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SHAKESPEARE PROBLEMS

By A. W. POLLARD & J. DOVER WILSON

III

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AND RICHARD III

BY
PETER ALEXANDER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
ALFRED W. POLLARD

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PREFACE

IT was at the suggestion of the late Dr Smart that I first examined the text of *Henry VI*; and the notes which the editor of *The Times Literary Supplement* was good enough to find space for in 1924 were shaped under his criticism and that of Professor Macneile Dixon. The work on the Bad Shakespeare Quartos by Professor Pollard and Professor Dover Wilson, and Dr Greg's analysis of the Quartos of *Alcazar* and *Orlando*, were of course constantly before me. Though I have written my share in this volume since Dr Smart's death, I am still indebted to him at every turn, as those who have read his work on Shakespeare can see, and as my references, I trust, make plain.

The opportunity for a more extended examination of *Henry VI*, and its sequel *Richard III*, has been given me by the generous invitation of the editors of this series to contribute to their studies; and I have been fortunate in having Professor Pollard's help from the beginning of the new undertaking. But for his criticism my part would be even more imperfect than it is. Like other students of Shakespeare, I owe to Professor Pollard the sense of a new style and new spirit in textual criticism; and had he not provided in the first volume of the series the fixed point on

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PREFACE

which the argument rests, I should not have ventured on an attempt to remove from Shakespeare studies what seems to me a world of misapprehension.

In such a task it is impossible to eliminate friction, and difficult, with the weight of opinion against me, to be unlaborious. By trying, however, to avoid unnecessary controversy, I have done something, I hope, to escape the charge, which the acrimony of commentators provoked from Dr Johnson, that the truth to be investigated is so near to inexistence as to escape attention: for the rest, I must look to the reader's indulgence or enthusiasm for these studies.

PETER ALEXANDER

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