warning should be uttered against many of the so-called “ casts ” of the busts. George Bullock took a cast in 1814 and Signor A. Michele another about forty years after, but those attributed to W. R. Kite, W. Scoular, and others, are really copies, departing from the original in important details as well as in general effect. It is from these that many persons derive incorrect impressions of the bust itself.

Mention should here be made of the “ Kesselstadt Death Mask, ” now at Darmstadt, as that has been claimed as the true death-mask of Shakespeare, and by it the authenticity of other portraits has been gauged. It is not in fact a death-mask at all, but a cast from one and probably not even a direct cast. In three places on the back of it is the inscription—+A°Dm 1616: and this is the sole actual link with Shakespeare. Among the many rapturous adherents of the theory was William Page, the American painter, who made many measurements of the mask and found that nearly half of them agreed with those of the Stratford bust; the greater number which do not he conveniently attributed to error in the sculptor. The cast first came to light in 1849, having been searched for by Dr. Ludwig Becker, the owner of a miniature in oil or parchment representing a corpse crowned with a wreath, lying in bed, while on the background, next to a burning candle, is the date —Aō 1637. This little picture was by tradition asserted to be Shakespeare, although the likeness, the death-date, and the wreath all point unmistakably to the poet-laureate Ben Jonson. Dr Becker had purchased it at the death-sale at Mainz of Count Kesselstadt in 1847, in which also “ a plaster of Paris cast ” (with no suggestion of Shakespeare then attached to it) had appeared. This he found in a broker’s rag-shop, assumed it to be the same, recognized in it a resemblance to the picture (which most persons cannot see) and so came to attribute to it the enormous historical value which it would, were his hypothesis correct, unquestionably possess. In searching for the link of evidence necessary to be established, through the Kesselstadt line to England and Shake- sρeare, a theory has been elaborated, but nothing has been proved or carried beyond the point of bare conjecture. The arguments against the authenticity of the cast are strong and cogent— the chief of which is the fact that the skull reproduced is funda­mentally of a different form and type from that shown in the Droeshout print—the forehead is receding instead of upright. Other important divergencies occur. The handsome, refined, and pleasing aspect of the mask accounts for much of the favour in which it has been held. It was believed in by Sir Richard Owen and was long on view in the British Museum, and was shown in the Stratford Centenary Exhibition in 1864.

The “ Droeshout print ” derives its importance from its having been executed at the order of Heminge and Condell to represent, as a frontispiece to the *Plays,* and put forth as his portrait, the man and friend to whose memory they paid the homage of their risky enterprise. The volume was to be his real monument, and the work was regarded by them as a memorial erected in a spirit of love, piety, and veneration. Mrs Shake­speare must have seen the print; Ben Jonson extolled it. His dedicatory verses, however, must be regarded in the light of conventional approval as commonly expressed in that age of the performances of portrait-engravers and habitually inscribed beneath them. It is obvious, therefore, that in the circumstances an authentic portrait must necessarily have been the basis of the engraving; and Sir George Scharf, judging from the contra- dictory lights and shadows in the head, concluded that the original must have been a limning—more or less an outline drawing—which the youthful engraver was required to put into chiaroscuro, achieving his task with but very partial success. That this is the case is proved by the so-called “ unique proof ” discovered by Halliwell-Phillips, and now in America. Another copy of it, also an early proof but not in quite the same “ state, ” is in the Bodleian Library. No other example is known. In this plate the head is far more human. The nose is here longer than in the bust, but the bony structure corresponds. In the proof, moreover, there is a thin, wiry moustache, much widened in the print as used; and in several other details there are

important divergencies. In this engraving by Droeshout the head is far too large for the body, and the dress—the costume of well-to-do persons of the time—is absurdly out of perspective: an additional argument that the unpractised engraver had only a drawing of a head to work from, for while the head shows the individuality of portraiture the body is as clearly done *de chic.* The first proof is conclusive evidence against the con­tention that the “ Flower Portrait ’’at the Shakespeare Memorial Museum, Stratford-on-Avon—the gift of Mrs Charles Flower (1895) and boldly entitled the “ Droeshout original ”— is the original painting from which the engraving was made, and is therefore the actual life-portrait for which Shakespeare sat. This view was entertained by many connoisseurs of repute until it was pointed out that had that been the case the first proof, if it had been engraved from it, would have resembled it in all. particulars, for the engraver would have merely copied the picture before him. Instead of that, we find that several details in the proof—the incorrect illumination, the small moustache, the shape of the eyebrow and of the deformed ear, &c.—have been corrected in the painting, in which further improvements are also imported. The conclusion is therefore irresistible. At the same time the picture may possibly be the earliest painted portrait in existence of the poet, for so far as we can judge of it in its present condition —(it was to some extent injured by fire at the Alexandra Palace) —it was probably executed in the earlier half of the 17th century. The inscription—*Willň Shakespeare,* 1609— is suspect on account of being written in cursive script, the only known example at the date to which it professes to belong. If it were authentic it might be taken as showing us Shakespeare’s appearance seven years before his death, and fourteen years before the publication of the Droeshout print. The former attribution of it to Cornells Janssen’s brush has been abandoned—it is the work of a comparatively unskilful craftsman. The picture’s pedigree cannot definitely be traced far back, but that is of little import- ance, as plausible pedigrees have often been manufactured to bolster up the most obvious impostures. The most interesting of the copies or adaptations of this portrait is perhaps that by William Blake now in the Manchester Corporation Art Gallery. One of the cleverest imitations, if such it be, of an old picture is the “ Buttery ” or “ Ellis portrait, ” acquired by an American collector in 1902. This small picture, on panel, is very poor judged as a work of art, but it has all the appearance of age. In this case the perspective of the dress has been corrected, and Shakespeare’s shield is shown on the background. The head is that of a middle-aged man; the moustache, contrary to the usual type, is drooping. It is curious that the “Thurston miniature" done from the Droeshout print gives the moustache of the “ proof.

Two other portraits of the same character of head and arrangement are the “ Ely Palace portrait ” and the “ Felton portrait,” both of which in their time have had, and still have, convinced believers. The “ Ely Palace portrait ” was discovered in 1845 in a broker’s shop, and was bought by Thomas Turton, bishop of Ely, who died in 1864, when it was bought by Henry Graves' and by him was presented to the Birthplace. An unsatisfactory statement of its history, similar to that of many other portraits,’ was put forth; the picture must be judged on its merits. It bears the inscription “Æ 39 + 1603,” and it shows a moustache and a right eyebrow identical with those in the Droeshout “proof.” It was therefore hailed by many competent judges as the original of the print; by others it was dismissed as a “make-up”; at the same time it is very far from being a proved fraud. Supposing both it and the “ Flower portrait ” to be genuine, this picture, which came to light long before the latter, antedates it by six years. Judged by the test of the Droeshout “ proof” it must have preceded and not followed it. The “ Felton, portrait, ” which made its first appearance in 1792, had the valiant championship of the astute and cynical Steevens, of Britton, Drake, and other authorities, as the original of the Droeshout print, while a few—those who believed in the “ Chandos portrait ”—denounced it as “ a rank forgery. ” On the back of the panel was boldly traced in a florid hand “Gul. Shakespear 1597 R.B.” (by others read “R.N.”). If