

**THE WORKS OF
SHAKESPEARE:
CYMBELINE**

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The Works of Shakespeare: Cymbeline by William Shakespeare & Edvard Dowden

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & EDVARD DOWDEN

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SHAKESPEARE

CYMBELINE

EDITED BY
EDWARD DOWDEN



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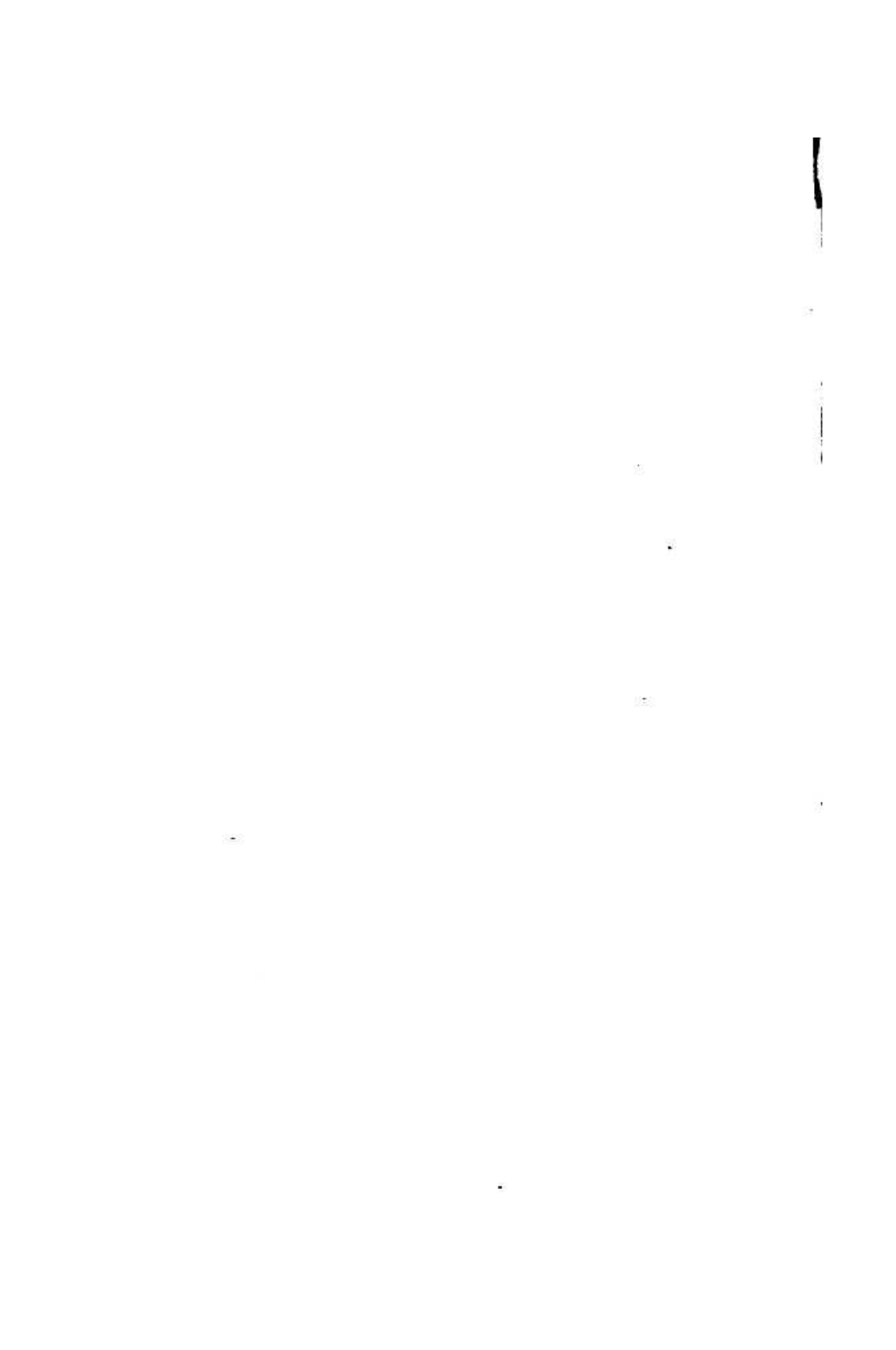
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INTRODUCTION

THE play of *Cymbeline* was printed for the first time in the Folio of 1623, where it is placed among the tragedies, and is the last play in the volume. It is there divided throughout into acts and scenes.

I have found the text often difficult to ascertain, and have felt how much cause there is to regret that we possess no Quarto, by which to test the readings of the Folio and correct some of its errors. It has seemed best to be conservative of the original text, where very strong reasons do not appear for departure from it. But I have accepted some alterations in punctuation suggested by Vaughan and others—alterations which in some instances affect the meaning of the passages.

With respect to the collation of the Folios, for which I have used my own copies of F 2 and F 4, and the Cambridge edition and Mr. Craig's New Shakspeare Society edition for F 3, I have noted what appears to me of importance and nothing more. It would have been easier to have asked the printers to set up Mr. Craig's complete collation, than to pick out the various readings which seem to me to deserve attention. The variations of the later Folios from the first do not in my eyes possess in general

even the value of editorial alterations, for the greater number of them are due to the carelessness of seventeenth-century printers. But as the text is difficult and has caused much throwing about of brains, I have been somewhat liberal in recording the conjectures of critics. A hesitating conjecture of my own with reference to the words of Imogen, marked with an obelus in the Globe Shakespeare, as probably corrupt:

Think that you are upon a rock, and now
Throw me again,

has received some countenance, which I did not expect, from the article "lock" in the *New English Dictionary*. This additional evidence I have given in a note at the end of the volume.

To ascertain the precise date at which *Cymbeline* was written is not possible; but we have a description of it by Dr. Simon Forman, the celebrated astrologer and quack-doctor, who died on the 12th of September 1611. Forman's manuscript, "The Booke of Plaies and Notes thereof," is in the Bodleian Library, and it has been printed in the "Transactions of the New Shakspeare Society, 1875-76." He saw at the Globe Theatre on April 30, 1611, a performance of a *Richard the Second* (which was not Shakespeare's play); on May 15, 1611, at the Globe, Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*; then, in Forman's manuscript, there follows "of Cimbalin King of England," which unfortunately is not dated; and the notes close with a description of *Macbeth*, "at the glob. 1610, the 20 of Aprill." Forman's account of the action of *Cymbeline* is full and accurate; the only divergence from the play as we have it, which deserves mention, is that the name of the

heroine appears as *Innogen*. The dated notes belonging to the years 1610-11, it is probable that *Cymbeline* was seen by Forman in one or other of those years. But the argument that the play must then have been a new play because he describes it in detail has little weight, for *Macbeth* is described even more fully, and *Macbeth* was probably written some years before the date at which Forman saw it acted.

In *Cymbeline*, II. iv. 70, 71, mention is made of

Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,
And Cydnus swel'd above her banks;

and again in IV. ii. 252, 253, we read:

Thersites' body is as good as Ajax',
When neither are alive.

There is little force in the inference that these passages imply a date close to the date of *Antony and Cleopatra* or of *Troilus and Cressida*, for Shakespeare knew North's translation of Plutarch long before *Antony and Cleopatra* was written, and the names of Thersites and Ajax were doubtless familiar to him long before he dramatised a portion of the Troy legend.

But it is certainly noteworthy that in *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare incidentally makes use of a passage from the novel of Boccaccio, from which he derived part of the plot of *Cymbeline*. In Boccaccio's story Ambrogiuolo (the original of Shakespeare's Iachimo) is impaled on a stake, his body is smeared with honey, and is destroyed by wasps, hornets, and flies. Iachimo is not so punished, but Autolycus of *The Winter's Tale* (IV. iv. 812-821) alarms the Clown with a horrible picture of the fate in store for him: "He [the old man] has a son who shall be flayed alive; then