

Review

Author(s): H. V. Routh

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'to the mouth of his self-confident good-for-nothing as the finishing touch of his portrait.' The old banished earl preaches in Lyly's manner, and Heraclide tries to melt her ravisher by similes, and laments her rape in the same fashion. In the notes the editor's interpretation of *zanie*, p. 83, in an unusual sense as *femme de chambre*, seems to me to be quite put out of court on p. 90, where the husband finds his wife's fellow victim, 'his simple *Zanie Capestrano* runne through.' The book is carefully edited, and I have noted only two or three unimportant misprints.

No. 2, *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, supplies an exact and handy reprint of the second regular English comedy and only existing specimen of sixteenth century vernacular University comedy. Mr S.'s observation of character puts his work on a higher plane than would otherwise be appropriate to its farcical plot and broad humour in rustic dialect, savouring more than a little of 'the dungy earth.' The editor briefly but vividly shews the interest of the comedy as a jovial picture of village life at its date; and in the play itself every character lives, from Cocke, the merry boy, to Master Baylye, an arbitrator of disputes as acute and humorous as Justice Clement, without his eccentricity. Perhaps even the portraiture of the two angry dames, 'alike,' as the editor says, 'in suspicion and action, yet subtly differentiated in character,' must yield to that of Hodge. His putting of the male point of view, when he learns the loss of the needle, on which not only the whole story turns, but also the mending of his breeches for the courtship of Kristian Clack, Tom Simson's maid, has only to be read once to be remembered ever:

Wherto serued your hands and eies, but this your neele to kepe
What deuill had you els to do, ye kept ich wot no sheepe
Cham faine a brode to dyg and delue, in water, myre and claye
Sossing and possing in the durte, styll from day to daye
A hundred things that be abrode, cham set to see them weele
And foure of you syt idle at home, and can not keepe a neele.

The editor's notes, so far as they go, are useful and to the point. Perhaps in suggesting that *this* (v, ii, 308) is a misprint for *'tis*, he has considered and rejected the possibility of its being the contraction of *this is* which sometimes occurs. It would have been well to note (with defence of the original) the reading *sayth!* for *sayth* (I, iii, 17) in Dr Bradley's text (*Representative English Comedies*, ed. Gayley, 1907), and that *breafast* (II, ii, 64) is not a misprint. The following appear to be such, *it* for *if* (II, v, 5) and *y* for *y'* (v, ii, 196). A welcome addition to the book is an appendix containing the earlier version of the famous drinking song in Act II, as printed by Dyce in 1843.

LIVERPOOL.

R. H. CASE.

Die Charakterprobleme bei Shakespeare. Eine Einführung in das Verständnis des Dramatikers. Von LEVIN L. SCHÜCKING, Professor an der Universität, Breslau. Leipzig: B. Tauchnitz. 1919.

'In all commentating upon Shakespeare, there has been a radical error never yet mentioned. It is the error of attempting to expound his

characters, to account for their actions, to reconcile their inconsistencies, not as if they were the coinage of a human brain, but as if they had been actual existences upon earth.'

E. A. POE, *Marginalia: Addenda*.

Different ages and countries may have produced poets as great as or greater than Shakespeare, but none has produced a dramatist who has harped more intensely and convincingly on the eccentricities, follies, failures, weaknesses and enormities of human nature. In all the long procession of his outstanding characters, hardly one has made the best of his or her life. This disconcerting realism has proved too much for the Nineteenth Century, and while poets have recreated the actual world, after their own imaginations, critics (some of them hardly less poetical) have read into Shakespeare's mimic world the tendencies which they yearned to feel around them. A reaction was sure to come and since the dawn of the Twentieth Century, scholars have here and there begun to treat the problems of Shakespeare in a less idealising spirit. For the most part, their work has been tentative—isolated monographs on some particular play or aspect of Shakespeare's dramas. And now, as soon as Peace is declared there appears a German book which incorporates all these beginnings, but deals with the whole Shakesperean question comprehensively and *ex cathedra*. It is in fact the first manifesto of the new movement.

Under these circumstances, it is necessary to give a full analysis of the argument, all the more as the work has not yet been translated. Prof. Schücking is thoroughly scientific and practical in his method. He is not embarking on an appreciation of Shakespeare's genius, or on an examination of his interpretation of life. He confines his attention to the unexpected difficulties which arise in studying Shakespeare's characters. For he maintains that the puzzles and enigmas ought to be unexpected. Shakespeare's work was intended to be popular. It did not rely on the support of a circle or cult, as so many modern poems and plays have done; it did not even aim at being modern. The dramatist seems to have chosen the subjects and the *mise-en-scène* which appealed to the ordinary taste and average intelligence of the time and he appears to have been content with at any rate partial anonymity. And yet his plays are far less intelligible than many other old compositions destined for more critical and sophisticated audiences. In Prof. Schücking's opinion commentators such as Löning, Dowden, Bradley and others are perplexed and confused because they are out of sympathy with Shakespeare's mind. They have assumed that the poet's intellect was dominated by quite modern speculations, while all the time his creativeness was moulded and directed by the primitive conditions of the Elizabethan theatre.

Shakespeare had in view a stage on which the actors practically mixed with the onlookers and, thanks to this intimacy, retained something of the atmosphere of story-tellers. So the characters were designed to be on familiar terms with the audience, to be conscious of their

presence, to explain their own qualities or comment on the plot and even to address the spectators personally. Thus Lady Macbeth talks of her own designs as 'fell,' Cordelia, Brutus and Henry V offend against the most elementary canon of modesty and Iago is openly convinced of his own villany. But the commentators, accustomed to the aloofness of the modern stage, and to its attention to spectacular realism, cannot understand these inconsistencies. The test example is the character of Julius Caesar. His self-glorification seems so excessive to modern theatrical ideas, that Brandes cannot explain his speeches without supposing that this colossus has become a dotard. The truth is that Caesar's greatness fills the whole piece. He is throughout an heroic character, masterful in every word and gesture and even after Death his spirit can conquer the living. To give him individuality, Shakespeare introduced a number of personal traits—apoplexy, superstition, susceptibility to flattery—and he thus becomes a man without losing the attributes of a superman. The audience, even if they had forgotten the Caesar of the medieval romances, undoubtedly expected the character to make this impression; and such impression is necessary to the dramatic situation. But how could the effect be produced? The play does not deal with the 'famous victories of Julius Caesar.' In fact he is passive throughout. He could appear great only by self-praise or by the praise of others. Shakespeare probably had less scruple in employing self-praise because there was already a dramatic tradition to represent Caesar in the spirit of Seneca's *Hercules Oetaeus*. But the dramatist had another and very likely more cogent reason in that no other personage could be suitably employed at the beginning of the play to praise Caesar, whereas the audience were quite prepared for a character to explain his own good or bad qualities much as the old figures in the moralities introduced themselves with 'I am....'

This objective treatment is the first essential difference between the modern and the Shakespearean theatres. The figures sometimes express not what would really be passing in their own minds, but what the spectators are intended to think about them or about the situation. Next to self-revelation, comes the light thrown on leading characters by their associates, such as the mob's opinion of Coriolanus or Oliver's admiration for Orlando whom he is trying to kill, or Edmund's appreciation of Edgar. Troilus is a good example. He is treated with contempt or with pity by commentators such as Kreyssig, Wolff, Tatlock. Yet his description of himself and his portrait by Ulysses make it clear that in reality he is an heroic character, sincere and passionate, who is learning his first lesson in the faithlessness of women. Similarly Macbeth is not a man of action and of iron will, as Ulrici, Kreyssig and Brandes imagine, nor in the first place an intellectual with an over-active imagination as Raleigh thinks. The key to his character is found in Lady Macbeth's portrait of her husband in act I, sc. 5, and all through the play her attitude shows that his struggle is against weakness and irresolution, not against his better nature. Thus many of Shakespeare's speeches are not illustrative of the speakers but of the characters which

they describe, or of some other topic on which the dramatist wishes to speak, as when he makes Mercutio describe dreams or Polonius give his paternal counsel, so full of wisdom and epigram.

If commentators had noticed this feature of Elizabethan technique, they would have been saved from many blunders such as Vischer, Conrad, Wolff and Löning make, when they attempt to explain some speech which Shakespeare composed without bothering to adapt it to the speaker. Commentators would have avoided even more ludicrous mistakes, if they had realised the next important difference between the primitive and modern theatre, namely that not only speeches but whole scenes are sometimes isolated from the plot and have a *dénouement* of their own. Rünelin goes so far as to say that scenes, such as the wooing of Anne by Richard III (1, 2), have an isolated completeness. At any rate there is a tendency to heighten scene-effects at the expense of the whole and to introduce words or statements, as Goethe pointed out, which are inconsistent with the rest of the plot, but give a greater force or completeness to particular episodes. Generally speaking, this tendency to construct 'step-by-step,' has had little effect on the unity of the principal characters, but there is a striking exception in the case of Cleopatra. In Act I Cleopatra is neither queenly nor truehearted but a coquette whose mentality centres in sensuality and passion. In the last acts she becomes essentially noble and as devoted as Juliet or Desdemona. Critics have looked for some thread of continuity in these rôles. If Shakespeare had intended the character to be consistent and to undergo some natural evolution, he would have put an explanatory speech into the mouth of Cleopatra or of her associates or, as in the case of Lady Macbeth, he would have indicated in the opening scenes the qualities which were to survive in the last act. Probably he began by vilifying Cleopatra to gratify the conventional idea of a seductress; or he may have intended the character as the copy of some model such as 'the dark lady of the sonnets.' Then towards the close of the play he changed his mind, possibly for dramatic effect, and turned his courtesan into an ideal study.

Antony and Cleopatra does not only exemplify the 'step-by-step' mode of composition. It will be remembered that after Antony's death, Cleopatra is fully resolved on suicide, but yet holds back some treasure and again sends messengers to Caesar. MacCallum and Boas suggest that her old selfish and covetous instincts have again temporarily got the better of her. Such an explanation may suit the allusiveness of modern art but not the methods of the Shakespearean stage. It is far more likely that the dramatist, however hasty his perusal of Plutarch, had found there certain episodes which he could not bring himself to forgo, even though they were no longer in harmony with his now idealised creation. In fact Shakespeare was so dependent on his data, that he sometimes sacrifices his dramatic sense. It almost looks as if he did not in every case stop to realise the full range of historical facts in relation to the psychology of his characters. The older school of critics has gone astray in insisting that the story was secondary and that the

starting point was the characters and dispositions of the leading figures. In reality Shakespeare's process seems to have been just the opposite. He seems to have started with a plot or situation, generally ready-made, and then, while constructing the individuality of his characters and filling them with warm life, to have persisted in fitting them into the prearranged scheme of events. Thus he frequently left discrepancies which commentators have been at their wit's end to explain away. The most conspicuous example of ill-adjustment of conduct to character will be found in *Hamlet*. The original *Hamlet* is lost, but from various sources and models, including Saxo Grammaticus, *Der bestrafte Brudermord*, Belleforest and Kyd we may conclude that Shakespeare found the main outlines of his plot ready to hand, especially the ghost, the motive, the need of secrecy, the simulation of madness and something of the trap-laying and game of life-and-death between the murderer and the avenger. Shakespeare introduced into this framework an addition of his own: the temperamental melancholic. This type, which has been analysed by Overbury and exemplified in Hieronimo (*Spanish Tragedy*), in Antonio (*Antonio's Revenge*) and in the comic Lord Dowsecer (*A Humorous Day's Mirth*) displayed in the age of Shakespeare well-recognised symptoms. The melancholic was inclined to monomania, misogyny, and misanthropy, and this state of mind was betrayed, in his outward conduct by irritability, intolerance, lack of self-control and indecision. If the melancholic still retained any healthy instincts, they led him to music and natural scenery. Such is Hamlet's fundamental character, as his own words and appearance make clear in the opening scenes. Shakespeare remains surprisingly true to this first portrait; the outward signs are sleeplessness, restlessness, absorption in stray thoughts, and the inward symptoms are moral weakness, inability to carry out a plan and irritability which finds vent in his intolerance of Polonius and in his behaviour at Ophelia's burial. All these qualities are found in Overbury's character-sketch, but Shakespeare has developed them so vividly and daringly and has so far ennobled his hero's perceptions with regard to his dead father and to Horatio, that modern commentators have mistaken this ruminating and disillusioned dilettante for an idealist. But he no more answers to the Elizabethan ideal than he does to ours. He is amazingly callous in shedding blood. He is brutal to Ophelia and to his mother, while his erotic fancies and his irresponsibility are familiar symptoms of melancholy. When he finds the king at his prayers, he does not spare him out of horror of violence but because of the Italian belief (incidentally illustrated in *The Unfortunate Traveller*) that a man must be caught and killed in sin before he can be made to taste of the full bitterness of death. He is by no means one of those gentle timid souls, absorbed in questions of world-importance. He has moments of feverish activity, for he is no coward and like all weak men is subject to excitability. But he is none the less the typical melancholic, and, while Laertes plunges into action with all the resolution of an epic figure, Hamlet, like any other vacillating character, takes refuge in irony and sarcasm. His censorious attitude has quite wrongly

directed critics such as Türk, Wolff and Kuno Fischer to the theoretical side of his self-expression. Hamlet then is a portrait of Elizabethan melancholy and though full of perplexities and inconsistencies for the nineteenth century reader, would at once be recognised and understood by the contemporaries of Shakespeare. It remains to see how far this pathological case is adapted to a story which descends from the Dark Ages. Here again the modern critic becomes almost a melancholic himself in his endeavour to reconcile what Shakespeare left irreconcilable. In the original story, the murder was perpetrated openly while Amlothe, Amleth or Hamlet was still a child and as the usurper was prepared for reprisals, the heir had to use cunning. So Shakespeare's Hamlet has to do the same, and more or less in the same manner, though his antic disposition, under the altered circumstances, increases rather than allays suspicion. In an earlier piece, a crazy girl finds traces of murder, while wandering through a wood, so apparently for this reason Ophelia was driven mad. She serves no other purpose except to facilitate the eaves-dropping scene and to occasion Hamlet's displays of irritability. The character of the usurper king is equally ill-adapted. In the first court scene he appears as an able, forbearing, tactful and generous ruler and stepfather. As the story progresses he shows the tenderest love for his wife, sympathy for Ophelia and courage and calmness in the rebellion led by Laertes. Yet both Hamlet and his murdered father describe him as an unnatural and sensual murderer, and then, in opposition to both these aspects, Hamlet's play moves him so much that he makes a full confession in his prayer. Whether Claudius is a criminal debauchee or a courteous man of action, or both, this act of conscience-stricken self-condemnation is inconsistent with his character. Commentators have endeavoured to justify this psychological discrepancy without realising that no justification was possible or necessary. Self-revelation was a canon of the primitive theatre and this scene (III, 3) is inserted out of deference to that tradition.

So far we have discussed the inconsistencies and discrepancies which arise when Shakespeare adheres too closely to his model. Other difficulties arise on the few occasions when he unexpectedly abandons it, as in *Lear*. He adopts his predecessors' starting point and represents a king making the division of his kingdom depend on his daughters' bombastic expressions of love. Critics such as Vischer and Bradley are mistaken in trying to find an explanation of Lear's amazing conduct. Shakespeare accepted the situation with all its impossibilities and then reconstructed the sequel so as to make it suit and explain so strange a beginning. If Lear's attitude to Cordelia was to be in the least convincing, he must be represented as irrational and abnormal. Now the spectacle of an old man sinking into idiocy had already become popular in the character of Titus Andronicus and Kyd's Hieronimo had supplied the model of a headstrong old man who is wounded by destiny in his tenderest susceptibilities but continues to fight against the inevitable till he goes mad. Shakespeare found that both these theatrical successes would serve as models for his purpose, so he made Lear a man of

impulsive anger and of almost insane intolerance. Thus his sudden vindictiveness against the child of his heart becomes at any rate intelligible, and throughout the play, Shakespeare sustains and develops these attributes. And yet the dramatist does not intend his character to lose the sympathy of the spectators. The whole play emphasises the three-fold outrage against age, royalty and paternity and none of the old man's faithful followers make any reproach against his passion. His very defects are the inverse of his qualities. So once again commentators are perplexed by these two apparently contradictory aspects of his character and search below the surface for some occult explanation. Dowden and Bradley go so far as to represent the play as a transition from arrogance and blindness to sympathy and fellow-feeling, through suffering. The real solution will be found in Shakespeare's desire to create the kind of man who might well have committed the acts of public and private folly represented in the opening situation. So he made him the shadow of a great king, for whom the spectators cannot entirely lose all respect, but one bordering on insanity, through age and temperament. Then the dramatist drags him through one calamity after another till his reason entirely breaks down and he becomes a doting imbecile. Had Lear's intellect been sufficiently strong to withstand all the shocks that he endures, his conduct towards Cordelia would have remained inexplicable. The play is a drama, not of spiritual rebirth, but of decay and collapse beginning with the disinheriting of his favourite daughter and ending in the heart-rending inanities which he gabbles over her corpse.

Thus in *Lear* the character and the plot correspond, but, it will be noticed, only so far as the character originates in the plot and continues to depend on it. In many cases Shakespeare seems to think more of preserving the plot than of making the characters behave convincingly. At any rate, when a discrepancy arises, as in *Much Ado*, *All's Well*, and *Measure for Measure*, the characters are more often at fault than is the story. This is particularly true when the action is derived from more than one source, as in the case of the sub-plot in *Lear*. There is nothing impossible, or even improbable in a bastard ousting the legitimate son from the affections of his father, but both Rümelin and Tolstoi have pointed out how unconvincing Edmund's accusations are and with what incredible stupidity Edgar contributes towards confirming these suspicions. Here again unnecessary attempts have been made to justify such makeshifts. The real explanation will probably be found in the discovery that these scenes, however unpsychological, are eminently 'actable.' And if they are not also consistent and true to life, it must be remembered that Shakespeare sometimes nods.

Sometimes Shakespeare makes his characters act with what looks like an insufficiency of motive, sometimes he explains and develops their motives and thereby raises more controversy. Yet he is not obscure. He is, if anything, over-explicit. But he employs the monologue to expound his character's thoughts and the commentator, accustomed to the dialogue of modern plays, will not believe that these figures are speaking the truth about themselves. For instance Kreyssig, Gervinus,

Ulrici, Brandes and Bradley all insist that Iago's alleged motives are not genuine and look for others. Yet the Ancient makes it clear that he really suspected Othello of adultery with Emilia and keenly resented the promotion of Cassio over his head. Another striking example of the primitive use of the monologue will be found in Prince Harry's speech at the beginning of *Henry IV* Pt I. All attempts by Kreyssig, Brandes and Wolff to harmonise this speech with the Prince's character are inadmissible. It is an exposition, statement or description of the situation, giving a loyal colour to the events. Similarly the rather hypocritical exhortation to prayer addressed to Falstaff by the same character at the end of Pt II is another commentary, exalting the position of a king, and not a speech in which some subtle state of mind is implied.

What is true of the monologues, is true in a greater degree of the asides; they are finger-posts to indicate in what direction the characters are moving. They are not utterances inspired by some complex mentality at which the commentator must guess. In fact all that school of criticism is mistaken, which maintains that Shakespeare was unable to present his picture objectively and which concludes that any passage needs expansion and point. In some plays, such as *Henry VIII*, it must be confessed that his work seems incomplete and disconnected, and it cannot be denied that the climax of *Antony and Cleopatra*, the flight of the Egyptian queen, is left unexplained. But in the case of nearly every other disputed point, as for instance Hamlet's madness or Lady Macbeth's swoon (II, 2), the causes or motives are not given only because they are obvious. An excellent example will be found in the *Taming of the Shrew*. Shakespeare gives no clue as to how a ruffian like Petruchio really domesticated a spiteful and malignant woman so quickly and thoroughly. The explanation is simply that there is no explanation; Shakespeare was merely telling an old tale in the newest and most surprising way. Katherine was probably copied from one of the 'roaring boys' and Petruchio from any soldier of fortune. Yet in spite of the simplicity and directness of the piece, no play has been so refined and intellectualised by commentators such as Schomburg, Sievers and Ulrici.

Are there then no other difficulties than those created by the incurable modernity of commentators? Yes, there are some, due to the dramatist's way of writing. Notwithstanding all arguments to the contrary, Shakespeare's work is stamped with the mark of impetuosity and impulse; his development as a poet is uncertain, and, despite enormous progress, he is liable to amazing lapses. We have the lack of concentration in *Antony and Cleopatra*, side by side with the studied form of *Othello*, the accurate local colour of *Romeo and Juliet* and the absence of it in other plays. He gives Iago too many motives and Macbeth too few. To explain these lapses as a device to bring certain points into relief is to confuse the method of Shakespeare with that of Lenbach and of Rodin. The most likely solution will be found in the personality of the poet himself. Shakespeare had the gift of assimilating himself to exceptional and extraordinary natures. He seems to have infused himself into all the ramifications of their complex or eccentric temperaments,

so that he did not analyse their qualities but felt them as a whole. Thus he puts into their mouths utterances which exactly correspond to the particular combination of emotions, and which give the effect of the speaker's personality but which lose their significance if they are botanised and traced back to their psychological sources; much as the different strings of a musical instrument must all sound in unison if they are to produce a chord. While composing, he probably lived so intensely in his characters, and identified himself so completely with their thoughts and feelings, that he sometimes lost the power of looking at them from outside. As he himself understood their antecedents, he forgot that the spectator did not, and so he sometimes passed over necessary information without which the situation cannot be fully appreciated. Moreover, he seems to have been endowed with an almost praeternatural rapidity of thought. We find in his style an unparalleled compression of ideas, rich in images and metaphors. And just as in this mental shorthand he now and then skips a thought, so in the construction of his plot, his mind overleaps some episode which he had imagined or found in his source-book, and hurries us on to the climax, unconscious that he had omitted some preliminary. Thus gaps and obscurities arise in his work, but as they are not intentional, the most obvious explanation is generally the best. When that is not forthcoming, the commentator must search for the lost key among the manners and ideas of the age or in the history of the theatre. Above all he must keep in view the exigencies of the Elizabethan stage and the taste of the audiences. It is a task for specialists, not for the unprofessional speculator however ingenious. Amateurs have worshipped Shakespeare as a god, but like all votaries, they have made him a god after their own image. They have read into his pages the thoughts which seemed to them the most beautiful or the most affecting, until they have made this great Elizabethan genius as highly sensitised as a twentieth-century intellectual.

Such is Prof. Schücking's solution of the mysteries of Shakespeare's psychology. The book is full of unostentatious learning and its pages are enlivened with some almost Heinesque touches of humour and sarcasm. At the same time its arrangement is a trifle confusing and its suggestive theories are propounded in that awkward scholastic style which, alas! we have come to expect from academic experts in general, and from German professors in particular. The present reviewer has in a few instances altered the sequence of ideas and has in nearly every instance abandoned the professor's phrasing, in order to allow for condensation. In spite of these precautions, the bare analysis of the book, though far from complete, has exceeded the space available for reviews. But in any case it was more desirable to expound than to discuss Prof. Schücking's views. Most scholars will probably be prepared to accept his principle and point of view. In fact some of his propositions have already been enunciated in Dr J. E. Schmidt's *Shakespeares Dramen und sein Schauspielerberuf*, while readers of J. M. Robertson's and E. E. Stoll's treatises on *Hamlet* will be struck by some surprising

similarities, though all three books appeared in 1919. At the same time, the book raises innumerable points of controversy. A scholar who propounds a theory is almost bound to over-emphasise certain aspects of his material. It is doubtful, for instance, whether the professor's estimate of Lear, Macbeth, Ophelia or Claudius will be accepted as final, while on the subject of Hamlet no two people can be expected to agree. He leaves many difficulties unsolved, such as the real significance of the jesters and of characters like Pandarus and Enobarbus. Above all, his low estimate of the theatre-going public will not meet with universal acceptance. However, the full discussion of any one of these questions would have taken up most of the allotted space, and the first duty of a reviewer is to give a fair hearing to his author. This is all the more desirable as mathematical certainty is unobtainable in literary matters, and the chief merit of a work of criticism or research is to make its readers think. As such, *Die Charakterprobleme bei Shakespeare* is indispensable to any scholar and it is good to hear that an English version will shortly be forthcoming.

H. V. ROUTH.

LONDON.

A History of Modern Colloquial English. By HENRY CECIL WYLD.
London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1920. 8vo. viii + 398 pp. 21s. net.

England, the birth-place of many great grammarians, has never yet taken any deep interest in her own linguistic studies. With the exception of Etymology, brought by Skeat, Bradley, Murray, and Craigie within the range of the general reader, the scientific study of our own tongue has hitherto been widely regarded as the harmless amusement of foreigners, whose learned monographs do not call for serious attention on the part of good patriots.

But what Skeat and his colleagues did for Etymology, has at last been done for Historical Grammar, which can now make its appeal to all circles of the learned, and to wider circles still.

Professor Wyld stands among the great authorities on his subject. His researches carry weight among specialists, and incidentally he is the author of the first English text-book to deal as adequately with Modern as with Medieval English.

With his *History of Modern Colloquial English* he now points out to the philologist the rightful position of the living language, and to the historian of literature the close connexion between the history of grammar and the history of thought and of manners.

The book before us is no mere text-book. It does not claim to set forth all that the student requires to know for the purpose of any examination, nor does it aim at being an encyclopaedia of its subject. On the other hand, it is a good deal more than chips from an English workshop: yet chips there are, as well as finished craftsmanship, enough to set many