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SHAKESPEARE v. SHAKESPEARE

JAMES LAURENSEN

*THE PICTURESQUE ATLAS
OF AUSTRALASIA*

A NOTE ON EMBLEM BOOKS

*AN EARLY VOLUME OF
LAW CASES*

D. McKEE WRIGHT'S FIRST BOOK

JOHN BASKERVILLE'S PRINTING

WELLINGTON NEW ZEALAND

June 1947

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PHOTO BY T. J. LAWLOR

View of the Rare Book Room

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IT IS SAID that every new idea and theory that is put forth goes through three stages in the public mind. First, 'absolute nonsense!' next, 'there may be something in it', and finally, 'of course it has always been so'. Anyone can see this exemplified if he thinks of the history of Copernican astronomy, of the theories of evolution and of germ infection, or the suggestion that there was a possibility of human flight. The idea that the 'Shakespeare' plays were written by someone other than the actor from Stratford, whose name (in a different spelling), they bear, is at present going through all three stages. The majority of people—people that is, who know anything of English literature at all—take it for granted that they were written by the Stratford man, but there is a growing number of people going through the second stage, and a minority who are fully convinced that whoever did write the plays, it was not the actor, though they are divided in their beliefs as to who really was the author. In this article we will follow the 'anti-Stratfordians' and for the sake of clearness will spell the name of the actor 'Shakspere' and that of the writer of the plays, 'Shakespeare'.

No student of English literature can ignore the question entirely, nor could a collector such as Alexander Turnbull. His Shakespeare collection was not extensive, as he concentrated particularly on Milton and some of the nineteenth century writers, but it had some interesting highlights. The copy of the Second Folio is a fine tall copy in a beautiful light calf binding, and there is also a copy of the Oxford Fascimile of the First Folio, and early editions of such sources as Holinshed's *Chronicle*, North's *Plutarch*, and the English version of the *Decameron*. (The tales of course were well-known before they appeared in print.) Rowe's edition of the plays in seven volumes is here and the twenty volumes of the Variorum edition, published by J. B. Lippincott, as well as other good early and modern sets. The 1853 set of the Shakespeare Society's publications, and the two series of the New Shakspere Society's, issued in the 'seventies and the 'eighties, are not to be found in every library. On

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the biographical side he had the inevitable Sidney Lee, and Halliwell-Phillipps' *Outlines* and Mrs Stopes' *Shakespeare's Environment*. Bacon was represented chiefly by the seven-volume edition of the Works, edited by Spedding, Ellis and Heath (1878-89), which has Rawley's *Life* in the first volume, and by one or two seventeenth century editions of which the best are the second issue of the *Novum Organum* (1620) and a nice little copy of the first edition of *Baconiana* (1679) which has the portrait frontispiece, missing in both the British Museum copies.

On the authorship question, however, Mr Turnbull had only a handful of books. Probably he was in the first stage of thinking on the subject; moreover the Baconians were only just getting into their stride when he was collecting, and the De Vere theory had not yet been born. His small group included Mark Twain's *Is Shakespeare Dead?* and *Is it Shakespeare*, by Walter Begley (a Cambridge graduate) and also Andrew Lang's *Shakespeare, Bacon and the Great Unknown*, and one or two others. The Library added to the group as occasion offered, often by donations. From the Atkinson Bequest, for instance, came the *Eldest Son of Queen Elizabeth*, by Isabella Nicholls, R. M. Theobald's *Dethroning Shakespeare*, and *Francis Bacon . . . versus Phantom Captain Shakespeare*, by W. F. C. Wigston. To these were added Bertram G. Theobald's *Exit Shakespeare, Enter Bacon*, and *Francis Bacon Concealed and Revealed*, presented to the Library by the author.

Then with the Kinsey collection, which came to the Library in 1937, there came a copy of T. J. Looney's *Shakespeare Identified*, which claims the authorship of the plays on behalf of Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford. The author, starting off with an anti-Shakspeare bias, but none in favour of anybody else, began by comparing the Shakespearean sonnets with other Elizabethan literature, and, much to his surprise, arrived towards the end of a long trail, at the Earl of Oxford. Although the book had been published several years before, there had not previously been a copy in the library, and this theory, together with the acquisition of the Theobald books, aroused interest in the whole business of Shakespeare authorship. Just before the

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war the Library became a member of the Bacon Society, whose enthusiastic secretary, Mr Valentine Smith, was pleased at the contact with a library at this faraway end of the world. He was instrumental in getting for the Library a very good set of the Society's magazine, *Baconiana*, going back to the first volume, but not altogether complete, and also procured some of the Society's pamphlets and books by members, some of which are now out of print. It was indirectly through the Society, too, that there came to the Library the largest donation it has yet received on the Bacon-Shakespeare question and on Bacon generally. This was the collection of Mr Harold Large, of Napier, an ardent Baconian of more than half-a-century's standing. When Mr Large was troubled about the disposition of the books that he had spent so long collecting, Mr Valentine Smith suggested that he should make contact with the Library, and the result was that we were presented with close on a hundred items—books, pamphlets and typescripts—dealing with the subject.

That the whole question, depending as it does on the sifting of evidence for and against the various claimants, has had a fascination for the legal mind is obvious by the number of lawyers who have taken part in the argument, and it is not surprising, therefore, that it had an interest for one of Wellington's leading lawyers, Sir Francis Dillon Bell. Amongst the books from his library presented recently by his son, Mr Cheviot Bell, there were several on this subject, the most useful, perhaps, being Mrs Gallup's *The Bi-Literal Cipher of Sir Francis Bacon*, the Library having only Part III, published in 1910, from Mr Large's collection. Other items from the Bell Library include E. Bosman's *Francis Bacon's Cryptic Rhymes*, Edwin Reed's *Francis Bacon our Shakespeare*, and W. A. Sutton's *The Shakespeare Enigma*.

Those who have not studied the subject are probably unaware that the beginning of the Baconian idea goes back to the middle of the eighteenth century. As far back as 1769 there appeared a book called *The Life and Adventures of Common Sense*, by Herbert Lawrence, in which the theory that the plays and poems ascribed to Shakespeare were the work of Francis Bacon appears to have been first pro-

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pounded. Roderick Eagle, in *Shakespeare: New Views for Old*, refers to this book, and states that 'Although Bacon is not openly named, it is clear that the unknown author attributed the Shakespeare plays to him'. About the same time there was living a Rev. James Wilmot, rector of Barton-on-the-Heath, in Warwickshire, who became convinced that the Bacon and Shakespeare writings had a common authorship and so impressed his views on a certain Mr Cowell of Ipswich, who met him in 1785, that the latter found himself unable to deliver a lecture on Shakespeare that he had promised to give. The next year, 1786, a book was published anonymously, called *The Learned Pig*, which referred to the Shakespeare plays, and which Eagle attributes to Wilmot. About sixty years later, in 1848, the Shakespeare question appeared again in, of all things, a book entitled *The Romance of Yachting*, by J. C. Hart. Gilbert Standen in *Shakespeare Authorship* (1930) quotes from this book the sentence: 'Who were the able literary men who wrote the dramas imputed to Shakespeare?' Delia Bacon in the United States, and W. H. Smith in England were both working on the Baconian idea at the same time, the latter publishing in 1856 a letter to Lord Ellesmere, which appeared the next year, 1857, as a small book entitled *Bacon and Shakespeare: an Enquiry touching Players, Play-houses and Play-writers in the days of Elizabeth*. Delia Bacon's *The Philosophy of Shakespeare Unfolded*, was published in the same year. Other champions of Bacon came forward—over 250 entries were listed in 1884—and a new aspect was given to the case in 1883, with the publication of Ignatius Donnelly's *The Great Cryptogram*, in two volumes, a copy of which is in the Large collection. Donnelly was the first of the cipher enthusiasts. Impressed with the idea that if Bacon had written the plays he would have left some kind of message in them he was struck by the allusion to 'bacon' in a scene of the *Merry Wives of Windsor* and in *King Henry IV, Part I*, but his search for any system in these references to 'bacon' and 'hog' and so on, was baffled through his use of a modern edition of Shakespeare's plays. It was only when he obtained a facsimile of the First Folio that it seemed to him that he could see a method in the

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position of certain words in the lines and columns, and he declared that he was able to work out a system of 'key numbers'; which had also to be altered by the addition or subtraction of certain 'variables'. Guided by these numbers he picked out an exciting story about Bacon, Shakspere the actor, and Queen Elizabeth which proved to his satisfaction that Shakspere could not have written the plays.

A new line was taken up by Mrs Elizabeth Wells Gallup. She began to investigate Bacon's 'Bi-Literal Cipher' which is described with one or two other ciphers in *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, published in 1623. (Spedding's edition gives both Bacon's Latin works and an English translation.) The basis of this cipher is that each letter of the alphabet may be represented by a combination of *a*'s and *b*'s in groups of five. The same system is used in the Morse code, with its group of dots-and-dashes in print, and its combination of long and short flashes or tappings according to whether lights or sounds are used. But to make it possible to write in cipher without it being obvious, each letter represents also an *a* or *b* according to a pre-arranged code, so that every group of five letters in an ordinary-looking sentence is really a group of *a*'s and *b*'s and equals one letter of the cipher. Just to help things along Bacon also suggests using two different founts of letters, one kind representing *a*'s and the other *b*'s, so that an *m* say, would be an *a* in one fount and *b* in an other. Mrs Gallup, using Bacon's cipher key, worked away on the plays, but like Donnelly, she was held up until she was able to get hold of original editions or facsimiles, not only of the plays, but also of Bacon's acknowledged works, and, being struck with the number of words and letters in italic founts, she worked on these, and found that it was only the italics that mattered. After investigating not only Shakespeare and Bacon, but much of the Elizabethan literature, she evolved a story, that at first sight seems so fantastic as to be quite incredible. The cipher messages tell, she says, that Bacon was the son of Queen Elizabeth and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

(History tells us that during 1560 Elizabeth's infatuation for Leicester was so marked as to cause comment, and Bacon's birth-date is given as January, 1561. Robert Deve-

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reux, afterwards Earl of Essex, is supposed to be a second son.) Francis was given into the care of Sir Nicholas and Lady Bacon, and brought up as their son, but discovered his real birth when he was about fifteen, and was sent to France for a time by the Queen to get him out of the way, returning to England while still a young man. He was never acknowledged publicly by Elizabeth, and, frustrated and embittered by being deprived of what he considered his rightful position, he wrapped up the story of his life, and much of the secret history of the reign, into his various works, giving at the same time clues to the 'word cipher' that Dr Owen had stumbled on independently, and revealing the other names under which he wrote. According to these revelations he was the author of not only the Shakespeare plays and poems, and of his acknowledged works, but—hold your breath!—of the works of Marlowe, George Peele, Robert Green and Edmund Spenser, and of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. He also did some translating of Homer, and is supposed to have had a hand in revising the works of the translators of the 1611 Bible.

Now what is the ordinary reader to think of all this? The fact that only original editions or facsimiles are of any use puts any checking up beyond the reach of the great majority of people, and, any attempt to wade through Donnelly's two volumes, with their pages and pages of exploration, their rows and rows of figures, with all their additions and subtractions, can only cause the reader to join in the poignant cry of 'Lost in the Wilderness!' with which Donnelly himself, struggling through the thickets of his 'cipher', heads one of his chapters. Even many convinced Baconians are somewhat suspicious of Donnelly's 'variables' and do not place much reliance on him. The 'Bi-Literal cipher', to which Bacon himself has given the key, seems to be more acceptable, and most Baconians now take for granted the story which is claimed to be revealed by it. The literature on the subject is already considerable and is growing. The new General Catalogue of the British Museum under the entry for Bacon, has a section headed 'Concealed life and writings', under which are listed 37 items.

H. C. Batchelor and Lord Penzance, members of an older

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generation of Baconians, are examples of the more cautious type. The former, in *Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare*, published in 1912, says that he will 'pass by all questions of secret cipher and "cryptograms" in the "Shakespeare" literature. I will not pronounce a personal opinion as to whether there is a cipher'. He bases his Baconian conclusions mostly on a comparison of the lives of the two men concerned and what seemed to him other indications of Bacon's authorship. Lord Penzance, one of the legal minds which has interested itself in the question, writing ten years earlier in a *Judicial Summing Up*, bluntly denies that there is any trace of Donnelly's cipher, and depends mostly on 'parallelisms' between Bacon's works and the plays. This method can, of course, be carried too far. A great many of the ideas and phrases common to both sets of writings are to be found all through Elizabethan literature, and were part of the ordinary speech and writing of the time. All the same, Mrs Henry Pott, studying the Ms. in the British Museum containing Bacon's *Promus of Formularies and elegancies* gives the seekers after parallelisms something to go on. Everybody knows that Shakespeare had the largest vocabulary of any English writer, Milton coming second, quite a long way behind, but perhaps they hardly realise that he coined quantities of new words that had never been used before, though many of them are now used by everybody. Mrs Potts claims that hundreds of these are found in the *Promus*, a collection of notes on words and phrases which had been unpublished till the appearance of her book in 1883.

Besides Bacon and Shakespeare, various claimants have been put forward—Edward de Vere (Earl of Oxford), Roger Manners (Earl of Rutland), and William Stanley (Earl of Derby), Oxford's son-in-law. Of these the most favoured is the Earl of Oxford. The circumstantial evidence in his favour, as put forward by T. J. Looney and other champions, is quite strong, and, of course, if the cipher testimony is not accepted, the evidence for any of the claimants is entirely circumstantial. Curiously enough, as G. H. Rendall points out in *Shakespeare Sonnets and Edward de Vere*, his life story parallels Bacon's in many respects. 'Bacon's mother

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(née Ann Cooke), was sister to Sir William Cecil's wife (Lady Burleigh); from fourteen onwards the Earl of Oxford was a member of the Cecil household; on his marriage with Ann Cecil (1571) he became first cousin by marriage to the young Francis Bacon. All their lives they moved in Cecil surroundings: both by Lord Burleigh's influence were entered as law students at Gray's Inn, both from time to time held chambers there Both travelled on the Continent, and had contact with the Court of France—Oxford from 1575 to 1576, Bacon from 1576 to 1579.' And so on. So much of the evidence which seems to favour an aristocratic authorship of the plays could apply to either one or the other.

Perhaps the most intriguing theory is the 'group theory'. According to Gibert Standen's little book on *Shakespeare Authorship*, already referred to, this was put forward by Delia Bacon, who suggested, besides Francis Bacon, the Earl of Oxford and others as authors of the plays. The idea has gained ground lately, chiefly through the work of Colonel B. R. Ward and the members of the 'Shakespeare Fellowship', a society formed to unite those 'who desire to see the principles of scientific and historical criticism applied to the problem of Shakespeare authorship'. Briefly, the idea is that the plays, the historical plays in particular—were propaganda put out to keep up the national morale during the struggle with Spain, and were the work of a group which had the Earl of Oxford at the head, and included Bacon, the Earl of Derby, and Shakspeare the actor. The latter is supposed to have replaced Marlowe in the group after Marlowe's death in 1593. It is known, of course, that Marlowe was engaged in Secret Service work, and it has been discovered from Elizabethan Exchequer documents that Oxford was receiving about £1000 a year for many years from a secret fund. The name 'Shakespeare' is presumed to have been chosen because its war-like suggestion of 'shaking a speare' at the enemy fitted with the name of a real person who could pass as the author. This exciting theory with its suggestion of secret service and its gathering up of all the claimants into a group, should give satisfaction all round, but is unlikely to please either the ardent Baconians

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or the orthodox Stratfordians, and unless actual documentary evidence turns up to decide the matter, the question of authorship will doubtless continue to be argued happily—or otherwise—by opposing groups for a long time to come.

In whichever direction one turns, one is met with what appears to be an impossibility. Here are these plays, acknowledged to be the finest things of their kind, not only in English literature, but in any literature, full of allusions to the work of classical and European writers, their ideas clothed in a magnificence of words which no other of our poets can equal—words and phrases so fitting that they have passed into our English speech, and people 'talk Shakespeare' without knowing that they are doing so. How could they have been written by a man born into an illiterate household, of whose education there is no record whatsoever (though it may be presumed that he had some), whose only known activities were acting and business dealing? On the other hand, supposing they were written by a well-known man of the time, or a group of men, how could the secret be kept? The more one examines the question the more impossible the first alternative seems. The difficulties of the second largely disappear when one realises the lack of publicity of those days, and the Elizabethan's love of mystery in their writings—how fond they were of assumed names, and anagrams and 'emblems', and how they peppered their work with initials, like the 'T.T.' and 'W.H.' which have given students of the sonnets so many sleepless nights, and with decorations and devices which might mean anything or nothing. To those in the secret all allusions would be perfectly clear; they would not think it either desirable or necessary to make any other record, and the mass of the people neither knew nor cared who were the authors of the plays they flocked to see.

With the exception of five of the items mentioned—the books of Lawrence, Wilmot, Hart, Delia Bacon, and W. H. Smith—all the works referred to in the article are in the Library, most of them in the Harold Large collection. Lest it be thought that the Library's interest is partizan, one should understand that this section is dwarfed by other material on editions of Shakespeare of Stratford. There

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are plenty more books on the authorship question, books of Shakespearean studies and criticisms, biographies on contemporaries, books on the Elizabethan theatre and on the dramatic literature of the time. It is impossible to list them all in this article, but mention may be made of the Malone Society reprints, the set of facsimilies of the quartos, and the splendid set of *Materials for the Study of the old English Drama*, published at Louvain from 1902 to 1914, and from 1927 to 1939. This fine work interrupted by two wars, may perhaps be continued when—if ever—peace returns to Europe.

A. WOODHOUSE

JAMES LAURENSEN STUDENT AND BENEFACTOR

FOR MANY YEARS James Laurenson was a frequent user of the Library. His serious, intent manner, with a swift sparkle of humour ever and anon, made him an interesting and pleasant student to help. His hobbies were two—the Shetlands of his origin, and flags and their history. He had set himself the task of tracing in the fullest detail the development of the New Zealand flag and its precursors. In this quest he was most painstaking, and his investigations went to many overseas sources of information.

When he died last year, it was gratifying to find that his collection of books and papers were to come to the Library. His material on flags will join forces with those of another such student, W. G. Ball, of Napier, whose collection (on a broader basis) similarly came several years ago. His Shetland Island books supplement strongly the several score presented by Sir Robert Stout, duplicating only two or three in the set.

A particularly welcome group came as well—a dozen or so excellent books on shipping, some that have been sought

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for years. We extend sympathy to his widow, and feel that she will, with us, take satisfaction that as he found the Library his friend in life, so it will remember him as a friend hereafter.

THE PICTURESQUE ATLAS OF AUSTRALASIA

A Dog With a Bad Name

THIS MIGHTY WORK in three, generally handsomely bound, volumes is well known to those versed in New Zealand books. But strange it is that despite the magnificence of its production, the accuracy and scope of its contents, vouched for by Dr Hocken's Bibliography ('a magnificent volume, with splendid illustrations and rare portraits'), it has never enjoyed a price on the New Zealand market to accord with these qualities. There is a good reason, which carries its effects to the present day. It is worth while to tell the story in some fullness.

The Picturesque Atlas of Australasia was edited by Dr Andrew Garran, and published in 1886 by the Picturesque Atlas Publishing Company of Sydney. Dr Garran, whose name had formerly been Gammon, had a distinguished career in Australia. Born in London in 1825, he took an M.A. degree in 1848, and went to Australia in 1851. After varied journalistic work he found himself at the height of his profession as editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1873. In 1870 he had taken the degree of LL.D. at Sydney, a qualification that served him well in the newspaper and political world. Quitting the former in 1885 he entered politics in 1887. Thus the 'Atlas' was the child of these two years of relative inactivity. He achieved eminence rapidly, becoming president of the Royal Commission on Strikes in 1890, whose report resulted in the Trades Disputes Con-

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ciliation and Arbitration Act of 1892. He enjoyed other important appointments of political significance, and was held in high esteem by Sir Henry Parkes, as evidenced in his *Fifty Years of Australian History*.

The work therefore was the product of a scholar and a well-equipped writer. It was well provided with illustrations and coloured maps. Actually it sold well, probably in Australia better than in New Zealand, which received attention in only half of volume 2 of the work. It was issued in 42 separate parts, which are still to be seen at times.

In New Zealand it was retailed by the Otago firm of Bowerman & Co., who employed a team of travelling salesmen. Purchasers saw specimen parts and signed a contract to have the work supplied. The material part of this contract read:

Please deliver to my address as given below, the work entitled Picturesque Atlas of Australasia, in forty-two parts (paper covers) for which I agree to pay you or your authorised agent 5s for each part when delivered at my residence or place of business, each part to contain from twelve to 20 pages. The publishers on their part agree to begin the delivery of the above-mentioned work during the year 1889, or the following year, and will complete the delivery of the series as soon after publication as possible . . . It is also expressly understood by each subscriber that the non-delivery of the publication at any specified date shall in nowise release the said subscriber from the above obligation. Subscriptions received only for the entire work, no agent being authorised to change the terms of this agreement, to give credit, to receive pay in advance or to contract any liability for the publishers.

It is likely that New Zealand sales were in the nature of dumping, though no abatement of the price was made. They appear to have started selling here in 1886, as indicated in such cases as follow. The price was five shillings per part, and the common impression seems to have been that parts would be delivered periodically, if not monthly. This did not eventuate, and purchasers, finding themselves embarrassed with heavy accounts, made trouble that had far-reaching effects.

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These were difficult years in New Zealand, when the economic position, following Vogel's boom of the 'seventies reached as low an ebb as the country has known. The rural communities in particular were affected, and they were the market that had bought readily the imposing volumes of the Picturesque Atlas. Many quailed at such an expense, but the contract had no loophole. Bowerman pressed for payment, and generally magistrates could do no other than sustain their claim.

Some of these cases are interesting. In Invercargill the Resident Magistrate gave a decision against the vendors (Bowerman)¹ on the grounds that oral evidence to the effect that the Picturesque Atlas was to be delivered monthly, was admissible, and that as these terms had not been followed, the contract was not binding. On appeal, however, this ruling was reversed by Sir Robert Stout, who pointed out that the contract stated specifically that the conditions could not be altered by an agent.

On another occasion the purchaser took delivery of four parts in 1888, and the bulk of the rest followed in one lump three years later. In his understandable exasperation he refused delivery, and an interesting altercation can be imagined before the agent left his undoubtedly heavy load (a full set weighs 34 lbs) at the gate. Again in the lower court the purchaser won his case, but again on appeal the Supreme Court gave for the vendors.

One purchaser endeavoured to evade his obligations by refusing to accept delivery since one part was duplicated and another lacking. Once more the Justices' finding for the defendant was altered by the judge, with stinging criticism of 'the incompetence of the Justices in the court below'.²

A case where the two courts agreed was when a purchaser, who had returned 14 parts objecting that monthly delivery had not been made, was required to accept them, but on an amended value.

1 9 N Z L R p. 157, 1891.
10 *ibid.* p. 60, 1893.
2 11 *ibid.* p. 392, 1893.
11 *ibid.* p. 358, 1891.
10 *ibid.* p. 348, 1891.

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In only one case is a favourable decision recorded for the purchaser. He had signed the contract in 1886, and as no copies of the book were delivered till 1891, the court held that the contract had been abandoned when payment and acceptance were refused.

What must constitute almost a unique procedure as a cautionary measure on the part of the Picturesque Atlas Publishing Company was the issue, in 1891, of a twelve-page folio brochure citing in some detail a number of prosecutions in Australia and New Zealand against delinquent subscribers. It is surely a coincidence that this publication, till now apparently unknown to New Zealand bibliography, should have come into the library just as this article was being completed. Though I have handled very many copies of the Picturesque Atlas, this minatory addendum I had not met before.

But these cases that came to the courts were few compared with those that found it preferable to swallow a bitter pill. They paid up, but endeavouring to convert such an expensive asset to specie again, found the book market glutted with the commodity. It has not yet recovered: the reason has been forgotten, and it is only remembered that it is an item that the market does not want. Today, an age when smaller houses do not have space for tall heavy volumes, the market is still unkindly, so that any time in these last thirty years a lucky purchaser could buy the three often splendidly bound volumes for anything from half-a-crown to half-a-guinea.

But in July, 1891, George Fisher, member of Parliament for Wellington City, asked a question in the House as 'to whether Government would take charge of the Book Purchasers' Protection Bill'.³

'Large numbers of people', he said, 'throughout the Otago and Canterbury Provincial Districts had been victimized by these book vampires. When these poor people came into court, they found themselves committed to a contract, innocent enough on the face of it, but so craftily drawn as to commit them to financial obligations which

³ Hansard vol. 72 p. 252, 488-90.

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they could never possibly meet. The magistrates in every case that had been tried, had said, that, although they sympathized very much with the people who had been deceived, they had no alternative but to give judgment for the plaintiffs'.

It was obvious that considerable activity had been going on behind the scenes, for Fisher to be ready with a private bill. At this time he was an experienced parliamentarian, with a background as printer, journalist and Hansard reporter. He had been mayor of Wellington for three years, in Parliament for seven, and Minister of Education in the Atkinson Ministry. He was a fine and vigorous speaker, and showed his bookish interests by promoting the erection of the Wellington Public Library.

A week later the second reading of the Bill was moved by Fisher, who received support from most members. Only W. F. Buckland, member for Manakau, a lawyer in practice for many years in Cambridge, and who introduced the satirical Washers' and Manglers' Bill in Parliament in 1892, spoke against it, though he apparently voted for it. It was suggested by another member that this opinion reflected the profitable business that the cases brought to the legal profession.

Thus in due course the Bill became law. Its essential provisions were that a duplicate of the agreement was to be supplied to the purchaser of books under such circumstances, and that the words 'The total liability of the purchaser under this agreement is should be printed in large red capitals as a background to the text in black ink'.

This act became incorporated in the Mercantile Law Act (Part IV) in the 1908 consolidation, and still remains operative today. It is, incidentally, the writer's experience that some sellers of books on such terms do not fully comply with these provisions, but the protection enjoyed by book purchasers today owes an appreciable debt to the unappreciated tomes of *The Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*.

In conclusion, the writer takes pleasure in acknowledging valuable assistance from Mr A. E. Currie of the Crown Law Office, in the preparation of these notes.

C.R.H.T.

A NOTE ON EMBLEM BOOKS

ACCORDING to the Oxford Dictionary, the meaning of 'emblem' in the early seventeenth century was 'an object or a picture of one, representing symbolically an abstract quality, an action, a class of persons etc.', or 'a moral fable or allegory'. Emblem books have been rather a neglected branch of book lore save for a few scattered studies over the past eighty years, but their immense vogue and frequent production in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries entitle them to some regard.

It is curious that the thin thread of emblem interest links three articles in our present issue. For the interpretation of emblems is decidedly one of the supports of the Baconians, and association and admiration bind the greatest of the emblem writers to the author of a little law book later described.

Not long ago a volume of Andrea Alciati's *Emblems*, 1566, was purchased from a local source. Already the library had several such volumes, but we had not regarded them as a class till now. As a whole, the group is small, but representative enough to allow of a useful examination of this kind of book, so completely characteristic of its age.

Alciati was a Milanese born in 1492, who was a famous jurisconsult, and widely known for his emblems and for his neatly turned classical, satirical, and sometimes witty stanzas in Latin which he appended to them. This became the accepted form for emblem books—an illustration with a related four or more lines of verse. His first known book was published in 1531 and this and others went through scores of editions in the next century or so. Although he was probably the best known of such writers, he is one of a veritable army of them, of whom Henry Green, the great authority of last century, listed 1300, compilers of over 3000 volumes of emblems.

Apart from its interest as a literary and occasional form, the emblem book evoked much pictorial and often artistic production. Famous engravers, many of whom are represented in the library, include Jost Amman, Theodor de

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Bry, Crispin de Passe, Albrecht Durer, Hans Holbein, and Wencelaus Hollar. These names are all associated with the illustration of emblem books.

In England a few translations of the continental productions were published, but the native output was slight. Quarles, Wither and Whitney are the principal names we know, and the library has the 1639 text of the first, the 1635 edition of the second, and Henry Green's reprint (1866) of the last. Of Quarles there are other editions of the nineteenth century.

Two English editions of the eighteenth century with good copper plates are based on continental models. One is called *Emblems for the entertainment and improvement of youth*, published in London in 1750. The other is by Herman Hugo, who was a popular Belgian producer of emblem books; our example is a version of 1702, *Pia Desideria, or Divine addresses*, englished by one Edmund Arwaker, with 47 copperplates. Of other European specimens, the *Emblemata Sacra de Fide, Spe, Charitate*, 1636, by Hesius, with over 100 little woodcuts, and *Emblemata et aliquot nummi antiqui operis*, by Sambucus, 1610, both printed by the famous Plantin Press of Antwerp, are of interest, the latter, incidentally, for its depicting of an early game of tennis. A Dutch specimen dated 1635, by Luiken, *De bykorf des Gemoeds*, is the only text in that language, and carried 100 engravings.

A certain number of works impinge upon the emblem style, such as the *Dance of Death*, *Ars Moriendi*, *Biblia Pauperum* and Brant's *Ship of Fools*, editions of which are present. Achilles Bocchius's *Symbolicarum quæstionum de universo genere, libri quinque*, a handsome 1555 edition of which was acquired last year, may be included, as can the *Mirror of Majestie* 1618.

In fact the extent to which emblem making is to be linked with heraldry, flags and banners, the engraving and woodcut art, decorative art etc. is scarcely yet assessed. Their depicting of scenes, costumes and events of their age gives them a consequence in the history of culture.

Henry Green has been mentioned above for his studies

AN EARLY VOLUME OF LAW CASES

in this realm. His name figures a number of times in the catalogue, for his several excellent editions (by the Holbein Society) of Alciati, for a bibliography of the same, and for his study on *Shakespeare and the Emblem writers*.

A further survey revealed a score or more of studies in literary and historical journals that covered the ground in very satisfactory fashion. Of these perhaps the best is Bailey's *New light on the Renaissance*, 1909.

AN EARLY VOLUME OF LAW CASES

LAST YEAR a sturdy little quarto volume bound in stamped parchment was presented to the library. Its title is *De Actionibus*, and it was printed at Lyons in 1539. The author's name, Jason Maino, is clearly shown on the black and red title page. It was not easy to find much about either the volume or its author, but the British Museum kindly supplied information on the former, the 'Biographie Universelle' on the latter. No copy of this edition appears to be in their collections or in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. The binding, which has been thought interesting enough to reproduce, is a superior type of trade binding common in Germany in the sixteenth century. The initials on either side of the stamped head of Lucretia on the upper cover are apparently those of the original binder or book-seller. Haebler, the eminent German bibliographer, considered this design was used at Wittemberg, where the volume was therefore probably bound. The initials could be those of either Christoph Georg or Caspar Genseler, both active in the book-trade there at the time.

Jason Mayno was an eminent juriconsult of Pavia of the fifteenth century: and as Pavia was one of the great centres of learning of the age, we may assume that Mayno (or Maino) was a considerable figure in his world. Certain it

D. McKEE WRIGHT'S FIRST BOOK

is that his works were authorities for the following century, no less certain that he has faded into the dimness common to much of the culture of the later middle ages.

Mayno achieved a high reputation as an advocate and orator, and was made a Count Palatine by the Emperor Maximilian. Louis XII of France gave him the Chateau of Piopera, and certain honours. He is notable in that he systematized clearly the opinions of commentators in jurisprudence, and also improved the recognition and reimbursement of lawyers and law teachers. He wrote several books, of which *De Actionibus*, first issued in 1483, was the earliest, and in itself a notable contribution to Roman law in its orderly methodising of the state of mediaeval knowledge on the subject. It was reprinted many times within the following century.

It was indicated on another page that there was a link between Alciati and Jason Mayno. As both were legal scholars of Pavia in the early sixteenth century, it is readily understandable that one of the earliest emblems of the former should have been devised for the latter. The symbols represented Hermes, a favourite figure with the emblematisers, and were used with the motto *Virtuti fortuna comes*. Alciati's tomb was sculptured with the same symbols, with the horns of plenty and the twined serpents.

D. McKEE WRIGHT'S FIRST BOOK

DAVID McKEE WRIGHT is one of the best known of New Zealand poets who first struck a characteristically New Zealand note in their work. A new edition of his works has just been published, but in preparing his selection, the editor consulted the material in the library. It was disappointing to find that no copy of Wright's earliest twenty-page booklet *Aorangi and other Verses*, Mills & Dick, Dun-

JOHN BASKERVILLE'S PRINTING

edin, 1896, was on the shelves. Enquiries elsewhere were equally unavailing. Serle's Bibliography of Australasian Poetry listed it, quoting from Hocken's Bibliography, but the Hocken Library and its catalogue did not record a copy. Its rarity began to become extreme, when among a group of pamphlets awaiting cataloguing from the Kinsey Collection, a perfectly preserved copy was discovered. It would now be useful to know if other copies exist, and where. Later works of the poet are much less elusive.

JOHN BASKERVILLE'S PRINTING

SINCE Mr Turnbull's earliest days, the Library has devoted some attention to fine printing and its history, so that the holdings of original specimens from the past are representative and often important examples from the presses concerned. Baskerville's productions are many, but the Library has relatively few, though additions have been made of recent years. In view of the frequent references to specific works printed by Baskerville in many modern treatises on printing, it will be of interest to set forth what are on the library shelves:

ADDISON. Joseph. *Works*. 4 volumes. Birmingham, printed by John Baskerville for J. & R. Tonson, London. MDCCLXI.

AESOP. *Select fables* . . . in three books. Birmingham, printed by John Baskerville for R. and J. Dodsley . . . 1764. In a very remarkable contemporary binding of green and red morocco.

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. Cambridge, printed by John Baskerville, printer to the University . . . MDCCLX.



PHOTO BY T. J. LAWLOR

View inside the entrance of the Library

JOHN BASKERVILLE'S PRINTING

- CATULLUS, TIBULLUS ET PROPERTIUS. *Opera*. Birmingham. Typis Joannis Baskerville, MDCCLXXII.
- CONGREVE, William. The Works of Mr. William Congreve in three volumes consisting of his plays and poems. 3 vols. Birmingham. Printed by John Baskerville for J. & R. Tonson, London, 1761. Full crushed Morocco, 'Bound by Riviere & Son for Alex. H. Turnbull.'
- HOLY BIBLE. Birmingham. Printed by John Baskerville. MDCCLXIX.
- (MALLET, DAVID). *Edwin and Emma*. Printed by John Baskerville for A. Miller in the Strand. MDCCLX.
- MILTON, J. *Paradise Lost (Paradise Regained)*. Birmingham. printed by John Baskerville for J. and R. Tonson. . . . MDCCLVIII. 2 volumes. From the library of Ralph Straus, bibliographer of Baskerville. This edition includes his famous preface on his printing enterprize.
- MILTON, John. *Paradise Lost (Paradise Regained)*. Birmingham. Printed by John Baskerville for J. & R. Tonson, MDCCLX. 2 volumes, bound by Derome le Jeune.
- SALLUSTIUS ET FLORUS. (*Opera*). Birmingham. Typis Joannis Baskerville, MDCCLXXIII.
- SHAFTESBURY, Anthony, Earl of. *Characteristics of men, manners, opinions, times*. Fifth edition. Birmingham. Printed by John Baskerville, MDCCLXXIII. 3 volumes.
- TERENCE. *Comoediae*. Birmingham. Typis Joannis Baskerville, MDCCLXXII.
- VIRGIL. *Works Englished by Robert Andrews*. Birmingham, printed by John Baskerville for the author. MDCCLXVI.
- VIRGIL. *Bucolica, Georgica et Aeneis*. Birmingham. Typis Johannis Baskerville. MDCCLXVI.

BOOKS ON BASKERVILLE

- BENNETT, W. *John Baskerville, the Birmingham printer*. Volume 1. Birmingham school of printing, 1937.

JOHN BASKERVILLE'S PRINTING

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY. *Literature and other miscellaneous items relating to John Baskerville*. Birmingham School of Printing, 1937.

BOCKWITZ, Hans H. *Baskerville in letters*. Birmingham school of printing, 1933.

John Baskerville in the judgment of German contemporaries. Birmingham school of printing, 1937.

CAVE, Thomas. *John Baskerville: the printer, 1706-1775*. Birmingham school of printing, 1936.

STRAUS, Ralph and Dent, R. K. *John Baskerville, a memoir*. Chatto and Windus, 1907.

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