inferences as to his illiteracy, drawn from his handwriting, depend on the most meagre data. The preface to the First Folio says that “ what he thought he uttered with that easiness that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers whereas Ben Jonson, in his *Discoveries,* says, “I remember the players often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted a line. My answer had been, would he had blotted a thousand!—which they thought a malevolent speech.” Reams have been written about these two sayings, but we do not know the real circumstances which prompted either, and the non-existence of any of the Shakespeare manuscripts leaves us open, unfortunately, to the wildest conjectures. That there were such manuscripts (unless Ben Jonson and the editors of the First Folio were liars) is certain; but there is nothing peculiar in their not having survived, though persons unacquainted with the history of the manuscripts of printed works of the period sometimes seem to think so.

We know so little of the composition of Shakespeare’s works, and the stages they went through, or the influence of other persons on him, that, so far as technical knowledge is concerned (especially the legal knowledge, which has given so much colour to the Baconian theory), various speculations are possible concerning the means which a dramatic genius may have had to inform his mind or acquire his vocabulary. The theatrical and social *milieu* of those days was small and close; the influence of culture was immediate and mainly oral. We have no positive knowledge indeed of any relations between Shakespeare and Bacon; but, after all, Bacon was a great contemporary, personally interested in the drama, and one would expect the contents of his mind and the same sort of literary expression that we find in his writings to be reflected in the mirror of the stage ; the same phenomenon would be detected in the drama of to-day were any critic to take the trouble to inquire. Assuming the genius of Shakespeare, such a poet and playwright would naturally be full of just the sort of matter that would represent the culture of the day and the interests of his patrons. In the purlieus of the Temple and in literary circles so closely connected with the lawyers and the court, it is just the dramatic “ genius ” who would be familiar with anything that could be turned to account, and whose works, especially plays, the vocabulary of which was open to embody countless sources, in the different stages of composition, rehearsal, production and revision, would show the imagination of a poet working upon ideas culled from the brains of others. Resemblances between phrases used by Shakespeare and by Bacon, therefore, carry one no farther than the fact that they were contemporaries. We cannot even say which, if either, originated the echo. So far as vocabulary is con­cerned, in every age it is the *writer* whose record remains and who by degrees becomes its representative; the truth as to the extent to which the intellectual *milieu* contributed to the education of the writer, or his genius was assisted by association with others, is hard to recover in after years, and only possible in proportion to our knowledge of the period and of the individual factors in operation.

(H. Ch.)

Tire Portraits of Shakespeare

The mystery that surrounds much in the life and work of Shakespeare extends also to his portraiture. The fact that the only two likenesses of the poet that can be regarded as carrying the authority of his co-workers, his friends, and relations— yet neither of them a life-portrait—differ in certain essential points, has opened the door to controversy and encouraged the advance and acceptance of numerous wholly different types. The result has been a swarm of portraits which may be classed as follows: (1) the genuine portraits of persons not Shakespeare but not unlike the various conceptions of him; (2) memorial portraits often based on one or other of accepted originals, whether those originals are worthy of acceptance or not; (3) portraits of persons known or unknown, which have been fraudulently “ faked ” into a resemblance of Shakespeare; and (4) spurious fabrications especially manufactured for imposition upon the public, whether with or without mercenary motive. It is curious that some of the crudest and most easily demonstrable frauds have been among those which have from time to time been, and still are, most eagerly accepted and most ardently championed. There are few subjects which have so imposed upon the credulous, especially those whose intelligence might be supposed proof against the chicanery practised upon them. Thus, in the past, a president of the Royal Academy in England, and many of the leading artists and Shakespearian students of the time, were found to support the genuineness, as a contemporary portrait of the poet, of a picture which, in its faked Shakespeare state, a few months before was not even in existence. This, at least, proves the intense interest taken by the world in the personality of Shakespeare, and the almost passionate desire to know his features. It is

desirable, therefore, to describe those portraits which have chief claim to recollection by reason either of their inherent interest or of the notoriety which they have at some time enjoyed; it is to be remarked that such notoriety once achieved never entirely dies away, if only because the art of the engraver, which has usually perpetuated them either as large plates, or as illustra­tions to reputable editions of. the works, or to commentaries or biographies, sustains their undeserved credit as likenesses more or less authentic.

Exhaustive study of the subject, extended over a series of years, has brought the present writer to the conclusion—identical with that entertained by leading Shakespearian authorities— that two portraits only can be accepted without question as authentic likenesses: the bust (really a half-length statue) with its structural wall-monument in the choir of Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon, and the copper-plate engraved by Martin Droeshout as frontispiece to the First Folio of Shake­speare’s works (and used for three subsequent issues) published in 1623, although first printed in the previous year.

The Stratford bust and monument must have been erected on the N. wall of the chancel or choir within six years after Shake­speare’s death in 1616, as it is mentioned in the prefatory memorial lines by Leonard Digges in the First Folio. The design in its general aspect was one often adopted by the “ tombe-makers ” of the period, though not originated by them, and according to Dugdale was executed by a Fleming resident in London since 1567, Garratt Johnson (Gerard Janssen), a denizen, who was occasionally a collaborator with Nicholas Stone. The bust is believed to have been commissioned by the poet’s son-in-law, Dr John Hall, and, like the Droeshout print, must have been seen by and likely enough had the approval of Mrs Shake­speare, who did not die until August 1623. It is thought to have been modelled from either a life or death mask, and inartistic as it is has the marks of facial individuality; that is to say, it is a portrait and not a generalization such as was common in funereal sculpture. According to the practice of the day, especially at the hands of Flemish sculptors of memorial figures, the bust was coloured; this is sufficient to account for the technical summariness of the modelling and of the forms. Thus the eyebrows are scarcely more than indicated by the chisel, and a solid surface represents the teeth of the open mouth; the brush was evoked to supply effect and detail. To the colour, as reapplied after the removal of the white paint with which Malone had the bust covered in 1793, must be attributed a good deal of the wooden appearance which is now a shock to many. The bust is of soft stone (not alabaster, as incorrectly stated by “ the accurate Dugdale ”), but a careful examination of the work reveals no sign of the alleged breakage and restora­tion or reparation to which some writers have attributed the apparently inordinate length of the upper lip. As a matter of fact the lip is not long; it is less than seven-eighths of an inch: the appearance is to a great extent an optical illusion, the result partly of the smallness of the nose and, especially, of the thinness of the moustache that shows the flesh above and below. Some repair was made to the monument in 1649, and again in 1748, but there is no mention in the church records of any meddling with the bust itself. Owing, however, to the characteristic inaccuracy of the print by one of Hollars’ assistants in the illustration of Dugdale’s *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (p. 688), the first edition of which was published in 1656, certain writers have been misled into the belief that the whole monument and bust were not merely restored but replaced by those which we see to-day. As other prints in the volume depart grossly from the objects represented, and as Dugdale, like Vertue (whose punctilious accuracy has also been baselessly extolled by Walpole), was at times demonstrably loose in his descrip­tions and presentments, there is no reason to believe that the bust and the figures above it are other than those originally placed in position. Other engravers, following the Dugdale print, have further stultified the original, but as they (Vertue, Grignion, Foudrinier, and others) differ among themselves, little importance need be attached to the circumstance. A