

**A PLEAFANT COMEDY,  
CALLED: THE CASE IS  
ALTERD. A DISSERTATION**

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A Pleafant Comedy, called: The Case is Alterd. A dissertation by Ben Jonson & William Edward Selin

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**BEN JONSON & WILLIAM EDWARD SELIN**

**A PLEAFANT COMEDY,  
CALLED: THE CASE IS  
ALTERD. A DISSERTATION**



YALE STUDIES IN ENGLISH

ALBERT S. COOK, EDITOR

LVI

THE CASE IS ALTERED

BY

BEN JONSON

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND GLOSSARY

BY

WILLIAM EDWARD SELIN, PH.D.

A Dissertation presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Yale University in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy



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## PREFACE

An edition of *The Case is Altered* will naturally include a discussion of three subjects—the authorship of the play, its date, and the satire on Anthony Munday. Jonson saw fit to ignore the play when he assembled the others in his folio of 1616, and this fact has left the authorship in some doubt. Why did he reject the play? Was he too critical of its faults, or did some one collaborate with him to such an extent that he could not justly claim it as his? Jonson's name on the title-page of the quarto signifies nothing, since there are some copies that omit the name, and the uncorrected condition of the text is fair evidence that he had no hand in the printing. Its exact date, likewise, is uncertain. It was first printed in 1609, but there is a clear allusion to it by Nashe as early as 1598. As this was the year when *Every Man in his Humour* was produced, the question of priority naturally arises. The satire on Anthony Munday complicates the problem of the date, as it gives evidence of being a later addition. Was Meres' designation of Munday as 'our best plotter' a sufficient reason to evoke the satire? Its humorous treatment does not conceal the fact that Jonson seems to have had strong provocation for the attack. Such, in brief, are some of the problems discussed in the Introduction. Other questions will be found to rise out of these, which are not so important, perhaps, but which are nevertheless full of interest. These too have briefly been considered.

My sincere thanks are due to Mr. W. A. White, of New York City, for his generous loan of the quarto of *The Case is Altered*, and for information about the folios; to Professors Richard G. Moulton, John M. Manly, Albert H.

Tolman, and David A. Robertson, of the University of Chicago, for letters regarding the presentation of *The Case is Altered* by students of that university; to Professor C. F. Tucker Brooke for points about Elizabethan printing; to Mr. Andrew Keogh, Mr. Henry R. Gruener, Mr. George A. Johnson, and Mr. Henry Ginter, of the Yale Library, for bibliographical aid. To Professor Albert S. Cook I owe a special debt of gratitude for frequent inspiring conferences, and for his patient criticism of my work.

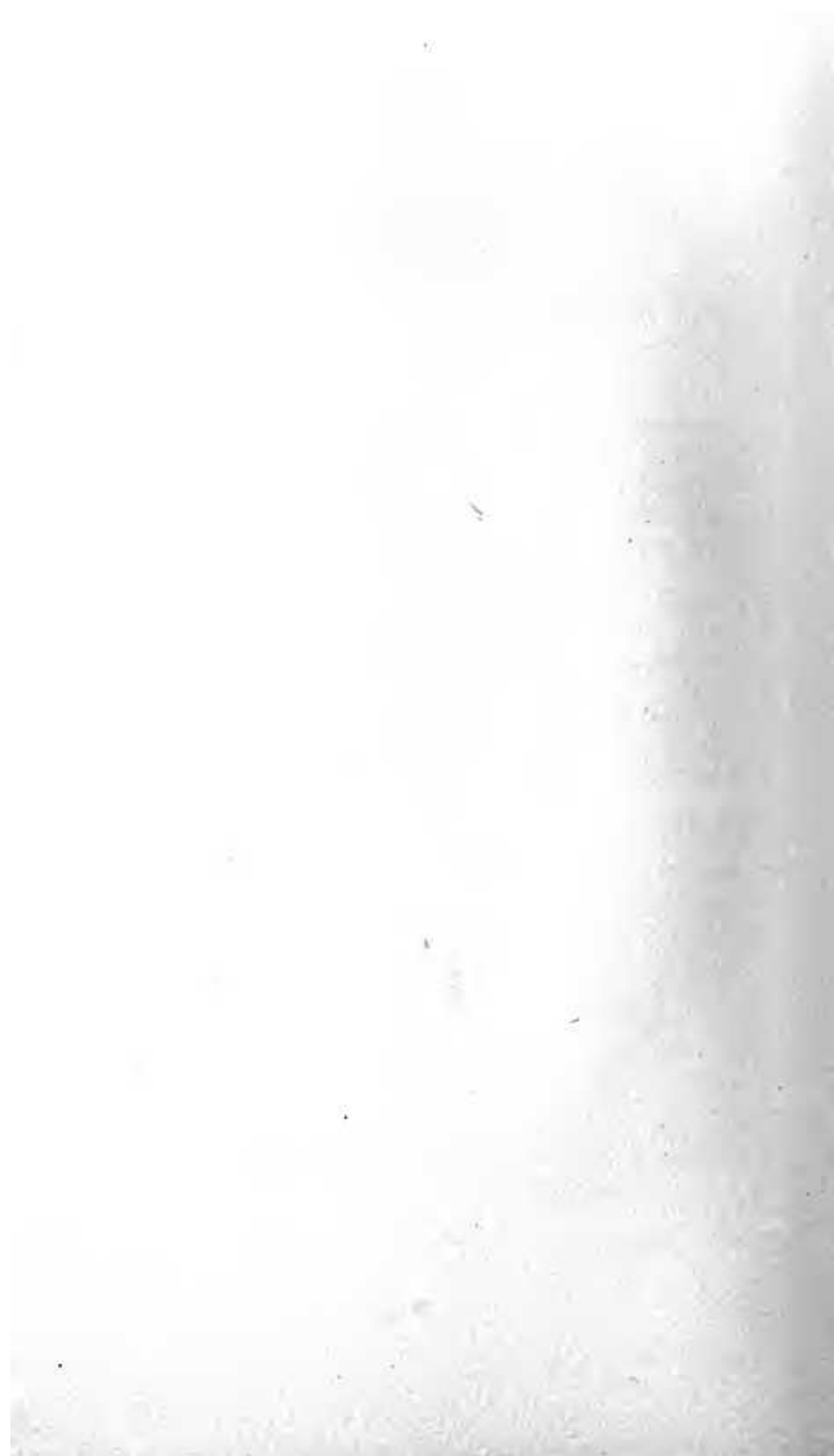
A portion of the expense of printing this dissertation has been borne by the Modern Language Club of Yale University, from funds placed at its disposal by the generosity of Mr. George E. Dimock, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, a graduate of Yale in the Class of 1874.

YALE UNIVERSITY,  
June, 1916.



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## INTRODUCTION

### A. EDITIONS OF THE TEXT

#### I. THE QUARTO OF 1609

*The Case is Altered* was published in quarto in 1609. It was not published again, either separately or in any collected edition of Jonson's works, until 1756, when it was included in Whalley's edition. Some<sup>1</sup> have insisted that the play appears in the folio of 1692, but no evidence is given that the writer saw the play in any particular copy of this folio. A careful search, extending over a wide field, has failed to show that the play was ever printed in any of the folios of Jonson. The search included the folios in the libraries of the following: Yale University, 1616, 1631-1640, 1640 (2 copies), 1692; Professor William Lyon Phelps (Yale), 1616, 1640 (2 copies), 1692; Professor John Milton Berdan (Yale), 1640, another issue (undated); Elizabethan Club (Yale), 1616; Boston Athenæum, 1631-1640; Columbia University, 1640-1641 (2 vols.); Cornell University, 1616; Professor Joseph Q. Adams (Cornell), 1616, 1640; Harvard University, 1616-1641 (2 vols.); Peabody Institute, 1616-1641 (2 vols.); Princeton University, 1640 (2 vols.); George D. Smith (bookseller, New York City), 1692; University of Chicago, 1616; University of Pennsylvania, 1616, 1640; Mr. William A. White, New York City, 1616, 1640, 1692. In a letter to Dr. George B. Tennant,<sup>2</sup> dated November 9, 1906, Mr. W. W. Greg writes, in part, as follows: "To the best of my belief (and I have

<sup>1</sup> Hazlitt, *Bibliographical Collections*, Second Series, 1882, p. 320; *Dict. Nat. Biog.* (s. v. Jonson); cf. Hart (ed. *Wks.* I. xxviii).

<sup>2</sup> Ed. *New Inn* (*Yale Studies* 34. iv).