REFLECTIONS OF INTEREST IN CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION IN REPRESENTATIVE ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN DRAMA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is the tendency of literature to reflect the spirit of the period in which it was written; and Elizabethan drama is typical of the rule, as it shows many evidences of that vitally important period in which it was written, the Renaissance. It was the prevailing custom of the writers of that age to make use of classical elements in the content of their productions. It is the purpose of this study to estimate and determine the nature and extent of the classical elements in Elizabethan drama, as evidenced by allusions to the different phases of classical civilization--literature, mythology, history, legendary history, language, art, philosophy, medicine, and law. The study will include an estimate of the relative popularity of the classic figures and stories, and many of the best and most representative lines will be quoted.

The list of dramas considered in this study and termed "Elizabethan" will begin with the earliest English comedies, Ralph Roister Doister and Gammer Gurton's Needle, and, excluding Shakespeare, will continue up to and including the dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher and Thomas Middleton; that is, the period from, approximately, 1550 to 1625. This period is commonly divided into two, Elizabethan and Jacobean. Carolingian drama, including a few works of Massinger, Ford, and Shirley, will be touched upon only in a general way.

The writer has drawn her material for this study from a critical reading of the plays themselves, from the few available books bearing upon the subject, and from magazine articles dealing with some small phase of the subject. The chapter on the dramatists in Felix E. Schelling's English Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare,[1] Richard Jebb's work on "The Classical Renaissance" in The Cambridge Modern History,[2] and William H. Hudson's The Story of the Renaissance[3] have been helpful in furnishing information for a general background. Ashley Thorndike's Shakespearean Theater,[4] in which he gives an account of the tastes of the Elizabethan audience, has also been helpful. The writer believes that the subject, as treated in this work, has never been similarly handled, inasmuch as diligent search has failed to reveal anything of a similar nature. Passing allusions have occasionally been made to the evident bulk of classical material in Renaissance drama, but its exact nature has not been unfolded. Douglas Bush has written a work upon a somewhat related subject, but in another field, entitled Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry;[5] but he has treated only non-dramatic works, and that, only in the realm of mythology. Classical dictionaries and

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[1] Felix E. Schelling, English Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1910), 486 pp.

[2] Richard C. Jebb, "The Classical Renaissance," The Cambridge Modern History, I, 532-584.

[3] William H. Hudson, The Story of the Renaissance (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1926), 286 pp.

[4] Ashley H. Thorndike, Shakespearean Theater (New York: The Mac-Millan Company, 1916), 486 pp.

[5] Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1932), 360 pp.

general mythologies, especially Gayley's The Classic Myths in English Literature and Art,[6] have been helpful to the author in furnishing certain details of information.

It has not been possible to consider all of the great bulk of plays extant from the Elizabethan period. However, all of those readily accessible have been studied. A list of eighty dramas includes some works of each of the authors generally recognized as preeminent, with the exception of the works of Shakespeare, which it seemed best to exclude because of their extensive nature and the close study involved in this investigation. Moreover, similar studies on certain phases of the subject have already been made, as Churton Collins' Shakespeare as a Classical Author,[7] William Theobald's The Classical Element in the Shakespearean Plays,[8] Robert Kilburn Root's Classical Mythology in Shakespeare,[9] and Douglas Bush's Notes on Shakespeare's Classical Mythology.[10]

The dramas under consideration will not be discussed chronologically, as the nature of the study does not permit. Rather, the references to each character, be he mythological, historical, or legendary, will be arranged according to the classical subject, personage, or deity mentioned, with the end in view of determining which classical figures and themes were

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[6] Charles Mills Gayley, The Classic Myths in English Literature and Art (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1911), 597 pp.

[7] In his Studies in Shakespeare. (London, 1904), 336 pp.

[8] (Edited by R. M. Theobald.) (London, 1909), 408 pp.

[9] Yale Studies in English, Vol. 19. (New York, 1903), 134 pp.

[10] Phil. Quart.; Vol. 6, 1927, pp. 295-302.

the most popular with the dramatists and their audiences.

In the concluding chapter, a survey of the contributions made by individual authors will be presented in order to compensate for the lack of such information in the preceding chapters.

It now becomes necessary to picture the background of the revival of interest in all things classical, which took place as one phase of the Renaissance movement. The recovery of masterpieces of antique culture and renewed interest in all phases of classical civilization, culminating in the movement known as Humanism, began in Italy with Petrarch and was continued by Boccaccio and others. The veil of mysticism and misapprehension which hung about the relics of the pagan past was torn away; and by the close of the fifteenth century, the knowledge of Greece and Rome had been reappropriated and placed beyond the possibility of destruction.

In England, the faint beginnings of the revival of interest in classical culture and civilization may be traced back as far as Chaucer; but Chaucer came before the times were ripe, and the humanistic movement made only a limited advance in the century following his death. One of the first patrons of classical learning in England was Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who gathered English scholars about him and induced younger Italians to visit him and to make translations for him from the classics. But it was not until the close of the fifteenth century that England began to share definitely in the great movement of the Renaissance. It was with three Oxford friends, Thomas Linacre, William Grocyn, and William Latimer, that classical scholarship in England really began; and

Cambridge soon followed the lead of Oxford. John Colet founded the first school in England expressly devoted to the new learning, St. Paul's School in London; other schools of a humanistic character soon followed. No lecture rooms in the universities were so crowded as those in which professors of classical literature read passages from the poets and orators, taught Greek, and commented upon the systems of the ancient philosophers.

The spirit of the new learning, increasingly powerful in the universities and schools, began, in the reign of Henry VIII, to pervade the court and the nobility. A real love of learning began to manifest itself among the upper ranks of English society, and there was a mania for everything Greek or Latin. This spirit pervaded all society with the spirit of romance. "For a generation nursed in decadent scholasticism . . . .it was the fountain of renascent youth, beauty, and freedom, the shape in which the Helen of art and poetry appeared to the ravished eye of medieval Faustus."[11]

Little by little the new learning and the spirit of culture spread among the English people. The great schools helped much to stimulate intellectual interests, but the work of popularization was furthered even more effectively by translators who opened the treasures of Greek and Latin literature to those to whom the originals were sealed books. "Ancient literature was welcomed as disclosing a new conception of life, a conception freer, larger, more rational, and more joyous than the

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[11] John Addington Symonds, "The Renaissance." Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, XXIII, 83-93.

medieval, one which gave unfettered scope to the play of the feelings, to the sense of beauty, and to all the activities of the intellect."[12]

This new world of the classics dawning on men's imaginations stimulated histrionic ambitions,[13] and the Elizabethan period is famous as the time in which English drama flourished, reaching its height in Shakespeare. "The Elizabethan drama in its totality is the real exponent of the English Renaissance," charged with all the passion and energy of the age;[14] and in order to understand the significance of the overwhelming evidence of renewed interest in classical civilization, it is well to consider something of the amount of classical education possessed by the audience of the period, to whom the drama was addressed.

> "When Shakespeare peeped through the curtains at the audience gathered to hear his first play," says Thorndike, "he looked upon a very motley crowd. The pit was filled with men and boys. The galleries contained a fair proportion of women, some not too respectable. In the boxes were a few gentlemen from the Inns of Court and in the lord's box, . . . ,was the young Earl of Southampton with a group of extravagantly dressed gentlemen of fashion."[15]

The theater was extremely popular. Almost all classes attended; so there were, no doubt, some who could appreciate subtleties of learning. The dramatists themselves, as exemplified especially by their prologues, seem to have had a poor opinion of their audience's mental powers; for it was

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[12] Richard C. Jebb, "The Classical Renaissance." The Cambridge Modern History, I, 532-584.

[13] Ashley H. Thorndike, op. cit., p. 369.

[14] John Addington Symonds, op.cit., p. 92.

[15] Ashley H. Thorndike, op. cit., p. 404.

their constant complaint that they must submit their wares for judgment to those without sufficient knowledge. Familiarity with the classics was, in fact, confined to very few members of the audience. Translators lament that England lagged behind other countries in making classical wisdom available for the mass of the unlearned; but the works translated indicate not only popularization of classic story, but increasing knowledge and understanding of antiquity.[16] This new knowledge became a leaven working through popular imagination, and the theaters became a very real means of education.[17] Only a few people could read well, but the audience of the day was trained to the spoken word. It found listening easier than reading. It liked to hear new words, phrases, or classical allusions that it did not understand;[18] and "the sorriest apprentice might have in him a response for Titania as well as for Andronicus."[19] The story of the Greek myths and the Homeric story seemed never to grow old to the Elizabethan audience, and the dramas, often based on the most bloody and revolting of the Greek myths, and, tracing crimes to their final horrible retribution, delighted both scholars and public. The dramatists cultivated the cultural background of the audience whenever possible. Jupiter and Venus descended upon many an amateur stage, and a mermaid or satyr popped out from any bush to offer an address to traveling royalty. Although

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[16] Douglas Bush, op. cit., pp. 26-28.

[17] Ashley H. Thorndike, op. cit., p. 412.

[18] Ibid., p. 415.

[19] Ibid., p. 411.

[20] Ibid., p. 370.

the majority of the popular audiences had very little general information, they were eager to learn new things, as offered to them by the dramatists, who were themselves generally steeped in culture and classic erudition. The extreme popularity of the drama is witness to this fact, as it was "the first time in the history of modern England a great literature found its support in the people rather than in the patronage of the great."[21] It reflects the new classical learning and reveals its influence in form, content, and spirit.

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[21] Ibid., p. 472.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

One of the most outstanding evidences of renewed interest in classical civilization among Renaissance dramatists and their audiences is the prevalence of references to classical history found in the drama of the period. Tucker Brooke says:

> Interest in the romance of history. . . .is in general one of the most striking literary characteristics of the age. . . . The cult of grisly ancient myth exploited by Seneca is supplanted by the cult of Plutarch (especially Plutarch's Lives in North's Translation), everywhere the strongest force in. . . .Elizabethan drama.[1]

The growth of national patriotism culminating in the victory over the Armada gave the drama a chance to use English historical material. "This vogue of English chronicle plays on the stage stopped abruptly," says Thorndike,"with the death of Elizabeth, but it had prepared the way for other historical information,"[2]--the Roman and Greek tragedies. "Only with an audience trained to an interest in history could the world contests of Caesar and Brutus, Augustus and Antony have had a thrilling reality. It is due primarily to the dramatic genius of Shakespeare, and secondarily, to the genius of Plutarch, but at least in a tertiary degree to the interest in the past which the drama had already developed in the London public, that, of all subjects of antiquity, Roman history was the one most effectively vitalized in English literature. Other matters of antiquity were less successfully presented."[3]

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[1] Tucker Brooke, The Tudor Drama (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, ©1911), pp. 201-02.

[2] Ashley H. Thorndike, Shakespearean Theater (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1910), p. 413.

[3] Loc. cit.

The desire for novelty, especially by the end of the sixteenth century, led the dramatists on the quest for fresh subject matter to interest their audiences; and they found it in the great magnet of Renaissance study, ancient literatures.

Of the eighty dramas under consideration in this work, eight have strictly classical themes: Campaspe, Damon and Pithias, The Parliament of Bees, Nero, Sejanus, The Postaster, Valentinian, and Bonduca. But, twenty-five of them have a classical setting, with a prevailing preference for Rome, Athens, Venice, and Milan. In this connection the reader will recall Shakespeare's Roman plays, Coriolanus, Julius Caesar, and Antony and Cleopatra.

Events from classical history, Roman, Greek, and Syracusan, receive continual mention by the writers, even in plays which do not have classical backgrounds. The glories of Rome, her honor, faith, and valor, are everywhere exalted, as:

> . . . .we, whom neither
> The Median law, nor Macedonian spear,
> Nor the fierce Gaul, nor painted Briton could
> Subdue, ...[4]

and

> . . . .It is no legend lie
> But a thing once done, indeed, as histories do descry;
> . . . .
> So, here is Syracuse, th'ancient town which once the Romans won,[5]

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[4] Nero, II, iii, p. 34. (Author unknown).

[5] Edwards, Prologue to Damon and Pithias, p. 572.

Mention is made of the Romans' conquest of Britain,[6] and of "Rome, whose turrets once were topped with honours."[7] Nero refers to the Pannonians and gray-eyed Germans"[8] who had been previously overcome by the Romans, and Mosca bids Volpone, "Let's die like Romans since we have lived like Grecians."[9] Nor is it always Rome's supremacy which receives mention. Nero calls his people's attention to the battle of Cannae, 217 B. C., when Hannibal met and conquered the Romans:

> . . . .We beg not now
> To have our consuls tread on ancient kings,
> Or spurn the quivered Susa at their feet;
> This we have had before: . . . .
> . . . .Let Cannae come,
> Let Allia's waters turn again to blood;[10]

and Beaumont and Fletcher mention the "worm-eaten precedents of the Roman wars."[11] Rome was proud of her custom of putting down the tyrants "to a ruinous fall . . . .(as told in) the whole histories of all the world--not only of Romans and Greeks."[12] A significant point is the acquaintance that even the lowest type of character in the drama has with Roman history. Brainworm says to Formal: "But to hear the manner of your services, ...they say they be very strange, and not like those a

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[6] Beaumont and Fletcher, Bonduca, I, i, p. 1.

[7] Fletcher, Valentinian, IV, iii, p. 431.

[8] Nero, IV, i, p. 55.

[9] Jonson, Volpone, III, vi, p. 81.

[10] Nero, III, iii, pp. 47-48.

[11] Beaumont and Fletcher, Thierry and Theodoret, II, i, p. 309.

[12] Prologue to Damon and Pithias, p. 587.

man reads in the Roman histories."[13] The reader is introduced to a considerable amount of the mechanics of Roman government, with many references to the Roman Capitol, the Senate and its decrees, praetors, senators, augurers, (official diviners), and the auspices, or magistrates who had auspicium to consult the gods on behalf of the Senate. Sejanus contains a vivid scene located in the Senate chamber. Tamburlaine, following a Roman precedent, presents his henchman with a naked sword, and Simon Eyre tells his journeymen:

> . . . .caps are emblems of humility.
> It is a citizen's badge, and first was worn
> By th' Romans;[14]

The reader receives enlightenment as to an ancient Roman custom in the lines:

> Happy the Roman state, where it was lawful
> If our sons were vicious, to choose one
> Out of a virtuous stock, though of poor parents,
> And make him noble.[15]

Grecian history seems not to have been so vital as the Roman to the dramatists' plots, though mention is made of "Greece. . . .in her chiefest prime."[16]

But it is in reference to the historical characters of Greece and Rome that interest in the classics is most evident and classical history

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[13] Jonson, Every Man in His Humour IV, vii, p. 286.

[14] Dekker, The Shoemaker's Holiday, I, iii, p. 208.

[15] Beaumont and Fletcher, The Spanish Curate, I, iii, p. 227.

[16] Greene, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, p. 181.

is expanded. References of a general nature to "Caesar" are made in eight plays, but in such a manner that it is impossible to tell which of the many Caesars is meant. Characters of all classes swear by Caesar, and the greatness of Caesar seems a matter of common knowledge to the lowest. It is not surprising that Julius Caesar is one of the most popular personages with the dramatists of all the Roman heroes. He is referred to in nine dramas, his conquests being the most popular subject:

> With such a train as Julius Caesar came
> To noble Rome, whenas he had achiev'd
> The mighty monarch of the triple world.[17]
>
> My camp is like to Julius Caesar's host,
> That never fought but had the victory,[18]
>
> . . . .gates and high pyramides
> Which Julius Caesar brought from Africa.[19]

and

> . . . .the margarites
> That Caesar found in wealthy Albion;[20]

Caesar's death "in the arms of prosperity"[21] is mentioned, and Sejanus calls him "the monster. . . .that sought unkindly to captive his country."[22]

Augustus Caesar is also mentioned in nine plays, in one of which, The Poetaster, he is a leading character. In Nero, he is "the Olympic

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[17] Greene, Alphonsus, King of Arragon, I, i, pp. 12-13.

[18] Marlowe, Tamburlaine, The First Part, I, iii, p. 21.

[19] Marlowe, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, III, i, p. 54.

[20] Greene, Orlando Furioso, I, i, p. 72.

[21] Webster, The Duchess of Malfi, V, v, p. 608.

[22] Jonson, Sejanus, I, i, p. 260.

conqueror," and Sejanus says of him:

> . . . ,diefied Augustus, hind'red not
> A temple to be built at Pergamum,
> In honor of himself and sacred Rome;[23]

Augustus' victories are mentioned in connection with the overthrow of Vologaeses, King of Parthia.

It is a rather surprising fact that Cato, the Roman patriot, is referred to in almost as many dramas as either Julius Caesar or Augustus, that is, in eight, almost always in respect to his "God-like" qualities of goodness and innocence.

Nero figures largely in the dramas of the period, though in only eight of them. Naturally, his wantonness and wild ways are uppermost, as also his connection with the burning of Rome and the death of his mother, Agrippina. In Valentinian is this reference:

> . . . ,like Nero
> And with the same forgetfulness of glory
> You have got a vein for fiddling.[24]

In Sejanus, Nero is an unimportant character, but he stands uppermost in the play, Nero. The author of this drama is unknown. All that can be with certainty conjectured is that the author of the drama was a man well-read in the classics. He was well-acquainted not only with Seutonius' life of Nero, but with Tacitus also, and Dion Cassius.[25] Mr. Horne continues:

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[23] Sejanus, I, ii, p. 254.

[24] Valentinian, I, iii, p. 429.

[25] Herbert Horne, editor, Introduction to Nero and Other Plays (London: T. Fisher Unwin, n. d.), p. 5.

> In the incidents of the play, he (the author) follows these writers very closely and is careful to preserve the historical order of the events he is dramatizing and all the considerable persons* mentioned by his authorities are to be found among the characters.[26]

The reader receives the impression that the events set forth in this tragedy are of quick succession; whereas, historically, they are scattered over four years. There is, thus, some divergence in time from actual history, and from actual facts. Nero, throughout, is the center of action.

Seven authors in seven plays use Pompey's name. He seems to have been held in high esteem, his dignity and his hugeness being the chief characteristics brought out. Mention is also made of his theater.

Brutus receives mention in six plays, generally as wise, temperate, constant, and honest:

> Where's the constant Brutus, that being proof
> Against all charms of benefits, did strike
> So brave a blow in the monster's heart
> That sought unkindly to captive his country.[27]

Tarquin, legendary last king of Rome, is mentioned in five dramas, always in reference to his rape of Lucrece, which led to the eventual establishment of the republic. Cicero, too, in five plays, is generally referred to as Tully, of the great wisdom and excellent Latin:

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[26] Herbert Horne, op. cit., p. 5.

[27] Sejanius, I, i, p. 250.

* Minor historical characters in Nero are: Tigellius, Sophonius, Epaphroditus, Lucius Piso, Flaevius Scaevinus, Milichus, Subrius Flavius, C. Petronius Arbiter, and Narcissus. Nimphidius, Neophilus, and Antonius Honoratus figure in the play; but classical dictionaries do not disclose their historical identity.

Tullie the wise whose sapience in volumes great
doth tell,
Who in wisdom in that time did many men excel--[28]

Cassius, the tribune, is referred to in four dramas, as brave but wily, as are also Antony and Tiberius. In Sejanus Tiberius is a leading character. Neilson says that this delineation of Tiberius by Jonson is one of the most successful attempts to recreate a highly complex character,[29] but C. H. Hereford thinks that the character of Tiberius as depicted by Jonson, though drawn with a profusion of power, makes very little appeal to the imagination, by either pungency or vivacity of coloring. It is simply a blind egoism.[30]

Vespasian is mentioned in three dramas; while Romulus; Numa, the second legendary king of Rome; Apicius, the Roman epicure and gourmand; Octavius; Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Carthage; Germanicus, grandfather of Nero; and Lepidus--each receives mention in two dramas. In Valentinian, Germanicus is called "loyal and straight,"[31] and seems to have been held in high esteem.

His name was, while he liv'd, above all envy;
. . . .
If there were seeds of the old virtue left,
They liv'd in him.[32]

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[28] Preston, Prologue to Cambises, pp. 7-8.

[29] William A. Neilson, editor, Chief Elizabethan Dramatists (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), p. 857.

[30] C. H. Hereford, Introduction to Ben Jonson, I, (The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists) London: T. Fisher Unwin, n.d.), pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.

[31] Valentinian, IV, i, p. 479.

[32] Sejanus, op. cit., p. 250.

Lyly in his Campaspe, as an apology for the presentation of the play, mentions the fact that Lepidus, "which coulde not sleepe for the chatting of birdes, set up a beaste whose head was like a dragon,"[33] and in Valentinian, Lepidus is mentioned as "Emylius."

There are many Roman characters who are mentioned only once each: Titus, Caius Caesar; Proculus, one of the instruments employed by Nero in the murder of his mother; Fabius Commentator; Caligula; the lawless Cataline; Diocleslan; Mummius, destroyer of Corinth; Laelius, the tribune; Aurelius; Metellus, one of a distinguished Roman family; Albutius, wealthy Roman remarkable for his severity toward his slaves; Lygdus, who administered poison to Drusus in the time of Sejanus' ascendancy; Aratus, a statesman; brave Camillus, who had "five times been dictator"[34] in Rome; Accius Naevius, the Roman augur, who is said to have performed the feat of cutting a whet-stone in two before Tarquin; Otho, Poppaea's love; Decius, a Roman persecutor of the Christians; Turpnus and Pammenes, mentioned in connection with Nero's doubtful conquests; Brennus, who brandished fire-brands about Rome during an invasion of the Celtic Gauls; Servius Galba; the irascible Bolanus; luxurious Scaeva; Silanus, who may be one of several of that name who were compelled to put an end to their lives because they were descendants of Augustus and might be preferred to him; Furnius, the tribune; Roscius, the Roman actor who vaunted "strange comic shows" before the emperor; and Corbulo,

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[33] Lyly, Prologue to Campaspe, p. 610.

[34] Jonson, The Poetaster, I, i, p. 520.

That ever-fortunate and living Roman,
That broke the heart-strings of the Parthians
And brought Arsaces' (monarch of Parthia) line upon their knees.[35]

The Poetaster mentions Tityrus and Tillage, poets, and Cothurnus and Thurius; but classical dictionaries do not reveal for them any historical reality.

Sejanus, the favorite and minister of the Emperor Tiberius, though he appears in only one drama, has the leading role. In this drama of Jonson, Sejanus gains the confidence of Tiberius and, supported by the praetorians, becomes virtually ruler of Rome. But, that he may go still higher, he removes Drusus, son of Tiberius, by poison, and Agrippina, wife of Germanicus, and her two sons. Tiberius at last sees through his designs and causes Sejanus to be put to death. Copious footnotes supplied by the author substantiate almost every fact in the play as actual history, though Jonson's object is not antiquarian correctness but the presentation of character in action.[36] Hereford[37] thinks that Sejanus, like Tiberius, is without pathos or passion as depicted by Jonson. Mention should here be made of the many minor characters appearing in the play who have historical significance.* Jonson's Poetaster, in which he retaliated for the provo-

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[35] Valentinian, op. cit., p. 479.

[36] Tucker Brooke, op. cit., p. 203.

[37] Introduction to C. H. Hereford, op. cit., p. xxxvii.

* These are: Drusus, Nero, (q.v.), Drusus, Jr., Caligula, (q.v.), Lucius Arruntius, Caius Silius, Marcus Lepidus, Cremutius Cordus, Asinius Gallus, Regulus Terentius, Gracinus Laco, Eudemus, Rufus, Latiaris, Varro, Sertorius Macro, Cotta, Domitius Afer, Haterius, Pomponius, Julius Posthumus, Fulcinus Trio, Satrius Secundus, and Pinnarcus Natta. Sanguinius, Titus Sabinus, Minutius, and Opsius appear also, but are of doubtful historical significance.

cation he had received for three years on the stage, also contains several Romans as characters who represent the "smaller fry" of his poetasters; e.g., Rufus Labius Crispinus representing John Marston, and Demetrius Fannius representing Thomas Dekker.*

Valentinian III, like Sejanus, appears in only one play, in which he is the leading character, and is mentioned in no other. This drama does not follow history exactly, omitting some details and changing others. In the main, it is the story of Valentinian's passion for the chaste wife of Petronius Maximus, his betrayal of her, and Maximus' scheming revenge.**

The names of Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, and the two Syracusan friends, Damon and Pithias, appear in three plays. They are the chief characters in the drama Damon and Pithias. In Bartholomew Fair Jonson entangles their classic example of friendship with Leatherhead's marionette show of Hero and Leander. Agathocles, "who, a base potter, won the kingly crown,"[38] appears in Orlando Furioso, and the brazen bulls of Phalaris, another Syracusan tyrant, are referred to in Valentinian and Rule a Wife and Have a Wife.

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[38] Orlando Furioso, I, i, p. 179.

* Other characters are: Trebatius Testa, Hermogenes Tigellius, Luscus, Maecenas, Aristius, Asinius Lupus, Pantilius Tuoca, and Albus and Minor (doubtfully authentic).

** Other historical characters in the play are: Aecius and Pontius. The following may be: Afranius, Fulvius, Lucius, Balbus, Proculus, Chilax, Licinius, Lycias, Phidias, Aretus, and Licippus.

The history of Hannibal, the Carthaginian general is so involved with that of Rome that he may well be considered here also. He has already been referred to in the mention of the battle of Cannae, in which he defeated the Romans. He is mentioned in four dramas, once mistakenly for "cannibal" by the water-carrier, Cob, in Every Man in His Humour, and in Bussy d' Ambois as:

> . . . .The man so great with fame,
> That from sacked Carthage, fetched his worthy name.[39]

Roman women play a comparatively small part in the dramas of the period, though a few are fairly important, judging by the references to them. Rather surprisingly, it is Lucrece, wife of T. Collatinus, who receives mention in nine of the dramas. In all of them she is the classic example of abused chastity, reputed to have killed herself because she was unable to resist the advances of Tarquin. Cleopatra, though an Egyptian, is so interwoven with the history of Rome she rightly belongs in this discussion. She is referred to in five of the dramas only, in connection with Antony and her death by the asp sting. The death of Agrippina, Nero's mother, at the hands of her son is twice mentioned, as are also Messalina, mother of Nero's wife; Poppaea, wife of Nero, who figures in the tragedy of Nero; Lais, the concubine; and Julia, daughter to Julius Caesar. Apicata, divorced wife of Sejanus, is mentioned in the play of that name; and Claudia Pulchra, who, when her vehicle was retarded in its progress through the streets of Rome, hurled bitter gibes at the populace, is referred to in Sejanus, as are also Plancina, Piso's wife in the reign of Tiberius;

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[39] Chapman, Bussy d' Ambois, III, ii, p. 320.

Nautilia Prisca, mother of Tiberius; and Urgulania, who is probably not historical. Other Roman women who are referred to only once are Lollia Paulina, empress of Caligula, who

> . . . .came in like star light hid with jewels,
> That were the spoils of provinces,[40];

Cynthia, the courtesan of the poet, Sextus Propertius; Delia, the love of the poet Gallus; and Portia,

> . . . .that was famous for her piety
> To her lov'd lord, (Brutus).[41]

It is doubtful that either Canidia, "the witch", or Enanthe is historical. Real personages who figure as characters in the dramas are Livia and Sosia in Sejanus, Eudoxia and Lucina in Valentinian, Cytheris, an actress, and Plautia, to whom as Delia Tibullus addressed his poetry, in The Poetaster; and Bonduca (Boadicea) in the play of that name. Though she was queen of the Iceni, a British tribe, Bonduca's history in the drama is interwoven with that of the Romans, who, under the direction of Seutonius Paulinus, take possession of her kingdom, establishing Roman authority in Britain. Bonduca, after a fierce battle, kills herself rather than submit to Roman authority. Fletcher uses historical matieral with entire freedom, deriving his original story from the Annals of Tacitus and developing slight allusions into scenes.[42] There are a few Roman women characters whose reality is only doubtfully authentic.*

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[40] Volpone, III, vi, p. 78.

[41] Fletcher, The Wild Goose Chase, I, i, p. 885.

[42] G. St. Lee Strachey, editor, Introduction to Beaumont and Fletcher (The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists) (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1893), II, p. 111.

* Claudia, Marcellina, Ardelia, and Phorba in Valentinian, and Chloe, Delilah, and Sabella in The Poetaster.

Greek history seems not to have been of the same importance to the dramatists and their audiences as Roman history, if one can judge by the comparative amount of allusions to Greek characters. Only one Greek woman, Aspasia, wife of Pericles, is so much as mentioned, if Campaspe, the Theban captive, who has no absolute historical basis, may be excluded. It is not surprising that Alexander of Macedon, whose history is closely linked with that of the Greeks, should be mentioned in fifteen plays, more often, even, than any Roman character. But he is the exception. Lyly in Campaspe dramatizes a single incident in the life of Alexander, derived, as Tucker Brooke says, "from a chance incident in Pliny's Natural History and from Plutarch's life of Alexander."[43] This incident is Alexander's love for the Theban captive, whom Lyly calls Campaspe, and its consequent results. Marlowe makes Alexander appear to Faustus by the conjuring of Mephistopheles, and mentions "the draught of which great Alexander drunk and died."[44] There is some amount of legend connected with Alexander's life brought out in the dramas, as:

> Seek not, ... as Alexander did
> To cut the plough swain's traces with thy sword.[45]

Alexander is supposed to have undone the Gordian knot with his sword, thus fulfilling the prophecy that he would be the future lord of Asia. Opinions seem to have differed among the writers as to Alexander's character. Sometimes he is the "great Alexander" of good features and high race, or

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[43] Tucker Brooke, op. cit., p. 173.

[44] Marlowe, The Jew of Malta, III, iv, p. 86.

[45] Orlando Furioso, II, i, 184.

> The valiant Macedon (who)
> Having in his conceit subdued the world
> Lamented that there were no more to conquer;[46]

and again he is

> . . . .that voluptuous rash
> Giddy, and drunken Macedon,[47]

Hephaestion plays an important role in Campaspe and is also mentioned in two other plays, always in reference to Alexander's love for him. Alcebiades, Theban politician and general, and Epaminondas, "who lived twice twenty years obscured in Thebes,"[48] are each mentioned in three dramas.

Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander, figures in two plays; and mention is once made of Flaminius, conqueror of Philip; Seleuc, his general; Perdiccus and Antigonus, generals of Alexander; Agesilaus and Archidamus, kings of Sparta, the latter of whom was "(inamoured) of his wooden doue;"[49] Themistocles, general and statesman; and Lycurgus, who resisted the worship of Bacchus in Sparta.

Roman and Greek history played a large part in the content of Renaissance drama, especially the former. Of this group, the most popular men characters were Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar, each mentioned in nine dramas; Cato and Nero in eight; Pompey, in seven, Brutus, in six; Tarquin and Cicero, in five; and Cassius, Antony, and Tiberius, in four each. Other Roman historical figures in the order of the number of

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[46] Massinger, The City Madam, IV, iii, 468.

[47] Sejanus, I, i, 250.

[48] Bussy d' Ambois, I, i, 520.

[49] Campaspe, V, iv, 632.

plays in which they are mentioned are: Vespasian; Romulus, Numa, Apicius, Octavio, Scipio Africanus, Germanicus, and Lepidus. Those mentioned only once are as follows: Titus, Caius Caesar, Proculus, Fabius Commentator, Caligula, Cataline, Diocletian, Mummius, Laelius, Aurelius, Metellus, Albutius, Lygdus, Aratus, Camillus, Accius Naevius, Otho, Decius, Turpnus, Pammenes, Brennus, Servius, Galba, Bolanus, Scaeva, Silanus, Furnius, Roscius, and Corbulo. Other Roman characters who figure in one play each are: Tigellius, Sophonius, Epaphroditus, Lucius Piso, Flaevius Scaevinus, Milichus, Subrius Flavius, C. Petronius Arbiter, and Narcissus in Nero; Sejanus, Drusus, Drusus, Jr., Lucius Arruntius, Caius Silius, Marcus Lepidus, Cremutius Cordus, Asinius Gallus, Regulus Terentius, Gracinus Laco, Eudemus, Rufus, Latiaris, Varro, Sertorius Macro, Cotta, Domitius Afer, Haterius, Pomponius, Julius Posthumus, Fulcinus Trio, Satrius Secundus, and Pinnareus Natta, in Sejanus; Trebatius Testa, Hermogenes Tigellius, Luscus, Maecenas, Aristius, Asinius, Lupus, and Pantilius Tucca in The Poetaster; and Aecius and Pontius in Valentinian.

Syracusan figures receiving mention in three plays each are Dionysius, Damon, and Pithias. Agathocles and Phalaris are mentioned once.

Hannibal of Carthage receives mention in four dramas.

Roman women who figure as characters or who are mentioned, in order of importance are: Lucrece, in nine dramas; Cleopatra, closely connected with Roman history, in five; and Agrippina, Messalina, Poppaea, Lais, and Julia, each in two. Other Roman women mentioned are: Apicata, Claudia Pulchra, Plancina, Nautilia Prisca, Lollia Paulina, Cynthia, Delia, Portia, Livia, Sosia, Eudoxia, Lucina, Cytheris, Plautia, and Boadicea.

The only Greek woman of actual historical significance mentioned is Aspasia. Alexander of Macedon, closely linked to Greek history, was, of all historical figures, the most important to the dramatists, being mentioned in fifteen dramas. Other Greek characters of importance to the drama are: Hephaestion, Alcebiades, Epaminondas, and Philip of Macedon. Greek characters who are mentioned only once are: Flaminius, Seleuc, Perdiccus, Antigonus, Agesilaus, Archidamus, Themistodes, and Lycurgus.

CHAPTER III

LEGENDARY HISTORY

Elizabethan drama abounds in references and allusions to Greek legendary history. Most of these allusions are almost inseparably interwoven with mythology, so that an absolute separation is well-nigh impossible; but some sort of basis of separation must be used. In this study, those figures which were not considered by the ancients to be divinities are considered to belong to legendary history, and with them are grouped such earthly figures as are most often used with them in the allusions. Certain ones of the earthly figures, however, whose names are bound up most closely with those of the gods, are discussed in the chapter on mythological allusions.

In another sense, legendary history is closely allied to literary history, in as much as the big names in literature are the source from which most classic legendary history is derived. Homer's Iliad furnishes certain historic myths which utilize events having a skeleton of fact, and his Odyssey furnishes romantic myths in which the adventures of the hero run riot with the imagination.

Besides Homer, there are other sources for certain semi-historical material. Hesiod is a most important source. The lyric poets, Stesichorus, Alcaeus, Sappho, Arion, Simonides, Anacreon, and Pindar, have contributed much to the knowledge of mythology and legendary adventures, as have the tragic dramatists, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Apollonius of Rhodes has contributed the adventures of Jason's quest for the fleece;

Theocritus, a group of rural idyls; and Herodotus, Apollodorus, and Pausanias, certain facts of semi-historical material.

Nor has the Roman contribution been slight. Vergil's Aeneid has contributed the wanderings of the Trojan figure, Aeneas; while Ovid's Metamorphoses has been a rich source for tales of mythical characters. In an indirect way, Horace, Catullus, and Tibullus have aided, and Seneca's tragedies are based on well-known Greek legends.

Almost all these authors of sources of legendary history are discussed as writers, in the chapter on literary history.

The Greek legendary figures fall naturally into several groups: those of the Older Heroes, whose exploits consist of the War against Laomedon of Troy, the Voyage for the Golden Fleece, and the Hunt of the Calydonian Boar; those of the Younger Heroes, consisting of the War of the Seven Against Thebes, the Wanderings of Ulysses, and the Adventures of Aeneas; and a group of miscellaneous characters, consisting of demigods, idyllic and poetic characters, and a few other individual figures. For the sake of clarity, the characters are in this study grouped together, in order to make clear which, of all the legendary heroes, were the most popular subjects to the dramatists. The women characters connected with their exploits are considered separately.

Hercules was by far the most popular personage of the ancient legendary heroes. He and his exploits are mentioned in thirty-five plays. The popularity of his exploits ranks as follows: the robbery of the golden apples of the Hesperides, in six dramas; the killing of the Lernean

Hydra, in four; the killing of the Nemean lion, in three; the removal of the horses of Diomedes and his struggle with the Pygmies, each in two; and the cleaning of the Augean stables, and his "pashing the jaws of serpents venomous,"[1] each in one.

Robert Greene revives the story of Hercules in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, when he has Vandermast, the scholar, promise:

> . . . .as Alcmena's bastard raz'd this tree,
> So will I raise him up as when he liv'd
> And cause him pull the dragon from his seat,
> And tear the branches piecemeal from the root.--
> Hercules! prodi, prodi, Hercules![2]

Hercules appears, clad in his lion's skin, and is commanded by Vandermast:

> Jove's bastard son, thou Libyan Hercules,
> Pull off the sprigs from off th' Hesperian tree,
> As once thou did'st to win the golden fruit.[3]

But Vandermast has started more than he is able to finish, for Bacon's power is greater over Hercules than his, and he finds himself unable to charm the fiend.

Paris, "the pride of vaunting Troy,"[4] was next in popularity with Renaissance dramatists, being mentioned in twelve plays. His courtship of Oenone,

> . . . .Paris, when Oenone lov'd him well,
> Forgot he was the son of Priamus
> All clad in grey, sat piping on a reed,[5]

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[1] Marlowe, Tamburlaine, The First Part, III, iii, p. 21.

[2] Greene, The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, p.196.

[3] Loc. cit.

[4] Ibid., p. 181.

[5] Greene, Orlando Furioso, II, i, p. 187.

and his choice of the three beauties, being the most popular stories about him:

> . . . .this was Paris' care,
> And he was blind in't, and there was great cause;
> For how was't possible he could judge aright,
> Having three amorous goddesses in view?[6]

Theseus receives mention in eleven plays, in connection with his desertion of Ariadne, his struggle with the Centaurs, and with the Minotaur. Achilles,

> . . . .the Myrmidon
> Trap't in the tress of Polyxena,
> Who, amid the glory of his chivalry,
> Sat daunted with a maid of Asia,[7]

and Orpheus, with his Thracian lyre, are used each in ten dramas. Orpheus's story is told in the words of the author of Nero:

> They tell of Orpheus, when he took his lute
> And moved the noble ivory with his touch,
> Hebrus stood still, Pangaeus bowed his head,
> Ossa then first shook off his snow, and came
> To listen to the movings of his song;
> . . . .
> He then twice-lost Eurydice bewails
> And Proserpine's vain gifts, and makes the shores
> And hollow caves of forests, now untrod,
> Bear his griefs company, and all things teacheth
> His lost love's name; then water, air, and ground,
> "Eurydice, Eurydice," resound.[8]

Hector, who

> . . . .'fore Achilles' tent
> Trotting his courser softly on the plains
> Proudly dar'd forth the stoutest youth of Greece;[9]

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[6] Webster, The Duchess of Malfi, III, ii, p. 538.

[7] Orlando Furioso, op. cit., p. 185.

[8] Nero, III, ii, p. 42. (Author unknown)

[9] Orlando Furioso, I, i, p. 175.

is referred to in nine dramas; while Ulysses is mentioned in only eight, a fact somewhat contrary to the statement made by Herzberg concerning poetry in general, that "of all the figures of the Trojan War, Ulysses has received most attention,"[10] and has become the best known figure of its succeeding events. His sojourn with Circe, his passing of the dangerous rock of the sirens, and his adventure with Polyphemus have most won the interest of the writers.

The several names which are each used by the dramatists in six plays are: Agamemnon, Orestes, Menelaus, "cuckold of Sparta,"[11] Jason, in connection with the search for the golden fleece, and Ixion, pinned to the wheel in Hades. The latter's adventures with Juno are used to point a moral:

> . . . Ixion aiming
> To embrace Juno, bosomed but a cloud,
> And begat Centaurs; 'tis a useful moral:
> Ambition hatched in clouds of mere opinion
> Proves but in birth a prodigy.[12]

Dramatists use the names of Daedalus and Priam in five plays. Priam's state of mind portrays the fate of Troy:

> . . . Priam was happy,
> Happy indeed; he saw his Troy burnt
> And Ilion lie in heaps, whilst the pure stream,
> Divine Scamander, did run Phrygian blood
> And heard the pleasant cries of Trojan mothers.[13]

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[10] Max Herzberg, Myths and their Meaning (Boston: Alleyn and Bacon, ©1928), p. 275.

[11] Jonson, Volpone, I, i, p. 11.

[12] Ford, The Broken Heart, IV, i, pp. 247-48.

[13] Nero, III, iii, p. 44.

Used by the authors in four dramas each, are the following: Pylades, Nestor, Lynceus, Castor and Pollux (sometimes as the Gemini), Oedipus, in relation to the Sphinx and the War of the Seven Against Thebes, Tityrus (his punishment in Hades), Pyrrhus, who

> . . . .striding o'er the cinders, stood
> On ground where Troy late was, and with his eye
> Measured the height of what he had thrown down,
> A city great in people and in power,
> . . . .now forgives
> The ten-year seige, and thinks his wounds well-healed,
> Bathed in the blood of Priam's fifty sons.[14]

and, strangely, Aeneas, referred to generally in connection with the episodes of Dido and Lavinia.

Mentioned three times by the dramatists are Damon, the ideal singer; Ajax; Hippolytus; Icarus, whose "waxen wings did mount above his reach";[15] "shoulder pieced" Pelops, who skillfully guided his horses for the winning of Oenomaus' daughter; Tantalus, who tells his own story:

> . . . .I am Tantalus; my longed for fruit
> Bobs at my lips, yet still it shrinks from me;[16]

and Leander, lover of Hero. Ben Jonson spends considerable time modernizing the story of the lovers of the Hellespont for the puppet show of Leatherhead--an instance when the dramatists use the old tales to serve a humorous purpose.

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[14] Nero, III, iv, pp. 48-49.

[15] Marlowe, Faustus, I, p. 41.

[16] Field, Amends for Ladies, IV, i, p. 462.

The remaining legendary heroes receive only one or two references each, and may be dismissed with a few words. Those mentioned in two dramas only, are Tereus,

> . . . .th' adulterous Thracian king,
> That fed upon the substance of his child,[17]

Meleager, Turnus, Romulus, Musaeus (semi-mythical bard), Perseus, Cadmus,

> . . . .he that build the walls of Thebes
> With ravishing sound of his melodious harp;[18]

Sisyphus, who

> . . . .was damned
> To roll the ceaseless stone;[19]

and Tiresias, prophet of Thebes. The list of those mentioned only once is long, and sometimes surprising, as many of them are names now used commonly: Athamas, driven by furies in the dumb show prefacing the fourth act of Gorboduc, Erichthonius, Alcmaeon, Pandarus, Euphorbus, Bellides, Demophon, Diomede, Teucer, Neoptolemus, Patroclus, Aegisthus (paramour of Clytemnestra), Amphion, Tityrus, Alexis, and Daphnis (ideal shepherds who appear as characters in The Faithful Shepherdess), Telegonus, Sinon, Anchises, Aeson, Aethelides, Eteocles and Polynices, Peleus, Capaneus, Creon, Pirothous (a character in Two Noble Kinsmen), and Bellerophon with his horse Pegasus.

"Although women played comparatively an insignificant part in Greek civilization," says H. A. Haring, "it is by no means an insignificant place

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[17] Tamburlaine, The First Part, IV, iv, p. 27.

[18] Faustus, II, ii, p. 50.

[19] Jonson, The Alchemist, II, i, p. 322.

which the women of Greece fill in modern literature and art. That Greek women were beautiful, and that their beauty was highly appreciated, there can be no doubt."[20] This statement applies equally as well to the Renaissance drama, and includes the Trojan women as well as the Greek.

It is not surprising that Helen of Troy occupies more space in the content of the drama than any other woman; she is referred to in sixteen plays. John Drinkwater has this to say of her:

> Of all the great "matter of Greece and Rome," the deepest and most lasting impression has undoubtedly been made by the story of Helen of Troy, with all the remarkable incidents that followed in the train of her abduction by Paris. . . . .The references to Helen and her contemporaries are innumerable.[21] Upon the poets of all time, Helen of Troy has exercised her fascination. . . . .Since Homer, the poets and dramatists of all literature have again and again endeavored to picture her concretely, or by suggestion.[22]

Robert Greene terms her

> . . . .that Greekish giglot's love
> That left her lord, Prince Menelaus,
> And with a swain made scape away to Troy.[23]

Faustus chooses, from all the delights of the world that are his for the asking, to see the face of "that peerless dame, that heavenly Helen,"[24] and at her appearance, utters the lines that are considered the most magnificent of all words ever written about her.

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[20] H. A. Haring, "Greek women in modern literature and art," Living Age, CCCXII (January, 1922), 97.

[21] John Drinkwater, The Outline of Literature (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1923), I, p. 273.

[22] Ibid., p. 274.

[23] Orlando Furioso, op. cit., p. 174.

[24] Faustus, V, i, p. 60.

Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.--
Her lips suck forth my soul; see where it flies!--
Come, Helen, come give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for Heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colors on my plumed crest;
Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appeared to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour.[25]

"No such verses had ever been heard on the English stage before, and this was one of the great debts our language owes to Marlowe."[26]

Dido, the Carthaginian queen, who

. . . .from a cold sea rock,
Full with her sorrow. . . . .tied fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan ships,[27]

Penelope, the chaste, and Medea, the sorceress, were next in popularity with the dramatists, being mentioned in six, five, and five dramas, respectively. Medea enters the scene of Gorboduc, driven by a fury for having murdered her own children; and in Alphonsus, King of Arragon she again conjures, resulting in Calchas' charge to her:

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[25] Faustus, op. cit., p. 60-61.

[26] James Russell Lowell, The Old English Dramatists (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1893), p. 51.

[27] Beaumont and Fletcher, The Maid's Tragedy, II, ii, p. 853.

Thou wretched witch, when wilt thou make an end
Of troubling us with these, thy cursed charms?
What meanest thou to call me from my grave?
Shall ne'er my ghost obtain his quiet rest?[28]

Forlorn Ariadne, deserted by Theseus, and Oenone, deserted by Paris, each figures in four dramas; while Circe and Niobe figure in three each, and Eurydice and Hecuba,

. . . .the woefull'st witch
That ever lived to make a mirror of,[29]

in two, each.

Many are the names, Greek and Trojan, of women appearing only once: Calypso, Hero, Andromeda, Progne and Philomel, Ino and Althea (who enter the scene of Gorboduc driven by furies, as dread examples to Isabella), Clytemnestra, Iphigenia, Andromache, Penthesilea, queen of the Amazons, Polyxena, Anaxarete, Hippolyta, Iole, Dejanira (the murderous wife of Hercules), Lavinia, Megaera, Phyllis (the love of Demophon), and Hypermnesta, "that saved her lord and husband, (when) forty-nine of her sisters cut their husbands' throats all in one night."[30]

The subject of legendary history would hardly be complete without a few words as to the importance of the whole story of the Trojan War to the composition of plays of Elizabethan days. "Ilion's fall" and "destroyed Troy" are on the tongues of all classes of character from kings to rustics; and the story of the Trojan horse is one to point many morals.

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[28] Greene, Alphonsus, King of Arragon, III, ii, p. 88.

[29] Sackville and Norton, Gorboduc, II, i, p. 25.

[30] Webster, The White Devil, V, vi, p. 978.

It is a simple problem to judge concerning the abundant evidence of revived interest in classic legendary history during the period of Renaissance drama-writing. The many allusions to the subject point without question to the verity of the statement that the dramatists and their audiences were intensely interested in classic legendary history. It was for them "a rich source of a many-colored stream of associations."[31]

The following facts may be again stated, by way of conclusion:

Hercules was, by far, the most popular personage of ancient legendary heroes. His exploits in the order of their importance are: the robbing of the golden apples; the killing of the Lernean Hydra; the killing of the Nemean Lion; the removal of the horses of Diomede and his struggle with the Pygmies; and his destruction of the serpents.

Paris is mentioned in twelve dramas; Theseus, in connection with Ariadne, the Centaurs, and the Minotaur, in eleven; and Achilles and Orpheus, each in ten. Hector is referred to in nine dramas, Ulysses in eight, and in connection with him the sirens, Circe, and Polyphemus. Used in six plays each are the names of Agamemnon, Orestes, Menelaus, Jason, and Ixion; in five, Daedalus and Priam; and in four, Pylades, Nestor, Lynceus, Castor and Pollux, Oedipus, Tityrus, Pyrrhus, and Aeneas.

Others, in the order of their importance, are: Damon, Ajax, Hippolytus, Icarus, Pelops, Tantalus, and Leander; Tereus, Meleager, Turnus, Musaeus, Perseus, Cadmus, Sisyphus, Tiresias, and Romulus; and those referred to only once: Athamas, Erichthonius, Alcmaeon, Pandarus, Euphorbus, Bellides,

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[31] Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota, 1932), p. 4.

Demophon, Diomede, Teucer, Neoptolemus, Patroclus, Aegisthus, Amphion, Tityrus, Alexis, Daphnis, Telegonus, Sinon, Anchises, Aeson, Aethelides, Eteocles, Polynices, Peleus, Capaneus, Creon, Pirothous, and Bellerophon.

Helen of Troy, among legendary women, ranks first, mentioned in sixteen plays; and Dido, Penelope, and Medea, next. The remaining semi-historical figures, mentioned in the order of their importance are: Ariadne and Oenone; Circe and Niobe; Eurydice and Hecuba; and those mentioned only once are: Calypso, Hero, Andromeda, Progne and Philomel, Ino and Althea, Clytemnestra, Iphigenia, Andromache, Penthesilea, Polyxena, Anaxarete, Hippolyta, Iole, Dejanira, Lavinia, Megaera, Phyllis, and Hypermnestra.

CHAPTER IV

MYTHOLOGY

The drama of the Elizabethans is steeped in Greek and Latin mythology to an extent difficult to evaluate. The playwrights have regarded these ancient legends with joy and have adopted them as their own in line after line. Charles M. Gayley has this to say upon the general use of classic mythology:

> Interwoven with the fabric of. . . .English literature, of. . . .epics, dramas, lyrics, and novels, of. . . .essays and orations, like a golden warp where the woof is too often of silver, are the myths of certain ancient nations.[1] Classic mythology has been for. . . .poetry, sculpture, and painting, a treasure house replete with golden tales and glimmering thoughts, passions in the rough and smooth, and fancies rich bejeweled.[2] They are, like Virgil's Shadows that flit by the Lethean stream until at beck of Fate they revisit upper day and the ever-tranquil stars, 'ghosts of far-off things and battles long ago.'[3]

Elizabethan drama is weighted heavily with allusions to classical mythology, even among the most diverse minds. Though beautiful simply as tales and as the record of the history of religious ideals and moral conduct, they are, besides, put by the playwrights to the most diverse uses: "as vehicles for sermons on morality, for mystical theology, for obscene burlesque, for decorative tapestry, for human comedy and tragedy, for poems of escape

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[1] Charles M. Gayley, The Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art (Boston: Ginn and Company, ©1911), p. 1.

[2] Ibid., p. xxx of Introduction.

[3] Loc. cit.

from life, and for humanitarian amelioration of life."[4]

To the gods and heroes were accorded a moral license and freedom of conduct that gave room for the wildest adventures; consequently, the dramatists had a rich field upon which to draw. Some of these deities have naturally been greater favorites than others; and their contacts with other gods and with mortals compose an intricate pattern of adventures, woven into the content of the dramas. Many of their plots would suffer a complete breakdown, were the mythological element removed, as mythology forms the basis for drama after drama. Even in plays not essentially based on myth, the characters put utmost dependence upon the divinities. They are all-powerful, sometimes loving in their supreme judgment, but more often vengeful. They prolong life or cut off the thread of days, at their own discretion. Their exploits are common knowledge to almost every character in the dramas; and the wrath or love of the gods is called down upon every hand, whether the play be fundamentally mythical or not. The abode of the gods on Olympus, their sacred mountains of Ida, Hebrus, Ossa, Pindus, Parnassus, and Oete, their oracles at Delphi, Castalia, and Trophonius, their favorite vale of Tempe in Thessaly, their banquets of nectar and ambrosia, and their temple, Pantheon, are in the conversations of the characters continually.

The Romans being by nature a practical, not a poetic, people, incorporated in their literature the mythology of the Greeks. In the beginning, the worship of certain Roman gods was developed independent of the

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[4] Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota, 1932), p. 4.

Greek religion, in Italy; but they were later, for the most part, identified with the Greek gods and assumed their characters and adventures. Their names were used interchangeably so that references to them, by the dramatists through their characters, are confusing, sometimes the Roman and sometimes the Greek name being used. Hence, in this study, they are not differentiated, except in the case of the few native Latin divinities who retained an individuality in Roman literature.

Of these, the most popular with the dramatists was the goddess Fortune, or Fortuna, who with her wheel threads her way through the content of thirty-five dramas, in one of which, Old Fortunatus, she is a character, trampling on kings and singing her song of supremacy:

> This world is Fortune's ball, wherewith she sports
> . . . .
> She sits and smiles to hear some curse her name.
> And some with adoration crown her fame.[5]

and her song of choice to Fortunatus:

> Six gifts I spend upon mortality,
> Wisdom, strength, health, beauty, long life and riches,
> Out of my bounty, one of these is thine.[6]
>
> Before thy soul at this deep lottery
> Draws forth her prize, . . .
> Know that there is no recanting a first choice.[7]

Against all warnings, Fortunatus chooses her prize of wealth, giving opportunity for Fortune's ultimate gloating over his misfortunes: "What

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[5] Dekker, Old Fortunatus, I, i, pp. 296-97.

[6] Ibid., p. 300.

[7] Ibid., p. 301.

have you gained by being covetous?"[8] Even Fortune, "world's empress," "damned sorceress," and "dread sovereign," must accede, in the end, supremacy to virtue. Thomas Kyd fittingly describes this goddess:

> Fortune, whose foot (is) standing on a rolling stone,
> And mind more mutable than fickle winds.[9]

Sejanus attempts to propitiate Fortune into smiling upon his aspirations:

> Great mother Fortune, queen of human state,
> Redress of actions, arbitress of fate,
> To whom all sway, all power, all empire, bows,
> Be present and propitious to our vows.[10]

But Fortune only turns away her head, and Sejanus, enraged, overturns her image, declaring her but his servant:

> How Fortune plies her sports, when she begins
> To practice 'em! pursues, continues, adds,
> Confounds with varying her impassion'd moods![11]

In the end, Fortune proves his undoing, and Sejanus meets his downfall.

To Webster, Fortune is

> . . . .a right whore:
> If she give aught, she does it in small parcels,
> That she may take away all at one swoop.[12]

Next in dramatic popularity among the essentially Roman gods and goddesses were Luna and Flora, goddess of flowers (sometimes called Chloris),

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[8] Old Fortunatus, V, iii, p. 380.

[9] Kyd, The Spanish Tragedy, I, i, p. 215.

[10] Jonson, Sejanus, V, iv, p. 276.

[11] Sejanus, V, x, p. 284.

[12] Webster, The White Devil, I, i, p. 930.

with her shrine at Eleusis, whom the dramatists mention in seven plays, in one of which, The Parliament of Bees, she is a character.* Sol,** is used in six dramas, Janus and Bellona each in five, and Tellus in three, in one of which, Endymion, she is the jealous aspirant for Endymion's love. Lucina, Vertumnus, Priapus, and the Fauns are each mentioned in two dramas; while Comus, the Silvani, and the Lares are each in one.

The divinities of heaven are alluded to more than any other group of gods and goddesses by the dramatists. It is not surprising that Jove or Jupiter is referred to in more dramas than any other god; that is, in forty-seven of the eighty under consideration,*** as the thunderer, mighty and vengeful, and lord and commander of the elements. Sometimes his connection with the overthrow of Saturn is dominant, but more often his name is used in connection with his many love affairs and Juno's jealousy. Danae was the most popular subject of all Jove's amorous adventures. Robert Greene gives a complete picture of Jove's admiration of Danae:

> What did avail the castle all of steel,
> Which Acrisius caused to be made
> To keep his Danae clogg'd in,
> She was with child for all her castle's force,
> And by that child, Acrisius, her sire
> Was after slain. . . . . .[13]

Seven plays contain references to Leda, "whom Jove deceived in likeness of

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[13] Greene, Alphonsus, King of Arragon, III, iii, pp. 45-46.

* As she is so closely identified with Diana, she is discussed under that heading.

** Cf. post, p. 45, Apollo.

*** The number of references throughout this study are based upon actual mention plus direct allusions.

a swan."[14] Beaumont and Fletcher tell her story thus:

> Leda, sailing on a stream
> To deceive the hopes of man,
> Love accounting but a dream,
> Doted on a silver swan.[15]

Five dramas contain references to each of "fair Europa, mounted on her bull,"[16] Alcmena, "to whom Jove came in shape of Amphitrion,* her husband, and begat Hercules,"[17] Latona, and Semele. The story of Io metamorphosed is used three times; while her watcher, hundred-eyed Argos, is referred to four times. One reference is made to Arethusa and one to Antiope, two others of Jove's loves. Jove's supping "with poor Baucis" is once mentioned, but his love for the beautiful boy Ganymede is nine times referred to.

The stories about Venus or Aphrodite, the lovely goddess of beauty, offered an almost inexhaustible mine of materials to the dramatists, who took advantage of the fact, to use her name in forty plays. To them she was "fair queen of love," Mars' paramour, Cytherea, Erycena, or Cyprus; while her train of sparrows, her doves, her girdle, and her myrtle were matters of common knowledge. Stories of wanton Venus are closely connected with those of Mars, and Vulcan's consequent jealousy, and with her small

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[14] Lyly, Campaspe, III, iii, p. 622.

[15] Fletcher, Valentinian, II, v, p. 447.

[16] Marlowe, Tamburlaine, The Second Part, I, i, p. 90.

[17] Campaspe, III, iii, p. 622.

[18] Prologue to Campaspe, p. 610.

* Amphitrion receives one other mention.

son, Cupid. In Cambises she and Cupid advance the plot by their scheming:

> Come forth, my son, unto my attentive eares resign;
> What I pretend, see you frequent, to force this game
> of mine.
> The king a kinswoman hath, adorned with beauty store;
> And I wish that Diana's gifts, they twain shall keep no more,
> But use my silver sugred game their joys for to augment.
> When I do speak, to wound his heart, Cupid my son, consent.
> And shoot at him the shaft of love that beares the head
> of golde,
> To wound his heart in lovers wise, his greefe for to
> unfold.[19]

Cupid replies:

> Mother, I mean for to obey as you have whole decreed;
> But you must tell me, mother deere, when I shall
> arrow draw,
> Els your request to be attain'd will not be worth
> a straw;
> I am blinde and cannot see, but stil do shoot
> by gesse,--
> The poets wel, in places store, of my might doo expresse.[20]

Then Venus answers:

> Cupid, my son, when time shall serve that thou shalt do
> this deed,
> Then warning I to thee will give, but see thou shoot
> with speed.[21]

In Alphonsus, King of Arragon, Venus defends Calliope, muse of epic poetry, against the other disputing muses, and offers to become her pupil. She also anticipates the action of each act. Palamon's eulogy to Venus is impressive:

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[19] Preston, Cambises, p. 658.

[20] Loc. cit.

[21] Loc. cit.

> Hail sovereign queen of secrets! who has power
> To call the fiercest tyrant from his rage,
> And weep unto a girl; . . . .
> What godlike power
> Hast thou not power upon?[22]

Venus' love for Adonis was an extremely popular subject, being mentioned in five dramas. One of the most representative passages on this subject is Chloe's words spoken of Daphnis, the shepherd:

> How the sight of those smooth-rising cheeks renews the story
> Of young Adonis, when in pride and glory
> He lay unfolded 'twixt the beating arms
> Of willing Venus![23]

Only once does the reader hear of

> That sweet boy who wrought bright Venus' bane,
> Transformed into a purple Hyacinth.[24]

Pygmalion, a devotee of Venus, and his ivory girl Galatea are mentioned twice by the playwrights.

Apollo or Phoebus, the shining god of poetry and light, was a subject of much inspiration to the dramatists, with his heliotrope, his bays, his lyre, and Phlegon, his fiery horse. He is often mentioned as Sol, and is once confused with the Egyptian god of the sun, Harpocrates. His name weaves through thirty-nine dramas. Robert Greene describes him thus:

> . . . .the burnish'd gates
> From whence Latona's son doth march,
> When, mounted on his coach, tinselled with flames,
> He triumphs to the beauty of the heavens;[25]

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[22] Beaumont and Fletcher, Two Noble Kinsmen, V, i, pp. 465-66.

[23] Fletcher, The Faithful Shepherdess, I, iii, p. 338.

[24] Greene, A Looking Glass for London and England, I, i, p. 82.

[25] Greene, Orlando Furioso, I, ii, p. 80.

Marlowe unwittingly refers to his own ill-timed death in his classic epilogue to Faustus:

> Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight
> And burned is Apollo's laurel bough,[26]

The adventure of Apollo that appealed most to the dramatists is his promise to Phaeton to drive his horses of the sun across the heavens, and its consequences. In fourteen plays this example of the rash charioteer is used. One of the best examples is that of Marlowe:

> As precious is the charge thou undertakest
> As that which Clymene's brainsick son did guide,
> When wandering Phoebe's ivory cheeks were scorched,[27]

Apollo's struggle with the Python is once mentioned. Most important to the dramatists' uses were Apollo's loves, of which there are many reminiscences: Thetis, ten;

> The sun, unable to sustain the sight,
> Shall hide his head in Thetis' watery lap;[28]

Daphne, four, who

> . . . .for her peaceful flight,
> Became a fruitless bay-tree;[29]

Clytie, two; and Dryope, Semele, and Cassandra, to whom he gave "the gift of prophecy with the curse that spake she never so true, that she should never be believed,"[30] each one. Apollo's Delphic Oracle, with its inter-

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[26] Marlowe, Faustus, V, ii, p. 63.

[27] Tamburlaine, The First Part, IV, ii, p. 25.

[28] Tamburlaine, The Second Part, I, iii, p. 105.

[29] Webster, The Duchess of Malfi, III, ii, p. 538.

[30] Lyly, Endymion, IV, i, p. 161.

pretation of the philosopher Tecnicus, forms the basis for the plot of The Broken Heart. The interpretation of the oracle's utterance that revenge proves its own executioner brings about the death of Orgilus, avenger of his sister's fate, and the resulting calamities of the other characters. Such a firm belief in mythological prophecies is typical of the dramatists' use of classic superstitions.

The Fates or Destinies, Atropos, Clotho, and Lachesis, were next in importance with the poets, references being made to them in thirty-four plays, as the fatal sisters, the Parcae, the "sisters three with cruel hands,"[31] and to the "sharpness of the Sisters' shears"[32] and their "strong and even thread."[33]

Cupid, or Eros, already touched upon in connection with Venus, receives mention in thirty-two dramas. His playful mischievousness and tyrant darts are important:

> Cupid is Venus' only boy
> But he is a wanton boy,
> * * * *
> Why should not Venus chide her son
> For the pranks that he hath done,
> * * * *
> He shoots his fiery darts as quick,
> Ah me with cruel wounding.[34]

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[31] Edwards, Damon and Pithias, p. 584.

[32] Alphonsus, King of Arragon, II, ii, p. 29.

[33] Dekker, The Shoemaker's Holiday, II, i, p. 214.

[34] Middleton, A Chaste Maid in Cheapside, IV, i, p. 231.

O Cupid, monarch over kings
Wherefore hast thou feet and wings?
It is to show how swift thou art,
When thou wound'st a tender heart;
Thy wings being clipped, and feet held still,
Thy bow could not so many kill;[35]

and the cause for his blindness:

Cupid and my Campaspe playd
At cardes for kisses, Cupid payd.
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows.
His mother's doves and teeme of sparrows
Looses them too. Then down he throwes
The corrall of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystall of his brow;
And then the dimple of his chinne.
All these did my Campaspe winne;
At last he set her both his eyes;
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.[36]

In Cynthia's Revels, Cupid and Mercury vie with each other as to which is cleverest. Each chides the other for his menial tasks; then to prove their cleverness, they plan to go disguised among the onlookers at the revels, shooting Cupid's arrows promiscuously. Were it not for the invulnerability of the objects of his trickery, much mischief would have been set on foot. Thus does Cupid advance Ben Jonson's plot.

Diana, or Artemis, ideal of maidenly grace and vigor, is a popular study of ancient literature, and the dramas of Elizabeth's day are filled with references to her--twenty-six in all. Sometimes she is Cynthia, Delia, Phoebe, or Selene, or the "shining lamp of night."[37] During the revels presented in the vale of Gargaphie, at which Cynthia presides, Hesper, the

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[35] Lyly, Mother Bombie, III, iii, pp. 59-60.

[36] Campaspe, III, iv, p. 626.

[37] Alphonsus, King of Arragon, II, ii, p. 30.

evening star, presents a eulogy to her:

> Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
> Now the sun is laid to sleep,
> Seated in thy silver chair,
> State in wonted manner keepe:
> Hesperus entreats thy lite,
> Goddess, excellently bright.
> . . . .
> Lay thy bow of pearl apart
> And thy crystal shining quiver;
> Give unto the flying hart
> Span to breathe, how short soever:
> Thou that mak'st a day or night
> Goddess excellently bright.[38]

Beaumont and Fletcher describe her thus:

> O sacred, shadowy, cold, and constant queen,
> Abandoner of revels, mute, and contemplative,
> Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure as wind-fanned snow,[39]

Lyly bases his Endymion upon the myth of Diana's love for the shepherd-boy. However, he reverses the plot, making Endymion, representing probably the Earl of Leicester, hopelessly pine for the moon, and Cynthia, representing Elizabeth, wake him with her kiss. Six other dramas use the same material.

The Faithful Shepherdess contains the story:

> . . . .the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
> . . . .saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
> She took eternal fire that never dies;
> . . . .she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
> His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
> Head of old Latmus, where she stoops each night,
> Gilding the mount, with her brother's light,
> To kiss her sweetheart.[40]

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[38] Jonson, Cynthia's Revels, V, iii, pp. 286-7.

[39] Two Noble Kinsmen, V, i, p. 468.

[40] The Faithful Shepherdess, I, iii, pp. 335-336.

Diana's connection with Actaeon and the hounds is used as material in five dramas, and she and her nymphs, Arete, Time, Phronesis, and Thauma, devoted to the single life, preside at her festivities in Cynthia's Revels, when Cupid and Mercury attempt to stir up mischief among them.

Juno or Hera and Mercury or Hermes are each mentioned in twenty-five dramas. Juno is a character in the masque of Women Beware Women, in which her nymphs toast her and her peacocks. Her jealousy of Jove is her uppermost characteristic as portrayed by the playwrights, though the authors using her name usually merely mention her. Lyly calls her "Juno, who would turn Jupiter's lovers to beasts on the earth,"[41] and Chapman refers to her in connection with the myth of Typheon: "Even out of earth, ...Juno struck this giant,"[42] Mercury, bright Maia's son, is not dwelt upon to a great extent, except in a very casual fashion. His entrapping of Argus by his ready trickery,

> Unlovely trull that Mercury entrapp'd
> Within the curious pleasure of his tongue,[43]

and his mischievousness with Cupid in attempting to cause havoc 'mongst Cynthia's nymphs are his chief activities played upon.

References to Mars or Ares, red-eyed god of war, with his eagle and sword, occur in twenty-four dramas, though the material of his exploits is not given much space by the writers. His connection with Venus, and Vulcan's resulting jealousy are uppermost:

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[41] Endymion, I, i, p. 147.

[42] Chapman, Bussy d'Ambois, III, ii, p. 537.

[43] A Looking Glass for London and England, I, i, pp. 83-84.

Mars, when he held bright Venus on his knee,
And saw the limping smith come from his forge[44]

His son, Phobetor, god of fear, is mentioned once.

The Muses were a subject of much interest to the writers, who credit them in prologue or epilogue with their own inspiration. Twenty plays contain references to them. Orlando, wandering in the forest and reading the love poems on the trees, asks:

. . . .are Muses masking in these trees,
Framing their ditties in conceited lines,[45]

They enter and sing in Damon and Pithias. In Alphonsus, King of Arragon, Melpomene, Clio, Erato, and Calliope enter, the latter hanging her head and not playing upon her instrument. This is the author's symbolical representation of the dramatists' neglect of epic poetry. The Muses are, at various times, the "Pierides" or the "Thespian girls," and their fountains of Hippocrene and Helicon furnish constant inspiration to the poets.

Pallas, or Athena, and Hymen are referred to in fourteen and thirteen plays, respectively. In connection with Pallas is Arachne, who competed with her in weaving a tapestry. In Women Beware Women, Hymen, clad in saffron, presents a wedding masque.

Divinities of heaven receiving references in eight plays are Mars, or Death, with sable wings, and Cimmerian clouds; Vesta and her Vestals:

. . . .kindling holy fires
Never dreaming loose desires,[46]

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[44] Ibid., III, iii, p. 11.

[45] Orlando Furioso, II, i, p. 189.

[46] Valentinian, II, v, p. 447.

Vulcan or Hephaestus, "the limping smith,"[47] with his tongs, his net, and his forge (Mount Aetna), in relation to his plot against Silius and his contest with Xanthus; and Aurora or Eos, the "grey-eyed morn,"[48] and her love for Tithonus and Cephalus.

Nemesis or Revenge, "she that rules in Rhamn(u)s' golden gates,"[49] receives seven references by the dramatists; and the Graces, Aesculapius, Hesper, and Boreas or Aquilo, who is characterized in the masque of The Maid's Tragedy as having broken his chains and stirred up the sea, are each used in six dramas. Marlowe aptly describes the latter:

> Auster and Aquilon with winged steeds,
> All sweating, tilt about the watery Heavens,
> With shivering spears enforcing thunder claps,
> And from their shields strike flames of lightening.[50]

Zephyrus or Favonius, the south wind, and Aolus, god of winds, both of whom appear in The Maid's Tragedy masque are mentioned in five plays. Lucifer, the Morning Star, is made reference to in three dramas; so is Iris, the Rainbow, and Hebe, cup-bearer to the gods, who toasts love in Women Beware Women. Ate, goddess of infatuation, and angry Themis are twice mentioned. Those heavenly divinities receiving one mention only are the god of the river (probably Alpheus), who saves Amoret from a watery grave prepared by the Sullen Shepherd, and Auster, the south wind.

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[47] A Looking Glass for London and England, III, iii, p. 111.

[48] Bussy d'Ambois, V, iv, p. 556.

[49] Tamburlaine, The First Part, II, iii, p. 13.

[50] Tamburlaine, The First Part, III, ii, p. 19.

The use by the dramatists of spirits in the sky is interesting. Bootes,

> . . . .thou that driv'st thy frozen wain
> Round as a ring, and bring a second night,[51]

is mentioned in six dramas; the Hesperides, guardian of the golden apples, of whom was Erythea with her silver bow, in five; Sirius, or the Dog, in four; and Orion, Arcturus, the Triones, Cassiopeia, Canopus, the Pleiades, and Taurus, each in one. The imaginary zones of the zodiac receive mention as follows: Libra, Scorpio, and Aries, the Ram, each two; and the Bear, the Lion, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Pisces, and Cancer, each one.

Myths of the underworld rank next in importance in the content of the dramas. Among these, the Furies are of most importance. Twenty-five dramas contain references to them. Gorboduc contains an apt description:

> The dreadful Furies, daughters of the night,
> With serpents girt, carrying the whip of ire,
> With hair and stinging snakes, and shining bright
> With flames of blood and with a brand of fire,[52]

In the same drama, three furies, Alecto, Megaera, and Tisiphone, clad in black garments, enter, each driving before her a king or queen, who, moved by furies, has slain his own children, a symbol presented by the dramatist of the fate of Isabella, murderess of her son.

Fifteen dramas make use of stories of Pluto, infernal king, sometimes as Dis, sometimes as Plutus, personification of underground wealth, most often in connection with Proserpine:

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[51] The Faithful Shepherdess, IV, iv, p. 380.

[52] Sackville and Norton, Gorboduc, IV, ii, p. 40.

O thou that sway'st the region under earth
. . . .
Come as thou did'st in fruitful Sicily,
Surveying all the glories of the land,
And, as thou took'st the fair Proserpina,
. . . .
For love, for honor, and to make her queen,[53]

Proserpine was almost as popular a subject as Pluto, being mentioned in eleven dramas. Sometimes it is a reference to Pirothous' love for her; sometimes it is in connection with her aid for Orpheus; but most often it is in connection with Pluto's seizure of her. Other inhabitants of Hades, in the order of their relative importance to the content of the plays, are Charon and Cerberus, in nine dramas each; Hecate, in eight; Hydra in seven; the judges of the underworld: Rhadamanthus, in five, and Eacus and Minos, each in two; Morpheus and Briareus, hundred-headed giant, in two; and Somnus in one. The regions of darkness seem to have enthralled the dramatists. Fiends of hell and infernal spirits everywhere abound, and references to Elysium, Stygian fields, lakes, and pools, nine fold-trenched Phlegethon, the dark Avern, Erebus, Lethe, Cocytus lake, Tartarian streams, Acheron, and Orcus' looming gulf are legion.

Among the gods of the earth, Bacchus, with his attendant Maenads and worshipping Bacchanals, looms large, sometimes as Lyaeus or sometimes as Evion, mentioned in twelve dramas. Nathaniel Field gives this sensuous picture of the god:

Bacchus drawn from Nysa down with tigers
Curbing with viny reins their wilful heads,--
Whilst some do gape upon his ivory Thyrse,
Some on the dangling grapes that crown his head,[54]

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[53] Tamburlaine, The Second Part, IV, iv, p. 146.

[54] Nero, I, iii, p. 17.

In Valentinian he is presented thus:

> God Lyaeus ever young,
> Ever honoured, ever sung,
> Stained with blood of lusty grapes,
> In a thousand lusty shapes,
> . . . .
> From thy plenteous hand divine,
> Let a river run with wine.
> God of youth, let this day here
> Enter neither care nor fear![55]

Mentioned with Bacchus are Silenus, his tutor, once, and Midas, to whom he granted hateful wealth, six times.

Ceres, goddess of harvest, with her carnation and golden sheaves, is the subject-matter of eight dramas. The name of Echo, a lesser divinity, appears in six, always in connection with her love for the beautiful Narcissus.

> That wept himself away in memory
> Of his own beauty,[56]

In Cynthia's Revels, Echo is called forth by Mercury to vent her passion for Narcissus' death:

> . . . .now after three thousand years,
> Which have been exercised in Juno's spite,
> Thou take a corporal figure, and ascend,
> Enriched with vocal and articulate power.
> Make haste, sad nymph, thrice shall my
> winged rod
> Strike the obsequious earth to give thee way.
> Arise and speak thy sorrows, Echo, rise
> Here by this fountain where thy love did pine,--
> Whose memory lives fresh to vulgar fame,
> Shrined in this yellow flower, that bears his name.[57]

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[55] Valentinian, V,viii, p. 517.

[56] The Faithful Shepherdess, I, iii, p. 338.

[57] Cynthia's Revels, I, i, p. 177.

Echo replies:

> . . . .that too beauteous boy,
> That trophy of self-love and spoil of nature,
> Who, now transformed into this drooping flower
> Hangs the repentant head, back from the stream
> As if it wished, Would I had never looked
> In such a flattering mirror! O Narcissus,
> Thou that wast once, and yet art, mine,
> Had Echo but been private to thy thoughts,
> She would have dropt away herself in tears,
> Till she had all turned water; that in her,
> As in a truer glass, thou mightst have gazed,
> And seen thy beauties by more kind reflection,
> . . . .
> Why did the gods give thee a heavenly form,
> And earthly thoughts to make thee proud of it?[58]

Echo curses the treacherous spring, renaming it the "Fountain of Self-Love." By her curse, the treachery of Cupid and Mars is averted.

Pan, god of woods and fields, presides over all the ceremonies in The Faithful Shepherdess. The pastoral characters sing to him:

> Pan, O great god Pan, to thee
> Thus do we sing!
> Thou that keep'st us chaste and free
> As the young spring;[59]

He is most often referred to in connection with Syrinx,

> . . . .her
> That loves the river's brinks, and still doth choke
> In cold remembrance of thy quick pursuit;[60]

Satyrs, nymphs, and dryads dance their way through many a drama, in masques, wedding ceremonies, or evening revels, as in Orlando Furioso, Old Fortunatus and the Faithful Shepherdess.

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[58] Ibid., pp. 177-78.

[59] The Faithful Shepherdess, I, ii, p. 328.

[60] The Faithful Shepherdess, V, iii, p. 397.

The divinities of the sea, though often mentioned, are seldom elaborated upon. Neptune, who is also mentioned in fifteen dramas, takes part in the masque of The Maid's Tragedy. The remaining sea deities can be summed up as follows: Atlas, Proteus, and the Sirens are referred to in six dramas each, one siren, Calypso, mentioned specifically; the Gorgons, in five; Medusa, a specific Gorgon, in four; the Harpies, Charybdis, and the Tritons, in three each; and Arion, fleetest of horses, Amphritrite, wife to Neptune, the Hyades, the sea-nymphs, and the Titans, Oceanus and Hyperion, each in one.

The whole subject of creation and the deposing of Saturn gave inspiration to many of the poets. General references are many, such as:

> Phlegra, the fields where all the sons of earth
> Muster'd against the gods,[61]

and

> . . . Nature hath shown more skill
> Than when she gave eternal chaos form,[62]

Saturn, sometimes as Cronus, figures in sixteen plays, and his wife, Ops, in three. Alphonsus, King of Arragon contains a complete picture of the early struggle:

> When Saturn heard that Jove his son
> Should drive him headlong from his heavenly seat
> He did command his mother presently
> To do to death the young and guiltless child
> But what of that? the mother loathed in heart
> For to commit so vile a massacre,
> Yea, Jove did live, and. . . .
> From his heavenly seat, drove Saturn clean away.[63]

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[61] Sejanus, V, x, p. 280.

[62] Tamburlaine, The Second Part, III, v, pp. 128-29.

[63] Alphonsus, King of Arragon, III, iii, p. 45.

> . . . .poor Saturn, forced by mighty Jove
> To fly his country, banish'd and forlorn,
> Did crave the aid of Troos, King of Troy.[64]

Time, a primal force, appears in nine dramas; while Nox or Night, with sable wings, figures in seven. She describes herself in The Maid's Tragedy:

> . . . .I am the Night
> For whom thou (the moon) bear'st about thy borrowed light
> Appear! no longer thy pale wings shroud,
> . . . .
> How dull and black am I.[65]

Other forces of Creation and their relative importance are as follows: the Cyclops, in five dramas; Typhon or Typhoeus, Prometheus, and Pandora, in three each; Aether (sacred Air), and Deucalion, in two; and "ugly Darkness with her rusty coach,"[66] Astrea, goddess of innocence and purity, and Dorus, son of Deucalion, each in one.*

From the results of this investigation in the field of mythology, it is obvious that the many mythological references woven into the drama give abundant evidence of the vital importance of the classical element to both dramatist and audience. The mythological element is woven into the plot of almost every drama. Some of the classical deities were of much more interest to the writers than others. Roman native deities were comparatively unimportant as compared to the body of Greek mythology and may be summed up, for the sake of clarity, as follows:

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[64] Alphonsus, King of Arragon, III, ii, p. 36.

[65] Beaumont and Fletcher, The Maid's Tragedy, I, ii, p. 843.

[66] Tamburlaine, The First Part, V, ii, p. 32.

* Miscellaneous references are: the Phoenix, five; the Basilisk, three; Gordian knot, three; sybils, two; the breed of Trochilus, one; and "the god of melancholy," one.

The Roman deity most frequently alluded to is Fortuna, mentioned in thirty-five dramas. Next in importance are Flora and Luna, mentioned in seven each. The other Roman gods and goddesses mentioned in order of their popularity are: Sol, Janus, Bellona, Tellus, Lucina, Vertumnus, Priapus, the Fauns, Comus, the Silvani, and the Lares.

Divinities which sometimes took the Roman and sometimes the Greek name were continually present in the content of the dramas. Most important of this group are the gods of heaven. Jove was listed in eighty dramas, and in connection with him were Ganymede, Danae, Leda, Europa, Alcmena, Latona, Semele, Io, Arethusa, Antiope, and Baucis, in order of their importance. The name of Venus appears in forty dramas, and in connection with her specifically, Adonis, Pygmalion and Galatea, and Hyacinth. Apollo is referred to in thirty-five dramas, most often in connection with Phaeton, Thetis, Daphne, Clytie, Dryope, Semele, Cassandra, or the Python. The Fates or Destinies are named in thirty-four plays; Cupid, in thirty-two; Diana, in twenty-six (sometimes in connection with Endymion, Actaeon, or her devoted nymphs); Juno and Mercury, each in twenty-five; Mars, in twenty-four; the Muses, in twenty; Athena, in fourteen; and Hymen, in thirteen. The remaining, listed in the order of their importance are: Mars, Vesta (and her Vestals), Vulcan, Aurora (her love for Tithonus and Cephalus), Nemesis, Aesculapius, Hesper, Boreas, Zephyrus, Aolus, Lucifer, Iris, Hebe, Ate, Themis, Alpheus, and Auster.

The spirits of the heavens receiving mention are: Bootes, in six dramas; the Hesperides, Sirius, Orion, Arcturus, the Triones, Cassiopeia,

Canopus, the Pleiades and Taurus; Libra, Scorpio, Aries, the Bear, the Lion, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Pisces, and Cancer.

Other characters mentioned in connection with the gods of the heavens are Argus, Phebetor, Silius, and Xanthus.

Divinities of the underworld rank next in importance. The Furies are mentioned in twenty-five dramas; Pluto, in five; Proserpine (and in connection with her, once, Pirotheus), in eleven; and, in order of their importance, Charon, Cerberus, Hecate, Hydra, Rhadamanthus, Eacus, Minos, Morpheus, Briareus, and Somnus.

Divinities of the earth were of the following importance to the dramatists: Bacchus, mentioned in twelve plays (and in connection, Midas, and Silenus); Ceres, in six; and in lesser numbers, Echo and Narcissus, Pan, Syrinx, nymphs, satyrs, and dryads.

Gods of the sea are mentioned as follows: Neptune, in sixteen dramas; Atlas, Proteus, and the Sirens, in six; and, in order of their references: the Gorgons, Medusa, the Harpies, Charybdis, The Tritons, Calypso, Arion, Amphitrite, the Hyades, the sea-nymphs, and the Titans, Oceanus and Hyperion.

The divinities concerned specifically in the creation, ranked according to the mention made of them by the dramatists are: Saturn, in sixteen dramas; Time, Nox, the Cyclops, Ops, Typhon, Prometheus, Pandora, Aether, Deucalion, Darkness, Astrea, and Dorus, in fewer numbers.

Sometimes these mythological characters are merely mentioned; at other times, they are dwelt upon at considerable length. The myths were

used to point out morals, to describe mystical theology, for burlesque, for decorative purposes, or for examples of comedy and tragedy. The words of John Drinkwater, in reference to all poetry, apply equally as well to the early drama field:

> Mythology has passed into all the veins of literature of which it is still one of the sweetest and most pervading elements. What the alphabet is to words and what words are to vocal or written expression of thought--such is mythology to poetry.[67]

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[67] John Drinkwater, Outline of Literature (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1923), I, p. 165.

CHAPTER V

LITERATURE

It has been noted that the ancient classics, that is, the literature of Greece and Rome, were regarded as a vital element of education in the English Renaissance; and the dramatists of the period, many of them educated at the universities, show by their allusions and quotations a ready familiarity with the Latin and Greek writers. Kenneth Sills writes of the poets of the Elizabethan age:

> Theirs was no rigid, cloistered classicism. They were primarily interested in their own language and in their own poetry; but they builded for the most part on the literatures of Greece and Rome. . . . .They insisted on the worth of their own experience; and as the greatest classicist of them all, Ben Jonson, wrote, "It is true that the ancients opened the gates and made the way that went before us, but as guides, not commanders."[1]

Throughout the Renaissance, the doctrine prevailed that the greater literature was the Latin.

> The literature of the Renaissance is four-fifths Latinistic--Virgilian, Ciceronian, Senecan, occasionally Horatian, very heavily Ovidian. . . . .The other fifth draws nourishment from Greek literature."[2]

It proves true that the great majority of the writers mentioned, or whose works are alluded to, by the dramatists under consideration, are

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[1] Kenneth C. M. Sills, "Virgil in the age of Elizabeth." Classical Journal, VI (December, 1910), 130.

[2] Samuel Lee Wolff, "The Greek gift to civilization." The Greek Genius and Its Influence (Lane Cooper, editor; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917), 219.

Roman, and as Mr. Wolff states, the literature is "very heavily Ovidian."[3] Ovid is mentioned in eleven of the eighty dramas considered, oftener than any other Roman or Greek, even Homer. "Old Ovid" is generally referred to in connection with his ability to make love, the court his mistresses, and to "stir the intellectuals of the ladies,"[4] as exemplified by his Ars Amandi, often mentioned and often quoted, especially by Ben Jonson. Lovers court their ladies by persuading them "in changed shapes, (to) act Ovid's tale."[5] Arden of Feversham reminds his wife:

> . . . thou knowest that we too, Ovid-like,
> Have often chid the morning when it 'gan to peep
> And often wished that dark night's purblind steeds
> Would pull her by the purple mantle back.[6]

Ovid, representing Jonson, and his father, Marcus Ovidius, are among the characters of The Poetaster. Jonson, because he felt he was assailed by the riff-raff of literature, though maintaining the friendship of the chosen few, retaliated in this play upon the lesser lights of drama. His defense of himself is summed up in his purpose in the Epilogue:

> To show that Vergil, Horace, and the rest
> Of these great master spirits, did not want
> Detractors them, or practicers among them:
> And by this line, although no parallel,
> I hoped at last they (the detractors) would sit down and blush.[7]

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[3] Loc. cit.

[4] Fletcher, Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, III, iii, p. 256.

[5] Jonson, Volpone, III, vi, p. 79.

[6] Arden of Feversham, I, p. 58. (Author unknown)

[7] Jonson, Epilogue to The Poetaster, p. 377.

Horace ranks next to Ovid in popularity, with mention in six plays; and Pliny the Elder and Vergil next, in five. Both Horace and Vergil are characters in Jonson's Poetaster. The former, when asked to sing of "Gallia's slaughtered forces," remarks that "Great Caesar's wars cannot be fought with words,"[8] but goes on to compose lines for Maecenas, in deference to his love for his Odes and Satires. Jonson's use of the bird and animal characters in Volpone is reputed to be borrowed from Horace. Sir John Daw, the would-be poet of Epicoene, resents derogatory remarks made by his listeners of his attempts at poetry, and says that neither Horace nor Vergil is "worthy to be named for authors."[9] Kenneth Sills remarks that the poets and other writers of Shakespeare's day looked upon Vergil in a large and generous way, and steered their craft by Vergil's compass.[10] This is partially exemplified in the fact that, when in The Poetaster Vergil reads his episode of Aeneas and Dido in the cave, both Ovid and Horace pay him high compliments:

> . . . Aenee shall be read,
> Whilst Rome of all the conquered world is heard.[11]

and

> His learning savours not the school-like glass,
> That most conceits in echoing words and terms,
> . . . .
> And for his poetry, 'tis so rammed with life,
> That it shall gather strength of life, with being
> And live hereafter, more admired, than now.[12]

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[8] The Poetaster, III, iii, p. 318.

[9] Jonson, Epicoene, III, ii, p. 175.

[10] Kenneth C. M. Sills, op. cit., p. 130.

[11] The Poetaster, I, i, p. 270.

[12] The Poetaster, V, i, p. 361.

A curious fact in relation to the classic writers is that their words and allusions to them are so often put into the mouths of the commonest characters. Justice Overdo of Every Man in His Humour is capable of quoting in his pompous way line after line from Vergil. This fact is repeated time after time. One of the earliest Elizabethans, Robert Greene, bemoans the fate of Vergil, giving the reader an insight into one of his characteristics:

> Oh Virgil, Virgil, wert thou now alive,
> Whose painful pen in stout Augustus' days
> Did deign to let the base and silly fly
> To scape away without thy praise of her,
> * * * *
> But thou art dead, yea, Virgil, thou art gone,[13]

The Roman dramatists came next in popularity with the English playwrights. Plautus and Seneca receive mention four times; (Seneca is a character in Nero); and Terence, three. The earliest English comedy, Ralph Roister Doister, which was in form patterned strictly after the Roman comedies, bears reference to these writers:

> The wise poets long time heretofore,
> Under merrie comedies secretes did declare,
> Wherein was contained very vertuous lore,
> With mysteries and forewarnings very rare,
> Such to write neither Plautus nor Terence dyd spare,
> Whiche, among the learned at this day, beares the bell.[14]

Some of Terence's comedies are mentioned by Jonson and Marston (Phormio, Amphytrio, and Cistellaria); and Robert Greene makes continual reference to "Gnatho" and "Thraso," who were, originally, well-known parasites in Terence's Eunuchus. Jonson describes the "Terentian manner" as "the equal

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[13] Greene, Prologue to Alphonsus, King of Arragon, p. 8.

[14] Udall, Prologue to Ralph Roister Doister, p. 424.

division into acts and scenes, the true number of actors, the furnishing the scene with Grex, or Chorus, and that the whole argument fall within compass of a day's business."[15] The "sage and witty Seneca"[16] of Thomas Preston and Plutarch are to Sir John Daw "Grave asses! mere essayists: a few loose sentences and that's all. . . .I do write as good things every hour, ...as either of them."[17]

Persius, the poet and satirist, receives mention in three plays; and the poets, Propertius, Lucan, a character in Nero; Tibullus, a character in The Poetaster; and Lucretius; the historian, Livy; and the epigrammatist, Martial--are next in point of number of references. From Ovid's lips fall warm words as to Lucretius' lasting qualities:

> Then shall all Lucretius' lofty numbers die,
> When earth and seas, in fire and flame shall fry.[18]

The poets receiving only one mention are: Theocritus, Catullus, "Ennius the rude,"[19] Accius, for whom Jonson prophecied a "fresh applause in every age,"[20] Ausonius, Statius, Valerius Flaccus, Paulus (a character in Valentinian), Varius, Petronius, Messala, Lucilius, and Cornelius Gallus, a character in The Poetaster, for whom also Jonson prophecied more fame than he has since merited:

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[15] Jonson, Prologue to Every Man Out of His Humor, pp. 123-24.

[16] Preston, Prologue to Cambises, p. 640.

[17] Epicoene, II, ii, pp. 174-175.

[18] The Poetaster, I, i, p. 270.

[19] Loc. cit.

[20] Loc. cit.

Our Gallus shall be known from East to West:
So shall Lycoris (his mistress), whom he now loves best.[21]

Juvenal, the satirist, the historians, Asinius Pollio and Tacitus, whom Sir John Daw in Epicoene calls "an entire knot: sometimes worth the untying, very seldom,"[22] the grammarian, Servius, Symmachus, the letter writer, and Marcus Antonius, orator, each receives one reference. It is surprising that some who, according to present-day standards, would be likely to merit much attention, are given only passing mention, as Catullus and Theocritus; while, vice versa, Persius ranks with Terence and Seneca.*

That Homer, the father of poets, should lead the ranks of the Greek writers with references in eight plays, is not surprising. This, however, does not equal the number of references to Ovid, the Roman. The opinions expressed by various characters of the dramas about Homer are of interest by contrast. Ovid in The Poetaster says,

Homer will live whilst Tenedois stands or Ide,
Or, to the sea, fleet Simois doth slide:[23]

and attempts to defend him against Tucca's critical remarks:

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[21] Loc. cit.

[22] Epicoene, II, ii, pp. 174-75.

[23] The Poetaster, I, i, p. 269.

* Although it is outside the scope of this study, mention should perhaps be made of the fact that, throughout many of the dramas, lines are adapted or quoted exactly from many of the above-mentioned writers, as Juvenal, Plautus, Seneca, Catullus, Horace, Vergil, etc. Latin quotations from these authors are frequently used. It should be pointed out also that references to Cicero, who showed considerable influence upon the Renaissance playwrights, are discussed in the section on history.

> Homer, your god of poets, what was he? I'll tell thee . . . .he was a poor, blind, rhyming rascal, that lived obscurely up and down in booths, ...and scarce ever made a good meal. . . .the hungry beggar,[24]

while Sir John Daw calls Homer an "old tedious, prolix ass."[25]

Anacreon "crowned with smiling flowers"[26] is mentioned in three plays; while Sappho, "such a fiddling kind of poetess,"[27] in the words of Mirabel, the Wild-Goose, Pindar, Lucian and Demosthenes are each mentioned twice.

The dramatists come in for their share of mention. Jonson informs the reader about the history of Greek comedy:

> . . . .that which we call Comoedia was at first nothing but a simple and continual song, sung by one person, till Susario invented a second; after him Epicharmus a third; Phormus and Chionides devised to have four actors, with a prologue and chorus; to which Cratinus, long after, added a fifth, and sixth; Eupolis, more, ... how is the face of it changed since, ...(they) have utterly excluded the chorus, altered the property of the persons, ...and augmented it with all liberty.[28]

Aristophanes and Menander, writers of comedy, are each mentioned twice, Menander, not altogether in a complimentary fashion: "whilst harlots flatter, shall Menander flourish."[29] Sophocles and Euripides are mentioned once each, no more than the minor dramatist, Philemon. Something of Euripides' lasting qualities are suggested by Webster:

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[24] Ibid., p. 273.

[25] Epicoene, loc. cit.

[26] Nero, IV, vii, p. 72. (Author unknown)

[27] Fletcher, The Wild Goose Chase, II, i, p. 891.

[28] Prologue to Every Man Out of His Humour, p. 128.

[29] The Poetaster, I, i, p. 269.

> Alcestis objecting that Euripides had only in three days composed three verses, whereas himself had written three hundred, "Thou tell'st truth," quoth he, "but here's the difference: thine shall be read for three days, whereas mine shall continue three ages.[30]

The poets, Hesiod, Callimachus, Paulus Silentiarius (a character in Valentinian), Lycophron, Arion, and Archilochus (his fury),* are found each in one drama, as are also the historians, Thucydides and Plutarch, "a tedious fellow,"[31] whose Sonnets and Symposium are also mentioned. The list of Greek writers closes with mention of Appion, the interpreter of Homer.**

Throughout this study of allusions to literary figures used in the drama, the fact becomes evident that references to Roman figures predominate over references to Greek figures. Of the Romans, Ovid is most often alluded to, being mentioned in eleven dramas. Horace, in six plays, and Vergil, in five, rank next. Others mentioned, in the order of their importance are: Plautus and Seneca; Terence and Persius; Propertius, Lucan, Tibullus, Lucretius, Livy, and Martial. Those receiving only one mention are: Theocritus, Catullus, Ennius, Accius, Ausonius, Statius, Valerius Flaccus, Paulus, Varius, Petronius, Messala, Lucilius, Cornelius Gallus, Juvenal, Asinius Pollio, Tacitus, Servius, Symmachus, and Marcus Antonius.

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[30] Webster, Introduction to The White Devil, p. 929.

[31] Epicoene, I, i, p. 153.

* Archilochus' misfortunes are supposed to have exasperated his character and to have given his poetry a severe cast. The Greeks considered him one of their greatest poets.

** Reference is twice made to the Alexandrian critic, Aristarchus.

Homer, with references in eight plays, though leading the ranks of the Greek writers, is not mentioned as often as is Ovid, the Roman. Anacreon ranks next to Homer with references in three dramas; while next in order of importance are the following: Sappho, Pindar, Lucian, and Demosthenes; Aristophanes and Menander; Sophocles, Euripides, Philemon, Hesiod, Callimachus, Paulus Silentiarius, Lycophron, Arion, Archilochus, Thucydides, Plutarch, and Appion.

CHAPTER VI

PHILOSOPHY

The classical revival awakened an interest in the philosophy as well as in the literature, history, and mythology of ancient Greece and Rome. New conceptions of human life were accompanied by a new philosophical activity and enthusiasm for the ancient systems. For the study of the scholastic theology of medievalism was substituted the ardent study of . . . Plato.[1] Other names should be added to this statement, such as the Greek Socrates, Pythagoras, and Diogenes, and the Roman Lucretius and Seneca. Aristotle had been well known throughout the Middle Ages, and his popularity lingered on throughout the Renaissance also. The references to ancient philosophers in the drama illustrate only partially the far-reaching effect of this one feature of thought. Richard Edwards in his Damon and Pithias defines one conception of philosophy:

> Loving wisdom is termed philosophy;
> * * * *
> For in loving of wisdom proof doth this try
> That frustra sapit, qui non sapit sibi:[2]
> (He is wise to no purpose who is not wise to himself.)

In the dramas the philosophers of Greece were generally looked upon as supreme in knowledge. Rustics and cultured alike were capable of continued quoting of the sages, and of consciously living the philosophy of the Stoic or Cynic. Clerimont, gentleman, disparages Truewit's Stoic bent, as he says: "Talk to me of pins and feathers, and ladies. . . .and things:

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[1] George Butz, The Rise of the Modern Spirit in Europe. (Boston: Sherman, French, and Company, 1912), p. 239.

[2] Edwards, Damon and Pithias, p. 153.

and leave this Stoicity till thou mak'st sermons.[3] Chaste Lucina of Valentinian represents certain of these Stoical qualities:

> She has in her
> All the contempt of glory and vain seeming
> Of all the Stoics.[4]

The dramatists seem not to have admired the Cynic. Macilente, representing Ben Jonson "out of his humour," introducing his play, ventures his opinion:

> There is no taste in this philosophy,
> . . . .
> I am no such pilled (polled) Cynic to believe
> That beggary is the only happiness.[5]

But not always are the philosophers revered. The drama Damon and Pithias is almost wholly satire directed at the philosophers and their arguments over non-essentials. The several philosophers, who appear as characters, spend much time discussing how the sea ebbs and flows; which is the most subtle of beasts; how a man may be thought a god; which is first, day or night; which is stronger, life or death; how long a man should live; and whether the sea or earth brings forth more creatures. A few profound truths are discussed, but not often. They do agree on one point--that the soul is immortal and that the body is the prison of the soul.

The philosophy in the dramas is almost entirely dominated by Greek thought. It is true there are references in the dramas to Seneca, and to Pliny, Persius, Lucretius, Livy, and Martial, all of whom had a knowledge

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[3] Jonson, Epicoene, I, i, p. 153.

[4] Fletcher, Valentinian, I, i, p. 417.

[5] Jonson, Every Man Out of His Humour, I, i, p. 128.

of philosophy and incorporated it into their writings; but by the dramatists, these characters are considered almost wholly as literary figures, not as philosophers. They are discussed in the chapter on literature. Anneus Cornutus is the only Roman character mentioned in the dramas, as basically a philosopher.

Although Aristotle, in fact, was studied more as a scientist and literary critic during the Renaissance, the allusions to him, by the dramatists are almost entirely concerned with his philosophy. He, or his works, are referred to in eleven dramas. Miles, the poor scholar of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, wishes he were a philosopher of Aristotle's stamp, and Faustus, already steeped in the doctrines of Aristotle, calls upon him and his "Sweet Analytics" for comfort in his travail of mind. A rustic character mentions Aristotle's theories: ". . . .the sea cannot stand without the earth as Aristotle saith,"[6] and again,

> Aristotle holdeth this for true,
> Of evil deeds we must choose the least:[7]

Sir John Daw, would-be poet of Epicoene, calls him "a mere commonplace fellow," in comparison to himself.[8]

Pythagoras is mentioned, generally in reference to his theory of the transmigration of souls, in ten of the dramas, figuring as a character in Endymion. Nano, the dwarf in Volpone, in trying to account for the

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[6] Greene, James the Fourth, II, ii, p. 338.

[7] Ibid., IV, v, p. 372.

[8] Epicoene, II, ii, p. 175.

origin of Pythagoras' soul, "that juggler divine,"[9] traces it back to Apollo and the gods and heroes of Troy. Faustus rejoices that Pythagoras' metempsychosis is not true, for

> . . . .were that true,
> This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd
> Unto some brutish beast![10]

Plato's influence is shown by the references to him in eight dramas, though in most of them he is barely mentioned. Marston quotes him in Latin in The Malcontent. Tamburlaine refers to "Plato's wondrous year,"[11] mentioned in his Timaeus. Lady Politic-Would-Be defines a lady:

> I would have
> A lady, indeed, t'have all letters and arts,
> Be able to discourse, to write, to paint;
> But principal, as Plato holds, your music
> . . . .
> Is your true rapture,[12]

Lyly makes Plato a character in Campaspe.

Diogenes, though referred to in only two plays, virtually dominates one of them, Campaspe. The themes of Diogenes and his tub, his seeking with a lantern for an honest man, and his austerity of living are continually made use of, and are subjects of banter among the common servants of the several philosophers, thus:

> Manes, Diogenes' servant: I serve, insteede of a maister, a mouse, whose house is a tub, whose dinner is a crust, and whose bed is a board.

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9 Jonson, Volpone, I, i, p. 11.

10 Marlowe, Faustus, V, iii, p. 62.

11 Marlowe, Tamburlaine, The First Part, IV, ii, p. 25.

12 Volpone, III, iv, p. 323.

> Psyllus, an apprentice: Then art thou in a state of life which philosophers recommend: a crumme for thy supper, an hande for thy cup, and thy clothes for thy sheetes. For Natura paucis contenta.[13] (Nature is content with few things.)

It is somewhat surprising that Socrates receives so little attention, being mentioned in only two plays, in one of which, Campaspe, he is ridiculed by Plato. Like Socrates, Bias, Chrysippus, Crates, and Anaxarchus are each mentioned by two dramatists, the last three as characters in Campaspe. Anaxarchus' death, at the hands of Nicocreon, tyrant of Syracuse, is referred to in the words of the forsaken wife, "I care not, though like (Anaxarchus), I were pounded to death in a mortar."[14] With the names of Aristippus, Democritus, Cleanthus, and the philosopher of Tyre, Melchie (or Porphyry), who are mentioned in only one drama each, the evidences of ancient philosophical influences upon Renaissance dramatists ends. References are generally vague, and in only Campaspe is classic philosophy dominant. George Butz says of this period:

> Then if ever in the history of high and pure thought, was felt in all its persuasiveness the sentiment to which Milton gave classic utterance:
>
> "How charming is divine philosophy!
> Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools
> suppose,
> But musical as is Apollo's lute,
> And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets
> When no crude surfeit reigns."[15]

However, there is scarcely sufficient evidence in the dramas for the

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[13] Lyly, Campaspe, I, ii, p. 612.

[14] Webster, The White Devil, V, iv, p. 973.

[15] George Butz, op. cit., p. 244.

statement. Roman philosophy is almost entirely neglected by the dramatists except for a reference to Cornutus. Grecian philosophers dominate, and are mentioned as follows: Aristotle, in eleven dramas; Pythagoras, in ten; Plato, in eight; Diogenes, Socrates, Bias, Chrysippus, Crates, and Anaxarchus, in two; and Aristippus, Democritus, Cleanthus, and Melchie, each in one.

CHAPTER VII

MISCELLANEOUS: LATIN AND GREEK LANGUAGES, MEDICINE, ART, MATHEMATICS, LAW

One of the outstanding phases of the revival of learning showed itself in the renewed interest in classical languages, which, by the time of the Elizabethan Renaissance, had reached a high degree of popularity. The thirst for classic learning had made "young men leave their loves and pleasures, grave men quit their counting-houses, churchmen desert their missals, to crowd the lecture-rooms of philologers and rhetoricians,"[1] where Latin, not English, was taught.[2] The great bulk of Latin used in the dramas written in the age of Elizabeth and James gives ample proof of the popularity of the classical languages among the writers, almost all of whom were educated at the universities and steeped in the Latin and Greek languages. Nathaniel Field's prologue to Woman Is a Weathercock aptly expresses the prevailing tendency to intersperse all plays with Latin:

> Thou must needs have some other language than thy mother-tongue, for thou thinks't it impossible for one to write a play, that need not use a word of Latin, though he had enough in him. I have been vexed with vile plays myself a great while, hearing many; now I thought to be equal with some, and they should hear mine too.[3]

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[1] John Addington Symonds, "The Renaissance." The Encyclopedia Britannica, XXIII, 83-93.

[2] Kenneth C. M. Sills, "Virgil in the age of Elizabeth." Classical Journal, VI (December, 1910), 123.

[3] Field, Prologue to Woman Is a Weathercock, p. 339.

One can but wonder to what extent the constant use of Latin appealed to an uncultivated audience, but its continual use attests the fact that it must have been acceptable. The fact that some dramas were written expressly for court circles, where the majority were able to understand classic tongues, rather than for the general public, partially explains the use of Latin and Greek in certain of the dramas. Of the eighty plays under consideration in this study, fifty-four of them make use of Latin, some with only a few words or phrases; but many, especially the plays of Lyly, Marlowe, Kyd, and Jonson, constantly intersperse their scenes with Latin. It is to be noted also that the use of the Latin (and, to some extent, Greek) tongue is not by any means confined to the cultured among the characters; indeed, the officers of the law, the servants, the rustics, the vinter's son or the fuller's daughter,--all are adept at tossing about Latin puns promiscuously, arguing intricacies of Latin construction (with frequent allusions to Lilly's Latin Grammar), and making doggerel rhymes from a combination of Latin and English. One servant girl of Mother Bombie, strangely, admits she is no Latinist, but this is the exception. It is taken for granted that everyone knows Latin from childhood. Brainworm, servant, illustrates this fact when he says:

> If I can but get his cloak, his purse, his hat,
> . . . . ., Veni, vidi, vici, I may say with Captain Caesar.[4]

as does Ingen:

> I have loved this lady since I was a child,
> Since I could construe Amo.[5]

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[4] Jonson, Every Man In His Humour, II, iv, p. 267.

[5] Field, Amends for Ladies, I, i, p. 420.

Sometimes almost whole scenes appear in Latin; for example, Otter, the sea captain, disguised as a divine, and Cutbeard, a barber, disguised as a canon lawyer, solemnly effecting a false divorce proceeding.[6] A very humorous scene, making use of much Latin, appears in A Chaste Maid in Cheapside. Yellowhammer, a goldsmith, and Maudlin, his wife, receive a letter from their son Tim written in Latin. Ignorant of the language, they are non-plussed, until the porter reads it to them according to what English words the Latin ones most resemble. Yellowhammer and his wife believe the misinterpretation; and much confusion results.

Now and then appears a character who seems not to appreciate the use of Latin. It is on various occasions called "goatish" or "claptrap," and Busy, the hypocritical Puritan, severely reprimands pompous Adam Overdo for his excessive use of Latin:

> Friend, I will have to communicate my spirit with you, if I hear any more of these superstitious relics, those lists (scraps) of Latin, the very rags of Rome.[7]

Mention should be made of the fact that much of the Latin used is quoted from Greek and Latin writers, with a decided preference for Ovid, Horace, Seneca, Virgil, Plautus, and Cicero.*

The Greek language plays a very minor part in the dramas, though occasionally a Greek word or allusion is made, and references to the Greek

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[6] Jonson, Epicoene, V, I.

[7] Jonson, Bartholomew Fair, IV, 6, p. 459.

* Others quoted are: Homer, Terence, Bias, Lucan, Claudian, Statius, Curtius, Aristotle, Justinian, Homer, Persius, Juvenal, Plato, and Martial.

language enters the conversation of sixteen dramas: Campaspe by Lyly; James the Fourth by Greene; The Spanish Tragedy by Kyd; Faustus by Marlowe; The Honest Whore I and Old Fortunatus by Dekker; Parliament of Bees by Day; Epicoene, The Alchemist, Sejanus, Every Man In His Humour, Every Man Out of His Humour, and The Poetaster by Jonson; Wild Goose Chase by Fletcher; The Royall Master and The Lady of Pleasure by Shirley.

A few fields of activity, medicine, art, mathematics, and law, may not go unmentioned, as there are a few evidences of interest among the Renaissance playwrights in these fields. Three Greek physicians receive mention, Galen, Hippocrates, and Melampus, with a decided majority for Galen, whose name appears in six plays. Faustus calls upon him and bids him come with his "sound Aphorisms."[8] The writings of both Galen and Hippocrates are somewhat disparaged by Jonson in favor of alchemy:

> Had old Hippocrates, or Galen,
> That to their books put med'cines all in,
> But known this secret, they had never
> * * * *
> Been murderers of so much paper,[9]

The fine arts of the ancients receive only a small amount of attention by the dramatists. Apelles, great painter of antiquity, is a character in Lyly's Campaspe who is called upon by Alexander to paint the Theban captive's portrait, falls in love with her, and rivaling Alexander for her love, complicates the plot. In the same play, references are made to Phydias and

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[8] Marlowe, Faustus, I, i, p. 42.

[9] Jonson, Volpone, II, i, 43.

Lysippus, sculptors, and Pyrgoteles, engraver of gems. This is, curiously enough, the extent of all references to fine arts, outside of literature, elsewhere discussed.

One mathematician, Euclid, the geometrician, receives mention, and that, by servants.[10]

Justinian, Roman law-giver, and his Institutes, and Solon, Athenian, each mentioned in two dramas, represent the only references made to ancient law-givers.

Thus, the references used in the fields of medicine, art, and mathematics are almost wholly to Greek personages. Foreign words inserted into the content of the drama are very generally Latin rather than Greek.

The immense amount of Latin, in fifty-four of the eighty dramas under consideration, and the small amount of Greek, in sixteen dramas, used by the writers of the period make apparent the interest in classical language. The use of foreign languages by the characters is not confined to the cultured; it is used by learned and unlearned alike.

In the field of classical medicine, three names are mentioned: Galen, Hippocrates, and Melampus; in the field of art, Apelles, Phydias, Lysippus, and Pyrgoteles; in mathematics, Euclid; and in law, Justinian and Solon.

Evidently, phases of classical civilization represented by medicine, art, mathematics, and law were neglected almost entirely by the dramatists.

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[10] Shirley, The Royall Master, I, ii, p. 576.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the writer of this discussion has been to point out the prevailing tendency of the dramas of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods to reflect an interest in classical civilization. However, the nature of the investigation has made it impossible, previously, to indicate classical tendencies in the various writers. A few such conclusions are necessary for a proper completion of the subject.

The early drama field is commonly divided as follows: dramas written before 1587, and those written between 1587 and 1603, Elizabethan; dramas written from 1603 to 1625, Jacobean; and those written from 1625 to 1642, Carolingian.[1]

In the first English comedies, Ralph Roister Doister, written between 1534 and 1541, and Gammer Gurton's Needle, c. 1553-54, there is very little evidence of interest in classical material, except as models for construction. But by the time of the performance of Gorboduc, 1561-62, and Edwards' Damon and Pithias, c. 1564-65, the classical element was more constantly evident, and reached its height for the first period of drama-writing in Campaspe, 1583-84, and Endymion, c. 1579-98, of John Lyly and

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[1] Because of the incompleteness of records, the dates of the plays must be assumed fairly generally, inasmuch as knowledge of certain plays is limited to dates of the first quarto editions; while certain others have only dates for their probable composition, entrance in the Stationers' Register, or licenses for publication or acting. Consequently, the arrangement of the groups of plays is somewhat open to question.

The Spanish Tragedy, 1584-89, of Thomas Kyd.

There were other influences, however, besides the classical. Even Lyly, whose works are almost universally based upon classical material, with classical allusions, and in accordance with the dramatic technique of the classic drama, wrote one play, Mother Bombie, c. 1590, which has very few classical references.

In the second period, Marlowe continued the practice of making use of the classical element, especially mythology, in the two parts of Tamburlaine, c. 1587-88, and in Faustus, c. 1589. Of his use of mythology, Douglas Bush says:

> Marlowe, to a degree which perhaps no poet except Keats has excelled, made classical myths his own. . . . Marlowe really sees Diana in the sky, and under the sea sweet singing mermaids sporting with their loves, and on the earth, goat-footed satyrs and upstarting fauns.[2]

However, in his plays of a little later date, The Jew of Malta, produced about 1590, and Edward II, produced 1591 or 1592, Marlowe used very little classical material. Robert Greene carried on the classical tradition by his use of many allusions in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, c. 1590, A Looking Glass for London and England, performed 1592, and Orlando Furioso, registered 1593. His plays of about the same period, James the Fourth and George-A-Greene, were of a different nature and used classical matter, only to a limited extent.

Peele, in his drama, Old Wives' Tale, c. 1590, used only a small

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[2] Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota, 1932), p. 137.

amount of classical material, nor did Heywood in A Woman Killed with Kindness, produced 1607, Tourneur in The Atheist's Tragedy, c. 1611, or the unknown authors of The Famous Victories of Henry V, c. 1588, and Arden of Feversham, acted 1590.

Dekker, however, at about the period Jonson was at his height, published Old Fortunatus, 1600, replete with classical matter; and Chapman, although the influence upon him was mostly French, was not averse to using a considerable quantity of classical material in Bussy d'Ambois, 1604. Those, then, making the most use of classical material during the period 1587 to 1603, before Jonson, were Marlowe, Greene, and Dekker. In Jonson, classicism reached its height. "With his ingenious scholarship and naturally retentive memory, ...(Jonson) could hardly be surpassed. Jonson's lines are full of the wisdom of the ancients. The processes of their art he understood, not only from a genuine intimacy with classic masterpieces but from a studious comparison of Greek and Latin themes of art. . . ."[3] In Every Man In His Humour, acted 1598, Jonson did not make use of so many classical references and allusions as in his later plays: Every Man Out of His Humour, produced 1599; Cynthia's Revels, acted 1600; The Poetaster, c. 1601; and in his dramas based on classical history, Sejanus and Cataline.

The climax of the three periods was thus reached in Jonson. In the plays of the next period, 1604-42, a rather noticeable diminishing of the

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[3] Ruth Ingersoll Goldmark, Studies in the Influence of the Classics On English Literature (New York: Columbia University Press, 1918), pp. 4-5.

volume of classical material is evident. Even Jonson's plays, Epicoene, acted 1607; The Alchemist, acted 1610; and Bartholomew Fair, 1614, exhibit a much less noticeable classical influence. None of the later dramatists, with the exception of Day in The Parliament of Bees, c. 1607, Webster in The White Devil, c. 1611-12, and Beaumont and Fletcher, exhibit any extensive use of classical references. The last two used a considerable amount of ancient material in their plays: The Faithful Shepherdess, 1610; Two Noble Kinsmen, 1608-12; The Maid's Tragedy, c. 1611; and Valentinian, produced sometime before 1619. In 1624 appeared a quarto edition of a play with a classical setting, Nero, by an unknown author; and from that date until the closing of the theaters in 1642, the classic element was used very meagerly, although present to a slight extent in most of the dramas. The "high spots," then, in the use of classical material seem to group themselves around the following dates: 1587-88; 1590-93; 1599-1612; and 1619. It should be kept in mind, however, that not every drama had a large classical content; for during the periods when "classical" dramas were being written, there were equally as many, with very insignificant classical content, being composed.

This study has shown that there are present many evidences of interest in several fields of classical civilization--history, literature, legendary history, philosophy, mythology, and language; and some evidences of interest in medicine, law, mathematics, and art. Of all these phases of classical civilization, the greatest abundance of material is in the field of mythology. Next, history and legendary history receive the most

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attention by the dramatists, and in the order of the amount of material written about them, the other fields rank, as nearly as it can be determined, thus: language, literature, philosophy, art, law, and mathematics. Roman influence dominates in history, literature, and language; while the Greek influence is predominant in mythology, legendary history, philosophy, medicine, art, and mathematics. Both influences are virtually equal in the subject of law.

By way of summary, a statement of the most popular figures alluded to by the dramatists is of interest.*

Historical figures most often referred to by the dramatists are: Roman--Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, Cato, Nero, Pompey, Brutus, Tarquin, Cicero, Cassius, Antony, Tiberius, Lucrece, and Cleopatra; Hannibal the Carthaginian; and Greek--Alexander, Hephaestion, Alcebiades, Epaminondas, and Philip of Macedon.

Masculine legendary figures most outstanding are: Hercules, Paris, Theseus, Achilles, Orpheus, Hector, Ulysses, Agamemnon, Orestes, Menelaus, Jason, Ixion, Daedalus, Priam, Pylades, Nestor, Lynceus, Castor, Pollux, Oedipus, Tityrus, Pyrrhus, and Aeneas. Most prominent feminine historical characters are: Helen of Troy, Dido, Penelope, Medea, Ariadne, and Oenone.

Mythological figures most important to the content of the drama are: Fortuna, Luna, and Flora, distinctly Roman deities; Jupiter (in

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* The following are mentioned at least four times each.

connection with Ganymede, Danae, Leda, Europa, Alcmena, Latona, and Semele), Venus (and Adonis), Apollo (and in connection, Phaeton, Thetis, and Daphne), the Fates, Cupid, Diana (and in connection, Endymion and Actaeon), Juno, Mercury, Mars, the Muses, Athena, Hymen, Mars, Vesta, Vulcan, Aurora, Nemesis, the Graces, Aesculapius, Hesper, Boreas, Zephyrus, Favonius, and Aolus--gods of the heavens; The Furies, Pluto, Proserpine, Charon, Cerberus, Hecate, the Hydra, and Rhadamanthus--creatures of the underworld: Bacchus (and Midas in connection), Ceres, Echo, and Pan--divinities of the earth; Neptune, Atlas, Proteus, the Sirens, the Gorgons, and Medusa--inhabitants of the sea; and Saturn, Time, Nox, and the Cyclops--figures in the creation.

Personages of classical literature who are prominent in the dramas are: Ovid, Horace, Vergil, Plautus, and Seneca--Roman; and Homer and Anacreon--Greek.

Philosophical character outstanding in the dramas are: Aristotle, Pythagoras, and Plato--all Greek. Galen, the Greek physician, was the only outstanding figure in medicine; Apelles, Phydias, and Lysippus, in art; Euclid, in mathematics, and Justinian and Solon, in law.

The Latin language was used in fifty-four dramas, sometimes to only a very small extent; whereas the Greek language was used or referred to in only sixteen plays.

In conclusion, the author wishes to say again that this is not an exhaustive study of the subject, nor are the conclusions reached absolutely final, because of the fact that not all of the many dramas of the period were available for use in the study. An investigation of the works of

other dramatists in the field might contribute new facts to those already discovered.

All of the above facts, however, concerning references and allusions to ancient life and thought, give proof to the statement that Greek and Roman civilization exerted an immense influence upon Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, and make evident the fact that there was a renewed interest in classical civilization reflected in the content of the drama.

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