English, or a reliable catalogue of all surviving literature of the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries.

Yet, even beyond this, such a thing as a "test word" is an ignis fatuus: unless one could find the word being consciously introduced into the language, perhaps in response to a dateable event or discovery, there is simply no case to be made. Shakespeare himself introduced hundreds of words into the language without fanfare, many of them hapax legomena, and many which took root. Representatives of either group could have been used to prove that Shakespeare "could not" have written them, since they were not then current. Still further, the acrobatics required of Ingleby and the others to demonstrate that the usages they stigmatised were, in fact, not in the language (for indeed, no word, as such, was found to be inadmissible–only particular significations of acknowledged words) reveal the weakness of the argument. (It might be added that the very emphasis with which the futile search for a test-word is pressed suggests that the
anti-Collier case as a whole may not rest on the unshakeable foundations often assumed.)

In any case, the strictly textual side of the controversy is not responsibly presented in Ingleby or in any other easily available source; it is as much a proper object of research as, let us say, Knight's textual theory. The separate responses of Singer, Halliwell, Dyce, and Richard Grant White are scattered in as many editions, pamphlets, and volumes.

I wish in concluding this dissertation to explore just one aspect of the editorial or textual side of the Collier controversy: the reasons advanced for either accepting or rejecting the emendations of the Perkins Folio. If this were a discussion of the essential nature of the Collier controversy, such an emphasis would be misleading since so much more was involved. However, as a conclusion to the present dissertation such an analysis may be deemed acceptable, because it will give us a test-case from which will emerge a clear picture of the state of textual reasoning in the early 1850's.

In his first announcement of the find Collier's enthusiasm was guarded. He notes, referring to his own edition of 1844, "I should unquestionably have made great use of it in the notes; and in particular instances the changes appear to me not merely so plausible, but so
self-evident, that, in spite of the principle I adopted of a close adherence to the old printed copies, I cannot help thinking that I should have availed myself of a few of these manuscript alterations in the text" (Athenaeum #1266, 31 Jan, 1852, p.142). In his second communication, emboldened perhaps by the immediate response to his first, Collier takes a stronger stand; though "It is to me yet quite uncertain what character they really deserve," he now "cannot avoid thinking that this discovery must hereafter occasion very considerable changes in the received text of Shakespeare's Plays" (Ibid, p.171).

The theoretical questions raised by the work of the "Old Corrector" (as Collier occasionally called him, and as Dyce soon officially dubbed him) did not emerge clearly until the publication, near the end of 1852, of Notes and Emendations to the text of Shakespeare's plays from early manuscript corrections in a copy of the folio, 1632 in the possession of J. Payne Collier. As was his habit, Collier nowhere presented a coherent rationale for accepting or rejecting the emendations as a whole, and the reasons he advanced for accepting particular emendations were almost all ad hoc and added up to very little. Though Collier could not, of course, defend the emendations as his own, he did take upon himself the task of offering "the facts, arguments, or observations that
occurred to . . . him in their favour . . . when they appeared to deserve support" (Notes and Emendations, p.4). In fact, of about 1500 alterations presented in the book, Collier supports more or less strongly about 95%. Only 1% earn his unqualified disapproval, while the necessity of admitting the remaining 4% to the text is queried by him. His notes of almost invariable support, however, can hardly be said to amount even to a series of reasons; they are rather designed to invest the emendations with an aura of authority.

Collier's major technique for creating this aura is one we have already met with in his work: the artful use of formulae whose cumulative effect is to deaden resistance, or to enlist assent without ever confronting possible disagreement. The formulae are usually small murmurs of approval: a reading "seems to recommend itself," or is inserted "probably on good authority," or "is quite consistent with the context," or gives us lines "restored . . . apparently to the form in which they were recited when the tragedy was acted," or "restores what we may presume to have been the original." Behind these formulae lies an attempt to persuade the reader that the mere existence of the Perkins Folio is sufficient proof of the authenticity of its emendations: "This is, of course, one of those cases in which either reading may
be right: if we prefer the reading of the Perkins Folio it is mainly because the old corrector had some grounds for adopting it." The ultimate effect of these formulae is to create the queasy feeling that the quartos and folios are merely guides to the text of Shakespeare, or raw materials for use in the settling of the text, rather than the texts themselves: "The following manuscript emendation . . . tends to establish that 'conclude' was the right word, and that 'include' adopted by editors from the folios the only old text was a misprint" (italics mine, Notes and Emendations, p.34). In doing this Collier was placing himself squarely in the camp of the atavists, whose language consistently implies that the early texts are to be quarried for reading.

Collier has one further non-argumentative technique of persuasion; he creates a variety of dilemmas which force the reader to choose between alternatives both of which support the emendation. The neatest of these, though also the easiest to evade, is set in these terms: "It seems impossible to doubt the genuineness of this insertion unless we go to the length of pronouncing it not only an invention, but an invention of the utmost ingenuity; for while it renders perfect the deficient sense, it shows at once what caused the error" (Notes and Emendations, p.18). The same dilemma appears
in a more subtle form as justification for a particularly vile rhyme he tries to foist into the text: "Here again, who is to determine whether the preceding *sic* emendation were derived from some good authority, or whether it was only a lucky guess on the part of the individual through whose hands this copy of the folio 1632 passed? Certain it is that not one of the many editors of Shakespeare were ever so fortunate as to stumble upon the meaning, which is thus rendered obvious, while at the same time, the intended rhyme is preserved."

And in general, no matter what appears in the margin of the Perkins Folio, Collier gives it a reading which supports its claim to be received into the text of Shakespeare: "... X and Y are slight changes but editors have been hitherto unwilling to make them in the face of the old impressions." "Words would scarcely have been inserted in this way without some adequate warrant in the possession of the corrector." Even the triviality of some of the emendations is taken as strengthening their claim: one is, "a change of the received text which the old corrector would, perhaps, not have thought it necessary to make had it not accorded with some other than the usual authorities." The very absence of an emendation confirms the annotator's responsibility: "Hitherto the quartos and folios have been
our best and safest guides; but it is notorious that in many instances they must be wrong; and while, in various places, the old corrector does not attempt to set them right, probably from not possessing the means of doing so, the very fact, that he has here refrained from purely arbitrary changes, ought to give us additional confidence in those emendations he felt authorized to introduce."

Now it is to be noticed about the foregoing catalog of rationalizations that though they are naive as textual reasoning, they do touch upon responsible textual theory at some points. In particular the remark about several of the emendations, that they both mend the sense and reveal the source of the error, precisely duplicates the dicta proposed by Greg for an acceptable emendation as, "one that strikes a trained intelligence as supplying exactly the sense required by the context and which at the same time reveals to the critic the manner in which the corruption arose." The genius of Collier's forgeries was that, as a scholar he was able to accommodate his fabrications to the existing state of knowledge. So with the Perkins folio, the same theory which was "supported" by the "evidence" of the Perkins folio; or conversely, the prevailing textual theory, Collier claimed, lent additional credence to the story told by the Perkins Folio.

Ultimately, however, Collier's response to the
question, why should we consider the folio's emendations seriously, is an answer answerless. Collier treats the readings of his folio and those of the old copies with what modern-day psychiatrists would call "pathological evenhandedness." A correction in the folio, 1632, instructs us to erase 'hapless' in favour of helpless, which certainly seems the fitter epithet; but it is impossible to maintain that 'hapless' does not fit the place and might not be the poet's word." "If the text had always stood 'palated worms' and it had been proposed to change it to 'politic' worms few readers would for an instant have consented to relinquish an expression so peculiarly Shakespearian."

It is a measure of the distance which Shakespeare scholars traversed in a brief period after Collier that we cannot conceive of the Perkins Folio, seen or unseen, surviving for an hour the analysis of Pollard, Greg and McKerrow—not to mention that of any reasonably accomplished graduate student of the present day. But the merits of the Perkins Folio's emendations were seriously debated by Shakespeare scholars in Collier's time, and only disappeared completely from view—except for the few that were both good and original—after an analysis of the handwriting and the ink had proved them to be modern fabrications.
III

The first thing to notice about the responses to Collier is that most of the commentators acceded to the ground rules Collier prescribed for the ensuing discussion. Among these rules one stands out as particularly significant: "I can only expect that each suggested alteration should be judged upon its own merits." This is, finally, to throw out of court the question of their authority, since that could only be investigated on the basis of the whole body of emendations. Only two of Collier's adversaries saw this clearly, and even they, as we shall see, succumbed to the temptation to, as one reviewer put it, "... Carry on in single contests about the merits of several passages, like the battles of the Iliad." For if the question of the authority or lack of it inhering in the Perkins Folio as a whole is not settled at once, then the same arguments which would be used against a proposed conjecture could be used to support it. For example, emendations which Collier himself admits to be of indifferent quality are proposed in passages which make perfect sense as they are. By any sane theory of emendation current in Collier's time, such readings could not even be given a hearing. But if the question of the authority of the Perkins emendations is allowed to abide, Collier is able to suggest even-handedly that such
an indifferent suggestion would never have been offered by one relying on conjectures—that no mere tinker of texts would have suspected corruption beneath the surface of the text: that only a scrupulous adherence to a rival authority could have prompted the corrector to insert the change.

However it is also possible—and in one case (that of Halliwell), quite obvious—that the authority of the Perkins Folio may have been discussed so little because nobody seriously considered it worth the refuting. In one sense, it was not even there to refute; Collier never explicitly claimed that it was authoritative. He only tried, as I have shown, to get the reader to take it as such. We have, then, a range of possible attitudes: the Perkins Folio is generally authoritative (Collier); it has no actual authority but a great deal of prestige because of its age and probable origin (Dyce); it is entitled to no more or less respect than any other body of conjectural emendations (Halliwell); it is a modern forgery (Singer).

Singer saw clearly that it was impossible that the Perkins Folio should be taken seriously. His analysis was brief and devastating, and I suspect that the main reason it was not accepted as conclusive was that its implications were so disturbing to the community of scholars:
I should have thought that Mr. Collier . . . meant to mystify the Shaksperean Scaligers of this age by the publication of his volume of Notes and Emendations; but as he had formerly evinced such praiseworthy respect for the remains of our great poet, and had been such a staunch defender of the integrity of the old text, I could not bring myself to believe that he would indulge in a hoax which might lead to mischievous results. I am constrained, therefore, to imagine it possible that he has himself been made the victim of such a delusion by some "Puck of a commentator." (8)

If the enemy be within the gates, where shall we look for relief?

There was, however, an additional reason why Singer's analysis was not accepted as final. The bold dismissal just cited formed merely the preface to a book in which, one by one, the emendations of the Perkins folio were examined. From this war, conducted in single skirmishes, Singer emerged badly battered. He was, at the time, nearly eighty years old, and though his integrity and long experience as an editor would not allow him to be imposed upon, his judgment had fled. Though he got in some telling blows, he was constantly stumbling into and out of silly blunders. He seems almost, at times, a fool, and, as had been the case with Malone, the obvious ineptitude of one part of the argument served to discredit the whole of it. The response of the reviewers to Singer was almost universally one of angry repudiation of his charges. Not until the forgery was
revealed—a few years after his death—was Singer rescued from the opprobrium of having accused a fellow-scholar of the deepest scholarly crime.

Dyce's response to *Notes and Emendations* was not, perhaps, the one we would have expected from him. The enmity between him and Collier which had been announced in the persistently hostile Remarks Dyce had directed at Collier's 1844 Shakespeare, and was to culminate in bitter charges and countercharges in Collier's second edition of 1858 and Dyce's *Structures* on it, was entirely in abeyance here. One of the notes is, if sincere, a touching personal testament of affection in the midst of the driest of discourses: when Collier approves the Perkins emendation, "The cowslips all her pensioners be," for "the cowslips tall," (because "cowslips are never 'tall'") Dyce notes that Collier "ought to have considered that however diminutive they may appear to himself as he gathers them in those sylvan scenes to which (unfortunately for his friends and acquaintances) he has now withdrawn, they might nevertheless seem 'tall' to Titania and her elves."9

*A Few Notes on Shakespeare* is just that—of the 200 or so passages examined only about 50 are on passages touched by the old corrector. Dyce's attitude is epitomized in his prefatory remark:
I have endeavoured to shew that sundry of the recently-published Emendations by the manuscript corrector of the folio 1632, are altogether erroneous; . . . But the reader must not therefore suppose that I consider Mr. Collier's volume as useless to the future editors of Shakespeare: my opinion is, that while it abounds with alterations ignorant, tasteless, and wanton, it also occasionally presents corrections which require no authority to recommend them, because common sense declares them to be right (Few Notes, p. i).

At various points Dyce makes it clear that the emendations, though perhaps lacking in authority—and in any case no authority in the world would induce him to accept a reading he found objectionable—carried a kind of moral prestige on account, perhaps, of their age. He welcomes one emendation, for example, because though it had previously been offered it had not been universally adopted, but would probably be so now.

The response of J.O. Halliwell was philological, illuminating one area of intense activity in Shakespeare studies in the mid-nineteenth century: the systematic study of Elizabethan English. Halliwell's own edition was appearing as the Collier controversy developed. His first volume was published in 1853, within a few months of Notes and Emendations. To us philology is generally an adjunct to Shakespearean textual studies, and is considered to be a separate discipline. It was not always so, and the leader of the philological movement was Halliwell. His textual introduction to Shakespeare was, in
fact, an extended study of the Elizabethan idiom. Philology creates strongly conservative editions, since its pursuit so well prepares an editor for the peculiarities he is likely to encounter in an old text.

For Halliwell the question of authority never arises. He flatly declares that the Perkins Folio's emendations are conjectural and on that basis works out a rationale for accepting or rejecting them one by one: that no emendation is to be admitted over a satisfactory reading or over a reading which appears elsewhere in Shakespeare or his contemporaries (see above, page 232). As for the suggestion that the emendations, whether or not authoritative deserve special respect on account of their age, "I believe it to admit of proof that the English language underwent greater changes between 1600 and 1630 . . . in respect of idiom than have since taken place." ¹⁰

Halliwell's attitude towards the emendations themselves is not entirely consistent—at least it changes as it develops. At one point he is rather genial in his evaluation: "at a late period in Shakespearian criticism, after nearly all the harvest had been supposed to have been garnered," Collier has discovered a book which, if not authoritative, gives truly important assistance to future editors.¹¹ This, at a time when Collier had
published only his Athenaeum articles. Halliwell was nettled, however, when he read in Notes and Emendations that one of the emendations would henceforth be received by all editors, "unless it be . . . someone who, having no right to use the emendations of our Folio, 1632, adheres of necessity to the antiquated blunder and pertinaciously attempts to justify it." Halliwell is the only commentator who rises to reject this reasoning: "The attribution of motives, as all the world knows, is not only the most easy, but the most mischievous and uncertain of all conjectural criticisms; and the English public cannot be long blinded by the arrogant assumption that every opponent of these new readings must necessarily be acting with insincerity." Halliwell then proceeds to examine all the emendations suggested for the text of The Tempest—a total of 33. He finds that only one of them even deserves serious consideration as a candidate for admission to the text, and that about half of the remainder are to be found in other commentators. Collier is chastised for a lack of candor in not publicizing how many of these emendations had already found a place in the text at one or another period.

It should be apparent that, just as the case for authority required the establishment of a theory which would show that the emendations derived from an
authoritative source not consulted by the early printers, the question of authenticity—of whether or not the Perkins Folio emendations really were inscribed during the seventeenth century—depended entirely on a satisfactory explanation of the fact that a great number of them had also been suggested by other commentators and editors. This latter question is not only of absorbing interest, but is also capable of numerical analysis, and thus was an attractive approach for several critics. On the basis of its interest and of its overall importance, the topic warrants a very brief digression here.

*Notes and Emendations* contains, according to my count, something over 1500 substantive emendations. Of these, Collier credits some 200—about 13%—to former editors. He treats the matter gingerly, but maintains throughout that the "coincidences" between the old corrector and the editors of Shakespeare represent instances in which the former has "anticipated" the conjectures of the "later" scholars, and by doing so "confirmed" their guesses. I have collated three plays—*Hamlet, Lear,* and *Othello*—with the Furness New Variorum Edition. In *Hamlet,* Collier acknowledges 6 of 31 changes (19%) to have been "rediscovered" by previous editors, while in fact 8 of them (26%) appear elsewhere. In *Lear,* Collier acknowledges only 2 of the 46 changes (4.4%) while 13 of them (28%)
appear elsewhere. And in *Othello*, 6 of the 55 emendations (11%) are attributed to "later" commentators, but in fact 20 (36%) should be so attributed. In the three plays, then, of 132 emendations, Collier credits 14 (10.5%), but 41 (31%) actually appear elsewhere.

The appearance of nearly one-third of the emendations of the Perkins Folio in other editions and commentaries was, insofar as it was noticed, deemed curious, and Halliwell seems to have been convinced it was something more, though he never accused Collier in so many words, contenting himself with the glum observation "... Mr Collier must have been deceived as to the composition of his annotated volume, for no one would otherwise have been rash enough to have presented it to the public as having a character so open to contradiction."^{13}

The last of the major scholars to take up the questions raised by the Perkins Folio was the American, Richard Grant White. He established himself as a conservative--according to my scheme--with his response to one of the objections to the Perkins emendations. A periodical reviewer had warned that to accept the emendations even experimentally would be dangerous, since a reading, once admitted into the text, soon becomes established as readers grow familiar with it. White, in irritated agreement, queries, "Is it not deplorable that
intelligent men should advocate the retention of a phrase in Shakespeare's works not on the grounds that we have the best authority to believe it his, and that it conveys a sense consistent with the context, but because people have become used to it?"  

In his book, entitled, with charming candor, *Shakespeare's Scholar*, Collier's folio either has authority or it has not. If it have authority, we must submit implicitly to all its *dicta*; if it have not, we must examine closely every correction and judge it by its reasonableness and probability. Let us make the changes if there be undeniable authority for them; and if they are exactly as the text unquestionably demands, let us make them without authority" *(Shakespeare's Scholar, pp.34-35).* I think the only difference between Grant White's attitude towards the emendations and the attitude that could be expected today in the same circumstances, is that we would say: "If it have not authority, it is not worth serious consideration by scholars—and if one-third of its emendations duplicate one previously advanced, it is not only without authority, it is clearly a fabrication." Of course if we add to this hypothetical case that the person who advanced these changes was, let us say, Fredson Bowers, we can begin perhaps to appreciate
the vertiginous sensations that obviously gripped the scholarly community in the early 1850's.

Grant White failed to realize that the repository for making a case rested with those who supported the emendations: that, in other words, unless Collier or someone else could bring forward convincing evidence that the emendations of the Perkins Folio were authoritative, there was simply nothing to discuss. This is not said to fault White, whose perception of the affair was more clearheaded than anyone else's. He was responding not merely to an abstract or hypothetical problem, but to a widely publicized attack on the very heart of scholarship, and an attack mounted by one who was himself a considerable scholar.

This, it seems to me, is the reason White, along with the other editors, did not hurl the challenge back in Collier's teeth. Although it might have been responsible scholarship to do so, the tremendous prestige which the emendations carried in the public eye made the issue one of more than merely local importance, made it more than a problem that could safely be left to the years and the slow processes of scholarly analysis to unravel. Though the solution to such problems as the identity of "hand D" in Sir Thomas More, or the nature of the Pavier quartos may have significant reverberations, they can
safely be left to the judgment of the experts; the world will get along well enough with its Shakespeare in the interim. But the issue posed by the Perkins Folio was one of overpowering urgency; it was nothing less than the purity of Shakespeare's language and the basis of a reprint of his text. Thus it was that White laid upon himself the obligation to sort through the emendations one by one.

IV

Collier's emendations stood no chance against the remorseless gaze of Halliwell and the free-swinging attack of Grant White. Long before they were exposed as forgeries, they had been relegated to oblivion by scholars, as an embarrassing and best-forgotten aberration in an otherwise distinguished career. But though the controversy over the emendations soon died down, the lessons it taught were well learned. In the first place, no reputable editor was ever again to attempt to make a name as a great emendator. In the second place, the attitude I have been calling "textual atavism"--the desire for a text of Shakespeare free from insoluble difficulties--had been dealt a blow from which it would not soon recover. The conservative attitude--the desire for a text which reproduced as near as possible the very words Shakespeare had written--was triumphantly
embodied in the two great reference texts—the Cambridge and the New Variorum—which were to dominate Shakespearean editing for the next sixty years and more. The apparatus of these two editions was designed, among other purposes, to make a repetition of the Perkins Folio affair impossible, for the possessor of these editions could not only ascertain at a glance whether or not a given conjecture was original, but could also, in the same glance, compare any new conjecture with the best that had previously been offered. I would suggest, finally, that the most important result of the Collier controversy was that it prompted an energetic reassessment of the folios and quartos. In this way it was instrumental in inaugurating the modern era of Shakespearean textual scholarship, an era whose finest achievement has been to force the old copies to yield up their secrets.

We have now reached the end of our historical survey of the editing of Shakespeare, and have come full circle: before Rowe, the only way to read Shakespeare whole was in one of the folios—texts which derived, if often at several removes, from his very manuscripts. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century it had become evident that the only valid approach to Shakespearean editing was to embrace those same editions, with all their faults, difficulties, and obscurities. Editors would no
longer seek to be considered ingenious emendators; they would be valued as they proved themselves to be restorers and defenders of the true text of Shakespeare.
FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I: NICHOLAS ROWE


3These judgments are drawn from, respectively, Joseph Hunter, New Illustrations of the Life, Studies, and Writings of Shakespeare (London, 1845), I,1vi; "New Readings in Shakespeare" (Blackwood's 74 [1853], p.474; Richard Grant White, Shakespeare's Scholar (New York, 1854) p.16; and Charles Knight's edition of Shakespeare (London, 1842), IX,371.


5Rowe's reliance on the fourth folio was first pointed out by Edward Capell (see below, p.127), in 1768. Though the fact of his reliance on the fourth folio was probably not unknown to editors before Capell, none of them saw its significance, and thus none of them, it is likely, thought it worth pointing out.

7 In Shakespeare's Seventeenth-Century Editors, 1632-1685 (New York, 1937), Passim.

8 It may be sufficient to mention that, along with some copies of the third folio, it contains for the first time several plays absent from the earlier folios.

9 Rowe, I, A2v.

10 Peter Alexander, "Restoring Shakespeare: The Modern Editor's Task" (SS 5 [1952], 1-9).

11 Johnson, I, xlvii.

CHAPTER II: ALEXANDER POPE AND LEWIS THEOBALD

1 See below, pp. 62-68.


3 Pope, I, xxii.

4 David Nichol Smith, Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century (Oxford, 1928), p.34: "What has an executor to do with a series of papers that are not quite ready for the press? He is disloyal to the memory of his friend if he perpetuates the little blemishes which his friend would undoubtedly have removed; and if he hits on a happy little alteration which he is convinced his friend would at once have adopted . . . he may not be the trusty friend that he was expected to be if he stays his hand."


6 See his list, Vol. VI.
That is, Theobald sent a marked-up copy of Pope's edition to the printer as the copy for his own edition. Thus, for every reading, spelling, stage-direction, speech-prefix, punctuation mark, etc., which Theobald did not either emend or restore from an earlier edition, Theobald's immediate source is Pope's edition, whether or not the reading, etc., had originated in an earlier edition than Pope's.


This would be so if the cleanness of the well printed play could be shown to result from the ease of reading sophisticated copy, while the messiness of the badly printed one resulted from the difficulty of reading authorial foul papers.


Pope, I,xix.


Earl R. Wasserman, "Elizabethan Poetry 'Improved'," MP 37 (1940), 357.

Ibid, 358.


19 The three efforts were those of John Churton Collins, Thomas R. Lounsbury, and Richard Foster Jones (see above, Chapter I, note 1).


21 "I ought to be in some Pain for the Figure that these sheets may make, this being the First Essay of Literal Criticism upon my Author in the English Tongue." _Shakespeare Restored_, p. 193.


23 The surviving correspondence is printed in John Nichols, _Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century_ . . . (London, 1817), pp. 189-647.

24 David Nichol Smith, _Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare_ (Glasgow, 1903), xlvi-xlvii.

25 Witness, for example, the wildly speculative attitude of Alexander Dyce in his occasional works on Shakespeare, and the solid conservatism of his editions.

26 Collins, p. 276.

27 Theobald, I, xxxvii.

28 Although Jones in generally even-handed, Collins, Lounsbury, and even D. Nichol Smith seem to feel that the historian of the affair must come down on one side or the other.

29 In his _Prolusions_, or _Select Pieces of Ancient Poetry_, (London, 1760).

30 See Jones, Chapters II-III.
CHAPTER III: SIR THOMAS HANMER AND WILLIAM WARBURTON


2 Jones, Lewis Theobald, 325.


5 The text of the letter is most easily available in Dawson (p.38), or in Evans (pp.148-49).

6 See Dawson, p.38.

7 Collins, passim, especially pp.268-271.

8 Entry cancelled.


11 Evans, pp.147-55. The crucial document in the Hanmer-Warburton controversy is "The Castrated Letter of Sir Thomas Hanmer in the Sixth Volume of the Biographica Britannica ... by a proprietor of that work [Philip] Nichols (1763."
12. The letter in which this plan is outlined, first printed in Nichols, Illustrations, II, 634, is transcribed by Dawson, SB II (1949-50), p. 36.

13. "As to Mr. Theobald, who wanted Money, I allowed him to print what I gave him for his own Advantage; and he allowed himself the Liberty of taking one Part for his own, and sequestering another for the Benefit, as I supposed, of some future Edition." Warburton's Preface, 1747.


17. See Giles Dawson, Four Centuries of Shakespeare Publication (Lawrence, Kansas, 1964).

18. Ibid.


20. See Warburton's note ad loc.

21. [Thomas Edwards], A Supplement to Mr. Warburton's Edition of Shakespeare. Being the Canons of Criticism . . . By the Other Gentleman of Lincoln's Inn, (London, 1745). The book was extremely popular, going through seven editions by 1765. After the third (1748) its title was changed to, what it had long been popularly called, The Canons of Criticism. My references to it (as Canons) are drawn from the fifth edition (1753).

23. The outlines are presented in the DNB article, and the whole story is told by John Selby Watson. Evans, though he is writing essentially a study of controversies, recapitulates most of the biographical details.

24. James Thorpe, Principles of Textual Criticism (San Marino, 1972), p.30: "... the critic who adopts an emendation of his own creation ... has indeed become co-author of this portion of the work of art--he has in fact been set on a level with the author."

25. Quoted from John Selby Watson, 297-98.


27. Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate, p.367.

28. Quoted by John Selby Watson, p.336. The "friend" is Hurd, who is also responsible for the construction of the passage which follows in the text.


CHAPTER IV: SAMUEL JOHNSON AND THE JOHNSON TRADITION


Johnson's rate of progress on his edition has been tabulated by Arthur Sherbo in his Samuel Johnson, Editor of Shakespeare (Urbana, 1956).


Pope is so treated by Robert A. Hart in, "Alexander Pope as Scholar-Editor," SB 23 (1970), 45-60; Theobald by Richard Foster Jones in Lewis Theobald (1919); Johnson by Scholes; Capell by Alice Walker in Edward Capell and his Edition of Shakespeare (British Academy, Annual Shakespeare Lecture, 1960); Capell and Malone together by Sailendra Kumar Sen in Capell, Malone, and Modern Critical Bibliography (Calcutta, 1960); and Ritson by Bertrand H. Bronson in Joseph Ritson, Scholar-at-Arms (Berkeley, 1938).


This procedure was not invariable with Johnson.


19 See Arthur Sherbo, Samuel Johnson, Editor of Shakespeare, p.11.


24 "My first labour is, always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice, through which light can find its way." (Johnson's Shakespeare, I,lxiii.)

CHAPTER V: EDMOND MALONE AND THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TRADITION


"Certainly . . . it is a very partial way of appreciating any work to expose its defects and to maintain a careful silence about its deserts." Monthly Review 12 (1793), p.60.

CHAPTER VI: SAMUEL WELLER SINGER

Alfred Van Rensselaer Westfall, American Shakespearean Criticism, 1607-1865 (New York, 1939).


This is not to suggest that none of the eighteenth-century editions had been directed to a "general audience," but merely to show that by the time of Singer it had become necessary to reassure the reader on this point.


CHAPTER VII: CHARLES KNIGHT

Charles Knight, ed., The Pictorial Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare. (London, 1838-41) 36 parts forming 8 vols. I have used Knight's second edition for purposes of citation, since it was more extensively available to me.

See the article on Knight in the DNB.
The idea itself is far older than Halliwell's discussion of it. W.W. Greg (The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare /Oxford, 1942: 3rd. edn. Oxford, 1954), p. 8n, points out: "The true interpretation of "divers stol'n and surreptitious copies," had in fact been pointed out . . . by Tycho Mommsen in the introduction to his parallel-text edition of Romeo and Juliet /in 1859/; but he did not make his argument specific, and it seems to have escaped notice." However, a fairly specific statement of the point (that not all the quartos were illicitly procured) is advanced as early as 1793 in a review of Malone's edition: "We suspect this is too strongly stated, when it is said that all the quartos were surreptitious. Heminge and Condell, Shakspeare's fellow comedians, and editors of the first folio edition of his works, in their preface to that book, only to say to their readers: 'whereas before you were abused with divers stolne and surreptitious copies / . . . / even those are now offered to your view cured, and perfect of their limbes.' (Monthly Review, 2nd Series, 12(1793), 57.


CHAPTER VIII: JOHN PAYNE COLLIER

1 J. Payne Collier, An Old Man's Diary Forty Years Ago (Privately Printed, 1871-72), entries for March 11, 1832, and March 18, 1832.

2 I have used the second edition (1842) which is slightly expanded.

3 See Bertrand H. Bronson, Joseph Ritson (Berkeley, 1938), for an analysis of Malone's occasional use of this technique.
CHAPTER IX: THE COLLIER CONTROVERSY


2 Prospectus of the Shakespeare Society (1841).

3 Athenaeum #1266 (31 January, 1852), pp.142-43.

The pamphlet is The Grimaldi Shakspere, a 16-page squib which implies that the Perkins Folio emendations are "bosh," (p.7), and "humbug," (p.16), and that Collier, by suggesting that the emendations are copyright, is attempting to steal Shakespeare. The pamphlet (London, 1852) is usually attributed to F.W.Fairholt, the illustrator of Halliwell's folio edition. As I have been unable to find out on what evidence the traditional attribution rests, I have been unwilling to pursue my suspicion that the work is in fact by Halliwell.


7 Edinburgh Review 103 (1856), 358.


11 Ibid. p.6.
12 James Orchard Halliwell, *Observations on Some of the Manuscript Emendations ... and Are They Copy-right?* (London, 1853), p. 5.

13 Ibid. p. 11.

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