no allusion to Shakespeare is really intended. The material for *Troilus and Cressida* was taken by Shakespeare from Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde,* Caxton’s *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye,* and Chapman’s Homer.

26. It is almost wholly on grounds of style that *All’s Well that Ends Well* is placed by most critics in or about 1602, and, as in the case of *Troilus and Cressida,* it has been argued, though with little justification, that parts of the play are of considerably earlier date, and perhaps represent the *Love's Labour’s Won* referred to by Meres. The story is derived from Boccaccio’s *Decameron* through the medium of William Paynter’s *Palace of Pleasure* (1566).

27. *Measure for Measure* is believed to have been played at court on the 26th of December 1604. The evidence for this is to be found, partly in an extract made for Malone from official records now lost, and partly in a forged document, which may, however, rest upon genuine information, placed amongst the account-books of the Office of the Revels. If this is correct the play was probably produced when the theatres were reopened after the plague in 1604. The plot is taken from a story already used by George Whetstone, both in his play of *Promos and Cassandra* (1578) and in his prose *Heptameron of Civil Discourses* (1582), and borrowed by him from Giraldi Cinthio’s *Hecatommithi* (1566).

28. A performance at court of *Othello* on November 1, 1604, is noted in the same records as those quoted with regard to *Measure for Measure,* and the play may be reasonably assigned to the same year. An alleged performance at Harefield in 1602 certainly rests upon a forgery. The play was revived in 1610 and seen by Prince Louis of Württemberg at the GIobe on April 30 of that year. It was entered in the Stationers’ *Register* on October 6, 1621, and a First Quarto was published in 1622. The text of this is less satisfactory than that of the First Folio, and omits a good many lines found therein and almost certainly belonging to the play as first written. It also contains some profane expressions which have been modified in the Folio, and thereby points to a date for the original production earlier than the Act to Restrain Abuses of Players passed in the spring of 1606. The plot, like that of *Measure for Measure,* comes from the *Hecatommithi* (1566) of Giraldi Cinthio.

29. *Macbeth* cannot, in view of its obvious allusions to James I., be of earlier date than 1603. The style and some trifling allusions point to about 1605 or 1606, and a hint for the theme may have been given by Matthew Gwynne’s entertainment of the *Tres Sibyllae,* with which James was welcomed to Oxford on August 27, 1605. The play was revived in 1610 and Simon Forman saw it at the Globe on April 2o. The only extant text, that of the First Folio, bears traces of shortening, and has been interpolated with additional rhymed dialogues for the witches by a second hand, probably that of Thomas Middleton. But the extent of Middleton’s contribution has been exaggerated; it is probably confined to act iii. sc. 5, and a few lines in act. iv. sc. 1. A ballad of *Macdobeth* was entered in the Stationers’ *Register* on August 27, 1596, but is not known. It is not likely that Shakespeare had consulted any Scottish history other than that included in Raphael Holinshed’s *Chronicle;* he may have gathered witchlore from Reginald Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) or King James’s own *Demonologie* (1599).

. 3O. The entry of *King Lear* in the Stationers’ *Register* on November 26, 1607, records the performance of the play at court on December 26, 1606. This suggests 1605 or 1606 as the date of production, and this is confirmed by the publication in 1605 of the older play, *The True Chronicle History of King Leir,* which Shakespeare used as his source. Two Quartos of *King Lear* were published in 1608, and contain a text rather longer, but in other respects less accurate, than that of the First Folio. The material of the play consists of fragments of Celtic myth, which found their way into history through Geoffrey of Mon­mouth. It was accessible to Shakespeare in Holinshed and in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene,* as well as in the old play.

31. It is not quite clear whether *Antony and Cleopatra* was the play of that name entered in the Stationers’ *Register* on May 20, 1608, for no Quarto is extant, and a fresh entry was made in the *Register* before the issue of the First FoIio. Apart from

this entry, there is little external evidence to fix the date of the play, but it is in Shakespeare’s later, although not his last manner, and may very well belong to 1606.

32. In the case of *Coriolanus* the external evidence available is even scantier, and all that can be said is that its closest affinities are to *Antony and Cleopatra,* which in all probability it directly followed or preceded in order of composition.' Both plays, like *Julius Caesar,* are based upon the *Lives* of Plutarch, as Englished by Sir Thomas North.

33. There is no external evidence as to the date of *Timon of Athens,* but it may safely be grouped on the strength of its internal characteristics with the plays just named, and there is a clear gulf between it and those that follow. It may be placed provisionally in 1607. The critical problems which it presents have never been thoroughly worked out. The extraordinary incoherencies of its action and inequalities of its style have prevented modem scholars from accepting it as a finished pro- duction of Shakespeare, but there agreement ceases. It is sometimes regarded as an incomplete draft for an intended play; sometimes as a Shakespearian fragment worked over by a second hand either for the stage or for printing in the First Folio; sometimes, but not very plausibly, as an old play by an inferior writer which Shakespeare had partly remodelled. It does not seem to have had any relations to an extant academic play of *Timon* which remained in manuscript until 1842. The sources are to be found, partly in Plutarch’s *Life of Marcus Antonius,* partly in Lucian’s dialogue of *Timon or Misanthropos,* and partly in William Paynter’s *Palace of Pleasure* (1566).

34. Similar difficulties, equally unsolved, cling about *Pericles.* It was entered in the Stationers’ *Register* on May 20, 1608, and published in 1609 as “ the late and much admired play ” acted by the King’s men at the Globe. The title-page bears Shake­speare’s name, but the play was not included in the First Folio, and was only added to Shakespeare’s collected works in the Third Folio, in company with others which, although they also had been printed under his name or initials in quarto form, are certainly not his. In 1608 was published a prose story, *The Painful Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre.* This claims to be the history of the play as it was presented by the King’s players, and is described in a dedication by George Wilkins as “ a poore infant of my braine. ” The production of the play is therefore to be put in 1608 or a little earlier. It can hardly be , doubted on internal evidence that Shakespeare is the author of the verse-scenes in the last three acts, with the exception of the doggerel choruses. It is probable, although it has been doubted, that he was also the author of the prose-scenes in those acts. To the first two acts he can at most only have contributed a touch or two. It seems reasonable to suppose that the non- Shakespearian part of the play is by Wilkins, by whom other . dramatic work was produced about 1607. The prose story quotes a line or two from Shakespeare’s contribution, and it follows that this must have been made by 1608. The close . resemblances of the style to that of Shakespeare’s latest playsmake it impossible to place it much earlier. But whether Shake­speare and Wilkins collaborated in the play, or Shakespeare partially rewrote Wilkins, or Wilkins completed Shakespeare, must be regarded as yet undetermined. Unless there was an earlier Shakespearian version now lost, Dryden’s statement that “ Shakespeare’s own Muse her Pericles first bore ” must be held to be an error. The story is an ancient one which exists' in many versions. In all of these except the play, the name of the hero is Apollonius of Tyre. The play is directly based upon a version in Gower’s *Confessio Amantis,* and the use of Gower as a “ presenter ’’ is thereby explained. But another version in Laur- ence Twine’s *Patterne of Painefull Adventures (c.* 1576), of which a new edition appeared in 1607, may also have been consulted.

35. *Cymbeline* shows a further development than *Pericles* in the direction of Shakespeare’s final style, and can hardly have come earlier. A description of it is in a note-book of Simon Forman, who died in September 1611, and describes in the same book other plays seen by him in 1610 and 1611. But these were ,not necessarily new plays, and *Cymbeline* may perhaps be assigned