Strictures on Mr. Collier's new edition of Shakespeare, 1858

Dyce Alexander
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Shakespeare, 1858.

By The

London:
John Russell Smith, 36, Soho Square.
1859.
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BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

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JOHN RUSSELL SMITH, 36 SOHO SQUARE.
1859.
Mr. Collier's new edition of *Shakespeare*, — which appeared not long after my own edition, — had been published six months before I even looked into it. Heartily tired of reading and writing about *variae lectiones* and contested passages, I had resolved to defer forming any acquaintance with Mr. Collier's more recent labours till the time arrived,— if it ever came,— when a re-impression of my own *Shakespeare* should be called for: and I only abandoned that resolution on learning, from several quarters, how Mr. Collier had assailed me throughout the whole book.

Besides bringing against me in his Preface sundry charges which are utterly false, Mr. Collier has over and over again, when speaking of me in his Notes, had recourse to such artful misrepresentation as, I believe, was never before practised, except by the most unprincipled hirelings of the press. I do not make this statement unadvisedly: let Mr. Collier,—who is fond of addressing the public about himself and his grievances, — gainsay it if he can: — he may, indeed, attempt to
excuse his *false charges* on the miserable plea that "he wrote in haste, without sufficient inquiry," &c., &c.; but the proofs which I have adduced of his *deliberate misrepresentation* are too strong to admit of even an attempt to invalidate them.

Nor, in attacking me, has Mr. Collier confined himself to my remarks on his former edition and on the performances of his Ms. Corrector. He has hunted through many volumes of early English dramatists which I edited at different periods of my life (some of them dated as far back as 1828); and wherever he could detect what he conceived to be an error, he has drawn it from its lurking-place with great parade,—nay, sometimes (regardless how far he might disfigure the page of Shakespeare) he has introduced a note for the express purpose of exhibiting it. As the early dramatists in question amount to above two dozen volumes, and, with the exception of Marlowe and of Beaumont and Fletcher, were edited by me, for the first time, from the very corrupt old copies, it was hardly to be expected that they should not occasionally afford Mr. Collier opportunities of gratifying his malice by pointing out mistakes and oversights: but it happens also, that frequently, in his hyper-acuteness, he has discovered faults where none exist, and, rivaling the Ms. Corrector, has boldly substituted his own ridiculous emendations for the genuine language of the poets.

Though a portion of the following sheets is occu-
pied with observations on a few (comparatively, a very few) of the many startling things in Mr. Collier's new text of Shakespeare,—those observations are to be considered by the reader as ἐν παθέγγο; the main object of this little work being to expose the ungentlemanly treatment which I have received at the hands of one who seems to take a pleasure in proclaiming that he was once my friend.

A. DYCE.
ERRATA.

P. 32, last line, and p. 33, fourth line, for "Lupus" read "Lopus."