



Beaver Pool Bridge.

Where Aylwin met Rhona Boswell on his way to the Fairy Glen.  
(Reproduced from "Aylwin," by kind permission of Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, Ltd.)

their wages and nothing more. If they did not come back—the incident was too common to afford matter for an evening's conversation round the camp fire.

It is two men of this stamp whose adventure is described in this remarkable novel. We are constrained to call it an adventure, but Mr. White, with the instinct of a good artist, emphasises its character as a mere incident of the day's work. In similar fashion he very skilfully underlines the disparity between the end and the means. A runaway Indian leaves debt behind him. The Company must make an example, and Sam Bolton and Dick Herron go forth to bring him back. A year of dreadful hardship passes before the two woodsmen, themselves on the brink of starvation, accidentally run against their prey in the frost-bound limits of the Silent Places. And they would not have found him but for the fact that the poor Ojibway was snow-blind and was unconsciously doubling on his trail. At an early stage of their journey the two traders were joined by May-may-gwàn, a beautiful Indian girl, who had fallen a victim to the spell of Dick Herron's laughing eyes. To turn her back was impossible, and the two angry woodsmen had to suffer her silent company and her pitiful offers of ministrations. As the horrors of the journey increased, embarrassment gave place to tragedy, and no reader is likely to forget the haunting picture of the two men, with what dogs they had not eaten, toiling silently through the snow, and the girl, with a breaking heart, far behind, dragging herself along with Indian stoicism. The traders and their captive survived, but May-may-gwàn remained in the Silent Places, dying happy in Dick Herron's lying but very merciful assurance of his love.

The materials of the story, as we have shown, are as simple as they are fresh. But the characters are unfolded with extraordinary skill and with the nicest discrimination. Sam Bolton, the old woodsman, sensitively alert to all the mysterious voices of the forest, is the counterpart to the younger man, full of the splendid arrogance of physical strength. The story of the Indian girl is told with equal delicacy and force, and its effect in moulding the character of the man she vainly loves reveals a psychological insight of a very remarkable order. Naturally much of the charm of the book lies in its scenic descriptions. These we do not hesitate to call masterly. There is no overloading of epithet, no elaboration of description at the expense of the evolution of character. Mr. White enables us to visualise the scene, whether it is in the spring forest or the illimitable vastness of the winter snows. The conclusion of the book

is something of a touch of genius. When the two broken men reach the camp, old Sam Bolton with official brevity recites the bare facts of their journey. Of the danger, the hardship, the tragedy, not a word. And not a word of approbation or surprise from the men round the fire. On the contrary Dick Herron is carelessly called on for the very song he had sung on the night he started for the journey, which by its grim teaching had transformed him from a

heedless boy to a grave-eyed and resolute man.

J. H. L.

#### WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.\*

These learned and delightful chapters are formed from "a series of papers which the author evidently intended to be the nucleus of an exhaustive work upon Shakespeare." One portion of the volume is a contribution to the biography of Shakespeare, and to the topography of places in country and town with which he was connected. The other deals with the sources and the production of "The Tempest." The work belongs to a class of books of which we have too few—books which have been the recreation of men of leisure and of learning, who fear no general editor's lash, who are not tied to a date, who let the publishing seasons come and go, who have no concern for royalties or half profits, who do not calculate their words by the thousand, who pursue their erudite amusement with the industry which pleasure stimulates and sustains, and who can wander into byways of knowledge not trodden and trampled by the crowd, and bring back to those who remain upon the highway gifts that are new and precious.

In the brief memoir prefixed, Mr. Lang, aided by reminiscences of Elton's earlier years, contributed by Mr. John White, tells the story of a life which seems to have been singularly happy. Charles Elton, born in 1839, was a contemporary of Frederick Myers at Cheltenham College, and, like Myers, was a boy unambitious of school prizes, but one who chose all knowledge for his province—as far as a boy can be said to do this—one whose abundant and easy power could not but take its own way. At Oxford the habit of his mind remained the same. Distinctions came to him rather than were sought. He was a classical scholar, a poet, a legist, a historian, because it was natural to be each of these, and an intimacy with the philosophy of Spinoza, the poetry of Shelley, the quaint lore of Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," came, as it were, of their own accord. An open Fellowship at Queen's was won when John Addington Symonds was Elton's rival. His main literary interest, says Mr. Lang, was "in the borderland of history, archæology, law, and the study of institutions." His marriage at the age of twenty-four was more than a marriage—it was also a happy intellectual alliance. His practice at the Bar, mainly concerned with the laws of real property, might have brought him high legal honours; but it was pleasanter at thirty to

\* "William Shakespeare: His Family and Friends." By the late Charles Isaac Elton. Edited by A. Hamilton Thompson, with a Memoir of the Author by Andrew Lang. 15s. net. (John Murray.)

become the squire of Whitestaunton in Somerset, with an estate containing in itself "a miniature history of South Britain," and an old house, remodelled in Tudor times, which lacks nothing of perfection, in Mr. Lang's eyes, except the presence of a ghost. Here, or in Cranley Place, he read widely and wrote in moderation, collected his faience of Rhodes, Persia, and Anatolia, and printed the catalogue of his library. That he should enter the House of Commons as member for West Somerset, and as a Conservative, was in the order of nature, but, though he made "four maiden speeches" on the same afternoon, it was not his way to contribute much to the strife of tongues. And in April, 1900, after a brief illness, the good and happy life ended, and his manuscripts for a work on Shakespeare had the fortune to be in a condition capable of presentation, under the careful editorship of Mr. Hamilton Thompson, as a last gift to the public.

It is a gift for which no student of Shakespeare can fail to be grateful, and which the reader who is not a specialist will find entertaining—in every chapter and almost on every page. Much that is familiar has to be told, but now and again Elton's knowledge of law, or his acquaintance with the methods of Elizabethan husbandry and tillage, or with some old lore of natural history, enables him to give a fresh interpretation, probably if not certainly true, to a familiar fact or Shakespearean word. He went in his leisurely way, so different from that of the professional maker of books, to the original sources, disentangled the fact from the legend, and with a judicial mind balanced statement against statement. An examination of facts and traditions relating to Shakespeare's early life is followed in this volume by a study of the topography—which includes much beside topography—of part of the Shakespearean district, of the Stratford road, and various localities in London. The descendants of Shakespeare, his death and his will, form the subjects of a later section of the book. A series of investigations of seventeenth century writers, who furnish illustrations or record traditions of Shakespeare—Howell, Ward, Dowdell, Aubrey, and others—is of special interest and value. The remainder of the volume is connected with "The Tempest."

With respect to Shakespeare's marriage, Mr. Elton, who could not err in a matter of law, assures us that a contract of present espousals, in which the man and woman declare "I take thee" for "my wife," and "my husband," before witnesses, and with some symbolical gift, constituted a legal civil marriage: "The civil marriage required the religious solemnity to give the parties their legal status as to property; but otherwise it was both valid and regular." To get married in church, with due publication of banns, was forbidden without a special licence between Trinity and Advent. On Thursday, 28th November, 1582, Shakespeare obtained a licence to be married with only one publication of the banns. The reason for haste is obvious to Mr. Elton; Advent Sunday fell on December 1st: "there was

only just time to get the banns called on the last day of November—St. Andrew's Day." Unless Shakespeare or his friends produced evidence of his father's consent to the marriage, the licence could not have been obtained, for the bridegroom was still a minor. In the absence of Anne Hathaway, who could have stated on oath that she was of full age, and in the absence probably of any certificate proving that her parents were dead, it was thought expedient to insert in the licence the somewhat unusual condition that she should not be married "without the consent of her friends." There is no reason to suppose that in any incident connected with Shakespeare's marriage he acted irregularly.

Let us dive into another page: "I can find no proof," writes Mr. Furness in a note on "palm-tree" in "As You Like It," III., ii., "that the willow was ever called a palm-tree." That the catkins were called "palms" Mr. Furness does not doubt. Mr. Elton writes of the palm-tree of Arden Forest, on which Rosalind finds her copy of verses: "This is no palm-tree of the south; it is the satiny palm or sallow, which decked the Warwickshire churches and 'made the country houses gay.' In the tract called 'The Supplication of the Poor Commons,' there is a delightful picture of river scenery which, with slight alterations, might have been applied to Shakespeare's home. A traveller is supposed to have espied a fair church, standing in this case on a hill and pleasantly set round with groves and fields: 'the goodly green meadows lying beneath, by the banks of a crystalline river, garnished with willows, poplars, palm-trees, and alders, most beautiful to behold.'"

These examples serve to indicate the kind of aids to Shakespearean study which will be found scattered in many places through Elton's volume. Where the writer's statements or conjectures need to be checked and controlled, the control will come in due time. Meanwhile we welcome a book on Shakespeare which is not one of fantastic theories or ingenious folly, but is sane, genial, and well informed.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

### AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF LITERARY TASTE.\*

In concluding the third and last volume of his "History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe" (and thus com-

\* "A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe." From the earliest texts to the present day. By George Saintsbury. Vol. III. "Modern Criticism." 20s. net. (Blackwood.)



Llyn Llydaw.

Where it was rumoured that Winnie was drowned.  
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