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Romantic Comedies of Robert Greene and William Shakespeare

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ROMANTIC COMEDIES

OF

ROBERT GREENE AND WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

( A Comparative Study )

by

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CONTENTS

I. Introduction ------------------------------------- 1

II. Use of Dramatic Elements

A. Dramatic Construction - Plot

1. Types of Plot --------------------------- 6
   a. Simple in Greene
   b. Complex in Both

2. Themes of Plot ------------------------- 12
   a. Central Theme
      (a) Love
   b. Subordinate Themes
      (a) Heroism
      (b) Wonder

3. Devices Used in Plot ------------------- 17
   a. Disguises

4. Sources of Plot ------------------------ 21
   a. Tradition of Romance Countries
   b. Genius of Contemporaries
   c. Originality of Authors

5. Treatment of the Same Plot by the
   Two Authors ------------------------ 29
   a. Plot Derived from Ariosto
   b. Plot Originated by Greene
B. Settings ----------------------------------- 37

1. Poverty of Settings in Greene

2. Richness of Settings in Shakespeare
   a. Social
      (a) Courtly
      (b) Vulgar
   b. Artificial
   c. Natural

C. Characterizations

1. General ----------------------------- 43
   a. Simplicity of Greene's
   b. Complexity of Shakespeare's

2. Particular
   a. Courtly
      (a) Dukes and Kings ------------- 47
      (b) Lovers ---------------------- 51
      (c) Women ----------------------- 66
      (d) Villains --------------------- 71
   b. Vulgar
      (a) Clowns ---------------------- 76
      (b) Companions and Servants ---- 80
   c. Superhuman
      (a) Fairies --------------------- 83
      (b) Magicians ------------------- 86
III. Use of Non-Dramatic Elements
   A. Lyric Element -------------------------- 89
   B. Philosophic Element ------------------- 95

IV. Summary ------------------------------ 101
I

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

The character of the work of a poet depends, in a measure, upon the state of the art upon which he enters and upon the character of his century and his nation. During the half-century, beginning about 1580, England witnessed the rise, culmination, and gradual decline of Romantic Comedy. "The foundations of modern society had been laid."¹ No one was any longer a vassal; the middle class had become self-reliant; the power of the nobles had been curtailed. The aristocracy still clustered about the Court, ever ready to follow its leading. This was a condition in which literature might lend itself to the demands of the public.

There had been a definite pulling away from the old classical dramas and the ecclesiastical plays that followed them. The miracle plays and the moralities could no longer tempt the public taste. There was then, as now and always, a demand for something different and more satisfying than existing forms. The time was ripe for literature to give self-expression to the nation. The art whereby the literature of the age of

¹. Knight: Pictorial Shakspere
Elizabeth found expression is the Drama, one part of which is Romantic Comedy. The vitality of this form is proved by the crowd of writers who in a short time entered this field.

One of the early exponents of Romantic Comedy was Robert Greene, who was a member of a group of writers, bound together by ties of personal comradeship and animated by a common spirit. They chose a theatrical career, partly, because of its lawlessness and jollity as well as for its more substantial considerations. All of the group were scholarly men, proud of their travel and learning; because of the latter they styled themselves "University Wits."

From about 1584 for the succeeding ten years, they took up play-writing as a serious profession and by their united abilities raised the English drama to the rank of literature. Each of these writers knew exactly what the other ones of the group were doing. While socially they were friends, they were rivals for public favor in their literary efforts, and were

1. "A delightful love story conducted in some romantic region, by gracious and gallant persons, thwarted or aided by the mirthful god, Circumstance, thus arriving at a fortunate issue." — Dowden.

quick to follow one another along successful paths.

Before Greene's death in 1592, there is no doubt but that he and Shakespeare had met and knew of each other's writings. In spite of a slight overlapping in their work, Greene is usually spoken of as a predecessor of Shakespeare. When the work of Greene, as a writer of English Comedy was drawing to a close, Shakespeare came up to London from Stratford, with no college background, no travel, no pretentions of any kind, adopted the stage as a profession and dignified it by his honest labor.

While Greene, no doubt, thoroughly enjoyed his writings, they were to him, in a large measure, a means to an end, furnishing the necessary funds for convivial living. But to Shakespeare, his work was the center of his whole life; never for a moment did he forget that he was a playwright. This attitude of his,—the respect with which he regarded his chosen profession, did much to advance it in the eyes of the world. It will be remembered that at the time Shakespeare begun his work, the stage had fallen into a state of disrepute, and it was for him especially to purify and exalt it.

Within the range of Greene's writings, was, we
believe, every known form of prose and poetry—tracts, sonnets, ballads, treatises, histories, auto-biographical sketches, funeral sermons, novels, as well as comedies, with only the last of which are we concerned. The very bulk of his writings argues for his industry; however, we now wish he had been more concerned with the quality rather than with the quantity of his work. With Shakespeare, aside from a few poems and his sonnets, which he wrote before he had found his life work, his full time was given to his comedies and his tragedies. Thus Shakespeare had the advantage of centralizing his powers. All of the plays of Greene were given to the public and were well received, as, likewise, were the dramas of Shakespeare; but the works of the former have proved ephemeral, while those of the latter are enduring.

In kindness and justice to Robert Greene may it be remembered by whomever reads this, that in studying his works together with those of Shakespeare, that we are comparing the work of a young man with that of a man in full maturity? Were we to limit our knowledge of Shakespeare to the works produced when he reached the age at which Greene died, the greatest comedies of the master would not have been written and the world would not have known any of his immortal tragedies. Since we cannot rightfully divorce Shakespeare
from any of his works, the balance, in any comparison of the two, will always be in his favor. This was settled long ago by common consent. But in spite of this disparity, there are some things in the plays of Robert Greene vital enough to justify our making a study of the two together.
USE OF DYNAMIC ELEMENTS

II
TYPES OF PLOTS

Both Greene and Shakespeare follow the same ground plan in the construction of their comedies. They need, at least, three levels of people. The lovers, about whom the others center, form the middle group. Above them must be some one of higher rank or superior power, who helps or hinders the progress of true love; while below the lovers is, invariably, a third group composed of companions, servants, clowns, and others, who are helpers and abettors of the lovers and who furnish the comic scenes.

Greene's earliest works have plots of classical simplicity, with just one love affair---its complication and resolution. In Orlando Furioso there is the eternal triangle, - the maiden and her accepted and her rejected lover. The latter does not readily yield to Angelica's decision. In consequence we have his accusation, its acceptance for a time, and Orlando's consequent insanity with Angelica's banishment. When Orlando recovers his sanity and has disposed of his would-be rival all is happiness. The plot of Alphonsus, King of Arragon is even simpler, if such a thing can be. The oracle has declared that Iphigenia is to marry Alphonsus. Girl-like she rebels, since
there has been no wooing; and for her rebellion she is banished by her father through whom the oracle had spoken. The father of Alphonsus solves her problem for her and everything ends satisfactorily.

In each of his other comedies, Greene makes use of a somewhat complicated intrigue; he was one of the first to establish the use of the complex plot. Take, for example, his comedy of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay in which are found three notable features: (1) the love between Margaret and Lacy; (2) the magic working rivals, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, introducing the low comedy element in the characters of Miles and the Devil who run away with him; (3) Edward, Prince of Wales and Lacy, rivals for the love of Margaret, the Keeper's daughter. Greene here gives us three distinct worlds mingled crudely together—the world of magic, of love, and of aristocracy. In his last play, George—Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield, Robert Greene makes a distinct departure from his preceding work, in not conforming to the accepted type, that for a time, there existed a doubt as to whether he was its author. For his leading characters in this play, he leaves the courtly group and seeks the rural scenes. This is the first time that English comedy showed its democratic tendency. In the country
surroundings he finds his lovers, the Pinner of Wakefield and Beatri, the daughter of Grime, a neighboring farmer. George and Beatri are as openly and sincerely in love as later are those immortal lovers of Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet. The father, Grime, furnishes the obstacle as he is ambitious for his daughter. In contrast to this frank and honorable love affair, Greene shows another of a decidedly undesirable kind, the pursuit of Jane—a Barley by the rogue, James, King of Scotland. She is a happily married woman with one child, a lad who would protect his mother if he were older. (This is the only time that a child appears in the comedies of our authors.) Greene does not make it plain why these two love affairs appear in the same play. The characters have no common interest. They certainly afford a contrast, but so far as seen, the characters of the one pair of lovers have no connection with the other couple. To complicate his plot still more, Greene brings in those well-known dwellers of the forest, Robin Hood, Scarlet, and Maid Marian. The whole is held together by a military expedition, headed by the King of England to put down an uprising in the north. Edward is so well pleased with the prowess of the Pinner that he in turn, serves the lover by removing the objection
of Grime to the fulfillment of the love of George-e-Greene and Bettris. This weaving of many threads together is a cardinal feature of Romantic Comedy. That Greene attempted it, before Shakespeare brought it to perfection, argues well for his insight into the demands of this growing form.

No comedy of Shakespeare has a simple plot. Some are much more complicated than are others. He arrives at complexity in various ways. In one of his early plays, The Comedy of Errors, the plot is based upon a comedy of Plautus. This derives its interest from the errors of the mixed identity of twin brothers. Shakespeare makes his plot more complex than the original by adding another pair of twins as servants of the first pair. This increases the possibilities of comical confusion many fold. The whole is then set in the love story of Aegeon and his wife who have been parted many years. They are happily reunited and to knit the stories more closely together, the twin brothers, Antipholus of Syrecuse and Antipholus of Ephesus, prove to be the long lost sons of old Aegeon and Aemilis.

In Midsummer Night's Dream are four distinct groups of people. We wonder, at first, what common
interest all can have. Theseus and Hippolyts celebrate their wedding day with an evening's entertainment. They surround the action with stateliness. Into the moonlit forest come Oberon and Titania with their fairy trains, all bent on entertainment, even to the extent of playful mischief. Then arrive the common mortals,—Lysander and Demetrius both in love with Hermia. She is in love with Lysander, while Helena loves Demetrius. Shakespeare must straighten out these mixed-up lovers. He accomplishes this with the fairies' aid. He adds still another thread to his weaving, for as a part of the entertainment, there is a play within the play, the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.

Let us examine the construction of the plot in The Merchant of Venice. Shakespeare introduces two main plots: (1) the main Nemesis action, the story of the Jew; (2) the main problem action, the casket story. The action of the latter is simple in its movement, but the former is quite complicated. It is resolved by two sub-actions: (a) the Jessica and Lorenzo plot, with simple movement, forming a link action; (b) the episode of the rings, complicated and resolved by itself. For comic relief action, we have Launcelot. External to these, but underlying the
comedy, is the circumstance of the rumoured shipwrecks. Shakespeare shows dramatic economy by the connection of the two main actions by a common person, Bassanio, and by a link action, the story of Jessica. This shows the general weaving. To maintain the balance of the first main action which is complicated, to the second which is simple, the author added to the latter the Jessica interest, that was transferred from the former and the episode of the rings, which was generated out of it. The action movement is the result of contrary motion between the two main actions; the first main plot is complicated and resolved by the second. The hero of the second, Bassanio, is the complicating force and the heroine of the second, Portia, is the resolving force. The external circumstance of the shipwrecks, in process of resolving the first, generates a complication to the second in the form of the episode of the rings, which is self-resolved. The second main action, assisted by the shipwreck, thus serves as motive action to the rest. For turning point Shakespeare uses as the center of the plot the scene of Bassanio's choice. Then complicating and resolving forces are united and all four sections meet. The catastrophe comes with Portia's judgment in the trial scene.
THEMES OF PLOTS

The central theme of Romantic Comedy is the ever-new love story. This furnishes a means of universal appeal, for none will be so false to himself as to say that for him, a romantic love tale has no interest. Old and young alike respond; the old to remember the happiness that has been and the young to picture to themselves the joy that is yet to be. No love story in Romantic Comedy flows smoothly. If it did, there would be no reason for its use as a theme in comedy. Outsiders are interested in the differences not in the similarities of love themes.

The obstacles in the course of true love are various. Some of these exist within the lovers themselves, for example, only one of the two may be in love. Greene uses this in Lady Dorothea whom King James 1 does not love and Shakespeare portrays this in Julia 2 who loves Proteus without return and in Helena 3 who marries Bertram although he does not want her. Sometimes the obstacle arises from the

1. James, the Fourth
2. Two Gentlemen of Verona
3. All's Well That Ends Well
suspicion of faithlessness and from jealousy. Greene and Shakespeare were both very gallant, for in every instance the exhibition of jealousy is on the man's part. (In the days of Elizabeth women, evidently, had not come into full equality with men.) Greene shows the use of jealousy in the love of Orlando and Angelica 1. With his successor we see it in Posthumus and Imogen 2 and in Claudio and Hero.3

Shakespeare makes lack of money the origin of the coil in Bassanio's 4 love affairs. He borrows the money and the trouble begins. Probably, Greene intended for us to understand that without his kingdom, Alphonsus did not feel justified in wooing Iphigena.5 This, however, is not clear. The will of parents or others in authority, often involves the love affair in a complication. Iphigena 5 and Angelica 1 are banished because their parents order it; Iphigena, for disobedience and Angelica, for the unfounded

1. Orlando Furioso
2. Cymbeline
3. Much Ado About Nothing
4. Merchant of Venice
5. Alphonsus, King of Arragon
accusation of infidelity. Greene, for a time, keeps the Pinner and Bettris apart, since it is the father's will. Orlando and Rosalind are each banished separately, but meet and solve their problem. Orlando's lack of self-confidence is ably augmented by Rosalind in one of the happiest of romances.

Along with love we find lust. King James is Greene's outstanding example. He invades two of the Greenean plays, *James, the Fourth* and *George-a-Greene*. Proteus is a companion figure in Shakespeare. These are but a few of the many obstacles that block the pathway of true love. How the lovers are helped in their difficulties, is discussed under the head of their ablest outside helpers, "Kings and Dukes". Accompanying the love interests are ideal friendships, for example: Celia and Rosalind; Hero and Beatrice. Other attending interests are patient endurance and self-sacrifice. Such mark Dorothea in Greene's

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1. George-a-Greene
2. As You Like It
3. Two Gentlemen of Verona
4. As You Like It
5. Much Ado About Nothing
6. James, the Fourth
work and Hermione ¹ in Shakespeare's.

The realm of heroism furnishes such themes as travel, adventure, chivalry, war, and conquest. Travel is used by Shakespeare in the play, As You Like It, and by Greene in James, the Fourth. Adventures come to both heroines as they journey. A shipwreck is one of the features of The Tempest; it is instrumental in bringing Ferdinand and Miranda together. Both Julia and Helene ³ must travel to solve the problems in their love affairs. War figures in Alphonsus, King of Aragon and in The Pinner of Wakefield. It is also the background for Troilus and Cressida.

Under wonder we see such themes appearing as chance of birth, wealth and fortune, pomp and power, myth and fable. Helene ³ was born a physician's daughter, so Bertram thinks himself above her. Dorothea's ⁴ troubles are solved just because she is the daughter of the King of England. With his power he will not endure the mistreatment of his daughter. Both writers

1. The Winter's Tale
2. Two Gentlemen of Verona
3. All's Well That Ends Well
4. James, the Fourth
bring the preternatural and the supernatural to their aid as we have shown under the sections -- "Fairies" and "Magicians." All of these different themes, woven together according to the skill or genius of their users, furnish opportunities for the delineation and exhibition of character in action which is ever the foundation of Romantic Comedy.
The work of neither writer would be complete, were we to subtract their many uses of disguises. Greene, as well as other romantic writers, share this device with Shakespeare. The favorite method of concealment is by dressing the character in the clothes of the opposite sex. More frequently it is the woman attired in men's apparel, but occasionally the reverse is used. The woman much more frequently needs protection and this seems to afford it. But each concealment in either author has its own special reason for being.

In Orlando Furioso Tom, the clown, dresses like Angelica, whom he serves, to deceive Orgalio. By acting her part, he protects his mistress. In Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, in order to woo Margaret, fair maid of Pressingfield, Lacy, the Lincoln Earl, is disguised in country apparel. Earls and dukes often resort to the dress of country folk or servants as a means of disguise. Men were, evidently, judged then as now by their apparel.

Queen Dorothea in James, the Fourth, to better conceal herself when she knows that her husband is
about to effect her murder, travels in men's apparel with her servant, Nano. She tells him,

"Nano, I am weary of these weeds, weary to wield this weapon that I bear."

Is not this a foreshadowing of Shakespeare's Rosalind? We, also, find attempts at concealment in George-a-Greene. Wily kindly changes attire with Bettris. So we see Wily disguised as a woman and Bettris, daughter of Grime, in Wily's clothes so that she can meet her lover, the Pinner of Wakefield. By so dressing she can evade her father's watchful eye.

The list of Shakespearean women in disguise is entirely too long to be treated exhaustively. No one has read his Shakespeare who has not learned to know and love these interesting women. We adventure with them as they go forth so dressed. Julia was the first of Shakespearean heroines thus to pursue her journey of discovery. Her becoming womanly modesty, as shown on this venture, is but the measure of the most of Shakespearean women. Probably, the one who delights us most is Rosalind, who merrily dons her disguise, as she prepares to follow her banished father. A part of her

1. As You Like It
2. Two Gentlemen of Verona
delight comes from the fact that her lover has preceded her and somewhere she will meet him without his knowing her with

"A gallant curtle-axe upon her thigh
A boar-spear in her hand."

It will be noted that with both Greene and Shakespeare, that it is usual to have the disguised woman travel with a companion -- a relative or a servant. Rosalind is particularly fortunate, since she has for companions her cousin, Celia, and Touchstone. She wanders on until she finds her lover in the Forest of Arden and charms us as well as him, as she teaches him how to woo his love. No list of Shakespearean women could be complete if Portia \(^1\) were omitted. She cannot act her part without the disguise. Do we not see her in her judge's robe, as she exhibits her learning, pronounces her sentence, and saves the life of the friend of the man she loves, and at the same time preserves the honor of Bassanio? Truly love must be blind not to have penetrated some of these various incognitos.

One of the most spectacular disguises is that of Hermione \(^2\) as a statue. She had so long been dead to

\(^1\) Merchant of Venice
\(^2\) The Winter's Tale
her husband that this plan was an effective one of bringing her alive again into his world. One disguise is used by Shakespeare that astonishes, although its need may have been imperative. It is the courageous mask of silence and darkness with which Helena cloaks herself as she plays the part of Diana to her husband, Bertram. By it she succeeds in winning him, but it is a desperate adventure; still Shakespeare cheers us with his "All's Well That Ends Well."

1. All's Well That Ends Well.
Both Greene and Shakespeare went to similar sources for the plots of their comedies. These were found in Italian tradition, or in the genius of some successful predecessor or contemporary of England, or were derived from the author's own originality. A few of those taken from the works of other writers were used nearly as they were found; others were modified and variously combined.

Greene found the plots for two of his works in Italy, the home of romance. To the writings of Ludovico Ariosto, an Italian poet of the previous century, Greene owed his *Quaino*. Ariosto published his principal work, the romantic epic, *Orlando Furioso* in 1516. It was popular in Italy and was recognized as the greatest work of the kind in any language. As Tasso wrote of it in 1559, "I do not believe ---- there have been printed or published, or seen so many Homer or Virgils as Furiosos." Greene went to Italian sources for another of his plays. He translated the Italian plot by Cinthio into the apocryphal history of *James, the Fourth*.

For his *Much Ado About Nothing*, Shakespeare went to Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, previously mentioned as the source of a play of the same name by Greene. The
story of Helena and Bertram in "All's Well That Ends Well," was taken by Shakespeare from Paynter's "Palace of Pleasure;" Paynter had in turn translated it from Boccaccio's "Decameron," which was the "great storehouse of romantic and humorous narrative for poets and dramatists of that and the succeeding age." The characters of the Countess, Lafeu, Parolles, and the Clown are original with Shakespeare. There are two Italian plays entitled "Gl Ingegni, (The Cheats)" which contain incidents similar to those of "Twelfth Night." Whether Shakespeare knew these sources or not, he was probably acquainted with the version of the story of Barnaby Riche in his "History of Apolonius and Sille in Riche His Farewell to the Militierie Profession" and from this he appeared to have drawn the main incidents of his plot. Malvolio, Fabian, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, the Clown, and Marie have no counterpart in the original.

Critics have pointed out several sources from which Shakespeare derived hints for the plot of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," all traceable back to the Italian. "The Taming of the Shrew" is an earlier play published under the title of "A Pleasant Conceited Historie, Called The Taming of the Shrew," which is believed to have been written by Marlowe and Shakespeare. It probably came originally
from Ariosto's I Suppositi and passed through the hands of several persons before it reached Shakespeare. The story of Measure for Measure comes from a novel by Cinthio, the Italian novelist and tragic author. It, like a number of the others, reached Shakespeare only after much traveling. Our poet took the names of Cymbeline and his two sons from Holinshed, together with a few historical facts concerning the king, but the story of the stealing of the princes and their lives in the wilderness, appears to be his own. For the story of Imogen, in the same comedy, Shakespeare is indebted directly or indirectly to the Decameron of Boccaccio. Both stories of the bond and of the casket, used in The Merchant of Venice are to be found in the Gesta Romanae, a Latin compilation of allegorical tales, which had been translated into English as early as the time of Henry VI.

Some of the incidents of the Two Gentlemen of Verona are identical with those in the Story of the Shepherdess Feisimene of Jorge de Montemeyor, a Portuguese. This play was translated and dramatized in 1584 under the title of the History of Felix and Philomena. It is thought Shakespeare borrowed incidents from a translation of Bandello's novel of Apollinius and Sylla and from Sidney's Arcadia. The general idea of The Comedy
of Errors was taken from The Menaechmi of Plautus, but the plot was entirely recast and rendered much more diverting by the variety and quick succession of the incidents.

In two of his comedies Greene followed the work of Christopher Marlowe; Tamburlaine furnished the inspiration for Alphonus, King of Arragon and in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Greene tried to outdo Marlowe's Doctor Faustus in magic. He showed his appreciation in the choice of the works from which these comedies were derived, in the plays of Marlowe as well as the two from Italian sources. George-a-Greene is founded upon a story in Thom's Early Romances, Vol. II. In this we find the prowess of George-a-Greene set forth and the defiance of the king portrayed. Greene followed the history closely; he even caused the messenger of the king to eat his seals. This comedy of his was, also, influenced by an old ballad, The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield, with Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John to be found in Mitson's Robin Hood. The love story is, no doubt, Greene's own.

Shakespeare, probably, took the love story of Troilus and Cressida from Chaucer's Troilus and Cressida and the camp story from W. Caxton's Historyes of Troye or Lutgaye's Hystorye, Sage, and Dystrustcyan of Troye. A suggestion of the character of Thersites
seems to have been derived from Chapman's Iliad. The story of The Winter's Tale was taken from Robert Greene's History of Dorestus and Euanice, which appeared under the title of Pandosto, the Triumph of Time. Shakespeare was chiefly indebted for the story of As You Like It to the novel by Thomas Lodge entitled Rosalynde, Euphues' Golden Legacie. We may suggest that Lodge took some of the main incidents of his novel from The Cokes Tale of Camelyn, which is found in a few of the later manuscripts of The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer. It is probable that a hint for A Midsummer Night's Dream was received from Chaucer's Knight's Tale. Shakespeare was, evidently, acquainted with North's Plutarch in which he could find the Life of Theseus. Oberon, Titania, and their trains were familiar personages in the popular fairy lore of the Elizabethan era.

Dyce, who is the editor of Greene's Comedies, tells us that "the story of Pandosto, we have every reason to believe, was the invention of Greene." After much investigation, we agree with him in this statement, since no source for it has been found. The play of Love's Labour's Lost, Shakespeare's first comedy, so far as it

1. The plots of these two are discussed in the following section.
is known, is original with him. The play is precisely such a one as a clever young man, lately from the country, might write. It is a dramatic plea on behalf of nature and common sense against the unreal and affected. Yet Schelling reminds us that "Holofernes, the pedant, and Don Armado, the vein and boastful captain are stock figures from the contemporary stage." As Shakespeare usually founded his plays upon some well-known history or romance, critics feel bound to find in the background of each of his works some source, but so far, have not been successful in tracing a satisfactory source for The Tempest, although several conjectures have been ventured.

Shakespeare, as well as Greene, did what every writer of the Elizabethan age was doing, took a plot wherever he found it and adapted it to his own purposes. While we know that this is but one of the common customs of the period, yet one of the first impressions from the study of the Greenean and Shakespearean sources is that of something very like plagiarism. Greene, in following the custom of the time, did what he needlessly accused Shakespeare of doing, "decorated himself with the feathers" of others. The exceedingly human and pathetic side of this incident is that Greene could so easily recognize the "most in the eye of another" without realizing that there
was, probably, "a beam in his own eye." Had he but had
the perspective and fairmindedness to sense it, he might
have known that he was as great a pilferer from the writ­
ings of others as was his successor.

Shakespeare, as we have shown, drew most heavily
upon Italian and other countries for the sources of his
comedies. But he overlooked no possible suggestions, for
he as freely took the plot from his English fellow au­
thors. No artist, no matter in what field he works, cre­
ates his own material. We might as fairly ask an archi­
tect to make the brick or stone with which he works, a
sculptor first to manufacture the marble out of which
he is to make a living statue, a musician to create the
tones with which he builds his theme, or a great paint­
er to employ his time in weaving the canvas for his mas­
ter-piece as to demand that a dramatic artist should
evolve from his innermost being, all the plots with
which he works. The time and skill of a genius can be
better employed in the constructive work with already
prepared materials. The fact that Greene demanded this
lesser activity in Shakespeare, shows that the former
did not sense, in full, the realm in which genius per­
forms its creative functions. "What is material and me­
chanical, Shakespeare willingly accepts from others,"
Dowden tells us; "his range of invention is almost without limit, but it is the invention in the spiritual world." Shakespeare, in his early works, bestowed more "labour of invention" upon his plots and the incidents he used than he did afterwards, when he usually selected known personages, to whom and to the outline of whose story, the popular mind was already somewhat familiar,—thus, probably, quite unconsciously adapting from his own experiences the usages of the early classical dramatists. We can best measure his success, however, when we place his achievements by the side of those of the other workers who had the same mines in which to dig as he had.
TREATMENT OF THE SAME PLOTS BY OUR AUTHORS

Twice in the plays of each, our dramatists worked from the same sources. The plot for Greene's Orlando Furioso is derived from a work of the same name by Ariosto. The action of the play depends upon the adventures of Orlando, who after having been chosen by Angelica from a number of suitors, goes insane because of love of her. Greene terminates his work, as does Ariosto, with the restoration of Orlando to his senses. This play has the least of Greene's work in it of any of his comedies; for here he adopts for his own the title, plot, incidents, resolution of the plot, and even the names of his characters from his predecessor.

When Shakespeare chose to work from the same production, he chose a particular part, Canto V. Here Polinesso, in order to revenge himself on the princess, Ginevra, who has rejected his suit and pledged herself to Arloden-te, induces her attendant to personate her and to appear at night at the balcony to which he ascends by a rope ladder. He does this in sight of his successful rival whom he stationed nearby to witness this proof of the infidelity of Ginevra. Shakespeare uses this plot in his Much Ado About Nothing. But he is not content with using this theme alone. He treats it as the bare skeleton on
which to shape his work.

In another instance, both artists used the same plot. How they handled it, shows some of the likenesses and differences that exist between them. In neither writer does this particular work represent him at his best. Greene was the originator of the plot, for Shakespeare took the plan for *The Winter's Tale* from his predecessor's story, *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time*, later known as *Dorastus and Fawnia*. Even the title shows a difference of approach. Shakespeare seems to say that "Here is a tale for the fireside on a winter's evening; let us enjoy it together"; while, with his title, Greene suggests that something is wrong, but that time can remedy all evils.

But to proceed with the plot. Both dramatists have two pairs of lovers; the maiden of the younger lovers is the daughter of the older couple. In Greene's novel, Egistus, King of Sicily, visits Pandosto, King of Bohemia, who conceives a sudden jealousy of his guest and his wife. Egistus escapes; but the wife dies in consequence of the treatment she receives. Her new-born babe, Fawnia, is cast a-drift and is rescued by honest shepherds. Later Dorastus, son of Egistus, falls in love with Fawnia and defies his father's will in reference to the marriage his father has planned for him. Thereupon, Dorastus and Fawnia escape in
a boat, which carries them to Bohemia, the land of her birth. A fellow passenger is the shepherd who with trinkets is prepared to prove Fawnia's parentage. When Pandosto, her father, sees her, he falls madly in love with her and later commits suicide when their relationship is revealed to him. With this termination, the plot is not suitable for comedy. It is with the story of Fawnia that Greene is most concerned. In his novel, Pandosto's jealousy and its outcome form the prologue to the Fawnia story. She is made by destiny, the instrument of vengeance for her mother's wrongs.

Leontes' jealousy seems mere madness in The Winter's Tale. Greene has shown a stronger, although not sufficient, ground for the jealousy. In Pandosto, speaking of Egistus, the guest, and the Queen, Greene says,

"They grew to such a secret uniting of their affections that the one could not well be without the company of the other."

With Shakespeare, the relation between Hermione and her husband's friend has been the mere courtesies of intimate friendship of guest and hostess. Hermione has the stately composure of one born to the purple; she is not quickly moved. Her pledge of troth had not been given impulsively so she cannot reply with vehemence to the King's accusation implying the breaking of the bond between them.
Thinking only of him she says briefly,

"How it will grieve you
When you shall come to clearer knowledge,"

for she knows the King is beside himself. Since Hermione does not defend herself, the people who know her best attest her character. Antigonus says,

"Every dram of woman's flesh is false
If she be."

Talking to the King, Paulina, companion to the Queen, voices her loyalty with

"If one by one you wedded all the world
Or from the all that are, took something good
To make a perfect woman, she you kill'd
Would be unparallel'd!"

Both writers have the King consult the Oracle of Apollo. In Greene, the King would have us believe that he is not a tyrant, so he consults the Oracle on his own initiative, while in The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare has him do it at the request of his Queen Hermione. When the reply from Apollo 1 is received, the rendition in

1. The Oracle (taken from Greene)

"Swpition is no prove; isalousie is an unequall judge; Belleris is chest; Egistus blameless; Prenion a true subject; the king shall live without an heire, if that which is lost be not founde."
neither case is as difficult as were the oracles in olden times to interpret. Greene makes it the cause for the repentance of Pandosto. In the Shakespearean comedy, Leontes defies the Oracle, but later bows to it, when he is punished by the death of his son. He admits,

"Apollo's angry, and the heavens themselves Do strike at my injustice."

But his path to repentance is not smooth.

When Perdita is grown and returns to the place of her birth, Shakespeare entirely eliminates the incestuous love of the father, Leontes. He so plans his comedy that there is a reunion of the King and his wife, Hermione. The Queen does not die, but lives concealed for sixteen years, during which time Leontes suffers for the injustice he has done to her. When in accordance with the Oracle, Perdita returns, Shakespeare so constructs his plot that the King is led into the presence of his Queen, thinking he is to view her statue. Then ensues a striking scene as Hermione steps down from her pedestal. After her long seclusion few words befit her; a silent surrender to her husband's

1. This is always the attitude of Shakespeare.
embrace is followed by a prayer of blessing on their daughter.

In Greene's novel, Fawnie and Dorastus are typical Arcadian nymph and swain and nothing more. In the Shakespearean love story, Florizel and Perdita play out their idyl against the background, which, although located elsewhere, in reality is Warwickshire life—the sheep-shearing festival and fair as Shakespeare, no doubt, had seen them many times in his younger days. Perdita is the most purely pastoral figure in Shakespeare's gallery of women. We enjoy with her her woodland posies:

"Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, 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."

Even Camillo and Polixenes, who came to find faults, say of her,—

"This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever
Ren on the greenward; nothing she does or seems
But make of something greater than herself
Too noble for this place."

Perdita proves that she has brains as well as beauty, when she adds this democratic touch,

"The self-same sun that shines upon his court
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but
Looks on all alike."
Shakespeare, as is usual with him, creates characters that do not appear in Greene's story. One is the Queen's over-zealous maid, Paulina, who is as valuable as her mistress is reserved. By her very eagerness to help, she makes bad matters worse, yet through it all she has the virtue of faithfulness, a rare gift. While she deserves censure for her small part in the long separation of the King and Queen, she, likewise, merits praise for her share in re-uniting them. Another character, not in the Greenean story, is the delightful rogue who comes in at the country fair, shows his wares, and relieves the rural folk of their silver. Autolycus is one of the most original creations of the master.

"The art of thieving as practiced by him is no crime, but the gift of some knavish god."

We look, in vain, to see if Dionysus can be near.

In Greene's novel, Dorastus pays for his filial disobedience with imprisonment, but Shakespeare spares Florizel rightly, some think, who would say as does Verplencck:

"Romance has its own standards of right and wrong and within its borderland the lover who ................. is true to his heart's queen has performed the whole duty to man."
It seems to us that Robert Greene is interested in plot as a thing on which to hang a story; and that Shakespeare values it as a tool useful in the development of character. He shows that comedy should picture that which life means; with a well-constructed plot it can prove that life is more purposive, hopeful, and amusing than we thought.
In Greene's early comedies are found no suggestions outstanding as introductions to acts or scenes to tell us on what background the events are taking place. So helped along by the subject matter only, we read on until some word in connection with an entrance or some remark of the player sets us on the right track. By following this process in reading Orlando Furioso, we discover we are in a castle room; we think we have this well fixed in mind when one actor, being left alone on the stage, surprises us by hanging rounde lays on the trees. Thus we realize that we are in a grove nearby. Our minds need "a magic carpet." For other settings twelve Peers of France enter with drums and trumpets, enters Melissa with a glass of wine, enters a fiddler, enters Orlando with a scarf before his face. Never are we told where we are except as we know from the context that many visitors have come to the home of the King of Africa. Similar directions are our only guides through Alphonsus, King of Arragon and through George-a-Greene, Pinner of Wakefield.

Friar Bacon and Friar Bungey contains just one direction concerning stage settings. This is what Greene says:
"Frier Bacon is discovered in his cell, lying on a bed, with a white stick in one hand, a book in the other, and a lamp lighted beside him, and the Brazen Head, and Miles with weapons by him."

In James, the Fourth, Greene uses two quite definite directions for stage settings. May we quote them?

"Music playing within, enter Aster Oberon, King of Fairies, and Antics who dance about the tomb placed conveniently on the stage; out of the which suddenly starts up, as they dance Bo- pen, a Scot, attired like a ridstall man, from whom the Antics fly. Oberon manet."

From the same work, we find another setting in Act II, Scene I:

"The Countess of Arron and Ida discovered in their porch, sitting at work, a servant attending. A song."

In these three, Robert Greene has given us fairly complete settings that are a decided advance over any previous work. The place, with Greene, is never fixed with clear-cut definiteness. While the most of his comedies might be located anywhere, we know that James, the Fourth is probably situated in Scotland. He places The Pinner in Wakefield, but that we may not forget London, he has King Edward sentence a man to end his days in the Tower.

All of Shakespeare's dramatic scenes are planned with social backgrounds. Since his leading characters belong to the courtly group, there is, as we may expect
always evidence of other characters from the same group. Together with these courtly persons are always to be found representatives of the vulgar folk, who are companions or servants. For example, Portia’s 1 confession of her love is staged almost as a Queen’s might be:

"You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,"

is spoken openly in the presence of her attendants and servants. The presence of these humble characters is no hindrance to any action. Often they know the affairs of their masters or mistresses as fully as do the originals of the deeds. A Robinson Crusoe would have no place in Romantic Comedy. When Shakespeare sends Prospero 2 to an enchanted island, it is fully peopled for his needs. Shylock, 3 who feels his alcofness from the Gentiles, is never shown except when surrounded by interested people. Even when a character wanders far from the city and courtly life, Shakespeare does not isolate him, but finds companions worthy to form the surroundings for his acts. Imogen, 4 it will be recalled, sought solitude

1. Merchant of Venice
2. The Tempest
3. Merchant of Venice
4. Cymbeline
and found the companionship of her unknown brothers in their forest home.

Shakespeare never leaves us in doubt as to where his scenes are laid. No two are ever the same. We find scenes in particular rooms, in houses, palaces, churches, inns, chapels, monasteries, nunneries, prisons, and moated granges. No home is too high or too low to admit us. We have scenes in King's palaces and in widow's cottages. But all events do not take place indoors. Parks and groves and forests are favored. Gardens, likewise, come in for a share. Street scenes are numerous. We may, perhaps, find ourselves at sea or on an enchanted island. Shakespeare even fixes the place for us geographically. Venice is the background for two; Verona, Arragon, Illyria, Windsor, Britain, Rome, and Troy, each is the scene of one comedy. If we trace these places down with the exactness of a scientist, we shall find that Romantic Comedy has such discrepancies as that Bohemia has no shore; so we learn that all of these settings must not be taken as actual. Many are only ideal; but with their seeming fixity they help toward reality.

Of all the natural settings, that Shakespeare uses, it seems, that he loves best the Forest of Arden. In fact, in whatever country his grove is set, we still feel the beauty and shade of the massive oaks known so
well throughout middle England. In such a setting we find some of Shakespeare's happiest works. It was "here he found refreshment, a sunlight tempered by forest green, a breeze to cool his forehead, and a stream to murmur in his ear." We have only to note the number of times he arranges his scenes in the forest, to feel with him, how satisfying is its shade, how faithful are its trees! Indeed, Shakespeare never gets so deep into human life that he loses his hold on nature; and the nature he knew best was his beloved country in Warwickshire. His nature descriptions are the outpouring of this sincere love of the country together with a great power of faithful description and an unlimited command of the fittest language. This vividness and freshness give reality to all his writings of country life. Greene, in a lesser degree, shared this delight in rural scenes and people. We find traces of it in his early works; a greater abundance of its use appears in his George-a-Greene. It does not permeate his entire works as it does Shakespeare's; but when he does use it, he becomes close to the master in appreciation if not equally so in expression. While all will, no doubt, agree that action is the major requisite of Romantic Comedy, the setting

1. Dowden: Shakespeare
often helps the situation. So we rejoice that Greene
began to be more specific in directions for settings
and that Shakespeare developed his settings so care­
fully.
CHARACTERIZATIONS IN GENERAL

In general, the characters who inhabit the pages of Greene's comedies are noticeable rather for the lack of decided characteristics than for any striking individual traits that make them remembered. Thus Dorothea might easily shift into the place of Angelica, or Margaret change places with Ida or Iphigena. This sense of something missing arises from the fact that each character has too few attributes. Indeed, they remind us strangely of the ancient Hebrew Kings who were either good or bad. Each of the Greenean women is young, beautiful, and good. Greene requires all three traits and puts the emphasis on chastity. Numerous instances of where the women have expressed themselves on this characteristic may be found in the characterizations of "Women". It is true that a few of his women show yet another trait. Lady Dorothea has the Griselda-like patience in her endurance of whatever treatment the king may offer her; Iphigena longs for the expression of love that is not forthcoming.

Greene's men are equally devoid of variety. All seem to be possessed of some degree of animal courage. (No test of moral courage is presented to them.) They are, for the most part, occupied with love in its purity,
or with its perversion, lust, or with its accompanist, jealousy. There seems to be little else in their composition but sex hunger. They are not all willing to go the same length to obtain their desires. Prince Edward would rob a girl of her purity to satisfy his passion, but he yields to Lacy's stronger claim of pure love. Sacripant arouses the jealousy of his rival to the point of insanity. King James would even kill his wife to possess the maiden he desires. He does not fail in this design because of any virtue in himself. Orlando is a colorless individual. He has no bad traits, but he, likewise, has no good ones. His only redeeming feature is that he loves truly and honorably. Alphonsus is ambitious to regain his lost kingdom; but just why does not appear. The fact that he loves Iphigene well does not develop through anything he says or does. Whether he is only bashful or whether he needs more worldly goods to make him a forceful character will never be known. The Pinner is to be noted for his prowess, together with his faithful love for Bettris. He is contented and happy with his lot. It will be remembered that he refused to be knighted. Greene's clowns show more diversity than do any other type of his characters; yet each clown, as considered alone, is composed of but few traits. This Hebraic simplicity and barren-
ness of characterization is one of Greene's most serious defects.

In contrast to his predecessor's work, Shakespeare's richness and variety of traits make his characters noticeable. He draws real men and women. They are desired and desirable acquaintances. When we learn to know his people well, they become life-long friends. He is as careful in his workmanship with his lowest people as with his highest. Everywhere we find variety. No two are ever exactly alike. Lance is different from all the other clowns and although but a lowly individual, he is as distinct a being as is Jaques, or Shylock, or Prospero, or Caliban. The Shakespearean women are as distinctly individual as are his men. Notice the variety within the individual, for example, Portia. We find her distinguished for intellect of the highest order, a trusting spirit, playfulness, and cheerfulness of temper compatible with the most serious habits of thoughts and the most profound sensibilities. All of the characters of Shakespeare are composite. Ferdinand tells Miranda that she is "created of every creature's best." Imogen conveys to our minds the impression of extreme simplicity, yet she is of wonderful complexity. She is a compound of the romantic enthusiasm of Juliet, the truth
and constancy of Helen, the dignified purity of Isabel, the tender sweetness of Viola, and the self-possession and intellectual beauty of Portia.

Shakespeare understands the value of contrast. We see it many times. The faithful Valentine is put beside the scoundrel, Proteus; lively Beatrice is placed over against the quieter Hero. The brothers of Orlando are quite unlike him. Our author also understood the essential of emphasis. When he puts four pairs of lovers into one play, As You Like It, even the careless reader has no difficulty in deciding which couple Shakespeare means to make most important. Character portrayal is the particular field in which Shakespeare stands pre-eminent. While the Greenean portraits may be compared to silhouettes, true and well-cut, the pictures in the Shakespearean gallery have the depth and roundness discernible in the daguerreotype. The latter have been printed by the sun, the giver of life.
In Romantic Comedy we usually find some powerful person or group of people above the central figures, the lovers, whose share in the working out of the plot is to help or hinder the lovers in the consummation of their hopes. In all of the works of Greene, this self-appointed Providence is the King, while with Shakespeare the Duke is often the force that aids the lovers or places obstacles in their way. Did the latter understand his England better and realize that there was no king in the reign of his good Queen Elizabeth? His plays would have furnished just as satisfactory reading, had he used a King and not a Duke to preside over the fate of the lovers; but they would not have shown the sensitiveness to apparently trifling details which is one of the Shakespearean characteristics. Sometimes the father or another elderly relative takes the place of Providence and it is always a matter of moment to see whether he will smooth the pathway of true love or fill it with obstacles.

In Greene's work, Orlando Furioso, this part is taken by the father, Marcilus, King of Africa, who is willing that his daughter should marry the man of her choice, Orlando. Yet he complicates affairs when
he believes his daughter is untrue and exiles her. He says,-

"My daughter, lords! Why she is exiled;
   And her griev'd father is content to lose
   The pleasance of his age, to countenance law."

In Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay the part of Providence is taken by Prince Edward after he yields the place of lover to Lacy to whom it rightfully belongs. The King of England fills this need in James, the Fourth. Notice how quickly James acts like an honorable being, when he knows that England's King is here to see that his daughter, Queen Dorothea, receives the treatment that is her due. The King of Arragon, the father, helps to solve the problem in Alphonse, King of Arragon by making Iphigenes realize that Alphonse has loved her for some time. In the more democratic play of George-a-Greene, Edward, King of England, is the one who forces the change in the father's view in regard to his daughter's love affair with the Pinner. It will be remembered that Grime thought Bettris should marry some one higher in rank than George-a-Greene.

Shakespeare shows us many ways in which the dukes or kings help or hinder the progress of the love theme. In All's Well That Ends Well, it is the King's order for Bertram to marry Helena, even if he does not love
her. In demanding this, the King is keeping his word to Helena, but is also seriously complicating the love affair. In Twelfth Night the Duke renders matters more complex by fancying he is in love with Lady Olivia, when he is really learning to love Viola. The Duke of Milan, who is, likewise, the father of Silvia, is the Providence in The Two Gentlemen of Verona. He grants the boon asked by Silvia's lover, Valentine. In As You Like It, it is the rightful Duke, living in banishment and his brother, Frederick, the usurper, who together make it necessary for Oliver, Orlando, Rosalind, and Celia to meet in the Forest of Arden, and thereby furnish one of the most beautiful natural settings conceivable for a love story. If Rosalind's father had not been banished, she and Celia would not have been wandering in the wildwood on their road to him.

The Duke of Venice presides at the trial scene of Antonio, until love sends a more able advocate in the form of Portia, who finds a way out of the coil. If Theseus, Duke of Athens, had not celebrated his wedding to Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, the world might never have known the beauties of Titania and Oberon and their followers and the love affairs of Lysander and Demetrius and Hermia and Helena might never have been
straightened out by these fairy folk. It is Ferdinand, King of Navarre with his attending Lords, who conceived the unnatural scheme of celibacy and learning that lend themselves to the unravelling forces of love in Love's Labour's Lost. In The Comedy of Errors the Duke is the final court of appeal; it is under him that Aegeon is reunited to his wife, Aemilia, from whom he has been separated so many years. Their sons, the twin brothers, are also restored to them by the same agency. In The Tempest Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, has been wronged by Antonio, the usurping Duke. In righting his own affairs, he, likewise, acts as the guardian spirit for the happiness of his daughter and Ferdinand, the son of the King of Naples.
LOVERS

The central characters in every Romantic Comedy are the lovers. In Greene's comedy, Orlando Furioso, the daughter of the King of Africa, Angelica, has reached the age at which marriage seems desirable. King Marcilius, unlike many fathers, is willing that his daughter shall make the choice that shall bring her happiness. He says to her,

"Sith father's will may hap to aim amiss,
(For parents' thoughts in love oft step awry,)
Choose thou the man who best contenteth thee,
Thou satisfied, my thoughts shall be at ease."

So on a certain day, twelve peers of France arrive, each eager to win her and, incidentally, the kingdom that will soon be hers. Angelica and her father give audience to the many suitors. Each, in turn, presents himself in such a manner as he hopes may win her. Most of them boast of their power and wealth; each seeks to dazzle her with her prospects as his wife. When, at last, it is Orlando's turn to woo her, he speaks more of his love and what he would do for her because of it, than of who he is and his

1. On the supposition that Greene's plays are not well-known, we have gone into more detail concerning them than we shall do in reference to the comedies of his better-known successor.
possessions. Using his own words, we see that,

"Swift fame hath sounded to our western seas
The matchless beauty of Angelica,
so, the fame of fair Angelica
Stamp'd in my thoughts the figure of her love.
I love, my lord,
Angelica herself shall speak for me."

And the reply of Angelica follows,

"Venus,
Whose bow commands the motions of the mind
Hath sent proud love to enter such a plea
And flat commands that, maugre majesty,
I choose Orlando, County Palatine."

The disappointed rivals did not accept the decision of Angelica. One, Sacripant, planned to arouse the jealousy of Orlando by proving that Angelica is untrue. After much suffering all is righted; again to quote Angelica:

"Had not Orlando lov'd Angelica
Ne'er had my lord fallen into these extremes."

So Greene furnishes a happy ending for the lovers, as shown by the words of Orlando:

"- - - When our banquettings be done,
And Orlando espous'd to Angelica
We'll furrow through the moving ocean
And cheerly frolic with great Charlemagne."

1. For Sacripant, see the section on Villains.
In Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, both Prince Edward and Lacy, Earl of Lincolnshire, are in love with Margaret, fair maid of Fressingfield. In discussing her, Edward calls attention to her beauty:

"Didst thou mark the maid,
How lovely in her country weeds she look'd?
I tell thee, Lacy, that her sparkling eyes
Do lighten forth sweet love's alluring fire."

But Lacy reminds him that

"In the court be many quainter dames than she."

Still not knowing of Lacy's love, Edward decides to have Lacy court Margaret for his Prince. As may always be expected, this courting by proxy fails. Since Edward desires Margaret for his mistress and Lacy would win her for his wife, we are pleased with the disloyalty of Lacy and the disappointment of Prince Edward. We rejoice when we see that Lacy, meditating, decides to woo her for himself:

"Love makes no exception of a friend,
Nor deems it of a prince, but as a man,
Honor bids thee control him in his lust;
His wooing is not for to wed the girl,
But to entrap her and beguile the lass;
Lacy, thou lovest, then brook not such abuse
But wed her, and abide thy prince's frown;
For better die than see her live disgrac'd."

Before this, Lacy, in disguise, had met Margaret at
the fair. She fell in love with his personage, his wit, and his courtesy; yet she would discourage love at first sight; she says, -

"Love ought to creep as doth the dial's shade, 
For timely ripe is rotten too-too soon."

Friar Bungay, to aid matters, tells Margaret that Lacy is the Earl of Lincoln. To prove how desirable Margaret is, Greene has two other lovers seek for her hand.

When Edward realizes how fruitless is his pursuit of Margaret, he yields to Lacy's worthier love, but not before he has given Margaret a chance to prove her love for Lacy, and him an opportunity to defend his disloyalty to his Prince with, -

"Love taught me your honor did but jest, 
That princes were in fancy but as men."

Thereupon Edward threatens to kill Lacy for his treachery and Margaret begs to be killed in his place, -

"Spare Lacy, gentle Edward, let me die."

Even after this proof of her love for him, Lacy decides to put her to another test--- to leave her for a while. To this she agrees, but exhibits her love with, -

"But love's foolish looks 
Think footsteps miles and minutes to be hours."
During his absence, a note of farewell is brought to her, as Lacy afterwards declares,

"To try sweet Peggy's constancy."

Just as she is about to become a nun, Lacy returns and Margaret decides her life and his by

"Betsaking me to him that is true love,
And leaving all the world for love of him."

In James, the Fourth Greene gives a very much more complicated treatment of the love affair than in his earlier works. The play opens with the arrival of "Fair Dorothea", daughter of the King of England with her father. She has come to Scotland to become the Queen of James, who knows even on his wedding day that he is desperately in love with Ida, daughter of the Countess of Arron. The mother asks to return to her country home and Ida seconds her request:

"The farther from the court I am removed
The more, I think, of heaven I were belov'd."

She, probably, recognizes the King's intentions, for she reminds him,

"Like a bee, Love hath a sting."

But James is not to be so easily thwarted in his desires.
He counsels with Ateukin, who proves himself to be a ready scoundrel.

Meanwhile Ida and her mother have retired to their estate; here they are visited by Lord Eustace, who instantly is in love with Ida, as she also is with him. Ateukin now proceeds on the King's errand, delivers James' proposal to Ida, who replies,

"Better than live unchaste, to lie in grave."

Knowing that he is making no headway, he returns to King James with whom he then plans to murder Queen Dorothea so that James may marry Ida. On hearing of this plan, Queen Dorothea says,

"He doth but tempt his wife, he tries my love,"

and still looks cheerfully forward for she goes on with

"Young men that are wild
In age grow wise."

and expresses her loving care for him,

"The heavens, I hope,
Will favor him through mine incessant prayers."

The Bishop of St. Andrew saying,

"Sin cannot thrive in courts without a plague,"
counsels flight. So Queen Dorothea, in male attire ca-
capes with her servant; but is set upon and wounded and reported dead. Afterwards she is taken to the home of Lord and Lady Anderson (still in disguise), where her hostess falls in love with her, and is told that her guest is Queen Dorothea. In the meantime, the love of Eustace and Ida culminates in their happy marriage. When James realizes that he has lost all possibility of possessing Ida and when, having heard the rumor of his daughter's death, the King of England, intent on revenge, arrives, life takes on a serious aspect. Queen Dorothea returns opportune to right all evils, as she reminds the King,-

"Youth hath misled- tute, but a little fault 'Tis kindly to amend what is amiss."

She shows how her deeds would match her words,

"But constancy, obedience, and my love In that my husband is my lord and chief These call me to compassion of his state. Men learn at last to know their good estate."

The simple love story of Alphonsus and Iphigene in Alphonsus, King of Arragon is fairly overshadowed by the mighty efforts of Alphonsus to regain his kingdom. The love of Iphigene, daughter of Faustus and Amureck, is foretold by her father under the spell of Medea.
Iphigene is ready to kill herself; she has no idea of following fate blindly. When she opposes her Father's will in carrying out this prophecy, he banishes her and her mother, who join the Amazons and meet Alphon-sus in battle,—a very unusual place for a love af-fair. Here he tells Iphigene of his wish to win her for his wife. But she still refuses him, since he does not sufficiently woo her. It is left for Carinus, the father of Alphon-sus to tell her,—

"Since first Alphon-sus' eyes
   Did he to glance upon your heavenly hue,
   And saw the rare perfection of the same,
   He hath desired to become your spouse."

What woman would be satisfied to be wooed by the fath-er of her lover? Can you blame her as she replies,—

"The world goes very hard
   When womenkind are forced for to woo.
   If that your son had loved me so well
   Why did he not inform me of the same?"

In George-e-Greene our dramatist has given us three love stories, two of which are of little or no importance to the main theme. The central love story has for its principals George-e-Greene and Bettris, daughter of Grime. Both are very frankly in love with each other. The obstacle, in the course of their love, is Grime, who thinks his daughter should wed some one
higher in rank than the Pinner. Bettris shows her de-
termination with,

"I care not for earl, nor yet for knight,
Nor baron that is so bold;
For George-a-Greene, the merry Pinner
He hath my heart in hold."

So she defies her father and, in disguise, seeks the
Pinner. When George-a-Greene has served the King well
he, in return, helps the Pinner by winning the reluc-
tant consent of Grime,

"I'll send for Grime and force him to give his
grant,
He'll not deny King Edward such a suit."

Both Greene and Shakespeare believe in love at
first sight and give us many instances of it. For an
example from Greene, the mutual love of Angelica and
Orlando develops at their first meeting. In The Tem-
pest the simplicity and tenderness of the love of
Ferdinand and Miranda, whose union is settled at their
first meeting, exceeds in delicacy and grace anything
of Greene's. Their very ignorance of conventionalities
marks them as lovers apart from the common run.

All of Greene's lovers are young. (It will be
recalled that Greene, himself, never became old.)
While youthful lovers claim much of the attention of
Shakespeare, he also shows the possibilities of a sincere love between two older characters,---as Hermione and Leontes in The Winter's Tale, whose reunion, after years of separation, is a second consecration or marriage.

In Orlando Furioso Angelica chooses her lover from a number. It will be recalled that the most of the suitors boast of their wealth and position, while Orlando magnifies his love. In The Merchant of Venice a series of lovers, in turn, select a casket, whose choice determines who is to be the happy lover. This is a more complicated scheme than the simple Greenean plan by which the lover of Angelica is determined. Bassanio does not come as the needy adventurer to choose the golden casket, or to "gain" or "get" anything material, but in the true spirit of self-abandoning love "to give" and "hazard all he hath" and having dared to give all he gets all. No wonder Portia waits anxiously as each suitor and especially as Bassanio makes his selection.

While in Greene's Iphigene in Alphonse, King of Aragon we find the protest of a woman who is not sufficiently wooed, in All's Well That Ends Well we meet Helena, who has the courage and determination to win her husband who never wooed her. Shakespeare uses
many of the same means in forwarding the affairs of his lovers as does Greene. It will be remembered that Bettris in *George-EGreene*, goes to her lover in disguise. Julia in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* also assumes a disguise and follows Proteus. There is a mutual love between the Pinner and Bettris that might warrant this procedure, but with Julia, it is a more hazardous adventure. Both dramatists show us that disobeying parents for the purpose of following the higher law of love is to be expected. Bettris so defies her father's will in *The Pinner* and Anne Page in the *Merry Wives of Windsor* and Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice* both do likewise. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Greene would have the Earl of Lincolnshire, who is in love with Margaret, woo her for his King. Shakespeare reverses the sexes in *Twelfth Night*, for Viola who is in love with the duke is sent by him to woo Olivia for her master. It is almost needless to say that in each case, the emissary fails.

False accusations may mar the happiness of lovers. Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing* is wrongly accused by Don Pedro and for a time is believed; as, likewise, is Angelica in *Orlando Furioso*. Shakespeare uses this motive in the case of Imogen in *Cymbeline*. In one of the
Shakespearean cases, the accusation of unfaithfulness follows marriage. The aimed at Hero strikes her very near the altar. In the example from Greene’s work, the accusation is made soon after the engagement. In both writers accusations of infidelity come from the men, and jealousy arising from such causes, likewise, originates with them. Such are the cases of Orlando and Angelica, of Claudio and Hero, of Posthumus and Imogen. When Queen Dorothea has the possibilities of a similar development of jealousy, there is never a hint that she is experiencing it. Viola must have come very near jealousy when she is sent to woo Lady Olivia for the Duke. We realize she loves her master; yet in their women neither Greene nor Shakespeare emphasize this undesirable factor in love.

All love is not faithful. Its fickleness is shown in Proteus in Two Gentlemen of Verona. He, at first, loves Julia, leaves her, and later returns to her. In A Midsummer Night’s Dream Shakespeare tells us that love may be only an illusion; even in extreme cases, depending upon such a simple expedient as the juice of a flower placed on the eyelids of the one to be effected. This causes the one, who is thus treated, to love the one first seen on waking. While its effect on
Titania is amusing; a graver mood greets its work on mortals.

We note that both writers know that women are so much in love with love that they sometimes fancy themselves in love with a woman disguised as a man. Greene carries this out in the case of Lady Anderson, who conceived a love for the disguised Queen Dorothia and is evidently cured of her infatuation when her Queen's identity is made known to her. Shakespeare, in Twelfth Night, has Lady Olivia charmed with Viola disguised as a court page. She transfers this love of hers to the twin brother of Viola; thus no harm results. In As You Like It Phoebe, a shepherdess, is so delighted with Ganymede, as the disguised Rosalind is called, that she would desert her faithful lover, Silvius; but this catastrophe is prevented by Rosalind. In Iphigenea in Greene's Alphonsus, King of Arragon, we see a war against insufficient wooing. Shakespeare gives us several instances of rebellion against love itself. Benedick and Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing are avowedly rebels to love; they are both entangled in its meshes when a merry plot of their friends makes them believe that each is the object of the secret passion of the other. Kate in the Taming of the Shrew is also a rebel against love, made so by her environment. Pe-
truchlo wins in the game of love by beating her with her own weapons.

Shakespeare is sometimes careless of the fitness of those whom he couples. He seems more interested in them before than after marriage. We shudder as we think of the impossibility of future happiness of Julis, in Two Gentlemen of Verone, as she clings to her faithless lover, the scoundrel Proteus. She loves and pities him although he has proved that he cares nothing for her, indeed, that he respects no woman. Greene shows the same disregard for the future in the marriage of Dorothel and King James in James, the Fourth. Although

"tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd,"

our authors seldom make two lovers equally in love. When this occurs, as it does in the Greenean characters, George-a-Greene and Bettris and the Shakespearean lovers, Orlando and Rosalind, we all rejoice with them. But often only one of the pair knows the meaning of love. Greene shows this in Queen Dorothel, who is willing to accept any substitute for love, even decent treatment from King James. Shakespeare gives a number of instances where the love is all on one side. Like the case of Dorothel, Shakespeare sometimes makes the woman loving,
while the man is beloved but unloving. Such are the cases of Helena and Bertram in All's Well That Ends Well and of Julia and Proteus in Two Gentlemen of Verona.

While Greene gives each of his plays to the development of but a single love affair, Shakespeare, with the wealth of his invention, often brings several couples into one comedy. In As You Like It the most important lovers are Orlando and Rosalind. Near them, but never overshadowing them, are Oliver and Celia, who love at first sight and glory in it. Silvia and Phèbe are the conventional pastoral lovers. William and Audrey furnish the rustic pair. Each couple is distinctive, but all are subordinate to the outstanding lovers. Shakespeare, with his careful workmanship, makes his secondary lovers as clear-cut as are his leading characters, for instance, in The Merchant of Venice, we see the lyrical beauty and picturesqueness with which Lorenzo and Jessica are enveloped. Music and odors of sweet flowers surround them. Happiness dwells in their hearts.
Women

The women who take their places in literature before the time of Shakespeare and Greene are, for the most part, of Italian origin, of a colorless graciousness, a noble, patient womanhood. Where Greene acquired the knowledge of the types of women he portrayed will, probably, never be known; but it is supposed that Shakespeare learned the essentials of his splendid drawing of women from his early study at his mother's knee. Yet no matter where either received the ability, each showed skill in presenting effectively the noble elements of women's characters.

Greene, dissolute and vicious though his life was known to be, was the first of our playwrights to feel and picture the charm of maidenly modesty and chastity upon the English stage. To this trait Greene, no doubt, owed some of his deserved popularity. Greene's Fawnia in Pandosto with her innocent, nymph-like charm and Margaret in Frier Bacon and Frier Bungay show this characteristic. In talking with her lover, who is high above her in rank, Margaret says, -

"What love is there where wedding ends not love?"

Ida and Dorothea in James, the Fourth are of one nature.
in whom the delights of rural life, unselfish love, and womanly purity are sketched with delicacy and truth. Even when Ateukin with devilish insistence tells her,—

"Women are all not formed to be saints,"

Ida answers him in terms not to be misunderstood. The advice of the King of England to his daughter, Dorothea, just as he is leaving for home after her marriage, gives a father's view on this subject. In all of his comedies, Greene keeps this standard of pure womanhood high. Here we sense his nearness in conception to the master of characterization. Just once in his comedies does Shakespeare vary from this ideal type of womanhood. He portrays a thorough-going wanton in Cresside. Although we know such women exist, and so such a picture is true to life, still we cannot but be grateful that we are not often entertained with their lives and actions.

In Greene's work, James the Fourth, we have an example of the friendship of a mother and a daughter. Ida and her mother, the Countess of Arron, share each other's joys and work. They are of one mind about the need of their leaving the Court. In Alphonse, King of Aragon the mother of Iphigene shares her daughter's exile, and so proves their interests are one. In
spite of the dearth of mothers in Shakespearean comedy, we find, approximately, the same relationship in All's Well That Ends Well. We refer to the relation that exists between Helena and the Countess Rousillon. Although here is no tie of blood, the Countess has reared Helena and loves her like a mother. She backs Helena splendidly, even though such support carries with it the apparent condemnation of her own son.

In no place has Greene frankly called our attention to the beauties of old age as Shakespeare does here. "The Countess of Rousillon," says Mrs. Jameson, "is like one of Titian's old women, who still, amid their wrinkles, remind us of that soul of beauty and sensibility which must have animated them when young." The Countess' fond maternal love for Helena, her pride in her good qualities are most natural in such a person. Greene views but a part of life; Shakespeare sees it entire.

Greene gives us no instance of the friendship of one woman for another, with the exception of the mother-and-daughter friendship already noted; but we find such examples in Shakespeare; one, in As You Like It, is Celia's friendship for Rosalind. Celia willingly follows her cousin into banishment. She
gives this exquisite description of their friendship:—

"If she be traitor
Why, so am I; we have still slept together,
Rose at an instant, learn'd, play'd, eat
together,
And wheresoe'er we went, like Juno's swans,
Still we were coupled and inseparable."

The friendship of Beatrice for Hero in Much Ado About Nothing is even more outstanding. When Claudio prepares the heartless scene for Hero in the church, the true love of Beatrice for her, her deep conviction of her friend's innocence, her anger at the malice of her public dishonor burst forth. Without a moment's hesitancy, she says:

"O, on my soul, my cousin is belied."

Their mutual attachment is very beautiful and extremely natural.

How women keep their exquisite femininity, even when dressed in men's apparel, is shown by both writers. Angelica tremblingly carries the sword that was given to her by her crazed lover, Orlando, when he would make her a knight. How Imogen timidly advances with drawn sword in shaking hand and how Rosalind bravely tries to assume a man's courage as she dons a weapon are pictures not easily forgotten. Both Rosalind and Lady Dorotha exhibit quite a feminine trait when both complain
that they are very weary of their long journey. While Greene has no woman who may be termed intellectual, Shakespeare portrays a number of this type. His best-known intellectual woman is Portia. We see her coping successfully with Shylock whose mind has grown keen through hatred, while hers is aided by love. Shakespeare does not intend that his women shall be repellent "Blue Stockings", for he shows his wisdom in giving them other attributes to make them attractive. Portia is rendered charming by intellect kindled into romance; Isobel, by intellect elevated by religious principle; Beatrice, by intellect animated by spirit; Rosalind, by intellect softened by sensibility. The Greenean women are of a very great monotony of character. It would take a long time to get acquainted with them, for the same reason that it is often hard to tell twins apart. But each of the Shakespearean women has a character peculiarly her own. Each is as readily distinguishable from the others as are real individuals. Notice the distinctions between Viola and Rosalind as pointed out by Mrs. Jameson:

"The wild sweetness, the frolic humour, which sports free and unblamed amid the shades of Arden, would ill become Viola, whose playfulness is assumed as a part of her disguise as a court page and guarded by the strictest delicacy. She has not, like Rosalind, a saucy enjoyment in her own incognito; her disguise does not sit so easily upon her; her heart does not beat freely under it."
VILLAINS

Our sympathy with the lovers makes us unwilling readily to accede a place in Romantic Comedy to villains; yet we find that Robert Greene twice found it necessary to use one of these trouble makers in the development of his stories. In Orlando Furioso Sacripant, disappointed in his love for Angelica, seeks revenge by arousing the jealousy of Orlando, his successful rival, by apparently proving that Angelica is faithless. How well he succeeds in this attempt, is shown by Orlando's becoming insane for a time. When his senses have been restored, Orlando seeks revenge and fatally wounds Sacripant, who, in his last moments, admits his wrongs to Angelica and Orlando. With no thought of forgiving him, Orlando leaves him to die alone with these words:

"Farewell, thou devil in the shape of man."

In James, the Fourth the villain, Ateukin, forwards the lust of the King by trying to get Ida for the mistress of King James. When this fails, he suggests the murder of the Queen, so that James may be free to marry Ida. He carries this plan so far that his tool wounds Queen Dorothea and leaves her for dead.
His only motive is to curry favor with the King. Later he realizes the wrong he has done, for he says,

"I know the heavens
Are just and will revenge; I know my sins
Exceed compare.  

O were I dead, how happy I should be."

When asked what should be done with his willing helper

"For greater viper never may be found,"

James, King of Scotland, orders

"Who so finds the man
Let him have martial law, and straight be hanged."

Besides a number of lesser wrong-doers, Shakespeare also has his villains. May we cite a few of them? In Cymbeline we get acquainted with Iachimo, the "Iago of comedy." Iachimo deliberately seeks to destroy the character of Imogen. In this end in his apparent temporary success, he is very like Sacripient of Greene's Orlando, who invents tales to damage the fair name of Angelica. Greene plays directly upon the jealousy of Orlando, while Shakespeare appeals to the faith of Posthumus in his wife's chastity. Another of the Shakespearean villains of about the same type, but, if it be conceivable, of a meaner disposition, is Proteus, in Two Gentlemen of Verona, who would desert the
women who loves him and betray the sweetheart of his friend. Shylock, a villain of quite a different type in The Merchant of Venice, is obsessed with a violent race hatred of all Gentiles. When he thinks he has one of them completely in his power, he feels that he has achieved the crown of his ambition. But Shakespeare will not have it so.

Let us see how these writers think their villains should be dealt with. In both of Greene's comedies, he shows that it is best to put them out of the way; thus Orlando kills Sacripent and King James orders Ateukin to be hanged. This is clearly following an old Hebraic ideal. But Greene forgets that James is as great a rascal as is his tool. Had James been of a more sensitive temperament, the treatment he had to receive, would have been harder to bear than that which he measures out for his accomplice, for he is enfolded in the excusing mother-love of his wife. ¹ This love is inherent in every woman and exhibits itself only when, in her eyes, her husband has played the part of a very little boy. Such a development in

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¹. Shakespeare uses this same form of women’s love when Hermione, in The Winter’s Tale, so silently forgives her husband for the wrong done her.
the love of a woman necessarily recognizes a deficiency of a noble love in him. We instinctively feel pity, approximating scorn, for him who merits it. However, we believe that the Greenean treatment of King James is an advance over his disposal of the other two villains.

But Shakespeare tells us that his villains are not to be punished in proportion to their deserts, but in accordance with the character of him who decides the punishment. He pleads for mercy as the twin of justice. We recall how Portia 1 speaks of mercy:

"It is twice blest.
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes,
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest.

It is an attribute of God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice."

In accordance with this ideal, we find Posthumus 2 shows his magnanimity to Iachimo in

"The power that I have on you is to spare you
The malice toward you to forgive you."

Proteus is treated even more mercifully, for in addi-

1. Merchant of Venice, Act IV, Scene I
2. Cymbeline, Act V, Scene V
tion to being forgiven by his friend, Valentine, whom he would have wronged, he is also received again as the lover of Julias, who says,

"Because I love him I must pity him."

And although Shylock 2 must relinquish his revenge, yet he is not left altogether disconsolate, for he still retains a part of his much-prized wealth. We believe that in his treatment of his villains, Shakespeare is a step ahead of Greene on the road to Christ-like living.

1. Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act IV, Scene IV
2. The Merchant of Venice.
The clown came into Romantic Comedy by way of the morality and miracle play and the coarse farce. In these olden forms he was variously named Vice and the Devil. His earliest duty was to furnish a cause for merriment by his very unsuccessful efforts to be helpful. Greene did his part in the developing of the clown. He gives us, at least, four types, that show successive improvement; these are the country bumpkin, the ordinary court fool, the highly developed vice, and a humouristic type.

We find the country bumpkin in Miles in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungey. Clowns are now supposed to be clever, but Miles' outstanding characteristic is a moron-like stupidity. He receives a box on the ear from Prince Edward as a matter of course. He arms himself against the Devil, thus showing his superstition, while he insists he does not fear this foe. When the Brazen Head, at length, speaks, he thinks the judgment day has arrived and behaves accordingly. For unsatisfactory service, he is rewarded with a trip to hell and is carried there on the back of a Devil. In this character there is no advance over the work of preceding writers. In the same play we find the court
fool in Ralph Simmel, "King Henry's only loved fool."

As we watch his pranks and hear his comments on those about him, we see his clever intuition. We note what he says of the love affairs of his master's son:

"Every time that Ned sighs for the Keeper's daughter, I'll tie a bell about him; and so within three or four days I will send word to his father Harry, that his son, and my master Ned, is become Love's morris-dancer."

Probably, Ralph intentionally deceives as well as entertains his audiences, for, without doubt, they often think they have discovered things for themselves which he has jokingly told them. Such is one of the duties of the court fool.

The highly developed Vice in Adam in the play, A Looking-Glass for London and England, claims attention chiefly for his gluttony. All of his pockets are loaded with food and drink which he proceeds to consume with much gusto in defiance of the proclaimed fast day. He comments:

"I had rather suffer a short hanging than a long fasting."

In James, the Fourth Greene has developed for the first time in English comedy, a humoristic type of fool in Andrew. He jokes about any and everything,
even about the gallows. It is, he tells us, "a place of great promotion." But the Clown nearing the Shakespearean type, is Slipper, who, in the same play, adroitly adjusts himself to any company in which he discovers himself. We find him shrewd in apparent simplicity, quick in repartee and indirection. He seems to be quite closely related to such a clown as Launce in Shakespeare.

From the former inelegance of jokes to such a display of comic underplot as is seen in many of Shakespeare's works, for instance, as in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, is a change for the better. Characters like Speed and Launce with his dog, Crab, have a right to live for the merriment they afford. Launce uses Crab as the auditor for his many drolleries. When asked whether his master's love suit is to be a success, he answers profoundly.

"Ask my dog; if he says ay, it will; if he says no, it will; if he shakes his tail and says nothing, it will."

We would as soon think of Dick Whittington without his cat, as of Launce without his dog. Speed is a fellow of higher sensibilities than is Launce. Like the legitimate fool, he is a mixture of wag, zany, and monkey. He is incredibly quick, is eternally punning, and is
cleverly observing and commenting on traits of character of those about him. As an example of this last, there is his witty speech enumerating how he knows his master is in love.

Nearly allied to Launce is Leuncelot Gobbo in The Merchant of Venice. While the main function of the clown is to furnish the comic element, Shakespeare finds other ways in which he may serve. Leuncelot Gobbo furnishes relief with his peculiar vein of humor. The clown, Touchstone, in As You Like It, becomes the messenger and trusted companion of Celia and Rosalind as they travel on their weary way. His good sense, as well as his wit, does much to enliven the journey.
In a number of Greene's plays and in nearly every one of Shakespeare's comedies, we find faithful servants and companions. In a great measure, these servants and companions have no other interests except those of their master and mistress and know no good or evil except that which benefits or harms him whom they serve. It will be recalled that Tom, in Orlando Furioso, protected Angelica by assuming her disguise. He accepted uncomplainingly a beating that would have been hers if he had not averted it by this means.

In James, the Fourth Nano, the quick-witted dwarf, is the trustworthy companion of Queen Dorothea as she flees from home to protect her life. He suggests that she go dressed as seems "a proper man." He even offers to teach her how to use her dagger (a part of man's attire) for self-protection. In The Pinner Bettris needs the help of her serving-man, Wily, in outwitting her father. She accomplishes this feat, because her servant is willing to exchange clothes with her. Thus she succeeds in getting to her lover.

Shakespeare has a greater number and range of