

From what has preceded, it will be observed that Shakespeare sometimes uses law terms in their technical legal sense, but more often does he use them without any special reference to their legal significance. When he does use legal terms in their proper sense, the source from which he obtains them can usually be traced to other authors, such as Holinshed's and Hall's Chronicles, Plutarch's Lives and other sources; and in the majority of cases where he uses such terms erroneously, it is generally impossible to discover from what source he received his material, and, therefore, it is to be concluded that they were original with him, or that he picked them up in a desultory way from personal observation and contact with members of the legal profession. It is not surprising that a man of Shakespeare's genius for gathering and assimilating knowledge would acquire a knowledge of the law sufficient for him to make the inaccurate use of such terms as are found in his works without any technical study of the subject. It seems that we get a more reasonable and logical explanation from the fact that he was a man of marvellous genius and of minute observation of the affairs of life, with an ability to assimilate its facts and conditions from a large acquaintance with men learned in all subjects with which he deals, together with vast and diversified reading, than to conclude, because we find a large amount of apparently technical language in his work, that he had made a profound and technical study of these subjects with which he appears, at least on the surface, to be thoroughly familiar.

Moreover, the sources from which he derived much of his material is still a mooted question. It is certain that a number of plays with similar titles to some