

**SHAKESPEARE'S PRONUNCIATION.
A SHAKESPEARE PHONOLOGY,
WITH A RIME-INDEX TO THE
POEMS AS A PRONOUNCING
VOCABULARY**

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Shakespeare's Pronunciation. A Shakespeare Phonology, with a Rime-Index to the Poems as a Pronouncing Vocabulary by Wilhelm Viëtor

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WILHELM VIËTOR

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*WITH A RIME-INDEX TO THE POEMS
AS A PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY*

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"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive thy powerful rime."



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TO

PROFESSOR

EDMUND STENGEL, M. A., PH. D.
OF GREIFSWALD UNIVERSITY.

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PREFACE.

THE aim and scope of the present volume having been set forth in the introductory chapter, very little remains to be said.

To the short list of works given in § 2 W. Franz's *Orthographie, Lautgebung und Wortbildung in den Werken Shakespeares* (Heidelberg, 1905) must now be added. As my own book had been completed in manuscript, and for the greater part printed or set in type when that volume appeared, I have not even tried to turn it to account. Prof. Franz, who in his preface kindly refers also to publications by myself and some of my pupils, will be found to agree with me on many points. I venture to hope that what I now give after long preliminary studies will be more exact as well as more complete than my former contributions to the subject.

A few words must, however, be added, to avoid possible misunderstandings. Specialists will speedily discover that I have ignored certain recent investigations (Marburg ones not excepted) which may seem to

modify or even invalidate some of my own conclusions. This has been done from the following considerations. In the first place, I wished to address myself to a wider circle of readers, some of whom would neither care for a detailed discussion of side-questions, nor, as a rule, have access to doctor's dissertations and similar monographs. The second consideration, however, is more important. As I have pointed out in § 2, my object is not to treat of Modern English, nor even Elizabethan, phonology, but of *the pronunciation adopted by Shakespeare in his published works*. Hence the rime-index to the poems forms an integral part of my book. Besides Shakespeare himself—the principal authority—, such contemporaries as Bullokar and Gill are on the whole of far greater use for our purpose than e. g. the Cely Papers or Paston Letters. Let me give an example to show what I mean. From sources such as those last mentioned we know that, with certain speakers, the difference in sound between *ai* and long *a* had been lost as early as the 15th c., not to mention later evidence which may prove more or less conclusive. Nevertheless, I keep Shakespearian [æi] distinct from [æi:], letting the facts, so to say, speak for themselves. A critic who only peruses my text is almost sure to raise objections. But a mere glance at the lists of rimes in *-aim : -aim, -ame : -ame, &c.*, in the rime-index ought to convert the most inveterate disbeliever.