

SHAKESPEARE ON THE CONTINENT
1590 TO 1660
DURING AND IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HIS LIFETIME

by

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PREFACE

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I. Purpose of Research.

The purpose of this research is to find how much of Shakespeare was known on the continent during his lifetime and the time immediately following, covering approximately the years from 1590 to 1660. In London his plays were sought after by the court and by the public. His contemporaries, with whom he collaborated in happy comradeship, were his friends, as a glance at the introduction to the First Folio, 1623, abundantly shows. He was the gentle Shakespeare, successful as an actor, a stage-manager, a playwright, and a poet. The civilized world today lauds his universality; his own contemporary, rare Ben Jonson, saw that the man whom he loved this side of idolatry, was not of an age, but for all time. There is much evidence that his dramas were carried to the provinces.

An extensive bibliography makes clear that his plays were in the repertoire of the groups of travelling actors, and that these companies, in the last decade of the

sixteenth century, began to take Shakespeare's plays to the continent, and that through his plays Shakespeare became known in foreign lands. "Shakspere," as Brander Matthews and many others have said, "did not write his plays for publication and for posterity; he wrote them to be presented in the theatre." (1) It was through play acting that the dramas first came to the people on the continent, brought there by travelling English companies of players, called the English Comedians.

The reason for the travelling on the continent of these English companies in such great numbers during the time of Shakespeare's life was, no doubt in part, due to the love of travel. Elizabethan England was merry England, ballad singers, acrobats, and wandering players passed constantly through the country and made high and low travel conscious. Sir Francis Bacon in his essay of travel comments that travel in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. Not only trade, religious differences, and maritime enterprises made for travel, but also the newly-found treasures of classic literatures in the older countries acted as a magnet. There were dismal reasons, too, that drew the actors

1. Matthews, Brander. The Development of the Drama. p.215

away from London. If we were to ask with Hamlet "how chances it they travel," (2) the answer would be the recent prohibition by the Privy Council made in 1601. The theatres had been closed, and forced the unhoused players to seek audiences elsewhere. London, as every one knows, intermittently, was ravaged by plagues from the time of the black death, 1348-9, to the great fire of 1666. In 1583, and in 1587 the plague was so grave that there were almost no plays given. In 1592-3 a severe epidemic spread over the city. During 1604-5 the plague was so violent that the coronation of James was shorn of its splendor, and again the theatres were closed. No doubt too, the English Comedians were encouraged by the welcome reception of the English actors in Europe to try their fortunes on the continent.

The plays of Shakespeare which are known to have been performed on the continent during the period of this study are: The Merchant of Venice, Titus Andronicus, Hamlet, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, and later The Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing, The Taming of the Shrew, Othello, and Julius Caesar, and parts of Midsummer Night's

2. "Hamlet." 2, ii, 343. Globe edition.

Dream and Merry Wives of Windsor, as well as some of the histories.

The study of Shakespeare on the continent for this research has been divided into that of Shakespeare in the Latin countries, Spain, Italy, and France, and that of Shakespeare in the Germanic countries, Holland, Denmark, and Germany. Robertson's theory of letting France serve for all the Latin influences is not entirely ascribed to. This research is limited to the study of Shakespeare's plays on the continent during Shakespeare's own day and the first of the seventeenth century, though there is a brief appendix for the Latin and for the Germanic material of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His plays were carried to the continent by travelling comedians, as has been said, as the earliest introduction of Shakespeare's plays to the continent. We grant that Jean Voltaire, 1694-1778 stimulated the first French Shakespearean criticism, and that Gotthold Lessing, 1729-1787, made the poet appreciated throughout Germany. But Shakespeare's plays had been introduced to the French and other Latins; to the Germans, and other Germanic peoples as early as the last decade of the sixteenth, and the early part of the seventeenth centuries.

II. Review of Literature.

For the subject of Shakespeare's influence on the continent during his lifetime and following, ca. 1590 to 1660 the bibliography has been extensive for part of the material, though, to be sure, unlike the enormous proportion of Shakespearean research on later periods. Some of the early material, however, is not easy of access, and much of it is found, not only in books, but in magazines, such as Notes and Queries and especially in the volumes of the Shakespeare Jahrbuch. That Shakespeare today is carried into the whole of the civilized world is attested clearly by the recent catalogue of the Barton collection from the Boston Public Library, and records from other Shakespearean centers.

Though I have made mention of work done in Russia, Poland, Austria, Hungary, I have confined myself in the main to two general divisions of the Anglo-Saxon family, as I have said, that is, the Latin - Spain, Italy, and France; and the Germanic - Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany.

For a general survey of the knowledge of Shakespeare on the continent during his lifetime and the early seventeenth century careful study has been given to the most complete authorities to which I had access: the Cambridge History of English Literature, Ward's English Dramatic Literature, Tucker Murray's English Dramatic Companies 1558-1642, volume dealing with the London companies, and volume two with the Provincial companies; E. K. Chambers' The Elizabethan Stage, and The Medieval Stage; and the two volumes of Shakespeare's England. Also the works of J. J. Jusserand, Albert Cohn, Franz Thimm, Karl Elze, W. Scherer, W. Creizenach, F. E. Schelling, J. G. Robertson, Martin B. Ruud, C. M. Haines were consulted. These writers present the continental environment, reception, and influence of the English actors and their plays, Shakespeare's the greatest among them.

For perspective and comparison Voltaire, and the romantic late eighteenth and early nineteenth century writers have been considered: Lessing, Herder, Goethe, Madame de Stael, Tieck, A. W. Schlegel, Hazlitt, Heine, Stendhal, De Quincey, and Hugo. More recent scholars were reviewed: Kuno Francke, 1901, G. G. Gervinus, 1903, Edmund Gosse, 1904,

Sidney Lee, 1906, Thomas Lounsbury, 1908, W. A. Neilson and A. H. Thorndike, 1913, J. Q. Adams, 1923, Thomas Secombe, 1928, Robert W. Babcock, 1931, and J. Dover Wilson, 1932.

For immediate background the contemporary and pre-contemporary views of the sixteenth century were studied, Roger Ascham, Thomas Nash, Jacob Ayrer, and John Stow, and the seventeenth century Ben Jonson, and later Thomas Rymer. For general background histories of the Elizabethan period Winter, 1893, Ordish, 1904, and Harrison, 1928, were perused.

For the study of the Shakespearean influence in the Latin countries there is varied material. The scholars dealing most comprehensively with the discussion of the influence in the Latins are: E. K. Chambers, Sidney Lee, J. G. Robertson, Ferdinand Brunetiere, J. Q. Adams, R. W. Babcock, Franz Thimm, W. Creizenach, A. W. Ward, and Gustav Lanson; and Felicieu Pascal, Jakob Engel, M. Claretie, J. Delsourt, Edward Sullivan, H. A. Taine; and Karl Elze for Italy and France; C. M. Haines, J. J. Jusserand for France. Jusserand in his Shakespeare en France sous l'ancien regime, has been called by Lee the most widely in-

formed, and by Thorndike the chief authority for France.

For a complete study of the Shakespearean influence in France during those early years Jusserand says it would be necessary to search the provincial archives in France; as Chambers has also said, "A search in the municipal archives of Picardy and Normandy might yield more extensive results, for France is referred to as scoured by the English Comedians about the first of the seventeenth century." (1) It has been a regret that such books could not be procured for this research as Albert Lacroix's L'Influence de Shakespeare sur le theatre francais jusqu'a nos jours, and F. P. Guizot's Shakespeare et son temps, as well as Eugene Rigal's Le Theatre Francais avant la periode classique, which Chambers calls the best for France, and a more extensive list of references from the Shakespeare Jahrbuch and the Shakespeare society publications. The material on the subject which has been available has, however, been typical and exemplary of the work done in the field.

The Shakespearean influence in Germanic countries for the period of my study, ca. 1590 to 1660, has been extensively discussed by varied scholars, the best

1. Chambers, E. K. The Elizabethan Stage. 2:294.

among them which were accessible to me are the works of: C. A. Richter, A. W. Schlegel, W. Scherer, W. Creizenach, J. G. Robertson, A. W. Ward, F. E. Schelling, E. K. Chambers, and Garnett and Gosse, Franz Thimm, G. E. Lessing, Kuno Francke, Karl Elze, and particularly Martin B. Ruud and Albert Cohn. Ruud has discussed the influence found in Denmark, and Cohn in Shakespeare in Germany in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, the influence and travels of the English Comedians with their Elizabethan and particularly Shakespearean plays in Holland and Germany. Much study has been done on Shakespeare in Germany since Albert Cohn did his work, but the book is still considered epoch-making and is conceded the best for the study of the Shakespearean influences introduced to the Germanic countries of Germany and the Netherlands. The work includes the copy of both German and English versions of the plays Romeo and Juliet, Titus Andronicus, and Hamlet, as used by the English Comedians.

III. Pre-Shakespearean Drama Taken to the Continent by the English Comedians.

It was by way of the actors and the stage, as J. G. Robertson in the Cambridge History of English Literature points out, rather than through literary channels that the English drama first reached the continent. There was the arousing of interest among the foreigners for the drama, which came primarily from the contacts with the English stage made by men and nobles travelling in England, as well as through English people travelling on the continent, and through intermarriage with the English. But the greatest spread of the drama was carried on by the work of the English Comedians, called in various places the Englische Comoedianten, the instrumentisten, the comediens anglois, players, and jongleurs.

The subject and form of these plays of the Elizabethan writers, as given by the English Comedians, were in better taste than the continentals had been popularly acquainted with. This may account for the great enthusiasm with which the plays were received. As the companies became used to the foreign languages, or as they acquired

foreign members in the company they tried to adapt the play to the language of the natives. The difficulty of naturalising English drama in such a manner, Robertson discerns, to the Dutch, French, Spanish, and Italian, Danish and Swedish is most subtle; there was no want of interest or of will at even the earliest period of the introduction of the English drama.

The English Comedians gave their repertoire, undoubtedly, in garbled English acting versions. This is shown by a comparison of lines in the plays in versions of that time with the plays of Shakespeare as we know them. The thought is sometimes changed, the meaning obscured, and only occasionally are the poetry and feeling expressed. It is not, however, unexpected, for without written manuscripts the actors could scarcely have given a play always the same. The plays were well-received, which indeed shows how great must have been the interest of the audience in these English-born actors. Robertson explains that the plays though garbled pleased greatly because the foreign audiences before whom the actors played came, after all to see even more than to hear.

The ordinary journeys of the English Comedians, and the travelling companies took them along the Rhine and

through the Lower Countries, through Germany, Denmark, and often into France and other Latin countries. It has been stated by Robertson that the question of Shakespeare's influence and appreciation in continental lands "other than France and Germany, is necessarily one of minor interest; that the Latin peoples followed more or less in the footsteps of France, the Germanic peoples of the north of Europe in those of Germany." (1) This is true as a generality only; the amount of material, too, for the study of travels of the comedians is greater for France than that for the other Latin countries, and for Germany than for the other Germanic countries, but there is sufficient available data to indicate Shakespearean influences in other Latin and Germanic centers.

As already suggested the English drama, in the sixteenth century, was comparatively, in a much more highly developed state than that of any other nation. Gervinus says "in Italy and in Germany the growth of literature and political power, the works of peace and war, were at variance and the one excluded the other, while in England they were linked together." (2) The English drama had been affected by the European influences. Upham asserts:

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1. Robertson, J. G. "Shakespeare on the Continent." Cambridge History of English Literature. 5:340-41.
 2. Gervinus, G. G. Shakespeare Commentaries. p. 880

"It is commonplace in the study of English literature that the fourteenth century, and the period immediately following the Stuart Restoration are peculiarly marked by extended influence from the literature of France. Equally common place is the dictum that the literature which in the wider sense we call Elizabethan is dominated rather by an Italian inspiration, operating largely by direct impulse, but in part, this time, through the medium of the French." (3)

And as Brunetiere substantiates, "Comedy in sixteenth century France is not French, nor of purely Latin, but of Italian origin." (4) But beyond these old influences, or because of them the main development of the English drama was concentrated into a short period of time, approximately fifty years, and that during the time of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, centering mainly about the city of London.

However, during the summer and early autumn months there was a new field for development. Few companies remained in London at such a time, but toured the surrounding provinces. Thus it was, as Lee points out, much the same as Tucker Murray has chronicled, "companies were well acquainted with travelling and performing. For example, between 1594 and 1614, Shakespeare's company, with well-rounded repertoires and well-versed actors, travelled in

3. Upham, A. H. The French Influence in Eng. Lit. p. 1.
 4. Brunetiere, Ferdinand. Manual of the Hist. of French Literature. p. 74.

the provinces and performed in towns such as Bath, Bristol, Coventry, Dover, Faversham, Falkestone, Leicester, Marlborough, Oxford, Rye, Saffron, and Shrewsbury." (5)

Because of the advanced state of the English drama and because the companies presenting the dramas were used to travelling in their own country and are known to have done so abroad, it is conceded and definitely established, as by the records of Jusserand, Cohn, and others that the English Comedians were known on the continent. It would be, moreover, highly improbable that none of the works of Shakespeare should have been included in their repertoire, for the popularity of his works would naturally insure them a place.

Conceding then, that the English companies of actors, as that of the Earl of Leicester in 1585, and subsequently; of Kemp and of Robert Browne, joining with continental companies, did introduce the knowledge of Shakespeare's plays to parts of the continent, we may reasonably conclude that the French, Italian, Spanish, Flemish, and German actors would borrow the themes, and even the plays themselves. There were, of course, companies of other nationalities touring the continent. The English players were only following the lead of the earlier French, Flemish, and

5. Lee, Sidney. A Life of William Shakespeare. p. 41.
Murray, Tucker. English Dramatic Companies. 1:75.

Italian actors touring in England. Chambers says "there seem to have been Italian companies in France in 1571." (6) And he thinks there were surely numbers of them for the players are not likely to have passed from Italy to England without leaving some travel traces of their presence in France. Creizenach says there were burgers in 1585 "going from Germany to France with plays of Hans Sachs and others." (7) Brunetiere also comments upon the Italian company in France as early as 1571. The conclusion is, however, that though the Spanish comedians were superior to the French, the English comedians were superior to all. Paul Lacroix records Louis XIV as saying, when the Italian comedians were prohibited from France in 1680: "You have no reason to complain. You came to France on foot and you have made enough to return in your carriages." (8)

As for foreign players in England, Adams states the French actors toured the country. Chambers makes, if we follow him, it clear that the England of Elizabethan time was a lender rather than a borrower of players, though there were Italian actors there as early as 1580, and both

6. Chambers, E. K. The Elizabethan Stage. 2:262.

7. Creizenach, W. Die Schauspiele der englischen Komodianten. p. 5.

8. Lacroix, Paul. The Eighteenth Century. p. 388.

French and Italian later than the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

It is natural that the comedians should borrow from one another, as Creizenach speaks of the English learning from the Italian companies in Elizabethan London. We find such borrowing among the earlier gleemen and jongleurs. According to Chambers, they blocked such borrowing seldom, as earlier they borrowed "the themes of continental minstrelsy, making the mime presentation essentially cosmopolitan." (9) The gleeman of England, and jongleur or trouvère of France, figures largely as a social and literary force on the continent and in England. We read that "the palmy days of the minstrelsy were the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries; the sixteenth century witnesses the complete break-up of minstrelsy in its medieval form. In Elizabethan London the last traces of the entertainers are found, and many of the members of the old minstrel groups are absorbed into the growing profession of stage-players." (10) At any rate, we see common interests between the old minstrel form and the actor profession, especially in the manner of spreading the traditional literature.

9. Chambers, E. K. The Medieval Stage. 1:75-76.

10. Ibid. 1:76.

These companies of other nations would be likely to borrow from the English players, for the main purpose of the travels of the English Comedians was to present their English plays. For example, the company accompanying the Earl of Leicester, who had been sent to the Netherlands with an army in 1585, went for the express aim of play-acting. And as Creizenach says the English Comedians had material to please and were willing to serve their audience.

As to the purpose of these men in forming play acting groups to travel from England to Europe; there is, beyond the desire of meeting success in new fields, the condition in England of a field over full. Through the closing of the theatres by order of the government in 1601, because of the Puritan influence, and of the ravages of the plague so often rife in the city, the opportunities of profit at home were less, and it was well-known that the profits for travelling companies were high. The plague, as already suggested, spreading through Elizabethan England was an important reason of less opportunity there, as well as a cause for fleeing for self-preservation. As so many of the English left their homeland to go to British col-

onies, notably America, it may be for the same reasons, so the comedians left England to tour through Europe. It was the time of the great renaissance in England, and as historians point out a glorious age of adventure.

So it was that at different times toward the end of the sixteenth century and in the early seventeenth century English actors from time to time crossed the channel and played, Robertson tells us, in Dutch, German, and Scandinavian towns, wandering as far north as Copenhagen and Stockholm, as far east as Danzig, Konigsberg, and Warsaw, and as far south as Vienna and Innsbruck. Chambers has found an indication of the presence from time to time in northern Europe of players as early as 1594, in the Dutch Netherlands in 1605, and in the Spanish Netherlands in 1608. The latter would indicate that the influence might have been carried from the Spanish province to Spain. He says also that traces of English players in southern Europe are few, though they must have been extensive; there were some players in Italy in 1601, at Madrid in 1583, at Paris in 1598, and at Fontainebleau in 1604. And he concludes that it would be rash to assume these records to represent all the visits of English actors to France during the period.

IV. Theory of Shakespeare's Own Presence on the Continent.

Having recorded in brief the travels of the players and of the companies which by some scholars Shakespeare is said to have joined, it may be well to consider the theories propounded in the ever-waging battle as to whether or not Shakespeare himself was ever a visitor to the continent. It is not the subject of this research, nor need any conclusion be drawn, each critic and scholar probably cites only the arguments, of those he knows, which prove his viewpoint. But in some ways it does liken to the theories of the spread of Shakespeare's works on the continent in the period under discussion. For if Shakespeare himself were travelling on the continent, his company would undoubtedly have presented some of his plays.

The Cambridge History of English Literature has taken the stand firmly that though "Shakespeare's company, if he belonged to any before 1594, probably, and after that, certainly, toured in the provinces; there is no evidence that he ever was, and no necessity that he ever should have

been, in Germany or Scotland or Denmark. London and Stratford are the only places in which from evidence we can place him." (1) Tucker Murray seems to believe that Shakespeare did belong to the company, saying that it is "not improbable that he had joined the Earl of Leicester's company during their visit to Stratford in 1587. And at any rate he was almost certainly one of the men who went over to Lord Strange's company in September 1587, and with this company, under its various patrons, he was connected from 1594 - the date of his first certain appearance as a member of any dramatic company, till his retirement from the stage." (2)

Sir Sidney Lee expresses his opinion as firmly: "That Shakespeare joined any of these expeditions is highly improbable. It is unlikely that he even accompanied his men to Scotland, and indeed so, that he ever set foot on the continent of Europe in either a private or a professional capacity. There is no particular reason why he could not have learned his geography displayed so cannily in his plays, by other means than travel." (3)

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1. Cambridge History of English Literature. 5:193.
 2. Murray, J. Tucker. English Dramatic Companies. 1:74-5.
 3. Lee, Sidney. Life of William Shakespeare. p. 198.

Ward states that Shakespeare has been made to toil or travel in various ways and in divers lands, but that:

"The question as to Shakspeare's conjectured travels was first fully discussed by Elze in his essays. He held the supposition that Shakspeare had visited Italy to be reasonable, but thought that the visit took place as late as 1593." (4)

Both Elze and Leon A. Daudet believe that Shakespeare travelled in the low countries, in Germany, and in Denmark. Cohn makes no definite statement as to Shakespeare's own travels.

In urging the proof of Shakespeare's travels Elze gives this statement:

"A belief that Shakespeare did not, on leaving home go to London, but that he went abroad would have been the only means by which he could have escaped the persecution of Sir Thomas Lucy, of the deer-stealing episode. At the same time while joining the English Comedians who travelled in Holland and Germany, he was likely to have made a tolerably large sum of money, which might have formed the foundation of his subsequent prosperity, which is so difficult to be accounted for." (5)

Edmund Gosse, however, in his critical work published in collaboration with Richard Garnett, says that the years from 1585 to 1592 give but one legal document

4. Ward, A. W. English Dramatic Literature. 2:19-20.
5. Elze, Karl. Essays on Shakespeare. p. 266.

concerning Shakespeare and no trace of his whereabouts.

And expresses his opinion thus:

"His saner and more responsible biographers also appear to us to err in too readily consenting to suppose him all this time a denizen of London. It seems to us certain that he must have seen far more of the world and mingled with associates of a much higher class." (6)

Also Gosse cites that only in 1592 Greene referred to Shakespeare as an upstart actor and playwright, surely not one of six years or more experience; that Shakespeare used the idiomatic French with an ease acquired surely where it was habitually spoken; and a familiarity with the moods and aspects of the sea bespeaking a first-hand experience. J. Dover Wilson points out that it may be due to the fact that London was such a maritime center only since the time of Elizabeth that Shakespeare has used a knowledge of the sea. Of the probability of a Shakespearean journey on the continent, Creizenach reports:

"Dasz Shakespeare den kontinent bereist habe ist bis jetzt nicht erwiesen." (7)

And Schelling comments as follows:

"In December, 1585, the Earl of Leicester and company of actors went abroad into the Netherlands; and they acted first in Denmark, and later in Germany, as far

6. Garnett, R. Gosse, Edmund. English Literature. p. 197.
7. Creizenach, W. Die Schauspiele der eng. Komo. p. 15.

south as Saxony. This company returned to England in 1587 and acted, amongst other places, at Stratford in the autumn of that year, where it has been surmised that Shakespeare joined them." (8)

Joseph Quincy Adams thinks that "it is doubtful that a company would have taken on an apprentice, for the tours were expensive, and they always reduced the personnel to a minimum." (9) Often the companies numbered as few as ten and twelve. Adams considers it far more likely that Shakespeare came straight from Stratford to London, than that he joined any company on a tour of England or of the continent.

Lessing makes no conjectures about Shakespearean travels, but from the following can it be that he thought Shakespeare such an Englishman?

"There is a threadbare story of three men, an Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German who were asked to write on the giraffe. The Englishman deliberately packed his kit and went over the sea to study the animal at first hand and wrote an extensive, practical, and interesting account of his experience. The Frenchman consulted books and wrote a logical account of what he had read. But the German, serious, patronizing, and methodical, taking the matter very much to heart, retired to his study and evolved the animal from his inner consciousness." (10)

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8. Schelling, F. E. Elizabethan Drama. 1:144.
 9. Adams, J. Q. A Life of Wm. Shakespeare. p. 123.
 10. Lessing, Gotthold. The Intellectual Revolution in Germany. p. 87.

Shakespearean scholars, notably Karl Elze and Charles Knight and Charles Brown, have expressed their conviction that Shakespeare visited Upper Italy, especially Venice, citing that within his works there are numerous weighty intimations calculated to support this belief. Elze quite vehemently sponsors the theory that it may be possible that the lost years of Shakespeare's life were spent in travel on the continent. On the continent, because the accounts of his travels with the companies through the provinces are not definite enough or certain enough to cover the entire period, and because, during the time of the rage of the plague, and of the dissent against that theatre of the time it would be natural for actors to have travelled abroad. These travels would possibly take the actors, Shakespeare included as well as not, to the coast of Holland, through Germany, touching points in France, and beyond, even to Italy.

For proof of Shakespeare's travels to Venice and other parts of Italy Elze refers to the citation in Charles Brown's Shakespeare's Autobiographical Poems of the absolute accuracy of descriptions of scenery, customs, names, as showing that Shakespeare must have seen, and not just have written of them from 'the knowledge of genius.'

Works exemplifying this knowledge are The Merchant of Venice, Taming of the Shrew, Othello, and some likenesses in The Tempest, Mr. Elze asserts. Mr. Brown's remark that Shakespeare might have learned each single one of these facts in London is quite true, Elze admits, but he says their totality borders upon the miraculous.

It is true that the number of English travellers to Italy kept on the increase throughout the sixteenth century, until at the end of the century it reached its culminating point. The great majority of these travellers were by no means ones who belonged exclusively to the ranks of the aristocracy of birth and wealth, but included the scholar, author, and actor, as is shown clearly from a glance at the list of Shakespeare's contemporaries who are known to have travelled or studied on the continent and reached Venice: Lyly, Nash, Harvey, Webster, Lord Bacon, Greene, Daniel, and Inigo Jones. "The silence about Shakespeare's supposed travels must therefore not be regarded as a proof of their non-reality." (11)

The difference between Shakespeare's earlier and his later Italianising comedies is so striking, Elze says,

11. Elze, Karl. Essays on Shakespeare. p. 266.

that a journey intervening between them, in 1593, would be the only satisfactory explanation. It is well known that during that year the theatres were closed for several months on account of the plague, so that Shakespeare had not only leisure enough for a journey, but would gladly have fled from the dangerous pestilential atmosphere of the metropolis.

Shakespeare could not have attained his knowledge of the foreign descriptions in his plays from the published works of travel, because the three works of travel of the period were published after the respective plays of Shakespeare's dealing with the countries, and therefore he was without that aid. There is, of course, the consideration of the population of London, and its influences. This is shown in Scott's article, and verified in the works upon London, and Shakespeare's England, by Stow, Ordish, and Winter. Scott speaks in this manner:

"The Bankside quarter of London was crowded with people of all nations; Huguenot refugees, Switzers, and Germans, from the Low Countries, half-Anglicized Italians and half-Italianated Englishmen, seamen, desperadoes, and among them men in whose veins ran the blood of the noblest families in England.

"From such a crowd as this came the cry for amusement and entertainment, which was granted to them by the establishment of playhouses outside the city walls, the first in 1576." (12)

Speaking of the Italianated-Englishman, Roger Ascham, a representative of the Purist group of Elizabethan grammarians, who wished to check innovations and only to develop resources of the native speech by composition within, has said, characteristically of the conservative group, that an Italianated Englishman is the devil incarnate. Sir Thomas Wilson's often quoted remark, characteristic of the same Purist group, in conflict with the radical group sponsoring the adding of new words to the Elizabethan English, was that the people powdered their talk with overseas alms.

Elze thinks it doubtful that Shakespeare could have assimilated the knowledge he portrayed in his plays, by other than first-hand experience. He admits that Shakespeare often gives the wrong accentuation to the Italian proper names, and misconstrues the geographical locations, but he thinks that Shakespeare is as nearly often right as wrong. Elze cites thus:

"Doctor Johnson has said that Shakespeare gives all nations the manners of England, and Ulrici remarks that in Shakespeare's plays, and especially in his

12. Scott, F. G. "The Predecessors of Shakespeare." Shakespeariana of New York Shakespeare Society. 2:506.

comedies, the name of a foreign country or place where the action is laid is only an external form, in reality the play always takes place in England, and in the same way as the personages speak English, so they are, as Goethe says, 'Englishmen to the backbone.'" (13)

Elze continues by saying that this is, however, too much protesting. Romeo, Juliet, Othello, Desdemona, and Shylock, among others, he comments are by no means Englishmen 'to the backbone,' and it cannot be denied that Shakespeare in The Merchant of Venice, to leave other plays out of the question, has carefully observed and wonderfully hit the local colouring. At any rate, he points out, summarily, Shakespeare adds the Italian colouring more truly and appreciates more minutely than Byron and Webster, who assuredly have travelled in Italy, and Ben Jonson, who perused books upon Italian customs and rules.

As a summary of the theory of Shakespeare's presence on the continent there is this cryptic statement of Elze's:

"Nevertheless, Shakespeare's supposed travels, as things stand, are certainly a matter of belief; except that rational arguments are indispensable to a rational belief. Such in our conviction can be adduced in favour of a journey to Italy. Accordingly, English Shakespearean scholars do not regard it with

13. Elze, Karl. Essays on Shakespeare. p. 271.

unfavourable eyes. Incredulous critics, whose incredulity we do by no means intend to blame, but which they have a right to claim, before rejecting the journey to Italy, ought to refute the arguments which speak in its favour, and to remove by some better means those difficulties which appear to find their simplest and most natural explanation by such a journey." (14)

V. Shakespeare's Influence in the Latin Countries, Spain, Italy, and France.

That the English Comedians should have tried their fortunes in the Latin countries is as natural as it was to have actors from Latin countries go to London. Chambers, as we know, speaks of French and Italian companies in England. And during the reign of Charles I, 1625-49, Nicoll tells us, "French actresses, Comediennes, were brought to England, but they were apparently hissed out of London." (1) The earliest performances given by the English actors abroad were under the patronage of the court, given before royal audiences, and the custom continued from 1580 to 1630. However, even shortly after the introduction of the Comedians the plays were taken to public places and given before the popular classes, where they were well-received.

As the English drama and stage were affected earlier and now during the late sixteenth century by the Latin influences, especially the Italian and the French, so it was that the English dramatic, and soon the Shakespearean influences, carried by the English Comedians

1. Nicoll, Allardyce. British Drama. p. 221.

touched and spread, however slowly, through the continental Latin countries of Spain, Italy, and France. Robertson suggests, too, that through the Latin influence Shakespeare's plays were first carried to such countries as Russia, Switzerland, and Poland.

We are satisfied that there is no full treatise on the subject of the Shakespearean influences in the Latin localities, but a thorough searching of records of the country would undoubtedly reveal records of the English Comedians' travels, and of the appearances of Shakespeare's plays, more extensive than we know now.

The influence of the English drama spread more slowly in the Latin countries because of the obstacle presented to adapt the language and style of the Elizabethan and Shakespearean dramas. Joseph Delcourt points out that "to the Latin minds there is no personality more complex, no art more difficult to understand," (2) than Shakespeare and his dramas. And Franz Thimm affirms that "it will be at all times a difficult task to translate Shakespeare into any of the Romance languages, for there is a want in the languages derived from the Latin of all those elements

2. Delcourt, Joseph. "Shakespeare and the French Mind." Nineteenth Century. 79:1274.

which characterise the Teutonic tongues." (3) Ludwig Tieck recalls for us that neither Shakespeare nor his contemporaries paid any attention to the elucidation of their dramas, which were simply acted, and not easily to be read by anyone who had seen them played only once. In speaking of linguistic difficulties, it seems, then, to be generally accepted that there would have been the initial problem of presenting the plays that they might be understood with the action, since English was spoken. And yet that there can never have been more than an idiomatic translation to the Romance languages necessarily impairs the foreign interpretation of literature of any kind. Robert Southey explains the impregnable trait of language in this fanciful way:

"In every language there is a magic of words as untranslatable as the 'Sesame' in the Arabian tale - you may retain the meaning, but if the words be changed the spell is lost." (4)

Spain's first record of the English Comedians is in 1593 at Madrid. It is reasonable to presume that there were probably more frequent ones. It is likely that influences were brought to Spain from the Spanish Netherlands

3. Thimm, Franz. Shakspeariana. p. 101.

4. Southey, Robert. In Variorum edition. Othello. 6:454.

where the Comedians appeared. Spain and Italy are indebted to one another for the adaptation of the Shakespearean influence, but it is probable that each country attained the first small knowledge of Shakespeare at about the same time. Gustav Lanson speaks of this relation thus:

"Les choses se passèrent en France à peu près comme en Italie. La comme ailleurs, la Renaissance française est une répétition de la Renaissance italienne."
(5)

According to Elze it is only in Italy that the English Comedians do reach their goal of continental travel. The first record for the appearance of the players in the courts of Italy is for the year 1601. The Italian reception of the English and soon the Shakespearean plays was impeded by the same language difficulty suffered by all the Latins, but Shakespeare's use of Italian settings and characters is a proof of the interchange of influences.

As for France, Chambers reports that it is referred to as scoured by the English Comedians, from the earliest appearances, but as already stated, the complete searching of the archives is yet to be done. Thimm insists that the appreciation of Shakespeare in France was very gradual, which may have been due to linguistic reasons.

5. Lanson, Gustav. Histoire de la littérature fran. p.412

However, the French Encyclopedia says "Shakespeare n'oublia jamais pendant toute cette periode." (6)

The earliest records of appearances of the English Comedians in France are in 1598 at Paris, and in 1604 at Fontainebleau. Elze gives the 1598 appearance as of the Jehan Sehais Comedien Anglois at a theatre in Paris. We meet with various traces pointing to Shakespeare, which might be multiplied by careful searching of the Imperial Library at Paris.

Ward speaks of the introduction of Shakespeare to France in this manner:

"The master-spirit of the Elisabethan drama, Shakspere, cannot have been wholly unknown in France. Whether or not an occasional resemblance to passages in Hamlet may be traced in the Agrippina of Cyrano de Bergerac in 1654, it is not easily conceivable that some knowledge of the Elisabethan drama, and of Shakspere's plays in particular, should have failed to find its way across the Narrow seas." (7)

English translations of Bacon, Wyatt, and Sackville were known in France, and translations of the French Ronsard, 1524-85, and Brantome, c.1540-1614, were known at the London court. There numerous French to English translations in London, and numbers of English to French in Paris, and Shakespeare's quartos and folios must have been

6. Encyclopedique francaise. 7:678.

7. Ward, A. W. English Dramatic Literature. 1:534.

known to France soon after their publication. Of this interchange of literature Henry B. Wheatley comments "From the shops of the publishers Shakespeare would have been able to obtain the books - foreign publications as well - he used for the plots of his plays." (8)

A study of the work of Jusserand, Shakespeare en France sous l'ancien regime, is perhaps the most beneficial for an understanding of the French acceptance and appreciation of the plays. First of all Jusserand mentions:

"It is most remarkable that the 'comediens anglois' came 'chez nous' during the time of Shakespeare and gave representations in the cities and in the country." (9)

The statement shows Jusserand's explicit belief that the works of Shakespeare were known in France during the poet's lifetime. He continues:

"The players had the dramatic productions of the English notables, Shakespeare and his friend, Jonson, presented much as were the French dramas presented in England.

"The taste for the drama in England had led to the overnumbering in the ranks of actors, and some of them knowing 'les grands chemins d'Europe' came in search of adventure. And they brought to the country a repertoire which contained pieces of Shakespeare, of Greene, of Marlowe, and of some of the other great ones." (10)

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8. Shakespeare's England. Henry B. Wheatley essay. 2:177.
 9. Jusserand, J. J. Shakespeare en France sous l'ancien regime. p. 48.
 10. Ibid. p. 49.

The plays Jusserand cites as having been presented are Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, and King Lear. He says that in 1598, shortly following the appearance of the English Comedians in Germany at the Saxon court, that the English actors performed at the Hotel de Bourgogne, Paris, the play Romeo and Juliet as they had in London. Jusserand gives no definite and connected chart for travels that these companies made through France. The records are just enough to arouse one's curiosity as to the entire history.

Some years later than the Paris performance of 1598, another troop of English actors is recorded as having performed at Fontainebleau, the date given as 1604. Jusserand describes this as the time that may have given us the incident of the visit of the future Louis XIV to the play, indicating it to be Henry IV, and the story of the child rehearsing the lines of 'tiph-toph' and marching with a grand step, reminiscent of the play. Chambers remarks that it is known that the child witnessed the play with his tutor, Jean Heroard, who has recorded the fact.

"It is known, then, that the English actors, the experts at verse and the drama had visited the country during the time of Henry VIII and all the time following

after." (11) This is Jusserand's definite statement. Chambers says, "it would be rash to assume these records of 1598 and 1604 to represent all the visits of English actors to France during the Elizabethan period." (12)

The difficulty of the foreign language to the audience, mentioned earlier, Jusserand emphasizes, made it necessary for the actors to apply all the skill they could, and to use the added attraction of music and amusement 'par clowneries au sens moderne du mot.' Naturally enough the linguistic difference lessened somewhat Shakespeare's chance to appeal to the French mind in the seventeenth century. They knew little about the understanding of that subtlest of Shakespeare's instruments - the language that he wielded, but their attempts are noteworthy.

From the foregoing citations, then, we know that some of Shakespeare's masterpieces were known abroad by 1616. And, Jusserand concludes that this was a great advance, for even the translations of which the French were capable were difficult to obtain. A similar difficulty has been found even in later French translations, which tend toward much of an idiomatic style. The French Ency-

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11. Jusserand, J. J. Shakespeare en France sous l'ancien regime. p. 53.
 12. Chambers, E. K. The Elizabethan Stage. 2:294.

yclopedia says.

"On trouve, dans le style de Shakespeare, tous les défauts à la mode de son temps: des plaisanteries grossières, des obscurités, des suites de métaphores incohérentes, de l'enflure et du mauvais goût." (13)

Some of this may be attributed to the translations of the early French; though, it is familiarly known that the French were shocked at the taste of the English. The latter consisted largely, in the French conception of the unities which were neglected by the majority of English dramatists. Sidney Lee states this clearly in the following: "Upon Shakespeare's works' first arrival in France during the early seventeenth century the Frenchmen were staggered by the originality, perceiving the dramatist's colossal breaches of classical law." (14)

Of the seventeenth century Shakespeare in France, beyond the spread of the dramas by the actors there are other influences that made him known. There is the occurrence in these early days of the name of Shakespeare in the catalogue of the King's library, 1675, and a comment made by Nicolas Clément that the works are a monument of genuine thought and shrewd expression, but disfigured by coarse language. Likewise the works of St. Evremond of

13. Encyclopedique francaise. 7:678.

14. Lee, Sidney. Shakespeare and the Modern Stage. p. 198.

Paris, 1699, show the effect of his life lived in England, and a knowledge of the productions of the English stage. His works include one play of the Shakespeare canon, Henry VIII. And there is further the interest that Peter Anthony de Motteux takes in the derogatory attacks of Rymer upon Shakespeare. The poet, then, in spite of linguistic difficulties on the part of some of the Latins, was known by his works, and later by his name before the beginning of the eighteenth century.

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The Shakespeare worship in the Latin countries, it is true especially in France, does not begin until later, after the reaction against Voltaire had set in. Felicieu Pascal tells us that Shakespearean infatuation reigned in Paris since 1768. Babcock remarks that "point for point, from the difference in angles, the early nineteenth century echoed the veneration of the late eighteenth century." (15) The first serious effort after knowledge of Shakespeare was made by De la Roche, who in 1717 gave an account of English poetry and drama, mentioning Shakespeare. He may deserve the honor of being

15. Babcock, R. W. The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry. p. 226.

Shakespeare's sponsor on the continent for France, by his work of 1717, but it popularly goes to Jean Voltaire, who after his visit to England in 1726-28 wrote so much of the Englishman, Shakespeare and interested the French nation in the Shakespearean dramas. Voltaire's comment that Shakespeare was "'a powerful and prolific genius, unaffected and yet sublime, but totally lacking in good taste and knowledge of the established rules' aroused at least a dozen and a half Parisian enthusiasts who began to extol the English dramatist." (16)

Of the Shakespeare-Voltaire relationship there has been much discussion; I shall only quote the rather typical statement of the Cambridge History of English Literature:

"On the one hand, there is no doubt that Voltaire did more than any other writer of the eighteenth century to familiarise the continent with Shakespeare; on the other, it is exceedingly difficult to do justice to his pioneer work, by reason of the foolish and often flippant antagonism to the English poet which he developed in later years. After all it was hardly a personal matter; it was the last determined struggle of Voltaire's conception of the seventeenth century classicism to assert itself against new and insidious forces which were making themselves felt in literature and criticism. It was Voltaire's lot to fight in this losing battle to the bitter end;

16. Pascal, Felicieu. "Shakespeare's Introduction into France." Fortnightly Review. 112:369.

he was himself too much immersed in the old spirit to discover, like his contemporary Lessing, a way of reconciling new ideals with the old classic faith." (17)

Of the eighteenth century translations the first is given as 1745-46 by De la Place, and in 1776-82 by Letourneur. In speaking of the Letourneur Thimm says that it had notes of Warburton, Steevens, and Johnson, and the comments of Eschenburg's German translation; but, that carefully as it seems to have been edited it gave but a faint idea of Shakespeare's genius.

The French Ducis, an actor, adapted and imitated Shakespeare plays. Ducis was much liked in his characterizations and translations, but Lee said of him that he made the unforgivable mistake of making Othello into a romance with a happy ending. Thimm cites the latest editions of Shakespeare for the nineteenth century in French as those of Guizot and Hugo, which he indicates bear testimony that Shakespeare by the sheer force of his genius has won the complete, if somewhat tardy appreciation of the entire French nation. Of Ducis' translation Madame de Stael remarks:

"On peut trouver beaucoup de défauts dans les pièces de Shakespeare adaptées par Ducis à notre Théâtre; mais

17. Cambridge History of English Literature. 5:319-20.

il serait bien injuste de n'y pas reconnaître des beautés du premier ordre. La France peut s'honorer d'un grand nombre d'érudits de la première force; mais rarement les connaissances et la sagacité philosophique y ont été réunies, tandis qu'en Allemagne elles sont maintenant presque inséparables." (18)

In the nineteenth century Shakespeare was admitted without demur into the French pantheon of literature's gods, and classicists and romanticists vie in doing him honor. Victor Hugo "recognized only three men as memorable in the history of humanity - Moses, Homer, and Shakespeare." (19) The Elder Dumas said "after God Shakespeare has created most," (20) which is, Haines says, the noblest appreciation of Shakespeare ever contained in a single sentence. And Albert Lacroix adds that the influence of Shakespeare on the French theatre has prompted, directly or indirectly, almost all the theories and works of the drama.

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With this glance at later material for the purpose of better understanding Shakespeare's reception in the Latin countries I shall summarize my findings for the

18. Stael, Madame de. De l'Allemagne. p. 143, 171.

19. Lee, Sidney. Shakespeare and the Modern Stage. p.208.

20. Ibid. p. 208.

Latin countries covering the period of my special research, 1590 to 1660. We have reason to believe that Shakespeare's plays were presented in the Latin countries as early as 1598; and that according to Chambers the record in the native lands and languages would reveal the dates for the many performances that were given. From the influence found in the Spanish, the Italian, and the French drama we are assured that the Shakespearean dramas did soon after their appearance in England find their way to these Latins. We know the definite dates of Shakespearean appearances to be 1598 at the Hotel de Bourgogne, Paris, when Romeo and Juliet was played; and in 1604 to Fontainebleau, when it is thought that the historical play Henry IV was given.

Finally, then in spite of the linguistic difficulties and the spell of the classic tradition of the renaissance in some of the Latin countries it is clearly demonstrated that Shakespeare's plays were known on the continent. Later records of the seventeenth century show that his name was known. Also that the plays were brought over by the English Comedians early in the seventeenth century to Spain, Italy, and France, and in the late sixteenth century to France, is proved.

VI. Shakespeare's Influence in the Germanic Countries, Holland, Denmark, and Germany.

The English Comedians may have centered in Germany, but they certainly gave performances in town of the other Germanic countries, notably Holland, Scandinavia, Austria, and Denmark, and even perhaps Sweden, and Norway. For the last two it has been impossible for me to find definite records though the influence would have been carried there through the relationship of the Danish with Swedish and Norwegian courts. For the first three named, Holland, Scandinavia, and Austria the travels of the English Comedians will be listed in with those through Germany, for after all the influence must have been very similar and very nearly at the same time for the other Germanic countries as for Germany.

For Denmark there is a late publication of Martin B. Ruud, an essay toward the history of Shakespeare in Denmark, from which I am fortunate enough to be able to quote:

"It is not known when Shakespeare first came to Denmark, but at least the young Danish scholars who visited England through the seventeenth century showed an unstinted admiration for Shakespeare, and must have brought some influences back with them.

"The first criticism of Shakespeare in Denmark was by Germans written in German. Some of the earliest translations are conscientious, but insufferably pedantic and trivial in reviewing.

"And from the very start Danish critics went to France or straight to England quite as often as the Germans."
(1)

Felix Schelling says of the company of the Earl of Leicester that it went abroad into the country of the Netherlands, and that "they acted first in Denmark, and later in Germany." (2)

In Russia and Poland, in Switzerland, and in Hungary the interest in Shakespeare is no less great than in the western countries of Europe, Robertson believes. Some of the influences carried to these countries were indeed Germanic influences noted already for Denmark. Ward believes that no special references are possible for these nations in the seventeenth century of the reproduction of Shakespeare. Professor K. Arabazhin comments thus of the Russian situation:

1. Ruud, Martin B. An Essay Toward the History of Shakespeare in Denmark. p. 1, 7.
2. Schelling, Felix E. Elizabethan Drama. 1:144.

"The reflected light of Shakespeare's influence penetrated into Russia as early as the days of Michailovitch, 1645-76, and through Vilthen's German repertoire vivified the embryo native theatre." (3)

Of the linguistic difficulties encountered by the English Comedians throughout the Germanic countries there are many comments; we read, however, in the Edinburgh Review that "no foreigner can ever fully understand Shakespeare, the most English although the most cosmopolitan of poets. The degree to which the Germans understand Shakespeare is one proof of our consanguinity, of that fundamental resemblance or sympathy between men of the same race, which lies beneath many superficial differences." (4) So it is that the German approval of the plays is found, because they were willing to accept them as they were, unhindered by the qualms of the classical unities as were the Latins.

Germany in the sixteenth century, when England was already traversed by players from Italy and France, and when English art had attained a high stage of development, could not yet boast of any actors by profession. The people themselves took part in performances, but the zest

3. Arabazhin, Prof. K. "Shakespeare in Russia." Living Age. 290:290.

4. Austin, S. "Shakespeare in Paris." Edin. Rev. 83:48.

was soon lost when the learned took to Latin and deserted the popular performances.

The most direct connection with the English drama was established only by the slim thread of information carried back to Germany by returning travellers. Of these there were a good number, particularly among the nobility, for it was considered good 'ton', among them to pay a visit to England, a privilege which up to Elizabeth's accession had been enjoyed only by the French and Italians.

Something of the fame of the early English stage may have been carried to Germany by the essential controversy between the English and the Germans, during the time of Martin Luther, 1483-1546, over "Is the King of England or Luther a Liar." Thimm, however, says:

"German statesmen, savants, and merchants were continually in England, now; and cannot have altogether abstained from visiting the theatres of London, anyway during the reign of James I, if not earlier. In the year 1614, a young man from Zurich, by name Johann Rudolf Hess, stayed in England and on his return, brought home, amongst other books, copies of Shakspeare's Hamlet, and Romeo and Juliet, and Ben Jonson's Volpone." (5)

However meagre the accounts may have been, and narrow as the circle into which the accounts may have penetrated they were nevertheless sufficient to pave the way

5. Thimm, Franz. Shakspeariana. p. 49.

for the English actors who toward the end of the sixteenth century formed the system of trying their fortunes in Germany. Jusserand records the earliest visits as at the Saxon court in 1586, and the appearance of Thomas Pope later companion of Shakespeare, and of Browne at Leyden in 1590. Ward comments of these English players:

"Germany and the Netherlands were from the middle of the sixteenth century visited by English musicians and other entertainers in large numbers. They are called instrumentalists, but there were actors among them - Thomas Pope and George Bryan - or they were all actors as well as musicians.

"German literature was to draw strength from ours in the very sphere where Henry Julius of Brunswick and Jacob Ayrer had joined hands with contemporary English dramatists. On the other hand the counter-influence of German writers and German subjects, brought home with them by the English Comedians or set in motion by means of their travels, was not inconsiderable." (6)

The plays given consisted of much after the same type for the German audiences as those that had been given by the companies on tour through the English provinces. They were well-known English plays of Shakespeare, his predecessors, and his contemporaries. Schelling indicates that Shakespeare, however garbled and Germanized, was better known to the 'habitué' of the popular German stage of the seventeenth century than to the literati of the eighteenth.

6. Ward, A. W. English Dramatic Literature. 1:474.

Players, musicians, and other English talent was known in Germany as early as 1417, but it was not until ca. 1580 that the first acting companies appeared there permanently and officially. There are records of English instrumentisten and players unnamed at the Danish court as early as 1579-80. And in 1585 earliest English players are traced, according to Albert Cohn, the preeminent authority for the study of Shakespearean early influence in Germany. The Leicester company is recorded in 1585, and again in 1608 as having performed at the court in Denmark; and, Cohn remarks, it is "known that there were numbers of companies appearing throughout the century in Germany."

(7) It was the custom, Thimm states, "of English strolling actors, towards the end of the sixteenth century to visit Germany, and to give performances of the plays they brought with them, in the larger towns, and at the courts of the petty princes." (8) He adds that these plays were of a type and character quite new to a public accustomed to the miracle-plays, or mysteries, and morality-plays.

7. Cohn, Albert. Shakespeare in Germany. p. 21-22.
 8. Thimm, Franz. Shakspeariana. p. 49.

There is controversy as to whether or not the actors were of English nationality, but that seems rather absurd after reading Cohn's carefully documented lists of appearances of English actors and their coming and going to foreign countries. Indeed the controversy must only arise over the fact that some of the later companies that called themselves English were not that entirely, if at all, having only perhaps an English leader, or member or two. Thimm points out that Shakespearean actors were at first genuine Englishmen, who acted in their mother-tongue; but their plays were afterwards either translated entire, or adaptations were made of them in German; and they were then performed by German companies, still sometimes under the title of Englische Komödianten.

Robert Browne, who paid several visits to the country of Germany and spent considerable periods on and off there between 1590 and 1621, has done most to acclimatize the English actors in Germany.

It is an assured fact that Shakespeare's plays must have been included in the repertoire of numbers of the companies, some of which included even members from Shakespeare's own company in England. Cohn remarks that the

"volume of the publication of the plays supposedly given by these English Comedians if the subject and not the form of the old English plays." (9) It is most likely that no performance could have been perfect form nor exact repetition of the original English plays, because of the treatment of the original manuscript, and because revivals of the play called for revision by often other than the original author.

The plays given in the courts at first, were, as a rule, those which had been given in England, and thus included those of Shakespeare. In the courts of Cassel, Wolfenbittel, Saxony, and perhaps others, there were permanent companies of English actors maintained, with the privilege, later, of taking leaves of absence for tours of the country. These actors were maintained for the purpose of adding grandeur to the court life, yet they had such a pronounced influence upon the condition of the country as to induce the spread of drama throughout the entire nation.

In spite of the popularity of the plays of Shakespeare, there is no evidence that the name of Shakespeare was known, although it seems rather unthinkable that some of the German noblemen who had learned of him and his fame

9. Cohn, Albert. Shakespeare in Germany. p. 89.

in England should not have carried back with them the name. It is, however, certain that Shakespeare was played. By at least 1626 there had been acted many times, and included in many company repertoire these plays of Shakespeare's: King Lear, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Titus Andronicus, and The Merchant of Venice; and played before the end of the century, The Taming of the Shrew, Comedy of Errors, Midsummer Night's Dream, Othello, Julius Caesar, Much Ado About Nothing, though often under slightly different titles.

There was the accepted idea the English people were preeminent above all nations for aptitude for dramatic entertainment, adopted perhaps, because of the seeming glory of the drama so well presented on visits to England. And without doubt the worst English pieces surpassed the best German ones, for taste, subject, and presentation, according to Cohn. By these English actors an interest in dramatic art was aroused among the German princes to the extent of a decided rivalry of feeling about the companies of actors sponsored by the various ones.

The volume of the English Comedians collections of works of 1620 is only the subject of English drama.

Cohn indicates that the condition of hurried publication, and publication merely for profit, and not for acting use could scarcely but entail work which would impart, at least, the idea of work crudely done, and fragmentary, with lines unfinished and inaccurate.

The volume of *Englische Comoedien und Tragödien* in 1620 contained in addition to two farces and fives jigs a number of plays, as given in the following list. Of the collection Cohn comments that the external traces as glimpsed through the titles are English, but that internally there is a mixture. He further points out that it is an error to imagine the collection to be the entire stage library of our English Comedians to that date, just as it is to imagine the form to be that of the German performances or of the original English performances.

The Titus Andronicus included in this volume is a pattern of a copy of the original Shakespeare tragedy, nevertheless displaying his genius, though not one of his best plays. Four of the works included in the volume are later included in the Dresden stage library, showing that they must have known a popularity. The collection:

Englische Comoedien und Tragedien, 1620

1. Comedy of Queen Esther and Haughty Hamon.
2. Comedy of the Prodigal Son in which Despain and Hope are cleverly introduced.
3. Comedy of Fortunatus and his Purse and Wishing Cap, in which appear three dead souls as spirits.
4. A Beautiful, merry, triumphant Comedy of a King's son from England and the King's daughter from Scot.
5. An entertaining, merry comedy of Sidonia and Thege.
6. A beautiful, merry Comedy of Somebody and Nobody.
7. Tragedy of Julius and Hyppolita.
8. Tragedy of Titus Andronicus. (acted 1600)
9. A merry jest with the clown of the beautiful Mary and the old Cuckold.
10. Another merry jest with clown, in which he makes merry with a stone.
11. Wife, husband, Pickelherring, Boy, Soldier.
12. Pickelherring at Amsterdam.
13. Blanket washer, Husband, wife, neighbour.
14. Wife, pickelherring, servant-maid, magister, stude.
15. Nobleman, Pickelherring, wife, husband.

Spelling and Capitalization, Cohn, A. p. 108.

The collection, writes Scherer, "furnishes the most important literary evidence of the influence which the English drama had exercised on the German drama since about the year 1590." (10)

Direct influence of the English theatre, Shakespeare, and the English traditions, through the English Comedians must mistakably, Cohn states, have operated upon such German dramatists as Duke Henry Julius of Brunswick, Hans Sachs, and Jacob Ayrer in the composition of their dramatic works.

The influence of the English Comedians is first found in the German author, Duke Henry Julius of the Wolfenbittel court, 1563-1613, who wrote a number of plays and was the first to maintain a regular theatre at his court. In all probability the English company of 1585 appeared at his court immediately after its arrival in Germany. Julius acquired from the association a skill in the use of interwoven underplot with the principal subject - which even Jacob Ayrer had not then mastered. Julius in his play Susanna introduces a fool, undoubtedly Shakespeare's influence. In The Tragedy of a Profligate Sons -- an accumulation of brutal murders: a boy's body cut open on the

10. Scherer, W. History of German Literature. 1:300.

stage, the murderer drinking the blood, roasting his heart on a coal fire and eating it, driving a nail into his father head, strangling his cousin, cutting his mother's throat, and at a revel suddenly finding the heads of the murdered upon the dishes instead of viands -- one can scarcely help being reminded of Titus Andronicus. Then the murdered persons appear as ghosts, drive the murderer mad, and carry him off. "Is it possible," asks Cohn, "to read this without being reminded of Macbeth, Richard the Second, and Cymbeline." (11)

The Duke's Comedy of Vincentius Ladislaus leads us still more directly to Shakespeare. It contains the rough prototype of Benedick in Much Ado About Nothing. There is a similar situation of humour as the Shakespearean scenes between Benedick and Beatrice in which each has been separately persuaded that the other is in love with him or her. The Duke has used the same intrigue gist. The fool in the Duke's plays has a principal part, as influenced by English. The prose form he has adopted is due to Shakespearean influence, for before the appearance of the English actors hardly any dramatist had ventured to write in other than rhyming verse.

11. Cohn, Albert. Shakespeare in Germany. p. 44.

Even if Germany has gained nothing more through these innovators than acquaintance with the subjects of Shakespeare and of the early English stage, Cohn insists, that indeed, would have been enough compensation for any coarse excitement introduced to the audiences, if such was done. However, the German plays were anything but delicate, and when we see the liberties taken by other dramatic writers we must account Shakespeare comparatively chaste and moral.

In Hans Sachs, 1494-1576, we can find some traces of English influence. Notably there are his ability to distinguish in his plays presented between the form of comedy and tragedy, and his treatment of foreign matter. His chance for English influence was the limited amount allowed up to 1576, but he is cited as one of the predecessors to the new movement in the German drama.

Of the life of Jacob Ayrer, ?-1605, little is known, but of his influence upon German drama a great deal indeed is found. It is not until 1593 that he is heard of in the literary world, and his works total rather an astounding number from that time to his death. He retained in his works the old verse of Hans Sachs, but what con-

stitutes his essential distinction from his Nuremberg predecessor, is the circumstance that he wrote all his pieces for the sole object of representation, and in many of his tragedies and comedies he displays a degree of skill in theatrical arrangements far above Sachs. The arrangement of his theatre must have been similar to the arrangement of the old English stage. There seems nothing improbable in the fact that Ayrer composed all his pieces between the years 1593 and 1605 because his dramas bear external and internal traces of English models, and it does not admit of a doubt that all of Ayrer's literary activity received its direction from his acquaintance with the English Comedians, according to Cohn. The subjects are much like those of the Comedians also. The two pieces which stand in direct connection to Shakespeare are: The Comedy of the Beautiful Sidea, and The Comedy of the Beautiful Phaenicia, as like Much Ado About Nothing.

We see at the courts of Cassel, Dresden, and Berlin the English taste exercising a preeminent influence and the subjects taken from the English and English history represented on the stage in great numbers. Many of the records we have are undoubtedly the corrupted copies of plays

which the Germans as imitators and spectators adapted, or with object to spoil the market for English and appropriate subjects for the benefit of German comedians in competing with English, used. Of the adaptations Cohn remarks that often illiterate scribes wrote down from memory what they had heard from the actors; thus giving only the skeleton of the outward incidents. The rest was filled in with dialogue of their own composition and in this manner pieces were fabricated, accounting for the fragmentary condition of the plays we have left to us, and also for the repetition of certain stock phrases and scenes in one play and another.

Likewise there was the condition in the theatres of pirating of plays. Much as in England, where one company tried to find out the content of another's play by copying lines at rehearsals or first performances, or by endeavoring to buy off some one of the company for their part in the play, which went with the actor, the same practice was carried on in Germany - for the protection of the copyright was, at the best, unstable. The clumsy hand of these workmen has quite obliterated all traces of higher art.

It is impossible that the English actors, who must have been acquainted with the stage of their native country, could ever have acted in that way, thus it must be through erroneous penning that we have the form of fragmentary plays.

Of Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet and Titus Andronicus Cohn has given the German versions.

The play of Hamlet as recorded is supposedly the version given in Germany, and is nothing more than a mere dry skeleton of the Shakespearean piece, and yet the prologue which is included, in spite of all its coarseness has many curious poetical touches and expressions. These prologues for the plays have often been lost because it was not considered worthwhile to have them printed, and later they were omitted from the plays. It is believed that Hamlet had been brought to Germany by the English players as early as 1603, for the German piece approaches most nearly the quarto of 1603, according to Cohn. The hand of the remodeller is distinctly seen in the want of skill in introduction of comic characters, of skill, too, in handling scenes, and in the mixture of serious with comic incidents.

There are these differences in acts and scenes: to the first act the English has five scenes while the German has seven; to the second act, the English two while the German has nine short ones; the third act, the English four while the German has eleven; the fourth act, the English seven and the German seven also; the fifth act, the English two and the German six. The differences in the story are many, but the German version seems so far away from the Shakespearean version we know that they are a little difficult to countenance. In the German Ophelia casts herself from a mountain, instead of drowning, and Hamlet and Laertes duel, a more formal treatment than the fight in the grave. The outcome for the characters follows much the same in other parts, and in the end all are dead, and Hamlet avenged. It is form that shows the greatest difference, as noted. There are none of the famous soliloquies nor lines; it is all rather stiff and prosaic. One can hardly believe it the same piece.

In Romeo and Juliet the German version Cohn gives seems in dialect and orthography to have been from the South Germany or Austria performances. It is not the authentic text as played by the English Comedians, but a version calculated for the requirements of the stage later.

It is based on Shakespeare's own play, as is seen in the likeness almost scene for scene; in fact, some passages are literal translations. However, there really are only few instances in which the poetical feeling is left. There is the omission of all the fine motives of Shakespeare's magnificent tragedy. The remodeller has inserted comic scenes utterly devoid of taste which obliterate the amount of tragic feeling. Notwithstanding the mutilated form we can still imagine it must have excited immense interest in a seventeenth century German audience.

The differences in acts and scenes between the German and English version as we know them are: we have a prologue, while we find none in the German; in act one we have five scenes, the German, four; in act two we have six scenes, the German eight; in act three we have five scenes, the German eight; in act four we have five scenes, the German six, and some rather ill verse; in act five we have three scenes, the German also three. In the manner of carrying out the story the incidents are quite similar and so also the characters. Juliet, however, dies first then Romeo goes to her tomb and there kills himself. There is the lack of fine motivation.

The German version translation of Titus Andronicus is most interesting and quite like the Shakespearean version as we know it. The differences in acts and scenes are: our act one with only one scene, beginning Noble Patricians; the German, one very short scene, beginning Noble Romans; our act two with four scenes, and the German, again, one short scene; our act three with two scenes, and the German, again one short scene; our act four with four scenes, and the German, one; our act five with three scenes, and the German, one, and then the German has the additional acts six, seven, and eight, each with one scene. The content is much the same in a condensed and less poetic manner.

The first Shakespearean piece known to have been adapted for the German language is an episode from Midsummer Night's Dream, published in the middle of the seventeenth century. There is also an imitation of the Taming of the Shrew. The German public had, of course, become acquainted with the plays through the English versions. Cohn gives no versions of the German Julius Caesar nor King Lear, which with Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet are included in the Dresden stage library of 1626. Such an inclusion is proof of the popularity of the plays.

Dresden Court Plays, 1626

- June 1 A Comedy of Christabella acted.
 " 2 Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.
 " 4 Comedy of Amphitrione.
 " 5 Tragi-comedy of Hertzogk of Florence.
 " 6 Comedy of King of Spain and Viceroy of Portugal.
 " 8 Tragedy of Julius Caesar.
 " 9 Comedy of Crysella.
 " 10 Comedy of Hertzogk.
 " 20 *Tragedy of Jemandt and Niemandt.
 " 21 Tragi-comedy of King in Denmark and the King in Sweden.
 " 24 Tragedy of Hamlet Prince in Denmark.
 " 25 Comedy of Orlando Furioso.
 " 27 Comedy of the King in England and the King in Scotland.
 " 28 Tragedy of Hieronymo Marsch ll in Spain.
- July 3 *Tragicomedy of the Hamann and the Koenign Ester.
 " 5 Tragedy of the Martherin Dorothea.
 " 7 Tragedy of Doctor Faust.
 " 9 Tragicomedy of King in Arragona.
 " 11 *Tragedy of Fortunato.
 " 13 Comedy of Joseph Juden of Venedigk.
 " 22 Tragicomedy of the Dexterous Thief.
 " 23 Tragicomedy of Hertzogk of Venedig.
 " 31 Tragedy of Barrabas, Jew of Malta.
- Aug. 2 Tragicomedy of the High Proculo.
 " 29 Tragedy of Barrabas, Jew of Malta.
- Sept. 4 Comedy of Hertzogk of Mantua and of Hertzogk of Verona.
 " 6 Tragicomedy of the High Proculo.
 " 15 Tragicomedy of Hertzogk of Florence.
 " 17 Tragicomedy of the Dexterous Thief.
 " 19 Comedy of King in Spain and Viceroy in Portugal.
 " 22 Tragicomedy of the Dexterous Thief.
 " 24 Comedy of Hertzogk of Ferrara.

Sept. 26 Tragedy of Lear, King in England.
 " 29 Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.
 Oct. 1 Tragedy of the Martherin Dorothea.
 " 4 Tragicomedy of Bevatter.
 " 19 Comedy of Verlohren Sohn.
 " 22 Comedy of the King in England and the King in
 Scotland.
 " 29 Comedy of the Graffen of Angiers.
 Nov. 5 Comedy of Josepho Jew of Venice.
 Dec. 4 Tragedy of the Rich Man.

_____: Shakespeare's plays.
 *: Included also in the collection of the English
 Comedians. P. 57.

The English Comedians, as the English actors are called, started with the courts, the patronage of some noble or prince, and then gradually extended until the companies were making tours over the hamlets of all of Germany. It was sometime later that the Germans also devoted themselves to the profession, adding the native competition, only shortly before the whole of Germany was devastated by a war which started in 1650, which slowly checked the immigrating English actors. From that time until the end of the century the English actors were in the minority. Thereafter if a company was called English it was probably that only the leader or one or two members were English, for the tide of English actors to Germany seemed to stem in the late seventeenth century as rapidly as it had risen in the late sixteenth century.

Besides the courts of Brunswick, under Duke Henry Julius, and of Cassel, under Maurice of Hesse, it was more especially the courts of Dresden and Berlin which manifested the most active theatrical life. Companies were also usually found at Brandenburg and at Saxon. The given chart following is of the chronological travels of the comedians. The map is an illustration of the travels. The alphabetical chart of towns stars those which were most frequently visited by the comedians.

Chronologically

- 1579 -
 1580 -
 1585 - Earliest English players at the Danish Court.
 1586 - Saxon court.
 1588 - Court of Frederick, Copenhagen, Denmark.
 1590 - Leyden, company under Browne.
 1592 - October - Cologne, Arnheim.
 August - Wolfenbuttel to Frankfort.
 1593 - Nuremberg.
 1596 - Wolfenbuttel to Copenhagen to Nuremberg to Augsburg to Strassburg to Frankfort.
 1598 - Cassel, under Browne.
 1599 - Hildesheim, Munster.
- 1600 - February - Memmingen.
 October - Saxon court.
 1601 - Strassburg, under Browne.
 March - Hesse to Frankfort to
 April - Nuremberg to Frankfort. (Easter)
 Court of Dresden.
 November - Amsterdam to Cologne to Redberg to Steinfurt to Munster.
 1602 - Wolfenbuttel, Ulm, Amsterdam.
 Frankfort to Augsburg, under Browne.
 1603 - Nuremberg to Frankfort.
 Stuttgart.
 1604 - Holland.
 1605 - January - Leyden to
 May - Hague
 Sept. - Prussia, Elbing to Konigsberg.
 1606 - Holland.
 Mecklenburg to Hague to Mecklenburg to Rostock.
 1607 - April - Hague.
 July - Elbing. (Private performance by Brandenburg company.)
 1608 - Austria, court of the Archduke at Gratz.
 1609 - Court of Dresden.
 1610 - Court of Dresden, Brandenburg, Hague.
 1611 - Darmstadt, Konigsberg, Wolfenbuttel.
 1612 - Nuremberg, Brussels.
 1613 - April - Dresden.
 June - Nuremberg, Regensburg.
 1614 - Wolfenbuttel, Brandenburg comedians.
 Brunswick.
 1615 - Amsterdam, Frankfort.
 1616 - Danzig to Poland to Moravia to Breslau, Prussia.
 1617 - Court of Dresden.
 1618 - Berlin to East Prussia.
 Elbing, Balge, Konigsberg.

Seven years elapse in the annals of the English Comedians, whether there are no performances or are no records, is not known. There are, however, a few English coming to the continent as shown by the fact that Thomas Dekker in his pamphlet criticized them for running away from London for fear of the plague. Those who did go across the channel probably quartered at Rotterdam, Holland, since King Frederick of Bohemia was there.

- 1625 - Court of Dresden.
 1626 - Court of Dresden.
 1627 -- Torgau.
 1628 - Nuremberg.
 1629 - Hague.

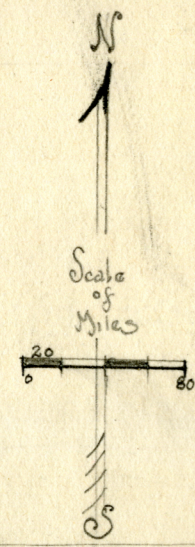
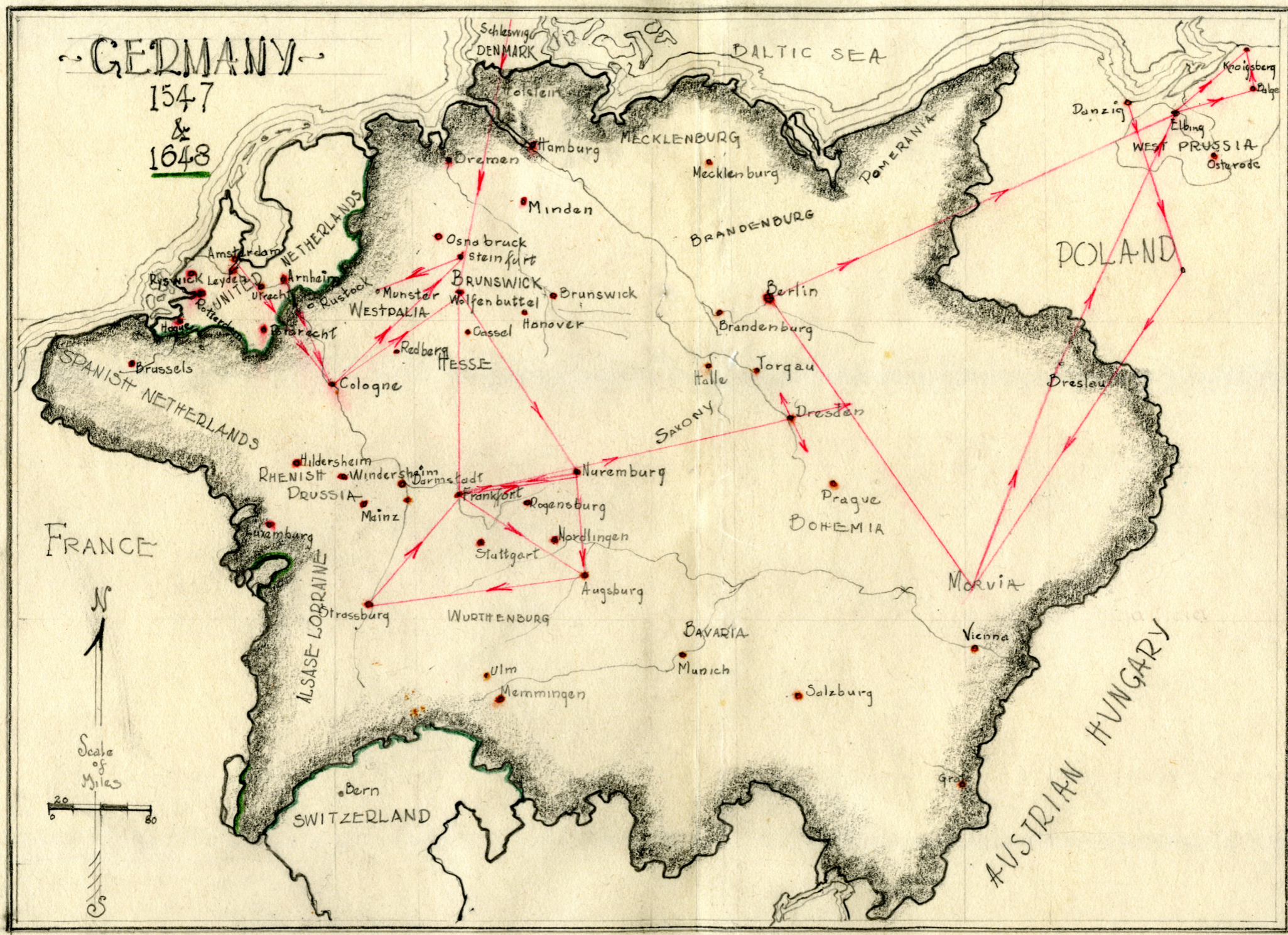
Ten years of war over the extent of the nation prevent the tide of English Comedians for a time.

- 1639 - Konigsberg.
 Brandenburg.
 1643 - Osnabruck.
 1644 - Hague.
 1645 - Hague.
 1650 - July - Zittau.
 November- Vienna.
 1651 - Prague.
 1652 - Basle.
 1653 - Vienna.
 1656 - Windsheim.
 Dordrecht.
 1659 - Vienna.
 1660 - Zittau.
 1683 - Notices of the English actors returning to England began to appear.

Alphabetical listing of towns in and near Germany visited by the English Comedians, location shown on the map.

Augsburg	Mainz
*Amsterdam, Holland	Memmingen
Arnheim, Holland	Minden
Balge	Munich
Basle	Munster
*Berlin	Nordlingen
*Brandenburg	*Nuremberg
Bremen	Osnabruck
Breslau	Osterode
Brunswick	Prague, Austria
Brussels, Belgium	Redberg
*Cassel	Regensburg
Cologne	Rotterdam, Holland
*Copenhagen, Denmark	Rostock
Danzig	Ryswick, Holland
Darmstadt	Salzburg
Dordrecht, Holland	Steinfurt
*Dresden	*Strassburg
Elbing	*Stuttgart
*Frankfort	Torgau
Gratz, Austria	Ulm
*Hague, Holland	Utrecht, Holland
Halle	Vienna, Austria
Hamburg	Windsheim
Hanover	*Wolfenbuttel
Heidelberg	Zittau
Hildesheim	-Zurich never permitted
Konigsberg	a performance.
Leyden	
Luxembourg	

* marks the towns where the English Comedians made the most frequent appearances.



It is most probable that the actors gave their plays in their native tongue, English, at least until some German men joined the company, or until they had been in the country long enough to be able to give a German presentation. Cohn has said that to the English Comedians the jigs with singing and dancing must have come quite naturally, as they furnished them the best opportunity of amusing the public, in spite of the different idiom. There are records of more elaborate performances given in both English and German, which the Germans must have come to see with interest. One performance is recorded at Cassel at which the professional actors performed a drama in six languages. This, however, must have been unusual.

The costumes in which the plays were performed, particularly at the courts were indeed elaborate. The German princes appear to have regarded the drama with favor and assisted with it in lading the actors with costumes, armour, and properties of all sorts. The following entry in Rochell's Chronicle of the city of Munster brings some observation as to how these English players performed:

"On the 26th of November, 1599, there arrived here eleven Englishmen, all young and lively fellows, with the exception of one, a rather elderly man, who had everything under his management. They acted on five

successive days, five different comedies in their own English tongue. They carried with them various musical instruments, such as lutes, cithern, fiddles, fifes, and such like; they danced many new and foreign dances (not usual in this country) at the beginning and at the end of their comedies. They were accompanied by a clown, who, when a new act had to commence and when they had to change their costume, made many antics and pranks in German during the performance, by which he amused the audience.

"They were licensed by the Town-Council for six days only, after which time they had to depart. During those days they took a great deal of money from those who wished to hear and see them, for every person had to give a (Bremen) shilling to each of them at their departure." (12)

When Shakespeare was still living his works were transferred to German ground, but nearly a century elapsed from the time of the first English Comedians in Germany until Shakespeare's name appeared there. His name first appeared in Daniel Georg Morhof's book, *Unterricht von der Teutschen Sprache und Poesie*, in 1682. Germany became the real leader only later.

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Following the brief seventeenth century records of the name of Shakespeare, the earliest eighteenth century notice of him in Germany was that of Johann Franz Bud-

deus, Allgemeines Historisches Lexicon, in 1709. But even in the year 1737, according to Thimm, Shakespeare's name was so little known that there is no mention of him in Gottsched's work in that year. In 1741 Germany possessed the first real translation of a Shakespearean drama into any language, that of Julius Caesar by Caspar Wilhelm von Borck, who had been Prussian ambassador in London shortly before. Johann Christoph Gottsched, 1700-66, the representative of classicism in Germany in the middle of the eighteenth century, abhorred Shakespeare and worshipped the French taste, but his student Johann Elias Schlegel presumed to detect merits in Shakespeare which were seen in the practices of a German dramatist of an older generation, Andreas Gryphius, 1616-1664, the subject of Gottsched's worship of French.

Germany in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, while France was in the throes of the Voltaire controversy, became the real leader of continental appreciation of Shakespeare. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, 1729-1781, arose as a critic greater than Voltaire. Lessing says that "the masterpieces of Shakespeare would have pleased German audiences better than the classic French

drama and would have been far more effective in awakening native dramatic talent, than the plays of Corneille and Racine." (13) While Lessing recommends Shakespeare repeatedly to the attention of German poets, he warns them against Shakespearizing.

In 1762, according to Ward, Wieland began the translation of Shakespeare which was first to open a knowledge of the author to the German literary public. This translation contained twenty-two plays, and was completed by Eschenbrg in 1775. Francke cites it as the "first comprehensive attempt to introduce Shakspere in Germany not to mention the garbled version of the English Comedians of the seventeenth century." (14) At last the Romantic School of Germany, in the very late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century took up the great dramatist. August Wilhelm Schlegel commenced translating some of his plays, of whom Thimm says that what he has done is done in so masterly a way as to make it a great loss to German literature that he did not translate the whole of Shakespeare. Schlegel was the first to give a poetic version of Shakespeare. Schlegel says that since the time of Lessing Shakespeare

13. Cutting, S. W. quoting Lessing in Introduction to Minna von Barnhelm. p. 24.

14. Francke, Kuno. History of German Literature. p. 456.

has been "more particularly noticed by Johann Gottfried von Herder, 1744-1803, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1749-1832, and Ludwig Tieck, 1773-1843, which break off, however, almost at the commencement." (15) Thimm says:

"We have also the scholars Goethe, Tieck; and those best commentaries of German of the last years: Ulrich Delius, Kreysig, and the crowning effect of German criticism, unmatched in literature of any country for the power of appreciation and the critical acumen: G. G. Gervinus' *Shakspeare*." (16)

Goethe has said of Shakespeare: "The first page of his that I read made me his for life; and when I had finished a single play, I stood like one born blind, on whom a miraculous hand bestows sight in a moment." (17)

Heinrich Heine, 1838-95, admitted only one defect in Shakespeare that "after all he is an Englishman." (18) Lessing called Shakespeare the poet of the modern world, just as Homer was of antiquity.

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Having followed briefly for perspective and better understanding of the earlier period, the fortunes of Shakespeare through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, I shall return to the results of the study of

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15. Schlegel, A. W. Dramatic Art and Literature. note 347
 16. Thimm, Franz. Shakspeariana. p. 55
 17. Boynton, Henry W. World's Leading Poets. p. 283.
 18. Library of Literary Criticism. 1:559.

Shakespearean knowledge in the Germanic countries in the years 1590 to 1660.

We find the earliest record of a Shakespearean play in the Germanic countries that of 1598, when Romeo and Juliet was performed at Leyden in the Netherlands. We know that the English Comedians after their first appearance in the Danish and German courts travelled then throughout the countries, and that the plays of Shakespeare during the years 1598-1660 were often presented, as shown by the list of travels. (See chart p. 70) The dramas which are known to have been performed are: Lear, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Titus Andronicus, The Merchant of Venice, and Julius Caesar, and later The Taming of the Shrew, The Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing, Othello, and at least parts of Midsummer Night's Dream, and Merry Wives of Windsor.

VII. A Final View of Shakespeare on the
Continent Serving in CONCLUSION

A final view of Shakespeare on the continent may serve in conclusion. Shakespeare has wholeheartedly met with the approval of the foreign countries whether he be considered "as a poet, by the British; as a psychologist, by the French; or as a philosopher, by the Germans." (1) Today his renown is such as to warrant the translation of his works into: "Dutch, Frisian, Flemish, Danish, Icelandic, Swedish, Welsh, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Bohemian, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Finnish, Modern Greek, also Bengalu, Chinese, and Japanese." (2)

Shakespeare, states Ward, had during his lifetime not a few wholly personal tributes of praise paid to his eminence in the various branches of his activity as an author, and during the last few years of his life these tributes were paid to his achievements by many. Schlegel says that Shakespeare was the pride of his nation, and the idol of his contemporaries. That during the interval of puritannical fanaticism his works should be neglected was natural, but they did shine forth later. Schlegel further

1. Matthews, Brander. Shakspeare as a Playwright. pref.
2. Lee, Sidney. Life of William Shakespeare. p. 371.

adds that he is certain that the contemporaries of Shakespeare's age did know the treasure they possessed in him, and that they felt they understood him. In regard to any false assertions against Shakespeare the Cambridge History of English Literature points out that to have mountebanks against you is a certificate of genuineness. In final tribute to Shakespeare there is this from Schlegel:

"Had no other monument of the age of Elizabeth come down to us than the works of Shakespeare, I should, from them alone, have formed the most favorable idea of its state of social culture and enlightenment." (3)

My problem has been to find the traces of his plays and the acceptance of them on the continent, during his life and the time just following. Indeed during that period we have reason to believe the foundation for the Shakespeare cult of more recent times was laid. There is this of the early Shakespearean drama on the continent. As it had to struggle for its reception in London, and as it obtained acceptance throughout England, so on the continent it was inured to a greater adaptability, and established itself well through both southern and northern Europe, receiving appreciation. The introduction of the

3. Schlegel, A. W. Dramatic Art and Literature. p. 347.

Shakespearean drama to the continent was during the time of Shakespeare's life, its popularity continued through the years following his death, and only fifty years later the name of the author was known and acclaimed.

The introduction of the Shakespearean plays to the continent by the English Comedians was accomplished by the last years of the sixteenth century, and most extensively by 1620 and 1626; and later in the seventeenth century, as has been pointed out, Shakespeare's name was found recorded in France, and in Germany, and surrounding continental countries. The knowledge of the plays of Shakespeare had penetrated through the Latin countries of southern Europe, Spain, Italy, and France. The plays were known there particularly through the travels of the English players, but somewhat from the Shakespearean influence and adaptations as brought by Spanish and Italian and French players returning from England and Germany. The knowledge of the plays of Shakespeare, it is proved, was carried throughout Germany by the English Comedians, and companies of players. In like manner by the English Comedians, as well as by German imitators later when the English players

became few, the plays found their way through Denmark, Holland, Austria, and to Switzerland, Russia, and Poland.

Much honor has accrued to such eighteenth century writers as Voltaire and others for the knowledge of the English poet in the Latin provinces, and to Lessing and other Germanic writers, for the appreciation of Shakespeare in the Teutonic countries. It was, however, during his lifetime and immediately following that Shakespeare's dramas were taken to the continent, the earliest record of a performance being that of 1598 at Paris. And during the first part of the seventeenth century many of his plays were carried throughout the continent.

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