

**HEATH'S ENGLISH
CLASSICS. THE TRAGEDY
OF JULIUS CAESAR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649543953

Heath's English Classics. The Tragedy of Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare & Arthur D. Innes

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & ARTHUR D. INNES

**HEATH'S ENGLISH
CLASSICS. THE TRAGEDY
OF JULIUS CAESAR**

Death's English Classics

THE TRAGEDY
OF
JULIUS CÆSAR.

EDITED BY

ARTHUR D. INNES, M.A.

SOMETIME SCHOLAR OF ORIEL COLL., OXFORD

BOSTON, U. S. A.
D. C. HEATH & CO., PUBLISHERS
1911

GENERAL PREFACE.

IN this edition of SHAKESPEARE an attempt is made to present the greater plays of the dramatist in their literary aspect, and not merely as material for the study of philology or grammar. Criticism purely verbal and textual has only been included to such an extent as may serve to help the student in the appreciation of the essential poetry. Questions of date and literary history have been fully dealt with in the Introductions, but the larger space has been devoted to the interpretative rather than the matter-of-fact order of scholarship. Aesthetic judgments are never final, but the Editors have attempted to suggest points of view from which the analysis of dramatic motive and dramatic character may be profitably undertaken. In the Notes likewise, while it is hoped that all unfamiliar expressions and allusions have been adequately explained, yet it has been thought even more important to consider the dramatic value of each scene, and the part which it plays in relation to the whole. These general principles are common to the whole series; in detail each Editor is alone responsible for the play or plays that have been intrusted to him.

Every volume of the series has been provided with a Glossary, an Essay upon Metre, and an Index; and Appendices have been added upon points of special interest, which could not conveniently be treated in the Introduction or the Notes. The text is based by the several Editors on that of the *Globe* edition: the only omissions made are those that are unavoidable in an edition likely to be used by young students.

By the systematic arrangement of the introductory matter, and by close attention to typographical details, every effort has been made to provide an edition that will prove convenient in use.

CONTENTS.

	Page
GENERAL PREFACE,	3
INTRODUCTION,	5
DRAMATIS PERSONAE,	20
JULIUS CÆSAR.	21
NOTES,	84
APPENDIX A.—OUTLINE OF SHAKESPEARE'S PROSODY, 127	
APPENDIX B.—HISTORICAL OUTLINES,	134
GLOSSARY,	137
GENERAL INDEX,	144

INTRODUCTION.

I. LITERARY HISTORY OF THE PLAY.

THE earliest known edition of *Julius Caesar* is that of the *First Folio*, 1623, in which the plays were for the first time collected. We have no knowledge of the text on which it was based; but the passages which show distinct signs of corruption are few: the readings are rarely open to serious question.

The means of settling the date when the play was written are to be found (1) in references to it, or in parallel passages, in contemporary writers; (2) in phrases here and there in the play which point to some particular period; (3) and in characteristics of scansion, construction, or thought, marking the particular phase of the author's development.

(1) A passage is quoted from Drayton's *Barons' Wars*, 1603, a revised edition of his *Mortimeriados*—

"In whome, in peace, the elements all lay
So mixt," &c.

which bears an obvious resemblance to Shakespeare's

"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him," &c.

If one of the two authors was borrowing from the other, the borrower was more probably Drayton; but it is quite as probable that the case is merely one of coincidence, and really proves nothing.

But in Weever's *Mirror of Martyrs*, 1601, are the lines—

"The many-headed multitude were drawne
By Brutus' speech, that Caesar was ambitious,
When eloquent Mark Antonie had shewne
His vertues, who but Brutus then was vicious?"

Weever's lines appear distinctly to refer to some well-known account of these orations; but they are not based on Plutarch, and the inference is that they are based on Shakespeare, unless both he and Shakespeare were familiar with some other narrative of which we know nothing. The presumption therefore is that the play is not later in date than 1601.

(2) At i. 2. 160 are the words, "the eternal devil". Some commentators are of opinion that 'eternal' was substituted for 'infernal' out of deference to the growing strength of the public sentiment against the freedom of language on the stage, which culminated in the act of James I. 'Eternal' seems to have been so substituted for 'infernal' in two other instances both subsequent to 1600, but not before. It is extremely doubtful whether Shakespeare may not have used 'eternal' as the better word; still the alternative possibility points to the play dating about 1600.

(3) The arguments from scansion are discussed in the appendix on prosody, *q.v.*, and entirely bear out the view that the play belongs to the middle period of Shakespeare's workmanship; is earlier than *Hamlet*, and about the same period as *Much Ado, As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*; *i.e.* between 1598 and 1602.

The character of the play itself leads to the same conclusion. Shakespeare seems to have finished all the English historical subjects he cared about with *Henry V.* in 1599, and it seems improbable that until that was done he would have gone farther afield. (*Henry VIII.* was written to order later.) Moreover the play constitutes in certain respects a new departure. The earlier tragedies were primarily tragedies of action; this is primarily a tragedy of character. It is more meditative and more complex; the thoughtful note which is characteristic of the comedies named above is prominent, but the philosophic interest does not predominate as in *Hamlet*, nor is there the same intensity of emotion as in the later tragedies. All of which agrees again with the conclusion that 1600 is the earliest and 1601 the latest date at which we should expect to find the play had been written. Thus the

three classes of evidence are entirely in harmony, and though none of them would be conclusive, taken in conjunction they make the date 1600-1601 practically certain.

2. SOURCES OF THE PLAY.

The sole literary source of Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* was Plutarch, whose 'Lives' he read in North's translation (the mistakes wherein he several times repeats, showing that he had not read the original). North himself translated (1579 and 1595) not from the Greek, but from the French translation by Amyot (1559). I have quoted freely in the notes; but the student is advised to read the 'Lives' of Cæsar, Brutus, and Antony. Professor Skeat's reprint in *Shakespeare's Plutarch* (Macmillan) is the most convenient volume.

A Latin play on the same subject was performed at Oxford in 1582, from which the '*et tu, Brute*' may have been derived; and mention is found of other plays dealing with it. But whether Shakespeare's play was at all affected by these, we have no means of ascertaining. Attention is called in the notes to points which seem to show conclusively that Shakespeare had no first-hand knowledge of the classical writers.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAY.

When Shakespeare set himself to write a historical play, it was not primarily his intention to educate his audience in historical details of which they had been previously ignorant; but he wrote as a dramatist who happened to have found an interesting story to tell in the pages of history. He treated Plutarch and Holinshed very much as he treated Boccaccio. He had not any great regard for accuracy of detail for its own sake, caring only for its dramatic interest. And for that end, speaking broadly, it was of much more importance to follow accepted popular tradition than to defy tradition for the sake of strict historical precision. We all know that in the case of the stories which are most popular in the nursery, children resent any variation on the version to which they are accus-

tomed; and the great public takes very much the same view. Now it may be a very good thing for the child to have a revised version forced upon it, and it doubtless is an excellent thing for the great public to be set right in matters historical; but the dramatic interest suffers if your audience—child or great public—has its attention turned to cavilling at your innovations instead of to the leading motives of the story.

Therefore in telling the story of the fall of Cæsar and of the conspirators Shakespeare deliberately accepted the familiar version as presented in the English translation of Plutarch. It was no part of the dramatist's business to see whether Plutarch told the truth in everything; whether his estimate of the conspirators was a just one; whether the supernatural accompaniments were credible in themselves. It was legitimate from his point of view to use anything and everything that was dramatically effective, and to reject everything unsuited to his purpose.

That Shakespeare followed his original so closely as he has done is no small tribute to the admirably artistic character of Plutarch's narrative. There is hardly a point in the play which is not directly suggested in the *Life of Cæsar*, or *Brutus*, or *Antony*. None of the characters vary appreciably from their portraits as drawn by Plutarch. The very arguments used in the various discussions are reproduced from the same source. Omens and portents reappear with hardly a change of importance except in one particular—the substitution of Cæsar's ghost for Brutus' 'evil angel'. In short, the whole of Shakespeare's material is in Plutarch; yet the play is as completely original, as entirely Shakespearian, as a picture by Turner is a Turner and nothing else. To say that Shakespeare borrowed from Plutarch would be a good deal like saying that Turner 'borrowed' from a landscape.

The play of *Julius Cæsar* has one characteristic in a very much more marked degree than any other of Shakespeare's plays—in the way in which it is pervaded by the notion of irresistible Destiny. Some such effect accompanies almost of necessity any serious introduction of the supernatural; but neither in *Macbeth* nor in *Hamlet* is the idea present with any-