

she expresses her impatience to learn the result of the maid's first errand. Hulda enters, assures her that all is well, and is then given her second message, to Rinuczo. It is at this point that the widow's stratagem first becomes plain to the maid and the audience. Then Rinuczo enters, declaring his love in a soliloquy, just as Alexander had done: Hulda comes and gives him the message. He expresses his readiness to comply with the widow's demands, and rewards the go-between. Both go out. Francisca, who has hardly expected success, now enters discussing the matter with Hulda. The lovers, she says, are not to be admitted, even if they come. The plot is now complete, and the train laid. The third "actus" opens with Alexander's entrance. His first speech shows fear, struggling with his resolution to please his lady, and finally he braces himself to the disagreeable task. After his departure, Rinuczo comes, and makes a speech of similar import. On his exit, the two watchmen appear; from their conversation we learn that they have come to arrest a murderer, whose crime they discuss in detail. Rinuczo comes on, carrying Alexander, and is mistaken by the watchmen for the culprit. They then try to stop him, but he throws Alexander down, and runs off, closely followed by the ministers of justice. Alexander makes his escape, unnoticed. Rinuczo returns for the body, having distanced his pursuers; on not finding it, he prudently resolves to go home and say nothing about the whole affair. Francisca and her maid appear, and make merry over the discomfited wooers. The play is closed by the herald in a long epilogue, in which the obvious morals are drawn.*

§ 113. *The Mise-en-Scène*.—This play is remarkable for its being divided into three "actus," and for its very effective stage-setting. The action is most delicately shaded. It would seem from this play, however, that Sachs' stage had one rather serious limitation. It had not the platform at the back of the stage which has such an important place in the earliest English

*NOTE.—The verbal resemblance are not close enough in this play to require special reference.