

**IN RE SHAKESPEARE.  
BEECHING V. GREENWOOD;  
REJOINDER ON BEHALF OF  
THE DEFENDANT**

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**G. G. GREENWOOD**

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BEECHING v. GREENWOOD &  
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## PREFACE

ON November 25th, 1908, Canon Beeching read a lengthy paper before the Royal Society of Literature by way of answer to my book, *The Shakespeare Problem Restated*. By the kindness of the Secretary to the Society, Dr. Percy Ames, I received an invitation to be present, and by the kindness of Lord Collins, who presided, I was allowed, at the conclusion of Canon Beeching's paper, to utter a few words, not indeed of reply—there was no time for that—but of protest against a misstatement and, as I conceived myself justified in calling it, a mere travesty of my arguments.<sup>1</sup> The Canon has now published his paper, together with two lectures delivered by him at the Royal

<sup>1</sup> "I think it was generally recognized," wrote a distinguished Fellow of the Society on November 28th, "that you were at a double disadvantage, having your arguments caricatured by an opponent and insufficient time for reply." To anticipate critics on the pounce let me say at once that I, of course, make no charge of conscious and deliberate misrepresentation. I would rather call it "very remarkable," and I think this will be the opinion of the reader who will have the patience to read the following pages.

Institution previously to the publication of my book, under the title of *William Shakespeare, Player, Playmaker, and Poet. A Reply to Mr. George Greenwood, M.P.* This "Reply" I propose now to examine.

The Canon is so kind as to say at the outset (p. 2) that I am provided with "much of the equipment of the successful practitioner at the Old Bailey." I do not know exactly what this may be intended to imply. For myself I never practised at the Old Bailey, though I remember that, in my young days, I held two or three briefs there. I remember, too, being impressed by the excellent manner in which the work was, for the most part, done in those courts. Whether or not my own work has in any way benefited by that example of efficiency I must leave to my readers to judge. Canon Beeching himself is provided with all the equipment of the Theologian, and those who understand what that means will appreciate the disadvantage at which a layman finds himself when he has to contend against a sacerdotal dialectician. The Canon has a further advantage. His book is a short one and is sold at two shillings, whereas, I am sorry to say, Mr. John Lane found it impossible to issue my bulky volume at less than

the somewhat deterrent price of one guinea. Many persons, therefore, I have no doubt, will read the "reply" who have not the leisure, or who will not take the trouble, to peruse my five hundred pages. Nay, I am almost inclined to think that Canon Beeching's "short method" must be primarily intended for such; for he has adopted a plan well known to controversialists. He has put into my mouth arguments which I never uttered, and which I should not dream of uttering, and has proceeded to demolish them with great self-satisfaction and with the most entire success. This method has the advantage of being a remarkably easy one, and is, frequently, very effectual in attaining the object in view. It has, indeed, so far as I know, only one objection, but as that, no doubt, has at once suggested itself to the reader, it is not necessary that I should enlarge upon it. I will only say now, as I said to the audience at 20 Hanover Square, that if any member of the reading and thinking public should deem it worth while to form an honest judgment of my book as a whole and of the arguments there set forth, he must have the patience to read the original. Those, on the other hand, who are content to judge of that work by Canon Beeching's