HE’S LIKE A LAMP, I SWEAR!

MERLIN X. HOUDINI, IV

A brilliant light shining down through the long Corridor of Time is, indeed, an apt figure of speech for WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, the dramatist whose name has been anagrammed to create a title for this article.

Shakespeare’s plays teem with characters, and all of them have names or designations. Presented below is a letter square, 18 x 18 in size, into which 95 of those names have been cemented. How many of these building bricks can you find?

The names appear either horizontally, or vertically, or diagonally. They are spelled either forward or backward. In all cases, however, the letters comprising a name are placed consecutively and in a straight line.

Naturally, there are a number of things you should know before you start looking for our 95 names.

To begin with, many Shakespearean characters sport compound names, such as PRINCE JOHN OF LANCASTER (King Henry IV, Part I). No such names have been used in their entirety, but single principal words from them are, in some instances, included. In the example just cited, all of the words except OF would be considered principals.
pal words, and consequently fair game.

Next, all of the names used are single words ranging in length from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 7 letters. Do not bother looking for longer names, as you will not find any.

Third, bear in mind that not all of the names in a Shakespearean play are necessarily listed in the dramatis personae at the beginning of the play. Some names pop up unannounced somewhere in the text, and a few such ones are also built into our letter square. Keep your eyes peeled!

Moreover, not all the characters in Shakespeare are human. There are supernatural beings with names, animals with names, and also figurative names personifying aspects of nature or of human life. Some of these may confront you as you penetrate into the mysteries of our letter square.

To add to your problems, we feel constrained to point out that some of Shakespeare's characters are identified not by individual names but by class names such as SERVANT, BAWD, or SHERIFF. You may spot such names in the square, if you look hard enough and long enough.

It goes almost without saying that you are expected to prove your easy familiarity with Shakespeare by specifying one play in which the character you have found in the square appears. Otherwise, you might just succumb to temptation and put down names such as LEON or NOEL, names that can be read in the square but which are unknown in the pages of Shakespeare.

It is at this point that things begin to get a little sticky. You are to choose identifications in such a manner that each one of Shakespeare's plays is represented at least once in your solution. The Bard of Avon wrote a total of 37 plays. Therefore, your identification list must include 38 different play titles. Go figure that one out!

Remember: you are searching for names of persons, not places.

The answer to this puzzle will be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.