CHAPTER SEVENTY-EIGHT

THE PUBLICATION OF Lord Oxford's pseudonym had been like the dropping of a block of mineral salts into a large vessel of water. Effervescence set in immediately, bubbles formed over a wide area, burst, and spread into foam, sparkling, shifting, and plopping upon the surface for a long time. Actually, the literary waters of London seethed for nearly ten years, at first in continuous, then in sporadic, minor explosions, with isolated repercussions to follow, while at as late a date as 1640 the author of *Wit's Recreation* was bewailing the enforced anonymity, in what seems to have been a final spurt:

> Shake-speare, we must be silent in our praise,
> 'Cause our encomiums will but blast thy bays.

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[18] I.e., the scarlet livery of Grooms of the Chamber, worn by licensed actors. In Ben Jonson's complete works, published in 1616, there is *An Ode: To Himself*, the final stanza of which reads:

> And since our dainty age
> Cannot endure reproof,
> Make not thyself a page,
> To that strumpet the stage,
> But sing high and aloof,
> Safe from the wolf's black jaw, and the dull ass's hoof.

Here Jonson and Horace merge, becoming indistinguishable, one from the other.

The initial bubble to explode had been *Willobie His Avisa,* in which the author clearly showed that he knew Southampton was implicated. Others followed—Oxford's own revelations, Nashe's, Jonson's, Marston's, etc.—with *The Isle of Dogs* a major eruption, which caused the authorities to take steps forcibly to restrain further disturbance. But the agitation continued, sometimes above, sometimes just below, the surface.[1] And for a time, the machinations of William Shaksper acted as a special irritant.

Undoubtedly the Archbishop of Canterbury had stipulated that *Venus and Adonis* must be brought out under a *nom de plume,* if it were to be published at all, because he knew that a public ever on the alert for allegory and the *sous-entendu* would take Venus to be Queen Elizabeth and Adonis the dashing Earl of Oxford, so long her favorite and brilliant ornament to the court; and the same condition would have applied to *Lucrece.* This very stipulation would have awakened suspicion in the minds of the wits, had they not already grasped the significance of the allusions.

The fact that the character who stands for Shaksper, in those plays which ridicule him most openly,[2] invariably quotes or paraphrases *Venus and Adonis,* suggests that this first publication of the name "Shakespeare" had impressed him, starting him upon his career of pretense and presumption. Since Richard Field of Stratford printed the poem, Shaksper may well have had advance notice and have plotted with his father. He had already, if he is the man Greene wrote about in the early part of *Groatsworth of Wit,* served for "seven years apace" as "absolute interpreter to the puppets." Now he saw an opportunity to advance himself in the theatrical world and perhaps even become a courtier.[3] For in both *The Poetaster* and *The Return from Parnassus* he makes a fine pretense—though never convincingly—of being a courtier, while even in *Every Man Out,* of 1598, he longs to be one: in his Fungoso-aspect ordering his tailor to make replicas of Fastidious Brisk-Southampton's satin suits for him to strut in. He

[1] Chapman constantly wrote about Oxford and drew upon his work in phrasing his own poems. This is too extensive a subject to go into here, but it has been treated ably and provocatively by Mr. Percy Allen. Chapman was like Jonson in being torn between praise and what Allen calls the "jealous craving to blame." We quote two passages which he takes to be Chapman's comments upon Oxford's descending from his high station to traffic with the stage:

> And Noblesse stoops sometimes beneath her blood;

and

> . . . the vaporous object of the eye
> Out-pierced the intellect in faculty.
> Baseness was nobler than nobility.

These taken from *The Case for E. de V. as Sh.;* p. 108.

[2] That is, in the plays following *E.M.O.*

[3] This is the general scheme followed by the Shepherd and the Clown in *The Winter's Tale.*

wishes, in other words, to be as much as possible like the young Will Shakespeare.

In three plays performed, and no doubt written at least in part, by students of St. John's College, Cambridge, between December 1597 and January 1602, called *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* and *The Return from Parnassus,* Parts I and II,[4] we encounter versions of, first, Shaksper-*cum*-Oxford and then Shaksper-*cum*-Southampton which were apparently based upon hearsay evidence, rather than upon the direct knowledge or observation informing the London plays. They were no doubt hilarious affairs, produced for the festive Christmas season. The writers had heard or read about, if they had not seen, the gull, Shaksper, and they had at least heard about the courtier-actor, Will Shakespeare, who appears as Amoretto, entering alone, reading from Ovid. He is described as one of

> Those Amorettoes that doe spend their time
> In comminge of their smother-dangled heyre:

probably an accurate picture of the long-haired young gallant, Southampton.

One of the rather startling features of *Parnassus* is its saucy allusions to the Queen; but Elizabeth was grown old now and more than a little ridiculous, and doubtless no one cared very much.[5] The authors had obviously heard all the gossip relative to the Earl of Oxford and the Queen, for they speak insinuatingly of Cynthia and Endymion; but whether the whole story, together with the personalities concerned, was confused in their minds, or whether they purposely muddled it, one cannot tell; perhaps a little of both was the case.

They knew about the trouble the Puritans had made and understood the significance of Caliban, for they speak of

> Stupido, that plodding puritaine
> That artless ass, and *that earth-creeping dolt.*

In the *Pilgrimage,* two students set forth to Parnassus, where the "Muses" will welcome them. The inference is clear in the lines,

> Nor are they *puling maides,* or *curious nuns,*[6]
> That *strictlie stand upon virginitie.*
> They freely give . . .

[4] Edited from MSS. by the Rev. W. D. Macray. The author is unknown; but the editor detects striking similarities to the style of Bishop Hall's *Satires,* 1597. He finds "evidence that the author came from the north, probably Cheshire." Other commentators believe there were several authors.

[5] It will have been noted that in *The Poetaster* Jonson is far more outspoken regarding the Queen than ever before. Years later he told Drummond that "Queen Elizabeth never saw her self after she became old in a true glass, they painted her and sometimes would vermilion her nose." He may have been fabricating, of course.

[6] The Queen, the chaste Diana, was Lord Oxford's first "Muse." Later her "maids," Anne Cecil and Anne Vavasor, were. Note "curious nuns."

The student, Philomosus, telling of his purpose, quotes the *Parnassus* authors' translation of the familiar couplet which heads *Venus and Adonis*—just as Jonson quotes his own version in *The Poetaster*—giving us the clue that *Parnassus* will be concerned with the *cause célèbre:*

> Let vulgar witts admire the common songes,
> I'le lie with Phoebus by the Muses' springes,
> Where we will sit free from all envie's rage,
> And scorne each earthly *Gullio* of this age.

Gullio is a gull, the same ambitious upstart we have met before, but he is also partly Southampton, just as Crispinus was, whose father was "a man of worship." Thus he suggests the "upstart crow," who had persecuted Greene, and will, in this play, similarly persecute Ingenioso; so that it seems likely that Greene was the prototype of this impecunious and unfortunate scholar. He was an alumnus of St. John's College. The authors of *Parnassus* would have known all about him.

The Return from Parnassus, Part I, introduces Consiliodorus, who speaks in the recognizable idiom:

> Seaven times *the earth in wanton liverie*
> Hath deckt herself to meet *her blushing love*
> Since I two schollers to Parnassus sent.

(This is the rhythm of *Venus and Adonis;* Venus is allegorically "the earth," Phoebus "her blushing love.")

Presently, paraphrasing *Richard II,* he says:

> My poore small farme, my littell, littell store.

(King Richard puts it,

> And my large kingdom for a little grave,
> A little, little grave, an obscure grave.—III.3.153-4.)

These three plays are somewhat diffuse and disorganized. Much of the subject-matter doubtless applied to persons and affairs in Cambridge. In fact, one suspects that two or three of the University's best poets had gone to London to make their fortunes and had been sadly disillusioned, if not embittered, as Ingenioso and Furor come to be, and as of course Greene was.

Ingenioso addresses his friends (III.1):

> Nowe, gentlemen, you may laugh if you will, for here comes *a gull.*
> *Gullio.* This *rapier* I bought when I sojourned in the *universitie of Padua.* By the heavens, it's a pure Tolledo;[7] it was the death of a *Pol-*

> *lonian,* a Germaine, and a Dutchman, because the(y) would not *pledge the health of England.*
> *Ing.* (He was never any further than Flushinge, and then he came home sicke of the scurveys.) Surely, sir, a notable exploit worthy to be chronicled! but had you anie witnesse of your valiancie?

Here we have an unmistakable allusion to the "gull," Shaksper, with his rapier, or spear, trying to pass himself off as the "traveller," Oxford, who has sojourned at Padua, knew the University, and afterwards used the city as a setting for some of his plays, and who had issued a challenge to all comers while in Italy. Two "Pollonians" had been killed in a street-brawl during his stay in Padua.[8] Ingenioso sees through him, quite as the wits saw through the gull, Shaksper.

Gullio brags exaggeratedly—of his sonnets, his fine clothes: he is never seen at court twice in one suit—and makes himself out to be an *amoroso.* Ingenioso leads him on by flattery.

> *Gullio.* O sir, that was my care to prove a complet *gentleman,* to be *tam Marte quam Mercurio;* insomuch that *I am pointed out for a poet in Paul's church yarde, and in the tilt-yarde for a champion;* nay, every man enquires after my abode.

This is a further attempt to impersonate Oxford, the champion spear-shaker of the "tilt-yarde," who had undoubtedly been pointed out in Paul's churchyard to young students down from the University, eager to see the famous Earl, the Queen's quondam lover, who was also a poet and said to be the great Shakespeare himself.

Gullio needs very little urging to tell how he courts his mistress:

> Pardon, faire lady, though sicke-thoughted Gullio makes amaine unto thee, and like a bould-faced sutore 'gins to woo thee;

which is, of course, taken directly from:

> Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,
> And like a bold-fac'd suitor 'gins to woo him. (*V. and A.: st.* 1.)
> *Ing.* (We shall have nothing but *pure Shakespeare* and shreds of poetrie he hath gathered at the theators!)

In these passages quoted above, Gullio mixes his boasts of prowess, a prowess which is intrinsically Lord Oxford's: the possession and mastery of a supremely fine rapier; his travels; his acquaintance with the University of Padua; his historic challenge in Palermo for the prestige—or, as Gullio puts it here, the "health"—of England; his

[7] In Jonson's *Every Man In* (II.1-3), much emphasis is laid upon a "rapier" belonging to the would-be-gentleman Stephano; he bought it for "a pure Toledo" and then discovered it was only a "provant rapier": i.e., common, soldier's issue. (Our reference is always to the original version of *E.M.I.* The play was revised in 1616 for the collected works, with the scene and proper names changed.) It will be recalled that a great deal was made of Shift and his rapier in *E.M.O.*

[8] Chapters Eight and Twenty.

championship in the tilt-yard; his fame as a poet (for Edward de Vere was well-known as a poet before he yielded to the necessity for anonymity, and was spoken of as "excellent in the devices of poetry" by contemporary scholars); his court-manners; his having a (royal) mistress—Gullio mixes all this, which he claims for himself, with quotations from *Venus and Adonis,* which he claims to have written. And so we have the Cambridge writers' testimony that Shakespeare is, of course, the Earl of Oxford, with the added testimony that a gull is trying to palm himself off as the nobleman and is too stupid and naive to realize how absurd he is.

So long as anyone will listen, Gullio-Shaksper will continue to talk, just as Horace-Jonson found that Crispinus-Shaksper would.

> *Gull.* Pardon me, moy mistressa, ast am *a gentleman, the moone in comparison of thy bright hue a mere slut, Anthonie's Cleopatra a black-browde milkmaid, Helen a dowdie.*

(All these are of course Oxford-Shakespeare allusions: Elizabeth being the envious "moon" in *Romeo and Juliet,* as well as Cleopatra; she is Launce's "milkmaid" in *The Two Gentlemen,* and Helen in *Troilus and Cressida.* Moreover, Mercutio says: "Dido *a dowdy, Cleopatra a gipsy; Helen* and Hero hildings and harlots"—II.4.412.)

> *Ing.* (Mark, Romeo and Juliet . . .)
> *Gull.* Thrise fairer then myself (thus I began),
> The gods faire riches, sweete above compare,
> Staine to all nymphes, (m)ore lovely then a man,
> More white and red than doves and roses are!
> Nature that made thee with herselfe had strife,
> Sith that the worlde hath ending with thy life.

The second stanza of *Venus and Adonis* is almost directly quoted here; Gullio is never quite accurate:

> 'Thrice fairer than myself,' thus she began,
> 'The field's chief flower, sweete above compare,
> Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
> More white and red than doves or roses are;
> Nature that made thee, with herself or strife,
> Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.'

The final couplet was paraphrased by Jonson in the verse, *To the Reader,* beneath the Droeshut engraving which desecrates the First Folio. We find Jonson completely *en rapport* with all this and are gradually made to understand the thorough disingenuousness which he brought to the Introduction to the First Folio.

Ingenioso's comment upon Gullio's plagiaristic flight is:

> Sweete Mr. Shakespeare!

This must, of course, be read "Master Shakespeare."

Gullio—partially Southampton here—employs Ingenioso to write verses for him, since he wishes to bestow "a diamond of invention" [9] upon his mistress.

> *Gull.* . . . therefore, sithens I am employed in some weightie affayres of the courte, I will have thee, Ingenioso, to make them, and when thou hast done I will peruse, pollish, and correct them.
> *Ing.* . . . But what vayne would it please you to have them in?
> *Gull.* Not in a vaine veine (prettie, i' faith!) Make mee them in two or three divers vayns, in Chaucer's, Gower's, and Spencer's and Mr. Shakespeare's. Marry, I think I shall entertaine those verses which run like this:
>
> Even as the sunn with purple coloured face
> Had tane his last leave of the weeping morne, etc.
>
> O sweet Mr. Shakespeare! I'le have his picture in my study at the courte.

He has of course merely quoted the opening couplet of *Venus and Adonis.*

Act IV, *scene* 1 shows Gullio boasting in such terms that it is obvious he is being confused—whether wittingly or not—with Southampton. It would be gratifying indeed to know whether writers and scholars who were not of the inner circle actually confused William Shaksper with the elegant and somewhat affected young actor who certainly must have called himself Will Shakespeare. In any case, they pretend to do so here. We believe it is a calculated pretense, just as it was with Jonson, from whom they may of course have taken the idea.

> *Gull.* The countess and my lorde entertayned mee verie honorably. Indeede they used my advise in some state matters and I perceyved *the Earle would faine have thruste one of his daughters upon mee;* but I will have *no knave priste to medle with my ringe.* I bestowed 20 angells upon the officers of the house at my departure, kist the Countess, tooke my leave of my lorde, and came awaye.

Gullio, boasting of having called upon the Earl and Countess of Oxford, is simply a mixture of the gull and Southampton, with whom Burghley had tried to arrange a match for one of the Earl's daughters. The statement about having "no knave priste to medle with my ringe" may be a sly reference to Oxford's ring-marriage with the Queen.[10] Ingenioso is not taken in by such braggadocio.

> *Ing.* (I thinke he meanes to poyson mee with a lie! Why he is acquainted with neere a lorde except my lorde Coulton, and for Countesses, he never came in the cuntrie where a Countess dwells!) Faith, sir, I must needs commend your generous high spirit. . . .

[9] This suggests "the brightest heaven of invention" (*H.V.:* Prologue, I) and the dedication of *V. and A.:* "the first heir of my invention."

[10] The authors of *Parnassus* may have been strutting a bit here themselves, showing off their sophistication, perhaps mocking the politic pretense that Southampton could have married one of the Earl's daughters.

The poor wretch needs money and is obliged to flatter Gullio, who continues to strut and preen himself. Later his supposed mistress will tell him his Latin is false; but now he quotes phrases which he says are from "Homer, Tullie, Ronzarde . . . which I thus translated . . . extempore into Englishe." He illustrates one with:

> What man soever loves a crane
> The same he thinks to be Diane.

> A dull universitie's head woulde have beene a month about *thus much.* . . . But have you finished those verses in an ambrosiall veyne that must kiss my mistris' dainty hande? I'le nowe steale some time from my weightie affayres to peruse them.

Here Gullio is the counterpart of Crispinus, the Poetaster, with his absurd rhymes. ("Thus much" is a characteristic Oxfordian locution.)

Ingenioso has written clever and amusing paraphrases in Chaucer's vein, in Spenser's, and in Shakespeare's, too long, we regret, to quote. Gullio's comment upon them is:

> Let the duncified world esteeme of Spencer and Chaucer, I'le worshipp sweete Mr. Shakespeare.

When he has left, Ingenioso bursts out:

> Why, who could endure this *post* put into a sattin suite, this haberdasher of lyes, this braggadochio, this ladymunger, this *meere rapier and dagger,* this cringer, this foretopp, but one that's foreordained to miserie. Well, Madam Pecunia, once more for thy sake I will waite on this truncke.

It will be recalled that Jonson speaks of the gull as "a post"; besides this, when, in *Cynthia's Revels,* Cos, who appears to be another version of Shaksper, seeks service with Amorphus, the latter says: "A page of good *timber!* it will now be my grace to entertain him first, though I cashier him again in private." And in *The Merchant of Venice,* when old Gobbo does not recognize his son who has become "Master" Launcelot, the youth says: "Do I look like a cudget or a hovel-*post,* a staff or a prop?"

Another of Gullio's brags regarding his mythical mistress is that he has frequently sung his

> sonnets *under her window* to a consort of musicke, I myself playing upon my ivorie lute most enchantingly.

Oxford is, as we have seen, twice portrayed by Jonson as making love under his mistress's window, like Romeo and Valentine. This situation furnishes the scene which introduces Puntarvolo in *Every Man Out* and appears in *The Poetaster* with Ovid and Julia. The Earl had twice been praised by John Farmer for his musicianship

and no doubt played upon an ivory lute "most enchantingly," for example, as Feste, singing *O Mistress Mine.*

There is a hitch about Ingenioso's payment for the verses he has written. Gullio rejects them, and the poor scholar tells him off:

> *Gull.* Peace, you impecunious *peasant!* As I am a souldier, I was never so abused since I first *bore arms.*
> *Ing.* What, you whoreson tintunabulum, thou that are *the scorne of all good wits, that never spokest wittie thing but out of a play,* never heardest the report of a gun without trembling, why, Mounsieur Mingo, is your *asse's head* growne proud with scratchinge? . . .
> *Gull.* Base, base, base peasant, peasant! *So haires may pull dead lions by the bearde!*

This is excellent psychology, the gull shaming his opponent with the attributes which are his own shame. Ingenioso's final sentence refers to Bottom, who had an "ass's head" and addressed each of the fairies as "mounsieur." As for Gullio's "So haires may pull dead lions by the bearde," this is an exact quotation from *The Spanish Tragedy;* and it may be that the authors of *Parnassus* were showing off another piece of knowledge—to wit, that this drama was Shakespeare's:

> He hunted well that was a lion's death,
> Not he that in a garment wore his skin:
> *So hares may pull dead lions by the beard.* (*Sp. Tr.:* I.3.170-3.)

However, does not this perhaps ridicule Southampton, the actor whom Greene called an "upstart crow," who is the heir of a dead lion? If so, it seems rather vicious, but Greene evidently had felt bitter toward Southampton.

Part II of *The Return* begins with a prologue which announces:

> What(ear) we show, is but a Christmas jest. . . .

Judicio (I.2) estimates certain poets of the day, praising some, dispraising others, including Marston, Locke, Hudson:

> *Jud.* Marlowe was happy in his buskind muse,
> Alas unhappy in his life and end.
> Pity it is that wit so ill should dwell,
> Wit lent from heaven, but vices sent from hell.

(If this play—or this part of it—were, indeed, written by Bishop Hall, as the editor surmised, Marlowe's atheism would have been sufficient provocation for Judicio's opinion.)

> *Beniamin Johnson* [*sic.*]
> The wittiest fellow of a Bricklayer in England.
> *William Shakespeare.*
> *Jud.* Who loves (not Adon's love, or Lucrece rape?)
> His sweeter verse conteynes hart (throbbing line)
> Could but a grauer subject him content,
> Without loves foolish lazy languishment.

(This also indicates the moralistic pronouncement of a cleric, and it must belong to the 1597 version, since not until 1598 was any of the plays published under the *nom de plume*.)

In Part II, Gullio has disappeared and we have Amoretto, a curious combination of Oxford-Shakespeare, Southampton-Shakespeare, and Shaksper. There is a short preliminary passage in which Academico talks with Echo, in the style of Oxford's early poem; then Amoretto enters, with a book.

> *Amo.* She's Cleopatra, I Mark Antony.
> *Acad.* No, thou art a meere mark for good witts to shoot at, and in that sute wilt make a fine man to dashe poor *clownes* out of *countenance.*
> *Amo.* She is my Moone, I her Endymion.
> *Acad.* No, she is thy shoulder of mutton,
> Thou her onyon; or she may be thy
> Luna, (well) and thou her Lunaticke.
> *Amo.* I her Aeneas, she my Dido is.
> *Acad.* She is thy Io, thou her brazen asse.
> Or she Dame Phantasy, and thou her *gull:*
> She thy Pasiphal and thou her loving bull.
> . . . . . .
> *Amo.* Sir, I will bless your eares with a very pretty story, *my father out of his own cost and charges keeps an open table for all kinds of dogges.*

Here we have Amoretto-Southampton not only pretending to be Oxford-Shakespeare—Antony to Elizabeth's Cleopatra, Endymion to her Cynthia, Aeneas to her Dido—as Gullio did in Part I, but also revealing himself as the son of Oxford (or the "master of worship"), who had supported many playwrights, or "dogges." Nashe had said the Earl had been "an infinite Maecenas to learned men." The authors of *Parnassus* seem to have known a great deal.

These young Cambridge satirists were evidently scornful of the elegant Southampton's pretensions. They have bestowed upon Amoretto a page, a very astute lad, who is under no illusions about his master. The Page soliloquizes:

> I think there is no felicitie to the serving of a foole.

And he remarks, in a cryptic passage:

> . . . his gifts have appeared in as many *colours* as the Rayn-bowe, first to maister Amoretto *in colour of the sattin suite* he weares; to *my Lady in the similitude of a loose gowne;* to my master in the likeness of *a silver basin and ewer;* and to us Pages in the semblance of new suites and poyntes. *So my master Amoretto plays the gull.* . . .

The use of the words "colour" and "hue" in connection with Southampton has been discussed (Chap. Sixty-three): "A man in hue all hues in his controlling." The phrase, "my Lady in the similitude of a loose gowne," may be a bold allusion to Elizabeth to match the one in *The Two Gentlemen:* "You never saw her since she was deformed."

And certainly the "silver basin and ewer" is an overt reference to Oxford's hereditary office of the Ewry and to his line, "So that myself bring water for my stain," in Sonnet 109, written to the Queen not long after the birth of Southampton.

The authors give the distinct impression of parading their sophisticated grasp of the entire affair: the romance, the scandal, the suppressed authorship, the impostor who profited by imitating Will Shakespeare—the player as well as the poet, and now of the dandiacal young courtier who pretends to be Master Shakespeare, a common playwright. The Page says "my master Amoretto plays the gull," instead of vice versa, be it noted.

There is another significant passage, where Amoretto and his Page enter together (II.6) and the latter, this time evidently referring to Oxford—Amoretto's father—says:

> I wonder what is become of that *Ovid de arte amandi,* my maister he that for the practise of his discourse is wonte to *courte his hobby* abroad and at home, desiring that most fayre and amiable dog to grace his company in a stately galliard, and if the dog, seeing him practise his (lofty) pointes, as his crospoynt (and his) backcaper, chance to *bewray the roome,* he presently doffes his Cap, most solemnly makes a low-leg to (her) Lady Ship, taking it for the greatest favour in the world, that shee would vouchsafe to leave her Civet box, or her *sweete glove* behind her.

The "sweete glove" is an immediately recognizable Oxford *cachet;* "Ovid" is another; "his hobby" suggests his plays; the "Cap" may refer to the round black cap worn by men of authority, mentioned by Nashe in his *Epistle Dedicatorie;* and the nobleman's attitude towards the dog who had chanced to "bewray the roome" recalls that of Launce towards his dog, who had behaved badly in Madam Silvia's dining-chamber, the dog being the plays which had committed nuisances at court.

This passage is similar to one describing Puntarvolo-Oxford in *Every Man Out* (II.1):

> *Fastidious.* Sirrah . . . I have heard this knight Puntarvolo reported to be a gentleman of exceeding good humour; . . . prithee, how is his disposition? . . .
> *Carlo.* Why, he loves dogs, and hawks, and his wife well; he has a good riding face, and *he can sit a great horse;* he will taint a staff well *at tilt;* when he is mounted he looks like the sign of the George. . . .
> *Fast.* O, but this is nothing to that's delivered of him. They say he has dialogues and discourses between his horse, himself, and his dog; and that he will court his own lady, as she were a stranger never encounter'd before.
> *Car.* Ay, that he will, and make fresh love to her every morning.

All this, incidentally, gives a very credible and engaging picture of Lord Oxford; moreover, it is particularly gratifying to be told

that, after so many amorous vicissitudes, "he loves his wife well." There is definite evidence that she was deeply in love with her husband.

Presently Amoretto—reminiscent now of young Ovid of *The Poetaster*—struggles with his studies.

> *Amo.* A plague on these mathematickes, they have spoyled my braine in making verse.

And later, in talking with his father, Sir Raderick, a Justice of the Peace, he gives proof, again like young Ovid, of his legal studies:

> *Amo.* There is taile general and taile speciall, and Littleton is very copious for that theme; for taile general is when lands are given to a man and his heyres of his body begotten. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> *Ing.* And you master Amoretto, that are the chief *carpenter of sonets,* a privileged *vicar* [11] of the lawlesse marriage of Inke and paper, you that are good for nothing but to condemn in *a sett speech* . . . it's fine when that *Puppet-player Fortune* must put such a birchen-lane *post* in so good a suit (and suite) such *an asse* in so good fortune.
> *Amo.* Father, shall I draw?

Ingenioso proceeds to call him "Fond gull," and says,

> Base *worme,* must thou needs discharge thy craboun to batter down the walles of learning?

(This seems to be pointed at Greene's diatribe.)

> *Amo. Bold peasants* I scorne (them), I scorne them.

It is all very curious, for here he is Shaksper again. Sir Raderick seems to pay no attention. A strange mixture of Falstaff and Shallow, he plays only a minor part. Ingenioso speaks of his "army of bailiffs and clownes." As a man of property, Oxford had bailiffs; as a patron of players, clowns.

There is another speech by the Page which describes the authors' idea of one of the pretenders endeavoring to appear as Shakespeare—that is, as the somewhat eccentric Lord Oxford. In presenting a travesty, it gives such a graphic suggestion of the original Oxford-Shakespeare that it is worth quoting:

> *Page.* My maisters, I could wish your presence at an admirable jest, why presently this great linguist my master will march through Paules Churchyard. Come to a booke binders shop, and with a big Italian looke and a spanish face aske for these bookes in spanish and italian, and turning, through his ignorance, the wrong end of the booke upward use action, on this unknowne tong after this sort, first look on the title and wrinckle his browe, next make as though there were some notable conceit, and lastly when he thinkes hee hath gulld the standers by sufficiently, throwes the booke away in a rage, swearing that hee could never finde bookes of a true printe since he was last in (Padua), enquire(s) after the next marte; and so departes.

[11] "Vicar" is used as a pun, Amoretto being the vicarious author. Latin, *vicarius:* instead of another, substitute, deputy.

But after a little, Ingenioso describes this same Amoretto in a caricature of Southampton, the courtier, as he appeared to an impecunious student.

> *Ing.* Marke you Amoretto Sir Radericks *sonne,* to him shall thy piping poetry and *sugar endes of verses* [12] *be directed,* he is the one, that will draw out his pocket glasse thrise in a walke, one that dreames in a night of nothing, but muske and civet, and talke(s) of nothing all day long but his hauke, his hound, and his mistress, one that more admires the good wrinckle of a boote, (or) the curious crinkling of a silke stocking, then all the witt in the world . . .

In *Act* IV, Philomosus, having returned from Parnassus, tries out for a part in a play before Kemp and Burbage, reciting for them:

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by the *sonne* of York.

It is here that the famous passage between Kemp and Burbage occurs:

> *Kemp.* Few of the university (men) pen plaies well, they smell too much of the writer *Ovid,* and that writer *Metamorphosis,* and talke too much of *Proserpina* and *Juppiter.* Why heres our fellow Shakespeare, puts them all downe, I and Ben Jonson too. O that *Ben Jonson* is a pestilent fellow, he brought up *Horace* giving the Poets a pill, but our fellow *Shakespeare* hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit.
> *Burb.* It is a shrewd fellow indeed.[13]

The salient feature here is the ignorance of the actors, about which we have already heard much. Kemp [14] thinks "Metamorphosis" is an author, as "Ovid" is; he evidently does not realize that the plays of Shakespeare abound in references to Jupiter and mention Proserpina, while the dramatist is, of course, saturated with Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* Because she is a symbolic character, Shakespeare even has Perdita, brought up by a simple shepherd, say,

[12] Meres spoke of Shakespeare's "sugred sonnets," and Jonson called Asotus "the son of Philargyrus" (sugary love). The Sonnets were directed to the Fair Youth, Oxford's son, who is here Amoretto, Sir Raderick's "sonne." Many poets of the day wrote verses to Southampton. The word *amoretto* means, literally, love-affair. It is significant that Greene uses the word "amorets" in the following passage, in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (IX. 172-4):

> Is this Prince Edward, Henry's royal son?
> How martial is the figure of his face!
> Yet lovely and beset with *amorets.*

One editor defines "amorets" as "love-kindling looks."

[13] Orig. ital.

[14] William Kemp was a simple clown. He is said to have "danced a morris all the way to Norwich in 1600."—J. Q. Adams: *A Life of Wm. Sh.;* p. 329.

O Proserpina!
For the flowers now that frighted thou let'st fall
From Dis's waggon! (*W.T.*: IV.3.116-18.)

The actors brag about their "fellow Shakespeare," but they obviously know very little about him. Their testimony that it was he who delivered the purge to Jonson in *Satiromastix,* however, adds some weight to our belief that Shakespeare himself had a part in writing, or at least that he sponsored, the play—unless, of course, the reference here is to *Troilus and Cressida.* The authors of *Parnassus* knew about this, whether or not the actors did.

Greenwood very properly says that, far from accepting this for a "eulogy" of Shakespeare by his "fellow-actors," as many commentators have done, we should recognize the fact that "the players are being held up for ridicule before a cultivated audience of Cambridge scholars and students, as ignorant, half-educated vulgarians, 'rude grooms,' as Greene called them." [15]

Indeed at the beginning of *Act* V, Studioso says:

But ist not strange (those) mimick apes should prize
Unhappy Schollers at a hireling rate. . . .
. . . . . .
England affordes those glorious vagabonds,
That carried erst their fardels on their backes,
Coursers to ride on through the gazing streets,
Sooping it in their glaring Satten sutes,
And Pages to attend their maisterships.
With mouthing words that better wits have framed,
They purchase lands and now esquires are (namde) made.

Amoretto-Shaksper is shown to have his Page. Shaksper purchased property, we know. And he seems to have been cordially detested by the scholars. As to whether he ever advanced sufficiently in the theatre to wear the scarlet livery of the Grooms of the Chamber we have no reliable evidence. If he did, it would have been after 1601, when his low status was described in *The Poetaster:* "He's one that hath the mustering, or convoy of a company now and then."

The scholar Ingenioso comes to a sad end, while the gull flourishes. He remarks bitterly to Academico:

Writs are out for me, to apprehend me for my playes, and now I am bound for the Isle of Dogges.

(We suspect that the author of this part is subtly suggesting that he himself is something of an Ingenioso and that he has taken a risk in writing so outspokenly in this play.)

[15] *The Sh. Prob. Rest.;* p. 322.

Ingenioso continues:

. . . there where the blattant (MS. barking) beast doth rule and raigne,
Renting (rending?) the credit of whome it please,
Where serpents tongs the pen men are to write,
Where cats do waule by day, dogs (bark) by night:
There shall engoared venom be my inke,
My pen a sharper quill of porcupine,
My stayned paper this sin-loaden earth:
There will I write in line will never die
Our feared Lordings crying villany.

The poet, Furor, equally embittered, adds his statement:

When I arrive within the Ile of Dogges,
Don Phoebus will I make to kisse the pump,
Thy one eye pries in every Draper's stall,
Yet never thinks of Poet Furor's neede:
Furor is lowsie, great Furor is
Ile make thee rue this lowsie case I wis,
And thou my sluttish *laundresse Cinthia,*
Neere thinks on Furors linen, Furors shirt:
Thou and thy squirting boy Endymion
Lie slavering still upon a lawlesse couch.
Furor will have thee carted through the dirt
That makest great poet Furor want a shirt.
Ing. Is not heere a true *dogge* that dare
barke so boldly at *the Moone.*

The poets leave London, and Academico bids them

Farewell, farewell, o long farewell.
Furor. Farewell, musty, dusty, rusty, fusty London,
Thou art not worthy of great Furor's wit.[16]

This is obviously written in some resentment, though intended to be humorous. "Don Phoebus" prying "in every Draper's stall" is the wealthy dandy, Southampton, who is also one of "the feared Lordings crying villany"; "Cinthia" and the youthful "Endymion . . . slavering still upon a lawlesse couch" are Elizabeth and the young Oxford, and the "dogge that dare barke so boldly at the Moone" is whatever playwright dares to tell the truth about the great scandal.

The authors of *Parnassus*—and we seem to detect a new hand in this last section—were apparently determined to present every facet of the story. And so they have brought in John Shaksper and William—the Sordido and Sogliardo of *Every Man Out,* the Shepherd and Clown of *The Winter's Tale*—giving them a separate scene in *The Return, II.* (II.4.) This time they are called Stercutio [17] and Immerito

[16] This speech provides a further connection with Greene, who, in collaboration with Lodge in *Mucedorus,* wrote: "I'll . . . call her old rusty, dusty, musty, fusty, crusty firebrand."

[17] *Sterco,* in Italian, means dung; another ref. here to the dung-hill in front of John Shaksper's house. Latin Dict. gives: *Sterculius (Stercus) the deity that presides*

(the Undeserving). They have come, when the scene opens, to interview Amoretto-Southampton about a "living." In view of the fact that Southampton is supposed to have paid Shaksper certain sums of money, this is quite realistic.

Stercutio. Sonne, is this the gentleman that sells us the living?
Im. Fy, father, thou must not call it selling, thou must say is this the gentleman that must have the gratuito?

Academico, aside, calls them "scurvy fellows." He continues:

old truepenny come to towne, to fetch away the living in his old greasy slops? Then Ile none: the time hath beene when such a fellow meddled with nothing but his ploughshare, his spade & his hobangles, and so to a piece of bread and cheese.
Ster. . . . and how many pounds must I pay.
Im. O, thou must not call them pounds, father, but thanks, and harke thou, father, thou must tell of nothing that is done; for I must seem to come cleere to it.
Ster. Ile take the gentleman now, he is in good vayne, for he smiles.
Amo. Sweete Ovid, I do honour every page.
Acad. Good Ovid, that in his lifetime lived with Gotes,[18] and now after his death, converseth with a Barbarian.
Amo. Why, then, Stercutio, I would be very willing to be the instrument to my father, that this living might be conferred upon your sonne: mary, I would have you know that I have been importuned by two or three Lordes, my kind cousins, in behalf of a Cambridge man: and have almost engaged my word . . . I must be respected with thanks.
. . . . . .
Ster. And I pray you, sir, what is the lowest thanks that you will take?
Acad. The very same method that he useth at the buying of an *oxe*.
Amo. I must have some odd sprinkling of an hundred poundes,[19] and commend your sonne as a man of good giftes to my father.
Ster. Harke thou, sir, thou shalt have 80 thankes.
Amo. I tell thee, fellow, I never opened my mouth in this kinde so cheape before in my life. I tel thee, few young gentlemen are found that would deale so kindly with thee as I doe.
Ster. Well, sir, because I knowe my sonne to be a good toward thing, and one that hath taken all his learning on his own head, without sending to the universitie, I am content to give you as many thankes as you aske, so you will promise to bring it to passe.
Amo. I warrant you for that . . . repayre you to the place and stay there, for my father he is walked abroad (into the parke) to take the benefit of the ayre. Ile meet him as he returns, and make way for your suite.

And this is all of that.

over manuring. Stercutus or Stercutius, Pliny. The Cambridge scholars used Pliny's form, Stercutio.

[18] Cf. Touchstone's pun (*A.Y.L.T.*: III.3.6-8.)

[19] The authors apparently believed that Amoretto was demanding a commission for arranging for Immerito to get the "living." But since the authors seem to dislike Southampton, this may have been merely a cynical notion of their own.

One or two comments upon this dialogue are in order. First, there is the matter of the names, *Amoretto* and *Immerito,* which are as similar in sound as Shakespeare and Shaksper and quite as different in significance. Amoretto is Amor-et(t)-O: Love-and-O(xford); Immerito, undeserving, unworthy. From this we see that whoever wrote the *Parnassus* trilogy and whatever their opinion of the participants in the sensational affair of the pseudonym, they knew their proper identities and understood what the situation was.

Another point is that Southampton seems to have acted as intermediary between his father, Oxford-Shakespeare, and the Shakspers of Stratford, and that Lord Oxford himself had no direct part in any arrangement with them.

In regard to Southampton's making a payment to Shaksper of Stratford, Rowe's "biography" records a statement by Sir William D'Avenant to the effect that the Earl of Southampton had paid William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon one thousand pounds for the purchase of property. Would not this be the "living" Stercutio speaks of?

No, the Stratford man was not "gentle" in the Elizabethan sense—it was Lord Oxford who was "Gentle Master William"—and the only thing about Shaksper which can be called "retiring" is evidence of his being a poet or dramatist. This retires, like Hamlet's crab, backwards and backwards into limbo.