

**KING SHAKESPEARE; A  
MASQUE OF PRAISE FOR  
THE SHAKESPEARE  
TERCENTENARY**

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King Shakespeare; A Masque of Praise for the Shakespeare Tercentenary by Albert Hatton  
Gilmer

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**ALBERT HATTON GILMER**

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KING SHAKESPEARE

A MASQUE OF PRAISE FOR  
THE SHAKESPEARE TERCENTENARY

WRITTEN FOR THE DRAMA LEAGUE OF BOSTON

BY

ALBERT HATTON GILMER

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COMPLIMENTS OF  
GINN AND COMPANY

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## FOREWORD

*For the many readers and teachers of Shakespeare, whether they be in schools, colleges, or clubs, desiring some form of appropriate exercise wherewith to commemorate the tercentennial of their beloved author's death, is issued this booklet. The little Masque — if such it may be termed, since it embodieth neither sweet music nor graceful dance, yet waxeth strong in compliment, the essence of the Masque — was devised for the Drama League of Boston, and first presented at the Shakespeare Revels of the Twentieth Century Club in that city. The passages contained herein comprise those fair and honest terms and words indited by the persons represented; hence it is believed that in what place soever the ceremony proveth not convenient for setting forth upon a stage, it may prove of use and interest for reading in classrooms wherein are studied the works of the master.*

*The Masque is not unlike a victim of fell Procrustes' bed, inasmuch as both are adaptable to the length and needs of the user. If the ceremony as printed be too long, it may be shortened by the careful omission of some who speak or appear; if too short, it may be lengthened, after exercise of skillful judgment, by the addition of other writers and actors of note and worth, of which there be many, — as Mr. Pope, Mr. S. Johnson, Mr. Pepys, Mr. and Mrs. Browning, Mr. Booth and Mr. Irving, — who have honored the memory of our great dramatist by their seemly words of commendation. Only see to it, howsoever you modify the form, you change not the spirit.*

*That none who wish it may be without a fitting means of respectful celebration for the memorable occasion, the Masque may be freely presented anywhere; this through the permission of the author and the publishers.*

A. H. G.

Tufts College, February, 1916

1616-1916

"Any time these three hundred years"

*Merry Wives of Windsor, I, 1, 12*

"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme.

\* \* \* \* \*

When wasteful war shall statues overturn,  
And broils root out the work of masonry,  
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn  
The living record of your memory.

'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity  
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room,  
Even in the eyes of all posterity  
That wear this world out to the ending doom."

*The Fifty-fifth Sonnet*

"He was not of an age, but for all time!"

*Ben Jonson*

KING SHAKESPEARE



## CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

### Allegorical Figures (non-speaking)

FATHER TIME

TRAGEDY

COMEDY

### In the Seventeenth Century

JOHN HEMING

HENRY CONDELL

BEN JONSON

WILLIAM BASSE

JOHN MILTON

### In the Eighteenth Century

DAVID GARRICK

### In the Nineteenth Century

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THOMAS CARLYLE

*The passing of Father Time across the stage indicates the passing of a century. All characters enter from left (actors' standpoint) and go out right. Time's entrances and exits are the opposite.*

## KING SHAKESPEARE

[*Well to the front of the stage hangs a curtain of black, deep red, or some neutral color, against the center of which is a bust (or picture) of Shakespeare upon a pedestal or table. At the right side of the stage stands a figure of TRAGEDY, in black, holding a classical tragic mask. In her girdle is a dagger. On the left stands a figure of COMEDY, gowned in yellow, with bright flowers in her hair. She holds a comic mask; in her girdle is a fool's bauble.*]

*From the left enter HEMING and CONDELL. HEMING carries a huge volume, a copy of the First Folio Edition, leather bound, and in size about sixteen inches long, eleven wide, and three thick. It contains the thirty-six plays of Shakespeare. He bows to the bust and then to the audience. CONDELL stands beside the pedestal.*

HEMING. When fierce devouring flames 'gan to destroy  
The Globe, our bank-side playhouse on the Thames,  
My friend Condell, with me, did rescue from  
Those blazing walls the precious manuscripts  
Our friend and fellow-actor, Shakespeare, wrote.  
We hand them on to eyes of generations  
Yet unborn, and in this book do bring  
The issue first of all his works complete.  
This worthy volume, it is writ for all —  
“ From the most able, to him that can but spell.  
There you are numbered. We had rather you were weighed.  
Especially, when the fate of all books depends upon your capacities; and not of your heads alone, but of your purses. Well!  
It is now public, and you will stand for your privileges we

## KING SHAKESPEARE

know: to read and censure. Do so, but buy it first. That doth best commend a book, the stationer says. Then, how odd soever your brains be, or your wisdoms, make your license the same, and spare not. Judge your six-penny worth, your shilling's worth at a time. But whatever you do, buy. And, though you be a magistrate of wit, and sit on the stage at Blackfriars, or the Cock-Pit, to arraign plays daily, know these plays [*Holds forth the book*] have had their trial already, and stood out all appeals, and do now come forth quitted rather by a decree of court, than any purchased letters of commendation."

[*Bows and retires, hands volume to CONDELL, and stands beside the pedestal*]

CONDELL. [*Steps forward and bows*] "It had been a thing we confess, worthy to have been wished, that the author himself had lived to have set forth and overseen his own writings. But since it hath been ordained otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we have collected and published them, absolute in their numbers as he conceived them, — who, as he was a happy imitator of nature, was a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together, and what he thought, he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.

"But it is not our province, who only gather his works and give them you, to praise him. It is yours that read him. And there we hope you will find enough, both to draw and to hold you; for his wit can no more lie hid than it could be lost. Read him, therefore, and again and again. And if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him. And so we leave you to other of his friends, whom, if you need, can be your guides; if you need them not, you can lead yourselves and others. And such readers we wish him."

[*Bows, steps back, and places the book at the foot of the bust. HEMING and CONDELL kneel before it*]