

# Shakespeare Tercentenary: 1616-1916

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Rose Caren  
as Desdemona

Mounet-Sully  
as Othello

### HE CONQUERED FRANCE BUT SLOWLY

#### The Long, Hard Battle of Shakespeare's Fame to Overcome the Wall of Prejudice Erected By Voltaire

Written for THE NEW YORK TIMES

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THAT Shakespeare was wholly unknown in France during the century of Louis XIV. is nothing that need astonish, since ignorance of all foreign affairs was so complete and so patent that a contemporary could write facetiously that in the estimation of the Parisians everything outside of their country "ate hay and walked on four feet." Diligent search has, however, revealed that two copies of his works existed in the country. One was in the King's library, the catalogue of which was completed in 1684, and was recorded as follows: "Will Shakespeare, poeta anglicus, operae poeticae contentia tragœdiarum, comediarum et historiolarum Anglie. London. Th. Cotes, 1632, fo."

In Prévost's "Memoirs" a considerable part is devoted to England and her literary men. "I have witnessed several of their dramas," he writes, "and they seem not inferior to the Greek and the French ones. I even venture to say that they would surpass them if their poets put more regularity in them." He had seen "Hamlet" and plays by other writers, and found infinite pleasure in them.

From the above it will be seen that, contrary to general belief, Voltaire was not the first to call the attention of the French to Shakespeare. But it is no doubt true that, as far as the public was concerned, it remained densely ignorant of the very existence of the poet until the famous "Philosophical Letters," or "Letters about the English"—for Voltaire himself used both titles—called attention to the fact that beyond the Channel there lived a playwright of whom the English thought as much as did the French of Racine, Corneille, or Molière. The little book appeared in French in 1734.

What shocked Voltaire on first acquaintance with Shakespeare was his total disregard of the consecrated unities of time, place, and action. That a dramatic action should occupy more than the regulation twenty-four hours was considered bad; that it should take several years was simply inconceivable. Then, again, the changes of place from act to act, and even from scene to scene, the bloodshed, the use of violent, gross, or even familiar language in a serious play, all disturbed Voltaire beyond belief, accustomed as he was to the uniform loftiness of speech, decorum in form, and refinement in manners of the French tragedy. Yet in spite of all their unpardonable faults those "monstrous tragedies" never bored, always interested. This Voltaire attributed to flashes of genius in the untutored Elizabethan, who, so Voltaire thought, wrote in a barbarous age for a rude crowd. Had he but lived in more civilized times those "monstrous farces" would have become beautifully polished and highly decorous tragedies in five acts and regular rhymed alexandrines.

He proceeded at once to add to his own tragedies some of the things he admired most in the British plays, namely, action, color, picturesque. His innovations were timid, indeed, judged by modern standards; but he knew the temper of his countrymen, and that they considered their own dramatic masterpieces perfect. He adapted "Julius Caesar" to the French taste, and called it the "Death of Caesar"; he introduced ghosts in several of his plays, and wrote tragedies without love. The best of his dramas, "Zaire," if not imitated from "Othello," bears at least a remarkable resemblance to it.

All his life he was haunted as much by Shakespeare as by the fear that the French people should know him too well and admire him. He put ghosts in "Eriphyle," which is of 1732, and in "Bemiramis," of 1748. In doing so he recalled his model, and admitted the beauty of that device in "Hamlet." Yet he could not help adding that "Hamlet" was "a coarse and barbarous play which would not be tolerated by the lowest rabble of France or Italy." In 1746 the public knew of Shakespeare only what Voltaire had told them. But things were going to change. In that year appeared the first installment of a so-called translation by Laplace, which was to be complete in four volumes.

The translation was a great success, and Voltaire was not satisfied. Why were not the French content with what he had told them about that dead Englishman? He had given them the soliloquy of Hamlet and two scenes from "Julius Caesar," with a suitable appreciation of the poet's genius. That should have been enough. Through the very imperfect rendering of Laplace Shakespeare began to arouse interest, and those who divined his greatness from the available fragments began to utter the opinion that perhaps the native tragedy might not be the ultimate expression of dramatic art. Voltaire was scandalized, perhaps in all sincerity, but perhaps, also, because his own supremacy was questioned by implication. But the worst was yet in store for him.

In 1769 there appeared in the Journal Encyclopédique an anonymous article which was given as a translation from the English. In it a parallel was drawn between Shakespeare and Corneille. Both writers were called the fathers of dramatic poetry in their respective countries. Both were called great in their way, but still the crown was given to Shakespeare, who was said to be the mirror of nature "in which all traits of the human soul are reflected as perfectly as the features of the countenance are displayed in the glass of an ordinary mirror." The conclusion was that "Shakespeare was incontestably

a great poetic genius, and Corneille an excellent dramatic poet."

That was more than Voltaire could stand. He forthwith composed an appeal to all the nations of Europe to decide the momentous question of superiority between the English stage and the French. The very idea of such a procedure was absurd enough, but the manner in which it was proposed was the acme of absurdity. All the world knew the French classic writers, and practically no one knew Shakespeare. But Voltaire would furnish Europe the means of knowing him. He gave a fairly detailed account of "Hamlet," a dozen passages being translated into French prose, each accompanied by deprecatory comments. Besides these he gave what Laplace, out of a natural sense of propriety, had omitted from his version of "Othello," but what Voltaire considered essential for a true appreciation of the whole



Jean Mounet-Sully as Hamlet

work, namely, the coarse speech of Iago announcing the flight of Desdemona with the Moor. On such evidence was intellectual Europe to base its verdict, and to such childish, not to say contemptible, means did a great genius stoop in order to belittle a dead rival.

From that time on Voltaire let no occasion pass by to attack him, never with sound critical judgment, but with abuse. To Samuel Johnson's reference to his unfair strictures as "petty cavils of petty minds" Voltaire replied that he did not wish to suspect Johnson "of being a sorry jester too fond of wine, but that he finds it a little extraordinary that he should count buffoonery and drunkenness among the beauties of the tragic theatre." And again he quotes some offensive passages or, from the French viewpoint, absurd situations, made worse by his blunders and wilful distortions. He kept up the fight to the end of his long life. In spite of him, however, Shakespeare gained in favor on the Continent. In Germany he was played and much admired. In France discontent with the classic rules became more pronounced from day to day, and Voltaire felt that literature was going to the dogs. "We are in the mire," he wrote in 1767, and three years later: "I have been told of a tragedy in prose which, it is said, will meet with success. That is the finishing stroke given to the fine arts." The old man was genuinely distressed at the threatened downfall of a dramatic system in which he had gained renown after his great masters, Corneille and Racine, and at the growing popularity of the foreign intruder, who was to his mind the antipodes of good taste.

Of this hated author's works France was to have at last a complete translation. In 1776 Letourneur began it with two volumes containing "Othello," "The Tempest," "Julius Caesar," a dedication to the King, and a long preface. The first volume gave a list of 800 subscribers, including the most illustrious people of France and the rest of Europe. It was stated in the preface that Shakespeare had been slandered and misrepresented, either through malice or ignorance. The com-

parison made between him and the greatest French dramatists turned out decidedly in his favor.

Voltaire, seeing that his appeal to the nations had brought no results, now had recourse to the supreme judgment of the Academy. His state of mind is sufficiently indicated by the letter he wrote to his friend, d'Argental, who was to transmit his appeal to the august body to which both belonged. On July 19, 1776, he wrote to him: "I must tell you how angry I am . . . against a man named Tournour. . . . Have you read two volumes of this wretch? . . . There are two volumes which one would imagine to be pieces to be played at the fair. . . . Have you read this abominable stuff of which we are to have five more volumes? Do you feel sufficient detestation for this impudent fool? . . . The blood boils in my old veins. . . . What is frightful is that the monster has a following in France, and to fill the measure of my chagrin it was I who first long ago spoke of the Shakespeare. I it was who first showed the French a few pearls I found in that huge dunghill. I did not then think that some day I was to help trample under foot the crown of Corneille and Racine in order to adorn the brow of a barbarous mountebank."

That letter was a prelude to the memorial he addressed to the Academy. His object was to show up Shakespeare to that eminent body "in all his abominable and incredible villainy." "The main thing," he wrote again to d'Argental, "is to inspire the nation with the disgust and detestation it ought to feel for buffoon Letourneur, extoller of buffoon Shakespeare." His denunciation was read before the Academy and duly approved. It was the official sanction placed upon the unworthiness of the foreign author.

Meanwhile Letourneur went on unconcerned with his great undertaking, and brought it to a successful termination. It is still a readable though an imperfect translation. He helped to a truer appreciation of Shakespeare, if he did not actually promote his popularity. This was mainly accomplished by another man who did not

know a word of English, namely, Ducis. Already in 1769 he made a French adaptation of "Hamlet" in the familiar classic style, five acts in alexandrines. It was a tame affair, and recalled the original only remotely, for all he knew of Shakespeare he got out of the fragments of Laplace, "Romeo," "Othello," and other pieces were similarly handled, although later on he took Letourneur for his source.

The public's distorted conception of the English master was due then in part to Voltaire, who hated him, and in part to Ducis, who loved him well but not wisely. This lasted through the French Revolution, through the reign of Napoleon, through part of the Restoration period. Ducis's adulterations were followed by others. In 1816 there appeared an adaptation of "Hamlet" as a pantomime with music by Gallenberg; in 1817 "The Visions of Macbeth," or "The Witches of Scotland," melodrama with grand spectacle; in 1818 "The Moor of Venice, or Othello," pantomime with dialogue and dances. To the public's mind Shakespeare was a kind of legendary purveyor of popular and sensational dramas. The few who knew better were unable to get a hearing. Besides, Laharpe, Voltaire's friend and disciple, was the only critic whose writings were studied in schools, and Laharpe, who did not know a word of English, shared Voltaire's views and prejudices in nearly all respects.

In 1819 Merle, manager of the Porte Saint Martin Theatre, visited England, and came back full of enthusiasm for the stage of that country; and when, in 1822, there landed an English company in Paris, he hastened to conclude with its manager, Penley, a contract for a series of six performances. The Liberal papers announced the news in words which betrayed uneasiness on their part. The Constitutionnel noted that "some persons find strange that foreign productions should be offered in Paris; yet why fear comparison? Molière has never yet found an adversary worthy of himself." The Album concluded its announcement of the coming event with the ominous words: "Look out for fun." The English company was to make its



Sarah Bernhardt as Hamlet

début on the 11st of July. Posters were placed all over Paris announcing that "By His Britannic Majesty's most humble servants will be performed the tragedy of 'Othello' in five acts by the most celebrated Shakespeare." Such an announcement was sure to be unwelcome to a considerable section of the Paris population, those who worshipped Napoleon and hence hated the English, and those who feared Shakespeare.

From the box office point of view the Shakespeare premiere in Paris was a distinct success. Every seat was sold, and huge crowds had to be refused admittance. From the moment the actors uttered the first words laughter arose in various parts of the house at the strange sounds never before heard on a Parisian stage. Soon the laughter became cat calls, whistling—the French equivalent for hissing; soon rotten apples, bad eggs, and pennies came raining down on the stage. The editor of a Royalist paper tried to rebuke the disturbers and to obtain fair play for the visitors. Missiles found their way to his box and he was ordered out of the theatre by the crowd. The actors and actresses were thoroughly frightened. In order to cut their ordeal short it was decided to jump from the middle of the third act to the fifth. But the choking of Desdemona was hardly calculated to calm that now seething mob.

Had the performance lasted a little longer the house would have been wrecked. As it was, the spectacle ended in a tumult and amid the cries of "Down with Shakespeare." He is a henchman of Wellington! The theatre was, however, wrecked two days later when another attempt was made by the Penley company.

During the years following many things occurred to prepare at least a fair hearing for Shakespeare. Canning, once an enemy of France, had become a friend. In 1822 and 1823 Stendhal published two pamphlets, entitled "Racine" and "Shakespeare." Armed with his sharp and deft pen and a complete disregard of tradition and authority, he set about demolishing pseudo-classic productions, and sapped the very foundations of the tragedy, according to Racine and Voltaire, by calling the alexandrine a cloak for nonsense. He was a true disciple of Voltaire when it came to killing with those terrible weapons, epigram, sarcasm, ridicule. Youth admires rebels, and it was to the young that Stendhal appealed, for, said he, "how are we to convince men of 50 who find Zamore of Voltaire's 'Aldrie' natural and brilliant, that Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' is one of the masterpieces of the human mind?" In 1825 the most talented and learned critic of the day, Villemain, wrote a eulogy of Shakespeare in the "Biographie Universelle," while the year before was founded an excellent journal which was from its very inception to start a systematic campaign for the reform of the stage under the auspices of Shakespeare. It bore the significant name of Le Globe. The classics still resisted, but they were less aggressive, and hardly a match for Stendhal and the Globe.

For all the above reasons the chances were in favor for the renewed effort to present Shakespeare which was made in 1827. The Globe was jubilant at hearing that a company under the management of Yates was to come and settle for some time in Paris. Other papers announced the coming event with veiled or open hostility.

The performances, given at first at the Odéon, the second national theatre, were highly successful from the start. The first one was given on Sept. 6, 1827. It was a gala affair, at which all social, literary, and artistic Paris was present. One of the actors recited a prologue in English and made a little speech in bad French, both of which were received with much approval. On Sept. 11 "Hamlet" was performed with Charles Kemble in the leading rôle. The Globe was happy. In its criticism it wrote: "Let us congratulate ourselves for this event as for a victory. Art has crowned its work. Hamlet has at last appeared on the French stage in all his truth, and he has made his appearance amid unanimous applause." Between Sept. 6, 1827, and



Cappiello's cartoon of Bernhardt as Hamlet.

July 25, 1828, "Hamlet" was given seven times, "Romeo and Juliet" and "Othello" five times, "King Lear," "Macbeth," and "Richard III," three times, and "The Merchant of Venice" six times. English comedies and dramas by other authors were presented, the most popular being "Jane Shore," which was given thirteen times.

Kemble, Kean, and Macready, the three greatest tragic actors of England, were seen in turn in Paris; of them Macready scored the most genuine success. Kean, though still comparatively young, was in his decline, while his rival was near the zenith of his powers. It would be interesting and instructive to trace some of the criticisms made by the leading newspapers of the day, but space forbids this here. Perhaps the following from the Figaro of Oct. 10, 1827, will do as a summing up of the results achieved: "The genius of Shakespeare has triumphed over the old prejudices of the French Nation"; and this from the Débats, the mouthpiece of the ultra classicists: "As long as there will be place left for a superior genius, it will be assigned to Shakespeare." Nothing could henceforth be more obvious to the French than the fact that England had at least one great dramatist. During the month of December, 1829, alone the Odéon, threatened with bankruptcy, saved itself by presenting translations of "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "The Merchant of Venice." Perhaps the greatest triumph was that the Comédie Française, the stronghold of classicism, performed de Vigny's translation of "Othello" in October, 1829.

The effect of the Shakespeare performances of 1827-28 on the men of letters then coming prominently to the fore was very great. Charles Nodier was the acknowledged leader among the younger set of poets and artists, although he was already a man of middle age. He had never seen the real Shakespeare performed. He witnessed the premiere of "Hamlet" at the Odéon. To one of his friends he whispered: "Ah! there at last is tragedy for you!" He wrote in the Mercure, No. 10: "The establishment of the English theatre in Paris is one of the events of our times, one of those events the importance of which will be only fully appreciated by its results. . . . The results have judged the cause. Shakespeare has become for us a conquest. . . . More enduring than war, with its pillage and blood, could bring us."

The author of "Victor Hugo: Told by a Witness of His Life," writes: "These admirable dramas, admirably played, moved Mr. V. Hugo profoundly. He was at that time writing his preface to 'Cromwell.' They filled him with enthusiasm for this god of the theatre, in whom seemed united in one trinity the three great geniuses of our stage, Corneille, Molière, and Beaumarchais."

Artists did not escape the effects of their contact with the real Shakespeare. Deveria and Boulanger made a souvenir album with scenes taken from the different plays performed. The classic painter Ingres placed Shakespeare's image in his "Cottage of Homer," timidly it is true, and close to the frame of the picture, which now hangs in the Louvre. Delacroix, the greatest painter of the romantic period, was obsessed by Shakespeare, whom he studied all his life, as is borne out by his journal.

But the one who came most deeply under the great playwright's influence was Berlioz. He had read and admired him in Letourneur's translation. He idolized him the moment he saw him interpreted by Miss Smithson. Years afterward he wrote about his experience: "When Shakespeare fell upon me so unexpectedly, I was thunderstruck. His lightning flashes opening the heaven of art with a sublime tumult, illumined for me the farthest depths. I recognized true grandeur, true beauty, true dramatic truth. I realized at the same time the enormous absurdity of the ideas spread in France by Voltaire. . . . I lived. . . . I understood. . . . I felt that I must rise and go forward." I felt that I became the inspirer of the music of Berlioz and of his life, and the pathetic and dolorous pages he devoted to the memory of his wife are a monument to the Ophelia of his younger years, but also an apotheosis of the poet to whom he owed the purest and most enduring joys of his restless life. Copyright, 1916, by The New York Times Company.



# BUT GERMANY MADE A NATIONAL IDOL OF HIM



Painted by K. Hofmann

Othello. Yet I'll not shed her blood,  
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,  
And smooth as monumental alabaster.  
Collection of Evert Jansen Wendell

Alexander Moissi  
as  
HamletFalstaff.  
Painted by Eduard  
Grützner, Munich

## He Has Become "Part and Parcel of the Intellectual Equipment of Every German"

Written for THE NEW YORK TIMES

By Rita Hochheimer

ONE result of the present war, whether for good or ill, is the increased national consciousness of all the belligerents. Even we, in the security and dispassionateness with which our distance from the theatre of war should endow us, are apt to regard our brothers across the seas as Allies or Teutons, losing sight of the common bond of human sympathy that should unite us all. Small wonder, then, that this misconception has been carried over from the stormy realm of political activity to the field of literary criticism. It is to this false perspective that we can most charitably ascribe the tenor of Shakespeare articles which have lately been appearing in English publications. When The London Daily Mail purports to give a German viewpoint, and says: "All good things are German; Shakespeare is a good thing, therefore Shakespeare is German," or that the Germans have "chosen Shakespeare to annex, like a hostile province," it presents a perverted truth to its readers.

As a matter of fact, Shakespeare has been long appreciated and loved, in Germany as in England. Shakespeare's transcendent genius belongs to no one nation. To attempt to narrow his sphere of influence is comparable to trying to keep the Bible from becoming the literary possession of any people except the Hebrews. It has for generations irrevocably entered into the literary life of every nation. The fact is there. To attempt to narrow its influence now simply exhibits our own ignorance. So with Shakespeare. His plays have become part and parcel of the intellectual equipment of every German. This is the fact. Let us not quibble over it, but rather rejoice in the greatness of this genius, who has won such complete recognition.

I said Shakespeare has long been known and loved in Germany. Nay, more, he has become a very wellspring of inspiration to the Germans, who regard him since Schiller's time—the middle of the eighteenth century—as "our Shakespeare." His influence is apparent throughout German

literature, and to a less extent in the other arts. Let us see how far this is true.

The Shakespearean plays were first introduced into Germany toward the end of the sixteenth century, at about the same time that they were being performed in Drury Lane and Blackfriars in London. But the German stage was still in its infancy. There were no theatres—the plays which had been previously given were presented by troupes of wandering players on the village green or in the taverns. Often apprentices and schoolboys took part. The plays themselves had been crude affairs, often perverted versions of Church legends and Bible stories. Their purpose was either merely to amuse the audience, often by obscene and ribald jests, or to "point a moral or adorn a tale." Into this atmosphere bands of English players brought Shakespeare's plays, together with those of other contemporary English dramatists. There was no question of patriotism involved in this, not of service to literature. The players were invited to cross the Channel by various German Princes, and came because they saw in so doing an opportunity of earning money. Their coming, however, familiarized the German people with the stories of Shakespeare's plays. To be sure, these were often presented in a much mangled form. Still the foundation was laid at this time for the later truer understanding and appreciation of our great poet in Germany. This at a time when France, entirely oblivious to Shakespeare's existence, was still subservient to classical antiquity, and when England herself had not by any means accorded him the undisputed place he holds today.

The real recognition of Shakespeare's genius in Germany dates from the eighteenth century. With the translation of twenty-two of Shakespeare's plays by Christian Martin Wieland in 1762 we have the beginning of the "Shakespeare cult," which has permeated all German life and thought. In 1773 Johann Gottfried Herder published his essay on Shakespeare. Here Shakespeare was hailed as the great "translator of nature into all tongues," whose God-given genius must eventually be

Lady Macbeth. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.  
Painted by Wilhelm von Kaulbach, Munich

recognized. He is described as "seated on a rocky summit, with storm and tempest and the raging ocean at his feet, his head encircled by the radiance of heaven."

Although Herder recognized Shakespeare's greatness, it remained for Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, the greatest critical mind Germany has produced, to proclaim this greatness throughout the length and breadth of Germany. The Germans at that time regarded the French writers, particularly Voltaire, as the models upon which they must pattern their literature. They had made veritable idols of them. With the sarcasm and wit of which he was a thorough master Lessing sought to tear down these false gods and to put in their stead Shakespeare, nature's child. Through Herder and Lessing the Germans have come to regard Shakespeare as the spokesman of nature, as the very embodiment of nature, and to reverse him as the supreme master. All later German literature is permeated with this devotion to Shakespeare, no longer regarded as a foreigner to be looked at askance, but as the embodiment of that great mother, nature, "the rightful heritage of all men of all nations."

Aside from Lessing's critical appreciation of "the greatest dramatist of the North" (to quote Herder) and Herder's own emphasis upon Shakespeare's aesthetic supremacy, the really remarkable translation of his works by August Wilhelm von Schlegel, and his less gifted collaborator, Ludwig Tieck, has had the greatest influence in bringing Shakespeare home to the German people. Schlegel has entered into the spirit of the original in such a sympathetic manner that even the harsher critic can accuse him of but few inaccuracies. And yet, as Menzel in his Shakespeare picture has subtly Germanized the great Briton, so Schlegel has produced a work that of and for itself is and must remain a German classic. It is this remarkable achievement of the translators' art that has made possible what is a most astounding fact—there are more Shakespearean plays produced in Berlin in normal times than in any other capital. There is hardly a German city of any size where Shakespeare is not part of the regular repertoire; hardly a village where there is not at least one Shakespearean play a year. At the opening of the present war there was a group of people in Berlin who wished to have all Shakespearean productions stopped. I have been told, but the demand of the public for them was so great that they had to be resumed. The repertoire of our German theatre in New York includes Shakespeare's plays, and they have probably been presented more often during the war than before. The situation in regard to giving them up is quite analogous to that arising from the suggestion made at the opening of the war that Wagner's operas be boycotted at the Metropolitan. You will remember how em-

phatically the public refused to countenance such a procedure.

I have spoken of Herder's appreciation of Shakespeare. This appreciation he communicated to the supreme genius of the German nation, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who as a young man was largely guided by the older Herder. Goethe's correspondence and Eckermann's Boswellian biography of Goethe bear testimony to the German poet's debt to Shakespeare. In one place he says: "Shakespeare gives us golden apples in silver dishes. I should not dare to compare myself to Shakespeare, who was a creature of a higher order, whom I must look up to and whom I must adore. Shakespeare . . . has sounded the whole of human life, in all its heights and depths."

The influence of Shakespeare on Goethe is further noticeable in the latter's works. His first drama was "Goetz von Berlichingen," in which, following the great English dramatist, he emphasized feeling rather than mere beauty of form. This marks a break with the French models, which had up to Lessing's time been held as the accepted standard for German playwrights. This play, like Schiller's early drama, "The Robbers," clearly shows Shakespeare's influence. In fact, this whole period of German literature does so. In this statement we may include Klinger's play, "Storm and Stress," which has given its title to the emphasis on feeling which characterizes all the literary products of this time.

In the later works of Goethe and Schiller we can also discover likenesses to Shakespeare, although he does not so completely carry them away in maturity, as he did in their youth. One can hardly read Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell" without recognizing its similarity to "Julius Caesar." "The Maid of Orleans" recalls "Henry VI." Valentine's duel in Goethe's "Faust" brings to mind Tybalt's duel, while Margarethe's melancholy after her desertion by Faust is of the same stuff as Ophelia's in "Hamlet." Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship" contains an analysis of "Hamlet" that has become classical. In the same work, one of the characters, on reading Shakespeare for the first time, expresses himself thus:

"I cannot recollect that any book, any man, any incident of my life has produced such important effects on me as these precious works. The strength and tenderness, the power and peacefulness of this man, have so astonished and transported me that I long vehemently for the time when I shall have it in my power to read further. . . . All the anticipations I have ever had regarding man and his destiny, which have accompanied me from youth upward, often unobserved by myself, I find developed and fulfilled in Shakespeare's writings." How far this is autobiographical one can only conjecture.

But there are others who, since the days of Goethe and Schiller, the great twin

Rudolf Schildkraut  
as  
Shylock

stars in the firmament of German literature, are indebted to the "British Titan," as Heinrich Heine has characterized the Bard of Avon. Heine, in his essay on Shakespeare's women, has summed up the situation when he likens him to the first German Emperor, who, you will remember, was chosen such by all the ruling German Princes and Kings. He says: "A glittering array of literary kings, one after the other, raised their voices, and chose William Shakespeare as the emperor of literature."

To mention a few of the modern Germans who have shown their appreciation for Shakespeare, we find Paul Heyse, Otto Ludwig, and Ludwig Fulda. The first of the three has written a drama called "The Island," based on Shakespeare's "Tempest." Heyse himself says of his earliest play, "Francesca da Rimini," "its style, to be sure, still shows my dependence on that inevitable model, Shakespeare."

Otto Ludwig has left us but little original work by which we may judge how profoundly Shakespeare influenced him, but all the last years of his life, while he lay on his invalid's couch, he was an eager student of the great English dramatist. We may almost say that in Shakespeare alone Otto Ludwig was able to lose sight of his bodily ailments and infirmities.

Ludwig Fulda, our German contemporary, who visited New York only a few years ago, must speak for himself. He says: "He [Shakespeare] has become not only a guest at the threshold of our culture, but has been granted the rights and privileges of the completest citizenship. Shakespeare

has become our Shakespeare, a German poet of whom we are as fond as of our own great men, and from whose works countless single passages and expressions have become part and parcel of the intellectual inheritance of the German nation."

Nor does this intellectual inheritance confine itself to literature. Probably a greater percentage of Shakespeare music has been composed by Germans than by any other nation. Mendelssohn's musical version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is the classical example. Besides, we may mention Schumann's music for a song in "Twelfth Night" and his overture to "Julius Caesar." Hans von Bülow is responsible for an "overture heroique" to "Julius Caesar," as well as a triumphal march intended for Caesar's entrance in the first act of the play. Weber's delightful setting to "Tell me where is fancy bred," from "The Merchant of Venice," is familiar to all music lovers. What is not generally known and is of interest in this connection is that Richard Wagner composed an opera based on "Measure for Measure."

In German art Shakespeare appears again and again. In the early nineteenth century, when German artists were painting whole series of pictures around one central theme, we find, together with Goethe galleries and Schiller galleries, Shakespeare galleries, that is, series of pictures illustrative of Shakespeare's plays. Of these the most notable are the one by Wilhelm von Kaulbach and the later Bruckmann Shakespeare gallery, in which the greatest number of pictures is by Edward von Steinle. The German artist, Edward Grützner, has given us the classical portrayal of Falstaff. He has presented him to us in all his various pranks and adventures, and has managed to make of him such an engaging rascal that one cannot be angry with him. Anselm Feuerbach has painted Romeo and Juliet in the full beauty of their Italian home. Paul Thumann has illustrated "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and Gabriel Max "Macbeth."

Perhaps the most striking evidence of the deep root Shakespeare has taken in this foreign soil is the existence of the German Shakespeare Society, founded in 1864. The learned men of this association aim to increase and stimulate the study of Shakespeare in Germany, together with the presentation of his plays on the German stage. Each year they publish a Year Book containing valuable Shakespeareana.

Let us then realize that Shakespeare is to the German Nation no "hostile province." On the contrary, German critics above all others have for generations appreciated and loved our Shakespeare. Let us join with them in this appreciation, so that Shakespeare may truly become what he has been called by the French critic, Emile Faguet—"the man of all humanity—humanity as it is to be."

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## The Greatest Creator, After God

Translated for The New York Times from Alexander S. Pushkin, (Russia's Greatest Poet.)

IT was the study of Shakespeare and our history that are responsible for my conception of the idea of revising in the form of a drama one of the most dramatic periods in our history. In "Boris Godunoff" I imitated Shakespeare in his unconstrained and broad character drawing. . . .

Shakespeare felt for all humanity, and he was the creator of an entire humanity. After God, Shakespeare is the greatest creator of living beings. . . .

Shakespeare and the other English poets were first to discover and appreciate nature and its splendor. The French had to wait for Rousseau to find it out. Shakespeare has observed and described completely human nature, from its seed and root to its flowers, fruits, and Autumn leaves. There is not a single side to the human soul, mind, heart, human weaknesses, vices, and virtues which he has not painted. . . .

Shakespeare is not only a great poet, but a great philosopher. Not his verses, but his thoughts, should be studied. Goethe—the Dante of Germany—owes much to Shakespeare. . . .

I did not read Calderon or Lope, but how magnificent is Shakespeare! As a tragedian Byron is pitiable against him. Shakespeare is never afraid of compromising his characters. He makes them speak from the very beginning with all the abundance of life, because he is sure he will find words strong enough for the place and time to uphold them to the very end. The characters of Shakespeare are unlike those of Molière, which are typifications of certain passions, certain vices. They are living creatures, animated with many passions and many vices and virtues. The miser of Molière is but a stinky, greedy person. Shylock in Shakespeare is not only stinky, he is also shrewd, sagacious, revengeful, affectionate, ingenious.

Nowhere, perhaps, has the many-sidedness of Shakespeare been reflected in so many various ways as in Falstaff, whose vices, all linked together, form a funny, monstrous chain, similar to the ancient bacchanalia. Analyzing his character, we find that his chief feature is sensuality. In his youth, in all probabilities, rough and vulgar dandling after women was his best pastime. But he is past 50 already. He is fat and decrepit. Gluttony and wine have prevailed over Venus. Also, he is a coward. But having passed his life amid scapegraces and loafers, subjected incessantly to their derision and tricks, he learned to conceal his cowardliness under an indirect and mocking daringness. He boasts by habit and calculation. He is not foolish, but has no principles at all. He has some manners of a person once used to good society. He is as weak as a woman. He needs strong Spanish wine, fat dinners, and money for his women. In order to get these he will face anything, but not a real danger.

In my youth accident brought me together with a man in whom nature, desiring to imitate Shakespeare, repeated his ingenious creation. It was Falstaff II, sensuous, cowardly, boastful, not foolish, funny, with no principles, tearful, and fat. One circumstance added to him an original charm—he was married. Shakespeare had no time to marry his bachelor. Falstaff died among his women, not having had time for becoming a cuckold or a father of children. How many scenes lost to the brush of Shakespeare! Take, for instance, this one, from the life of Falstaff II: His 4-year-old son, an exact reproduction of his father, a Falstaff III, in miniature, was once repeating these words in the absence of his father: "How brave is papa! How much the Czar loves papa!" The child was overheard and asked, "Who told you that?" "Papa," was the answer.

## Was Lady Macbeth Intoxicated?

"Tales and Fables," by Princess Lazarevitch-Hrebellanovich of Serbia. (The Century Company.)

THERE is in "Macbeth" almost a kind of grim, exalted comedy, such as Balzac meant in his expression, "La Comédie Humaine," where pity, too, has place. In the tragic poem of Macbeth, amid the strains of dirge for human frailty, amid the clamor of swords and shields, resound harsh notes like clash of strange wits, echoing the vanity of successful wrongdoing, the vain, outrageous arrogance of the taker of life. Hecate prophetically flames this strident ridicule across the murky sky in the short, sharp measure of her exultant words that ring with demon's scorn and ironic laugh, ending:

And we all know, security  
Is mortal's chiefest enemy!

If I had ever played Lady Macbeth in an ideal production of the piece, guided wholly by myself, I should have taken the part of Hecate, too, though in complete disguise. I cannot explain the value of this point, but it is clear to my inner soul. It has something to do with the identification of the spirit by which Lady Macbeth is possessed in answer to her invocation of that obsession in the hour when, drunk with ambition, she asks and obtains a temporary extension of the faculties, by which, in that intoxication of the imagination, she overleaps and overrides everything in her path. I think Shakespeare means her to be drunk in the murder hour; that is, drunk with ambition and the pictured greatness of the crown for Macbeth and herself. I think, too, he makes it clear that her mental exaltation in the hour of the deed is still further raised to the utmost pitch by a "wee drapple of the craythur," which sent the King's guards into heavy sleep. For hear her say, as if the eye of her soul were swollen by deadly nightshade and in the spirit of scornful Hecate: That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold; What hath quenched them hath given me fire.

I used to enter the scene with a golden goblet in my hand.

Only when the deed is done and Hecate has ridden away across the moon does that fire begin to fall back out of her veins and the cold reality come down like snow—like an ice wind from the frozen world. Then, because she was in verity great, a proud and royal soul, the glorious palaces realms of the self-intoxicated mind utterly vanish and are gone, flown like witches in the night, and simple human truth remains, and takes her by all its bitter, stony way down to the tomb.

## Shakespeare

Written for THE NEW YORK TIMES

By Philip B. Goetz

WHAT needs the master of eternal phrase

Our weak and tardy lauds as vain as fleet?

Naught gains he that in awe we thus repeat

Glibly the rote the meanest voice may raise;

'Tis we win dignity who sound his praise.

Who in the brightness of his daring feet

Learn where to follow for our thieving neat.

Joy desperate lives in these after-lays,

Unquenched had they slept had he not sung.

Yet master as he was, he saw not all,

Nor all he said aye glows without a flaw;

He from his height flashes no blinding law

Save this, that fame yields never to a thrall:

True, free, unscarred speaks the imperious tongue.



# AND THROUGH HIM RUSSIA HAS FOUND HERSELF

Without Imitating Him, Her Art and Literature Were Awakened At His Touch

Written for THE NEW YORK TIMES

By Isaac Don Levine

SHAKESPEARE in Russia is not identified with any certain period in Russia's spiritual development, but with the entire history of the Russian stage and literature. Of all the great Western European minds who have exerted their influence on Russian thought, Shakespeare occupies the most peculiar place. Voltaire, Racine, Rousseau, Goethe, Schiller, and Byron have all had their days in Russia. Like meteors they have crossed suddenly the Russian horizons, illuminating the paths of Russia's intellectual progress. Not so with Shakespeare. In the dark seventeenth century he entered Russia, and, step by step, growing in brightness, expanding in all directions, he developed into the great luminary of today. Russia is now full of Shakespeare. Russia's soul is the Shakespearean soul. Russia's literature, art, music, philosophy, Russia's very political life, are permeated with the Shakespearean spirit of Pushkin, Russia's greatest poet, in the agonies of Dostoyevsky, in the philosophical and psychological quests of Turgenev and Tolstoy, in the restlessness and yearnings of Gorki and Andreyev, in the tunes of Tchakovsky, the impassioned art of Mochalov and Kommissarzhevskaya, Russia's greatest actors, the dramatic genius of Shakespeare has found its truest incarnation. There is not a race in humanity that is a better typification of the Hamlet of "To be or not to be" than the Russian. There are few, if any, nationalities that surpass the Russian in the depth of emotion stirred up by the raging passions of Othello or the heartrending tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. And what nation more than the Russian can boast of a profound understanding of Shylock, of a deep comprehension of the sore problem of the Eternal Jew?

Shakespeare first appeared in Russia in the seventeenth century, when wandering troupes of English and German actors first touched Russia. Scenes from "King Lear" were included in their repertoires. In the first decade of the eighteenth century a troupe of German actors presented in Petrograd before Peter the Great "A Comedy, Julius Caesar," doubtless an adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy. In 1748, the German actor Conrad Ackerman played in Petrograd a French adaptation of "Hamlet." Russian interest in Shakespeare dates from the same year. The beginning of a literature and the theatre in Russia belongs to the same period. At that time Russia was completely under the influence of France; her educated classes spoke French and worshipped Racine and Voltaire. The pseudo-classicism then dominating France was thus transferred to Russia. And for generations to come Russian literature and art were merely blind imitations of the French.

In 1748, A. Sumarokov, "the father of the Russian drama," published his "Hamlet," a tragedy by A. Sumarokov, printed by the Academy of Sciences. It was presented in 1750, and was, in fact, a translation of a French pseudo-classic adaptation of "Hamlet." In 1759 Dmitrievskii, one of the founders of the Russian theatre, translated from the French "The Life and Death of King Richard III." In 1769 he made a journey to London, where Garrick acquainted him with the works of Shakespeare. But the influence of the French was too powerful on him to make him deeply interested in Shakespeare. In 1769 the Russian periodical Adskaya Potcha printed the first review of Shakespeare in Russia. It was a consensus of Voltaire's notorious criticisms of the great dramatist. In 1772 N. I. Novikov, who shares with Dmitrievskii the honor of being called "the parents of the Russian theatre," printed in his paper a translation of Romeo's monologue in the fifth act of "Romeo and Juliet." In 1783 a Russian version of Le Tournier's adaptation of "The Life and Death of King Richard III." was published.

An interesting page in the history of Shakespeare in Russia has been inscribed by Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia. She was a woman of literary aspirations, and wrote a number of plays and articles. Though she was a great admirer of Voltaire, with whom she corresponded for years, she became interested in Shakespeare. In 1769 she published a comedy in five acts, an imitation of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," entitled "This 'Tis to Have Linnen and Buck-baskets! a free and loose adaptation from Shakespeare." This was the first play in Russia to bear the name of Shakespeare. Later the Empress published two plays based on Russian history, each of which bore the inscription: "An imitation of Shakespeare, a historical play, without conforming to the regular theatrical laws." This was an open revolt against the pseudo-classicism still dominating Russia, and only Catherine could dare do such a thing. It was an ominous warning to the pseudo-classicists, but it stimulated no desire in Russia to study Shakespeare and to seek new forms in art and literature. It was destined for Germany indirectly to open a new era in the Shakespearean development in Russia.

There was at this time a youth somewhere in Russia who was dreaming of great things. His name was Karamzine, the future famous historian of Russia. He was educated in Germany, and learned to regard contemptuously the French literature. He planned to translate Shakespeare into Russian from the original. In 1787 appeared his translation of "Julius Caesar," the first work of Shakespeare to be translated into Russian from the original. In his preface Karamzine said: "Shakespeare was one of those spirits whose fame lasts for ages. Time, the mighty destroyer of all, will never demolish the magnificent creations of Shakespeare." He defended Shakespeare from the "sophist" Voltaire. But Voltaire was the idol of Russia, while Karamzine was an unknown young man. He received little encouragement, and translated no more of Shakespeare. He, however, started the ball rolling. The press began to give translations of monologues from Shakespeare. The dramatist became frequently the subject of public discussion. In the world of Russian art and literature there appeared a small but strong group of admirers of Lessing, who took up the fight of liberating the drama from its pseudo-classic shackles.

In 1792 the Zritel said: "The glorious Shakespeare put in his tragedies characters and actions that would degrade the lowest of farces; and though he compensated us at times with passages of sublime beauty, one can never approve of such methods. The beautiful in Shakespeare is like light-



C. Kovalenskaya  
as Olivia, in  
Twelfth Night

G. Darsky as Shylock. He gained fame in this role late in the nineteenth century

nings in the darkness of night." The following year The Mercury referred to the works of Shakespeare as "the monstrous farces called 'tragedies'." In 1795 a translation of "Romeo and Juliet" from a French adaptation was published in Moscow.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the Russian intelligentsia struck into Anglomania. This was the time when Alexander I. ascended the throne. The liberal Emperor was expected to grant a Constitution to Russia. The political and economical theories of Adam Smith were studied and widely discussed. The Magna Charta became the object of deep interest. The press devoted columns to items on all phases of English life. The novels of Goldsmith, Young, Richardson, Fielding, Radcliffe, translated from the French, became very popular. Pseudo-classicism was on the decline, and romanticism began to replace it. The Russian public wanted Shakespeare, but not the true Shakespeare. It was not yet ripe for him. It wanted the pathetic, the sentimental, the tempestuous in Shakespeare. Duci gave the French public these elements of Shakespeare. An army of translators was soon at work, translating Duci's Shakespeare into Russian. In 1806 "Othello" was for the first time presented on the Russian stage, but it was "Othello" à la Duci. Such were also "King Lear," given at the Imperial Theatre in 1807, and "Hamlet" in 1817. Sept. 17 of the same year a Shakespearean opera was for the first time sung in Russia. It was "Romeo and Juliet," music by D. Steibert, the libretto being a translation from the French. In 1821 the ingenious Prince A. Shachovskoi presented in the Grand Theatre in Petrograd "The Tempest, or Shipwreck, a romantic fantasia in three acts, taken from the works of Shakespeare." It had an enormous success. Prince Shachovskoi made numerous changes in the play, but preserved all its original beauty.

In the periodical literature, however, a more conscientious effort to study Shakespeare was being made. In 1802 there appeared in a magazine an article "On Tragedy," in which the works of the great dramatic poet were analyzed. The writer gives the first place to "The Tempest," the second to "A Midsummer Night's Dream." In an article "On Drama," the same writer, urging the reading of Shakespeare, says: "Kingdoms fall, generations vanish, mountains crumble away, monuments fall into ruins, but Shakespeare, Homer, and Ossian will live forever." The dominating literary opinion was still anti-Shakespearean. In 1810 the editor of the Russian Vestnik reviewed "Romeo and Juliet" and "Othello," and expressed a rather unfavorable opinion of them.

In 1811 the Vestnik Evropy derided the Ghost in "Hamlet" and made fun of the whole play. On the other hand, the Dukh Zhurnalov printed in 1816 an article entitled "Comments of a Russian on Shakespeare, Schiller, and the best of the French dramatists." The writer challenged "the Messieurs French" to point out passages in their literature equal to the scenes between Hamlet and his mother or Brutus and Antony. He exclaims: "What a difference between these and French monotony! Even without following the names of the characters it is possible to recognize them. Each passion speaks in its own tongue, and not in the language of the sentimental French heroes."

The third decade of the last century marks the beginning of the modern, typically Russian literature. Pushkin, Lermontov, the Russian Byron, Griboyedov, and Zhukovski began to assert themselves. It was a short time after the death of Byron, and Byronism was still dominating all that was young in Europe. Not the least service of Byron to Russia was the stimulus he gave to the study of English. Pushkin took it up, and became soon an ardent admirer of Shakespeare. In a letter to a friend he wrote that he "preferred Shakespeare to the Bible." In his preface to "Boris Godunoff" he openly acknowledged that it was Shakespeare who gave him the idea of writing his famous drama. Some years later Pushkin began translating "Measure for Measure," but he never went beyond the first scene.

In 1825 a farce in two acts called "The Ghosts of Shakespeare," and dedicated to Griboyedov, was published. The author, in his preface, said that it was originally written for private use, but he published it in order to acquaint Russia with "the romantic mythology of Shakespeare." The

same year Prince Shachovskoi presented in Petrograd "Falstaff, a comedy based on 'Henry IV.,' a historical chronicle by Shakespeare." Like all the Prince's adaptations, it became very popular. When Zagoskin once referred to the author of "The Merry Wives of Windsor" as stupid, Prince Shachovskoi replied that "one cannot discuss Shakespeare with children and the feeble-minded," that the whole Russian literature in comparison with the English was not worth a penny, and that such a poor and backward people as the Russians would have long to live and much to learn before it understood and appreciated Shakespeare." In 1828 a translation of "Hamlet" in verse appeared. It was too exact for the theatre. And Polyevoy, in his Moscow Telegraph, demanded a translation of "Hamlet" in which Mochalov, the Moscow actor, could show his powers. When Griboyedov read before the Petrograd favorite, Karatygin, a French translation of the fifth act in "Romeo and Juliet," the great tragedian fell to his knees, "as if gone insane, and begged the dramatist to translate the tragedy into Russian." But Griboyedov refused "to mutilate Shakespeare."



Joan of Arc summoning the fiends to the Aid of France.

I Henry VI, Act V, Scene III.

Collection of William P. Harvey

Criticisms, comments on Shakespeare, translations of separate scenes, and monologues from Shakespeare's works became very frequent in the press. Pietnev, in his "Thoughts on Macbeth," became so enthused with Shakespeare that he dreamed of giving up all other reading for the rest of his life and devoting it to his favorite. "Why read other writers, when he contains them all?" he asked. Another writer, in a series of brochures which appeared in 1830-31, analyzed "The Merchant of Venice," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "The Winter's Tale," and "Macbeth," devoting to the latter a great deal of space. A prominent magazine published a long biography of Shakespeare, full of praise and exaltations. But there was still considerable opposition to Shakespeare in Russia. Its most eminent representative was Bulgariu, who recommended Shakespeare to a "museum of historical relics."

In the '30s romanticism in Russia reached its apogee. Walter Scott was very popular, paving a way for a broader and deeper study of Shakespeare. The young generation of authors turned to Hegel and Chelling and Shakespeare. The historical "Stankevitch circle" came into existence about that time, gathering into its ranks the brilliant group of young men who were destined to become the creators of most of the wealth of the Russian literature. Turgenev, Belinski, Aksakoff, Ostrovski, Herten—all came under the influence of Stankevitch. Shakespeare was their idol. They worshipped him, studied him, discussed him incessantly. And when later all of them delivered their individual messages to the Russian people it was the sublime message of Shakespeare that they delivered.

Meanwhile the introduction of Shakespeare into Russia continued. In 1833 the first translations of "King Lear" and "The Merchant of Venice" from the original appeared. The Moscow Telegraph did not find them satisfactory, but said that "bad translations would never kill the great poet." The Russian stage, however, was still in want of a good translation of Shakespeare, worthy of Karatygin, the "Russian Talma," or Mochalov, the Moscow genius. Polyevoy of the Moscow Telegraph then undertook the translation of "Hamlet" for the stage. After long persuasion Mochalov agreed to play it. On Jan. 22, 1837, the first performance was given, with Mochalov in the rôle of Hamlet. With this date a new epoch in the history of Shakespeare in Russia commences.

Belinski thus describes the historic performance: "The proportions of the crowds who clamored for admission are beyond description. Those who were able to procure tickets felt the happiest persons in the world. It is a long time since Moscow has seen such a mighty and universal outburst of enthusiasm provoked by the love of art." The crowds did not diminish with the second and third performances of the drama. "Since Mochalov," said Belinski in another place, "the Russians understood that there is but one dramatic poet in the world, and that is Shakespeare." Mochalov's love of Shakespeare passed all bounds. On the monument erected to him on his grave the following words were inscribed: "To the Mad Friend of Shakespeare."

At the same time Karatygin played "Hamlet" in Petrograd with tremendous success. Russia went wild with "Hamlet." Shakespeare, who was before understood and appreciated only by few, suddenly became the idol of the public. Shakespeare's struggle for recognition in Russia was at an end. All opposition disappeared. His triumph on the stage directly influenced the development of the Russian drama and theatre. Gogol wrote that Shakespeare planted the seeds of the modern Russian theatre, as created by Ostrovski and Alexei Tolstoy. The Shakespearean tide turned Russian thought and art to the psychology of human nature, to the drama in the life of the individual, to the study of the subtleties of man and the vicissitudes and catastrophes of his life. Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Tchekhov, Andreyev, and Gorky, under the influence of Shakespeare, dug deep into the mysterious abysses of the Russian soul, penetrating all its nooks and corners.

Beginning with the '40s of the last

century Shakespeare's works, like an irresistible flood, inundated Russia. Legions of translators took up the work of presenting the genuine Shakespeare to Russia. Numberless articles began to appear in the press devoted to all phases of Shakespearean history. In 1840 Slavin published his "Life of William Shakespeare." In the '40s and '50s Belinski, Botkin, Pisarev and Drushinin were the apostles of Shakespeare in Russia. In 1860 Turgenev read his famous lecture on "Hamlet and Don Quixote." In 1864 Tichonravov's articles on Shakespeare made a profound impression on the Russian public. In 1865-68 the poets Nekrasoff and Gerbel edited a new edition of Shakespeare. In the '70s the first and greatest Shakespearean scholar appeared in Russia. It was Nikolai Storozhenko who established a course in "Shakespeareology" in the Moscow University. In 1872 he published his "Predecessors of Shakespeare," and in 1876 his "Robert Greene," considered the best work on Greene. The two books were translated into English and German. Storozhenko proved in them that Shakespeare was influenced by Greene, Marlowe, and other English dramatists of the fifteenth century. Till his death (1906) Storozhenko continued to contribute articles and books to the Shakespeareana of the world.

In 1879 N. Ketcher published his monumental translation of Shakespeare's dramas. He worked on it twenty-eight years. Between 1873 and 1882 there existed in Moscow the historic "Shakespeare circle." Turgenev once witnessed a performance of "Henry IV.," given by the "Circle," and he said that he never saw in Western Europe Falstaff better played than on that occasion. In the '80s Professor Shchegolev toured Russia, lecturing on Shakespeare. In 1887 Timofeyev published his "Influence of Shakespeare on the Russian Drama." In 1889 Tchukov's popular but rather superficial "Study of Shakespeare" appeared. In 1893 Konshin's translation of Shakespeare appeared. In 1899 I. Ivanov published his work "On Shakespeare." In 1896 Sokolovskii's single-handed complete translation of Shakespeare appeared. It was a translation in verse, and he labored over it for thirty years. It is recommended by the Academy of Sciences. In 1900 Grand Duke Constantin published his "Hamlet." Soon afterward Shestov's "Shakespeare and Brandes" was published, a splendid contribution to the Shakespearean literature in Russia. In 1906 Tolstoy's famous article on Shakespeare appeared.

The stage kept pace with the literary expansion of Shakespeare. A brilliant array of actors, from the days of Mochalov and Karatygin to our own have immortalized the Shakespearean characters. Stchepkin, Stravinski, Kovalenskaya, Darski, and, finally, the great Kommissarzhevskaya, founder of the Moscow Art Theatre, and Yozhkin (Prince A. Sumarokov) have written indelible pages in the history of Shakespeare in Russia. In 1900 Tchakovsky composed the music for "Hamlet" sung by Gitti in Petrograd.

A landmark in the international history of the theatre was the staging of "Hamlet" in 1912 in the Moscow Art Theatre, under the direction of Edward Gordon Craig, the English artist. Craig's theory that the stage must be made real, not pictorially but architecturally, was first put to test there. To a large degree it has been rendered real, thanks to several years' preparations, during which time more than a hundred rehearsals of the play took place. V. T. Katchalov in the rôle of Hamlet was a great success.

What was the message of Shakespeare to the Russian literature and stage? One cannot say that the Russian drama is an imitation of Shakespeare, as it was in the case of Voltaire and Racine in the eighteenth century. Shakespeare's mission to Russia was this: Till the forties of the last century Russian art and literature could not find themselves. They blundered. They embraced pseudo-classicism, followed the Encyclopedists, imitated Schiller and Byron, became infatuated with Walter Scott. But all these idols became Russia with ill-grace, because Russia had in her those dramatic elements that had put her art and literature in such a brief period into the foremost ranks of the world's spiritual treasures. And there was no one to awaken Russia to the realization of her vast intellectual wealth. No one but Shakespeare. When the true, unadulterated, un-mutilated Shakespeare was shown to Russia by Mochalov and Karatygin, spiritual Russia, as if touched by a magic wand, awakened.

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## The Last Scene of "Romeo"

From Edward Dowden's "Shakespeare"

SHAKESPEARE did not intend that the feeling evoked by the last scene of this tragedy of "Romeo and Juliet" should be one of hopeless sorrow or despair in presence of failure, ruin, and miserable collapse. Juliet and Romeo, to whom Verona has been a harsh stepmother, have accomplished their lives. They loved perfectly. Romeo had attained to manhood. Juliet had suddenly blossomed into heroic womanhood. Through her, and through anguish and joy, her lover had emerged from the life of dream into the waking life of truth. Juliet had saved his soul; she had rescued him from abandonment to spurious feeling, from abandonment to

morbid self-consciousness, and the enervating luxury of emotion for emotion's sake. What more was needed? And as secondary to all this, the enmity of the houses is appeased. Montague will raise in pure gold the statue of true and faithful Juliet. Capulet will place Romeo by her side. Their lives are accomplished; they go to take up their place in the large history of the world, which contains many such things. Shakespeare in this last scene carries forward our imagination from the horror of the tomb to the better life of man, when such love as that of Juliet and Romeo will be publicly honored and remembered by a memorial all gold.



Fedor Ignatievitch Stravinski's drawing of himself in the role of Falstaff.

The late Vera F. Kommissarzhevskaya as Desdemona

She was the founder of the Moscow Art Theatre and was considered the greatest Russian Actress





Stuart Robson and William H Crane as the two Dromios in the  
Comedy of Errors.  
Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother. I see by you I am  
a sweet-faced youth. © Gobbie & Co. Wendell Collection.

From "William Shakespeare," By Georg Brandes—Copyright, The Macmillan Company

A full-length portrait of a man in elaborate, ornate costume, possibly a theatrical or historical character. He is seated on a dark chair, holding a long, thin object (possibly a sword or staff) vertically. The costume features a dark, patterned tunic with a wide, decorative border and a large, ornate headdress. The background is a painted backdrop depicting a classical building and foliage.

These unvenished situations," the understanding gentlemen of the ground," as Ben Jonson nicknamed them, were attired in unsavory black smocks and goatskin jerkins, which had none too pleasant an odor. They were called "nutcrackers" from their habit of everlastingly cracking nuts and throwing the shells upon the stage. Tossing about apple peel, cords sausage ends, and small pebbles was another of their amusements. Tobacco, also, and apple vendors forced their way among them, and even before the curtain was lifted a reek of tobacco smoke and beer arose from the crowd impatiently waiting for the prima donna to be shaved.