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 "THE TWO WIVES OF THE KING."
 TRANSLATED FOR THE SATURDAY READER FROM
 THE FRENCH OF PAUL FEVAL.

SHAKSPERIAN HYGIENE.

NOT BY ANY-MAN.

"Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly.—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*"

YOUR correspondent V. says it is not absolutely impossible that William Shakspeare was an attorney's clerk, and he has given us a very interesting paper, illustrative of Shakspeare's knowledge of legal terms and practice. All readers of Shakspeare, specially those learned in the law, must have been amazed, not only at the number of his juridical phrases and forensic allusions, but by the accuracy and propriety with which they are introduced. "We cannot argue with confidence on the principles which would guide us to safe conclusions respecting ordinary men, when we are reasoning, respecting one of whom it was truly said :"

"Each change of many coloured life he drew
 Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new:
 Existence saw him spin her bounded reign,
 And pausing time toiled after him in vain."

The idea of Shakspeare being a lawyer's clerk was first suggested by Chalmers, and has since been countenanced by Malone and others. Payne Collier, than whom there has been no one amongst the editors of Shakspeare who has treated his author with more reverence, is strongly inclined to the belief that the author of Hamlet was employed some years in engrossing deeds, serving writs, and making out bills of costs. Payne Collier referred the matter to the late Lord Campbell, and in a very delightful book, entitled "Shakspeare's Legal Acquirements," he says :

"Were an issue tried before me, as Chief Justice at the Warwick Assizes, 'Whether William Shakspeare, late of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman, ever was clerk in an attorney's office in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid,' I should hold that there is evidence to go the jury in support of the affirmative; but I should add that the evidence is very far from being conclusive. . . . The probability is (particularly if the trial were by a special jury of Fellows of the Society of Antiquarians) that after they had been some hours in deliberation, I should receive a message from them, 'There is no chance of our agreeing, and therefore we wish to be discharged.'"

It has been suggested that Shakspeare, during his first years in London, may have dined at the ordinary in Alsatia, where he may have had a daily surfeit of the law—if, with his universal thirst for knowledge, he had any desire to drink deeply at this muddy fountain. It is thus described by honest old Decker, (1609) :

"There is another ordinary at which your London usurer, your stale bachelor, and your

thrifty attorney do resort; the price threepence; the rooms as full of company as a jail; and indeed divided into several wards, like the beds of a hospital. . . . If they chance to discourse, it is of nothing but of statutes, bonds, recognizances, fines, recoveries, audits, rents, subsidies, sureties, enclosures, liveries, indictments, outlawries, feoffments, judgments, commissions, bankrupts, amercements, and of such horrible matter."

In such company a willing listener might soon make great progress in law. Shakspeare was conversant with all sorts and conditions of men. His genius was unbounded, consequently, he might have acquired knowledge even from conversation, which would have required a special study with others not so richly gifted.

Some have supposed Shakspeare a schoolmaster; if so, would he not have a little respect for the cloth? In all his dramas we have but three schoolmasters, and he makes them all exceedingly ridiculous. Holofernes in "Love's Labour's Lost," is laughed at for his pedantry and bad verses; Sir Hugh Evans in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," who, although in holy orders, has not yet learned the English language; lastly, Pinch, in the "Comedy of Errors," who unites the bad qualities of a pedagogue and a conjurer.

The butcher theory we will leave to those who have no divinity to shape their ends, and not mechanical handicraft to point a skewer.

It is to be remembered that Shakspeare is satirically severe upon the profession of the law, and may it not be argued from thence that he was not a member of the profession? In "Henry VI," act 4, in the scene between Jack Cade and his coadjutors, occurs the following :

Dick. The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.
Cade. Nay, that I mean to do. Is not this a lamentable thing that the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? that parchment being scribbled o'er should undo a man? Some say the bee stings; but I say it is the bee's wax, for I did but seal once to a thing, and I was never my own man since.

Sir John Falstaff's banter with the Lord Chief Justice does not smack of reverence—his sole object is to turn him into ridicule, and admirably he succeeds.

"God give your lordship good time of day; I am glad to see your lordship abroad: I heard say your lordship was sick: I hope your lordship goes abroad by advice. Your lordship though not clean past your youth hath yet some smack of age in you, some relish for the saltness of time; and I most humbly beseech your lordship to a reverend care of your health."

Again, when Falstaff is arrested, at the suit of Dame Quickly, he gains his discharge with the consent of the Chief Justice, by saying to his lordship—

"My lord, this is a poor mad soul; and she says up and down the town that her eldest son is like you."

Look, what a butt he makes of Mr. Justice Shallow during his visit to him in Gloucestershire; and how he anticipates the fun of recapitulating, at the Boar's Head, Eastcheap, all Shallow's absurdities and eccentricities :

"I will devise matter enough out of this Shallow to keep Prince Henry in continual laughter. The wearing out of six fashions (which is four terms or two actions) and he shall laugh without intervallums."

Again, at Menenius, in "Coriolanus," who is made the vehicle of satire to the judges :

"You wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange wife and a posset seller, and rejoin the controversy of three pence to a day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like nummers . . . dismiss the controversy more entangled by your hearing; all the peace you make in the cause is, calling both the parties knaves."

The speculations as to Shakspeare's profession are harmless, and afford a little literary recreation. I am not going to combat the opinions

of an attorney, and doubtless he has already considered me tiresome, and is inclined to say with King-Lear

"This is nothing, fool."

If so, I can but give him the rejoinder.

"Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer—you gave me nothing for it."

Why may Shakspeare not have been a sailor? It has been shewn most conclusively that Shakspeare's knowledge of seamanship must have been the result of the most accurate personal observation, or, what is perhaps more difficult, of the power of combining and applying the information derived from others—

The boatswain in the "Tempest" delivers himself in the true vernacular style of the forecastle.

Lord Mulgrave supposes that Shakspeare must have acquired this technical knowledge by conversation with some of the most skilful seamen of the time. He adds, "no books had then been published on the subject."

Was he a gardener? in "Winter's Tale," act iv., scene 3, occurs the following :

Perdita.—Sir, the year growing ancient,—
 Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth
 Of trembling winter,—the fairest flowers of the season.

Are our carnations, and streak'd gillyvors,
 Which some call nature's bastards: of that kind
 Our rustic garden's barren; and I care not
 To get slips of them.

Polixenes. Wherefore, gentle maiden,
 Do you neglect them?

Perdita. For I have heard it said,
 There is an art which, in their pinedness, shares
 With great creating nature.

Polixenes. Say, there be;
 Yet nature is made better by no mean,
 But nature makes that mean: so, over that art,
 Which, you say, adds to nature, is an art
 That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we
 marry

A gentler scion to the wildest stock;
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind
 By bud of nobler race: This is an art
 Which does mend nature,—change it rather: but
 The art itself is nature.

Perdita. So it is.

Polixenes.—Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
 And do not call them bastards.

Perdita. * * * Here's flowers for you;
 Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;
 The marigold that goes to bed with the sun,
 And with him rises weeping; these are flowers
 Of middle summer—

O, Proserpina,
 For the flowers now, that I righted, thou let'st fall
 From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
 That come before the swallow dars, and take
 The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
 Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
 That die unmarried, ere they can behold
 Bright Phoebus in his strength, a malady
 Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and
 The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,
 The flower-de-luce being one! O! these I lack,
 To make you garlands of; and, my sweet friend,
 To strew him o'er and o'er.

A chapter on Shakspeare's flowers I might give you at no distant day—the very thought of them is cheering amidst this long winter snow.

My present object is to show that Shakspeare, who has left no subject untouched, and truly, "nullum quod tetigit non ornavit," has scattered through his plays scraps of medical experience of equal truth and wisdom with anything science can teach us. A few of the Hygienic maxims or rules of health I subjoin.

First, then, we have the important functions of the stomach in the animal economy, accurately sketched in the fable of the Belly and the Members, in "Coriolanus." The stomach thus replies to the rebellious limbs :—

"True it is, my incorporate friends, quoth he,
 That I receive the general food at first,
 Which you do live upon: and fit it is;
 Because I am the store-house and the shop
 Of the whole body: But, if you do remember,
 I send it through the rivers of your blood,