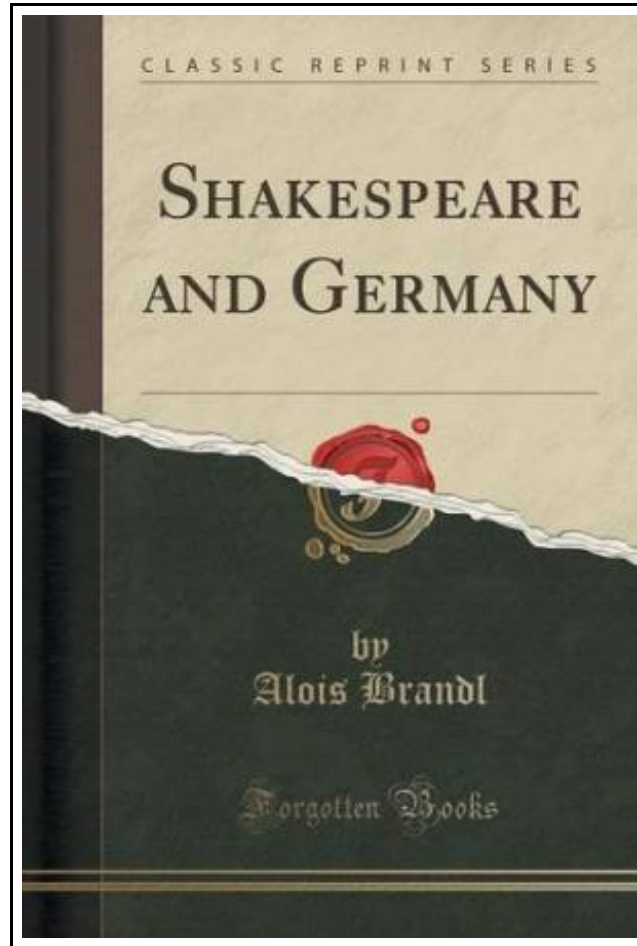


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Forgotten Books, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Excerpt from Shakespeare and Germany The Spectator did become popular, Robinson and Gulliver were read even in our villages; but what they had to offer was only poetry of the foot - to use a happy expression of Professor Herford - not poetry of the wing; they proved suggestive and amusing, but did not contain any revelations. The tide did not turn until, a short time before the French Revolution, Shakespeare conquered Germany with his word and his thought: then England, for the first time, had a voice on the Rhine and by the Danube, and became a force in the growth of German culture. The man who was chiefly instrumental in bringing about this change was Lessing. Many educated Germans felt about Shakespeare as he felt, and some of our literary men were working in the same direction in which he worked; but Lessing produced the strongest argument. He started from the opinion of Voltaire, whose critique and imitations of Shakespeare had done most towards calling the attention of German readers to the English dramatist. The great Voltaire had learned in England that Shakespeare had a large soul, and was a genius by nature; but he found him a sinner against the rules of Aristotle as deduced by the classicists. No, said Lessing; Shakespeare does not sin against the rules of Aristotle, if you but understand them properly; Shakespeare agrees with him in all essential things much better than Voltaire himself. As an example, Lessing compared the appearance of the ghost in Voltaire's Semiramis, in broad daylight, at the council-assembly, announced only by a clap of thunder, with the ghost in Hamlet, which appears at...

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