

In such work as "Gorboduc," by Thomas Sackville; and the best criticism that could be offered on it is that given by Swinburne: "Blank it is, but verse it is not." It is nothing more than a series of individual verses, without the freedom, sweep, elasticity, that are so necessary to sustain the music of an unrhyming measure. Marlowe, unlike Shakspeare, who took years to free himself from the trammels of rhyme, broke away from the usage of his time at once, and produced his "mighty line,"—the line that has since been the vehicle for expressing the finest thought of the Anglo-Saxon world.

In his tentative effort, "Tamburlaine," the verse is not as free as it afterwards becomes in his hands; but it is immeasurably superior to the work of any writer before its production, and has some passages that compare favourably with his later work. But in "Faustus," "The Jew of Malta," and "Edward the Second," there are passages that will stand examination with the very best tragic utterances of Shakspeare.

We have said that he left Shakspeare nothing to discover in the form of the Romantic Drama. A careful examination will show that he knew when to use poetry and when prose: he knew, too, how to vary the music of a rapid speech by inserting short lines, and his handling of the breaks, pauses, and accents, is, at times, quite as masterly as that of his follower and disciple, Shakspeare.

Now, it may be asked, what grounds have we for considering Shakspeare his pupil. Compare their works, and it will be seen that he undoubtedly was. Take, for example, the following passages:

"Let the soldiers be buried.—Hell, death, Tamburlaine, hell!—Make ready my coach, my chair, my jewels,—I come, I come, I come!"—*Tam.*

"Come, come, my coach! Goodnight, ladies."—*Hamlet.*

These passages are peculiar, not only in the use of the same expression, "coach," under similar circumstances, but they are from scenes depicting insanity, and are in prose, Marlowe seeing, before Shakspeare, that the proper form for expressing the ravings of insanity was prose rather than the dignified iambic.

Again:

"Into what corner peers my halcyon's bill?"—*Jew of Malta.*

"Reneg, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks

With every gale and vary of their master."—*King Lear.*

"But, stay! What star shines yonder in the east?

The loadstar of my life, if Abigail."—*Jew of Malta.*

"But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!"—*Romeo and Juliet.*

"Gallop apace, bright Phoebus, through the sky!"—*Ed. II.*

"Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds, Towards Phoebus' lodging."—*Romeo and Juliet.*

These lines, and the famous line quoted in "As you Like It" from Marlowe's "Hero and Leander":

"Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?"

ought to convince the most determined maintainer of Shakspeare's absolute originality, that he was at least thoroughly conversant with all Marlowe's productions.

Marlowe converted the actor Shakspeare to his manner, and not only Shak-

speare, but a group of much more difficult subjects to convert—the scholars of Oxford and Cambridge—Greene, Lodge, Peele, Nash, and others. Greene was the most powerful of the group, but he never attained Marlowe's masterly form, and never possessed his sound judgment. Greene's page is marred by excessive mythology and euphuistic forms that detract from the grace of all his characters, and especially from such admirably-drawn women as Margaret of Fressingfield.

It is difficult to say what Marlowe would have done had he lived; but that he could never have been a Shakspeare has been so frequently pointed out, and the reasons given, that it is unnecessary to dwell on the subject. He lacked humour as completely as Shelley lacked it, and he seemed unable to portray a simple, loving, noble-minded woman like Imogen or Miranda. But he has epic strength of workmanship, and epic force in depicting gigantic souls of Titanic mould; and the promise of Edward II. might have given England a writer of tragedies having the epic power of a Milton.

It has been customary to speak of Marlowe as our "elder Shelley," ever since Swinburne styled him by that name; but the name is inadequate. He was in few things like Shelley. Every line that Shelley penned came from his heart, and was a part of his life, whereas whole scenes in Marlowe's dramas have evidently been written to please the "groundlings." Shelley's Muse, too, is essentially lyrical, whereas Marlowe's, with the exception of the exquisite lyric, "Come, live with me and be my love," and the charming narrative, "Hero and Leander," is dramatic, dealing with living men, if not living women. His characters are Titanic, but they have not the vagueness of outline, the superhuman indefiniteness of the very best of Shelley's creations. He is more like Keats in his love of beauty. For him, "beauty is truth, truth beauty"; and his answer to the question

"What is beauty, sayeth my sufferings, then?"

would not have been unworthy of the modern Apostle of beauty.

But take him for all in all, and he resembles Byron more than he does either Shelley or Keats. He has lyrical power, so has Byron; he has dramatic intensity, so has Byron; his characters are all more or less reflections of his own life; so are Byron's; and his life, like Byron's, was a round of debauch, followed by mighty effort. But there are many points in which his soul in no way resembles Byron's, and it would be better to speak of him by no name excepting that of Kit Marlowe.

Marlowe has not been without his enthusiasts. Among his contemporaries Chapman, Petowe.—both of whom completed his unfinished "Hero and Leander"—Drayton, Peele, and Ben Jonson, gave him their tribute of praise, and held him in memory as "kind Kit Marlowe," among the moderns Goethe, Swinburne, Horne, Lowell, Symonds, and a host of lesser writers have studied him carefully and sympathetically, and praised him worthily. It would be well if more of our students of the drama would turn their attention to his work. To understand Shakspeare properly Marlowe should

be known. The "myriad-minded" one will lose none of his attractiveness by being judged in the light of the help he received from the Father of our English Drama.

In this brief study but little that is definite has been said about Marlowe's life; but little is known of it, and that little so evil that it is better to say naught about it, but to judge the man by his work and influence—to judge him as Burns should be judged. The age, the circumstances of his life, have all to be taken into account, and a sympathetic student would be apt to be led into an apology for the life, or a refutation of the facts presented—a task as useless as it is needless. His work is before us, and from his work he should be judged. A tree should be known by its fruit, and Marlowe by the children of his brain; and Faustus and Edward II. are all we need to show us that he was at once an energetic student, a strong thinker, and a powerful moralist.

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PARIS LETTER.

Patriots, but not Chauvins, are doing good work by having straightforward chats over the utopia a good many of their countrymen are nursing; that of being able to rival England in her navy. France, say these honest teachers, does not possess the plant power like England, whose resources are practically unlimited, for war-ship construction; further, the two great political parties in England are united as to the Egyptian Question, and also to keep up the standard of the British navy, so as to make it equal to the combined navies of the two largest naval powers of the world. That is a very plain fact, and it never has been concealed. It is not at all probable that England would have to face a triple alliance of naval powers, as it may be assumed she will, when the occasion arises, make for herself two friends of the "mammon of unrighteousness."

The nation that rules the seas, reflective judges consider, will dominate any future war, and it is on sea, and in the Mediterranean, that the European contest, alleged to be in the cards, will be decided. It must be a quick affair also, in order to prevent a belligerent from augmenting his battle-ships by capturing those of an enemy. Happily, war is not among the prospectives; the French never allude to any continental crash, are fully alive to what it involves, and will indulge in no risk.

It is Sweden that monopolizes the role of Cassandra at present; a Royalist M. Melander, in order to frighten Norway to remain the Siamese brother of Sweden, warns her of the consequences of secession. United, the Scandinavian army is able to resist either England or Russia, or even both united. That's the latest marvel from the land of the midnight sun. But M. Melander and Norwegians would do well to remember that Russia covets both of them as she did Finland; she wants the open-water harbour at Ofoten that is never ice-bound, and Muscovites demand the connection of the Finland railway system with that of Sweden, which unites with the Ofoten Fjord.

The two great objects in life for