conjecturally to 1609. The mask-like dream in act v. sc. 4 must be an interpolation by another hand. This play also is based upon a wide-spread story, probably known to Shakespeare in Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (day 2, novel 9), and possibly also in an English book of tales called *Westward for Smelts.* The historical part is, as usual, from Holinshed.

36. *The Winter's Tale* was seen by Forman on May 15, 1611, and as it clearly belongs to the latest group of plays it may well enough have been produced in the preceding year. A document amongst the Revels Accounts, which is forged, but may rest on some authentic basis, gives November 5, 1611 as the date of a performance at court. The play is recorded to have been licensed by Sir George Buck, who began to license plays in 1607. The plot is from Robert Greene’s *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time, or Dorastus and Fawnia* (1588).

37. The wedding-mask in act iv. of *The Tempest* has suggested the possibility that it may have been composed to celebrate the marriage of the princess Elizabeth and Frederick V., the elector palatine, on February 14, 1613. But Malone appears to have had evidence, now lost, that the play was performed at court as early as 1611, and the forged document amongst the Revels Accounts gives the precise date of November 1, 1611. Sylvester Jourdan’s *A Discovery of the Bermudas,* containing an account of the shipwreck of Sir George Somers in 1609, was pub­lished about October 1610, and this or some other contemporary narrative of Virginian colonization probably furnished the hint of the plot.

38. The tale of Shakespeare’s independent dramas is now complete, but an analysis of the *Two Noble Kinsmen* leaves no reason to doubt the accuracy of its ascription on the title-page of the First Quarto of 1634 to Shakespeare and John Fletcher. This appears to have been a case of ordinary collaboration. There is sufficient resemblance between the styles of the two writers to render the division of the play between them a matter of some difficulty; but the parts that may probably be assigned to Shakespeare are acts i. scc. 1-4; ii. 1; iii. 1, 2; v. 1, 3, 4. Fletcher’s morris-dance in act iii. sc. 5 is borrowed from that in Beaumont’s *Mask* *of the Inner Temple and Gray’s Inn,* given on February 20, 1613, and the play may perhaps be dated in 1613. It is based on Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale.*

**39.** It may now be accepted as a settled result of scholarship that *Henry VIII.* is also the result of collaboration, and that one of the collaborators was Fletcher. There is no good reason to doubt that the other was Shakespeare, although attempts have been made to substitute Philip Massinger. The inclusion, how­ever, of the play in the First Folio must be regarded as conclusive against this theory. There is some ground for suspicion that the collaborators may have had an earlier work of Shakespeare before them, and this would explain the reversion to the “ history ” type of play which Shakespeare had long abandoned. His share appears to consist of act i. scc. 1, 2; act ii. scc. 3, 4; act iii. sc. 2, 11. 1-203; act v. sc. **I.** The play was probably produced in 1613, and originally bore the alternative title of *All is True.* It was being performed in the Globe on June 29, 1613, when the thatch caught fire and the theatre was burnt. The principal source was Holinshed, but Hall’s *Union of Lancaster and York,* Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments of the Church,* and perhaps Samuel Rowley’s play of *When You See Me, You Know Me* (1605), appear also to have contributed.

Shakespeare’s non-dramatic writings are not numerous. The narrative poem of *Venus and Adonis* was entered in the Stationers’ *Register* on April 18, 1593, and thirteen editions, dating from 1593 to 1636, are known. The

*Rape of Lucrece* was entered in the *Register* on May 9, 1594, and the six extant editions range from 1594 to r624. Each poem is prefaced by a dedicatory epistle from the author to Henry Wriothesley, earl of Southampton. The subjects, taken respect­ively from the and the *Fasti* of Ovid, were frequent

in Renaissance literature. It was once supposed that Shakespeare came from Stratford-on-Avon with *Venus* *and Adonis* in his pocket; but it is more likely that both poems owe their origin to the comparative leisure afforded to playwrights and actors

by the plague-period of 1592-1594. In 1599 the stationer William Jaggard published a volume of miscellaneous verse which he called *The Passionate Pilgrim,* and placed Shakespeare’s name on the title-page. Only two of the pieces included herein are certainly Shakespeare’s, and although others may quite possibly be his, the authority of the volume is destroyed by the fact that some of its contents are without doubt the work of Marlowe, Sir Walter Raleigh, Richard Barnfield and Bartholomew Griffin. In 1601 Shakespeare contributed *The Phoenix and the Turtle,* an elegy on an unknown pair of wedded lovers, to a volume called *Love’s Martyr, or Rosalin’s Complaint,* which was collected and mainly written by Robert Chester.

The interest of all these poems sinks into insignificance beside that of one remaining volume. The *Sonnets* were entered in the *Register* on May 20, 1609, by the stationer Thomas Thorpe, and published by him under the title *Shake­speares Sonnets, never before Imprinted,* in the same year. In addition to a hundred and fifty-four sonnets, the volume contains the elegiac poem, probably dating from the *Venus and Adonis* period, of *A Lover’s Complaint.* In 1640 the *Sonnets,* together with other poems from *The Passionate Pilgrim* and elsewhere, many of them not Shakespeare’s, were republished by John Benson in *Poems Written by Wil. Shake­speare, Gent.* Here the sonnets are arranged in an altogether different order from that of 1609 and are declared by the publisher to “ appeare of the same purity, the Authour himselfe then living avouched. ” No Shakespearian controversy has received so much attention, especially during recent years, as that which concerns itself with the date, character, and literary history of the *Sonnets.* This is intelligible enough, since upon the issues raised depends the question whether these poems do or do not give a glimpse into the intimate depths of a personality which otherwise is at the most only imperfectly revealed through the plays. On the whole, the balance of authority is now in favour of regarding them as in a very considerable measure autobiographical. This view has undergone the fires of much destructive argument. The authenticity of the order in which the sonnets were printed in 1609 has been doubted; and their subject-matter has been variously explained as being of the nature of a philo­sophical allegory, of an effort of the dramatic imagination, or of a heartless exercise in the forms of the Petrarchan convention. This last theory has been recently and strenuously maintained, and may be regarded as the only one which now holds the field in opposition to the autobiographical interpretation. But it rests upon the false psychological assumption, which is disproved by the whole history of poetry and in particular of Petrarchan poetry, that the use of conventions is inconsistent with the expression of unfeigned emotions; and it is hardly to be set against the direct conviction which the sonnets carry to the most finely critical minds of the strength and sincerity of the spiritual experience out of which they were wrought. This conviction makes due allowance for the inevitable heightening of emotion itself in the act of poetic composition ; and it certainly does not carry with it a belief that all the external events which underlie the emotional development are capable at this distance of time of inferential reconstruction. But it does accept the sonnets as an actual record of a part of Shakespeare’s life during the years in which they were written, and as revealing at least the outlines of a drama which played itself out for once, not in his imagination but in his actual conduct in the world of men and women.

There is no advantage to be gained by rearranging the order of the 1609 volume, even if there were any basis other than that of individual whim on which to do so. Many of the sonnets are obviously linked to those which follow or precede them; and altogether a few may conceivably be misplaced, the order as a whole does not jar against the sense of emotional continuity, which is the only possible test that can be applied. The last two sonnets, however, are merely alternative versions of a Greek epigram, and the rest fall into two series, which are more probably parallel than successive. The shorter of these two series (cxxvii.- clii.) appears to be the record of the poet’s relations with a mistress, a dark woman with raven brows and mourning eyes.