

quite impossible for Bacon, as he was never thrown into fellowship with it.

11. Cases are not wanting in which rare genius has supplied the place of every external advantage; but no instance can be found in history of the same man belonging to the highest rank of philosophers, and to the highest rank of poets.

12. No instance can be named of an author writing with such grace and perfection in two styles so entirely different as the styles of Bacon and Shakespeare.

13. In our ideal of the author of these plays, we must not imagine an Emerson or a Carlyle sitting by his study window, in dressing-gown and slippers, and surrounded by the best thoughts of centuries. We must not grace our ideal with the culture reflected from a polished society and literature. It must not have about it the atmosphere of the philosopher or the man of letters. What rebuke we suffer if we permit the thought even to flash through our minds. "Dr. Shakespeare!" He was not the man from whom in our day we should expect such characters and sentiments. He did not live in the conditions of modern life, and we must not judge him by our standards. His was an age of vigor, that spoke because it felt, and not because it thought and studied. Genius was his gift, and why deny him its exaltation? The gods do not wonder at their own productions; nor do we put a great value upon what we can produce without effort and in ordinary moments. Such admiration is for those only who confess their own weakness. How unnatural, then, that this divinity should have betrayed the mortal weakness of guarding his own fame.

14. How weak is all this circumstantial evidence, and as much more as can be found, by the side of the clear and positive testimony of contemporaries! Numerous extracts are given to show how clear and conclusive is this evidence.

The earliest mention of Shakespeare by a contemporary is by Edmund Spenser, in 1591, in "The Teares of the Muses." Complaint by Thalia, lines 205-210.

"And he, the man whom Nature selfe had made
To mock herselfe, and truth to imitate,
With kindly counter under mimic shade,
Our pleasant Willy, ah! is dead of late:
With whom all joy and jolly merriment,
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent."

The best authorities make it clear beyond all doubt that these lines were intended to refer to Shakespeare. [See Charles Knight's "Life of Shakespeare," ed. 1843, pp. 342-348.]

In 1592 appeared "Kinde Hart's Dreame a poem of considerable interest and merit," by Henri Chettle. In Chettle's "address," a passage occurs, referring to Shakespeare, as all critics agree.

Ben Johnson's eulogy upon Shakespeare first published in the folio of 1623, is well

known. In his prose the same author makes a long and affectionate reference to the friend of his youth. The following is a part. * * * * "For I loved the man, and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped.—["Discoveries." Probably written in 1636.]

What explanation can be made of these and other allusions? Were these men and their fellows all so completely deceived by the cunning of a Lord Chancellor and the Prince of Philosophers? Or are we to suppose that they were combined in an effort to make posterity believe a lie? What an absurdity! But one of these must be admitted, if this theory is to be accepted.

15. Besides believing that Bacon, in all his numerous acknowledged works, took pains to repress his "excellent phantasy" and wonderful "facility of expression," and to use them only in his dramas, this theory requires us to believe that he affected an ignorance about things with which he must have been perfectly acquainted; as, for example, in "Julius Cæsar" chimneys of the Roman houses are referred to, and the "eternal devil" is spoken of, evidently in its modern sense; both of which were unknown to the Romans. In "The Tempest," Bohemia is represented as a maritime kingdom, etc. How absurd to think of Bacon as stooping to such paltry tricks to escape the responsibilities of authorship!

16. If the new theory is accepted, the miracle is not lessened. No similar case is on record in which such magnificent genius succeeded in deceiving its own, and following generations, or, in fact, that it ever made the attempt; and it is no more incredible that Shakespeare really wrote the works attributed to him, than that so many and such worthy contemporaries should be deluded so completely, or that they should assist in a stupendous deception for no conceivable reason.

It is unnecessary to multiply arguments further on either side or to notice the answers which will suggest themselves to many, if not all, of the arguments which have been presented.

So far as this discussion attempts an explanation of the origin or existence of genius, it is certainly quite futile; and quite as unworthy is the attempt to adjust the mere honor of authorship as between two individuals simply. But the question is by no means an unimportant one, whether genius has worked in this instance, by the use of means necessary to ordinary mortals, or whether its inspiration has been immediate and complete.