THE FIRST EDITION OF BEN JONSON'S 'EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR'

By W. W. GREG

IT has long been a matter of general knowledge that there are two editions of *Every Man out of his Humour* dated 1600, one printed for William Holme, the other for Nicholas Linge, and I think it has been generally recognized that of these the Holme quarto is the earlier. So far as I know at present the only copies of this are in the Bodleian and Dyce libraries: the Linge quarto is much commoner, being also found in the British Museum (C. 57. c. 22) and several other collections. Both editions were reprinted by Professor W. Bang and myself in the *Materialien zur Kunde des älteren englischen Dramas*, Louvain, 1907. In 1908 the British Museum purchased a copy of the play with Holme's imprint and the date 1600 (C. 34. i. 29), presumably in the belief that it belonged to the edition already represented at Bodley and South Kensington. In fact it does not; the Museum had by a fortunate accident acquired a copy—poor it is true—of the hitherto unsuspected first edition!

For twelve years the volume has stood on the shelves without its importance being commonly realized. I see from my notes that in August 1914 I examined and identified it, but the date will explain not only why I did not publish the fact but how I came indeed to lose all recollection of it, and it was not till I resumed work on dramatic bibliography a few weeks ago that I made the discovery afresh.

The Museum quarto differs from those previously known

in having the collation A-R instead of A-Q only. The title-page agrees closely with the other bearing Holme's name, but is readily distinguished by the fact that instead of Peter Short's device (with the initials P. S. and the motto 'Et vsque ad nubes veritas tua': no. 278 in Dr. McKerrow's list) it has an oblong ornament (measuring 25 × 52 mm.) of two winged satyr-like figures supporting a vase of flowers. The copy, I have said, is a poor one: the edge of the title-leaf has been repaired, H₃ is mutilated and a portion of the text on each page lost, A₁ which was presumably blank is missing, the whole is not over clean, and worst of all I am afraid that two leaves, R₃-4, are wanting at the end. It is true that the text of the play ends with the word 'Finis' on R₂^b, and it would be quite possible to suppose that the alternative ending, which fills a further three pages in the other editions was an afterthought and did not appear in the first. But unfortunately, although the chain marks on R₁ and R₂ correspond very satisfactorily, there is on one leaf a portion of a water-mark of which no trace appears on the other, and while one cannot speak with confidence, it seems probable that the two leaves do not belong together, and that consequently R must originally have been a full sheet of four leaves. I should add that though I have spoken of the volume as a quarto, strictly speaking only signatures H, P, Q, R in the Museum

BRITISH MUSEUM QUARTO, C1^b

Carl. O good words, good words, a well-timberd fellow, he would ha' made a good columnne and he had been thought on when the house was a building. O art thou *Enter boy with*
 come? well said: giue me; boy, fill, so: *a glasse.*
 here's a cup of wine sparkles like a diamond. Gentlewomen,
 (I am sworne to put them in first) and Gentlemen, a round, in
 place of a bad Prologue, I drinke this good draught to your
 health here, Canarie, the verie *Elixir* and spirit of *(He drinks.)*
 wine: this is that our Poet calls Castalian liquor, whē he comes
 abroad (now and then) once in a fortnight, and makes a good

copy are of this format, the rest being of that puzzling size (it might perhaps be called 'bastard quarto') which is commonly folded in fours, and agrees in size and shape with a normal quarto, but according to wire and water marks should be an octavo.

But though in state of preservation the Museum quarto (if for convenience I may continue to give it this name) leaves something to be desired, it nevertheless possesses unique interest as being the only copy so far recorded of what is presumably the first edition, and unquestionably an earlier edition than any hitherto described. This appears from a number of points. It is suggested to begin with by the fact that it is better printed than either of its rivals, and confirmed by its running into seventeen sheets whereas they are confined to sixteen. Conclusive bibliographical proof of its precedence is afforded by the parallel passages printed at the foot of these pages, in which it will be observed that the quite unreasonable space left for the stage directions in the Bodley-Dyce edition results from the compositor having made the endings of the short lines agree with the Museum edition. Further evidence will also be found in the manner in which the Bodley-Dyce edition was set up, a subject upon which it may be worth while to say a few words.

The first edition appears to have been rapidly exhausted,

BODLEY-DYCE QUARTO, B4^a

Carl. O good wordes, good wordes, a well-timberde fellow, hee woulde ha'made a good colunne and he had been thought on when the house was a building. O art thou
Enter Boy with a glasse.
 come? wel sayd: giue mee; Boy, fil, so:
 here's a cup of wine sparkles like a Diamonde. Gentlewomen (I am sworne to put them in first) and Gentlemen, a round, in place of a bad prologue, I drink this good draught to your health here, Canarie, the verie *Elixir* and Spirit of
(He drinks.)
 wine: this is that our Poet calles Castalian liquor, when hee comes abroad (nowe and then) once in a fortnight, and makes a good Meale

for there are signs of haste in the production of the second. The copy was divided between two compositors and the play being a long one it was determined to save expense by reducing by one the number of the sheets. The compositors worked with slightly different founts of type and we find A setting up the first half, A-H, and B the second half, I-Q, of the new edition. The first edition, containing seventeen sheets, when it was distributed to the two compositors, was divided in the middle of sheet I, I 1-2 falling to A's share, and I 3-4 to B's. Each then had to save two leaves, or four pages, in resetting. But in the original edition one leaf (A1) or two pages were blank at the beginning, and though we do not know for certain it is possible that one page (R4^b) was blank at the end. It follows that compositor A began by saving two pages straight away by placing the title on A1, and so in effect only had to compress to the extent of two pages, while compositor B had to save at least three pages by closer setting. Having saved his two initial pages, A could, of course, gain nothing over the title-page and 'The names of the actors' that together occupied the next leaf. But he got to work in earnest on the descriptive 'Characters' that follow, compressing the four pages of the original into three. He was thus free to begin the text on A3^b instead of B1 and it remained to save one page only out of a total of 60. In order to do this he adopted a page of 37 lines in place of the 36 of the original, with the result that by the end of his sheet E (F2^b of the original) he had saved exactly 36 lines, or one page of the original, and had come into agreement with his copy. He now quietly dropped his extra line, reducing his page to 36, and followed the original page for page to the end of his section. Compositor B began with I3^a of the original, making it I1^a of his reprint. But, though he had to save no less than three pages of text on a total of 67, he did not lengthen his page as A had done. I suspect that the reason for this may

have been that the two pages forming the first opening of his section, I3^b and I4^a, were already of 37 lines in the original, and that he failed to notice that they were exceptional: 38 lines would probably have made the page inconveniently long. But there were plenty of other opportunities of saving, for the original compositor had put plenty of lead in headings and directions and much of this B was able to omit, besides occasionally tucking in lines that had previously been turned over. By these means he had saved one page by the end of N2^a (which corresponded with the foot of his M3^b), two by the end of O4^a (= O1^a), and three by the end of R1^b (= Q2^a). The next two pages, R2^a and R2^b, he reproduced exactly on Q2^b and Q3^a, the second being not quite full. Whether his remaining three pages are reproduced page for page we cannot at present tell. The first is in larger type, which does not suggest that he was pressed for space: on the other hand on the last, which is quite full, there are no leads separating the text from the stage direction and 'Grege' that follow, so that it is quite possible that the original compositor ran over on to his fourth and last page.

The reprint is astonishingly exact. In half a dozen pages compared in different parts I have found no variation of reading whatever, and even minor differences of spelling, &c. are rare. There are a few wrong founts, a wrong word division, and a failure to indent. In line 4399¹ (the last speech of the revised ending) the first edition, like its successors, reads:

That (spight of pitie) betray themselves,
where I imagine 'pitie' (eds. 2, 3 'pittie') to be a misprint for 'petic' (the passage is not in the folio: Gifford printed 'pity, do' silently).

Compositor A began working with minute accuracy, but grew slightly less careful as he proceeded; B is on the whole even more faithful. A curious feature of the first edition is a sprinkling

¹ According to the numbering in the *Materialien* edition.

of instances in which 'u' and 'v' and 'i' and 'j' are used according to the modern and not the old convention. These anomalies were normalized by A but retained by B. It is certainly a complete surprise to me to find Elizabethan compositors working with such fidelity as this.

What I have said should leave no doubt as to the priority of the Museum over the Bodley-Dyce quarto. Nor is there any question of that of Holme's second over Linge's. The fact that these agree page for page of course makes it impossible that they should be independent reprints of the first edition. Similarly the fact that in every case in which their readings differ Holme's second agrees with his first obviously proves that it was not printed from Linge's. There are just sixty such instances and of these exactly two-thirds are apostrophied contractions which are expanded in Linge's edition, only to be contracted again, in almost every case, in the folio of 1616. I quote a few instances :

<i>Line.</i>	<i>Holme 1.</i>	<i>Holme 2.</i>	<i>Linge.</i>	<i>Folio.</i>
640	bankrupts	bankrupts	Bankroutes	bankrupts
645	placable	placable	peaceable	placable
800	one and twentith	one and twentith	[omits]	one and tvventieth
815	I'not	I'not	Is not	I' not
842	in paper	in paper	in a paper	in paper
979	runs	runnes	turnes	runs
1180	might see	might see	might but see	might see
1259	innated	innated	inward	innated
1286	rarefi'd	rarefi'd	ratifide	rarefi'd
1325, 1333	it's	it's	it is	it's
1339	'tis	'tis	it is	'tis
2077	pr'y thee	pr'y thee	pray thee	pr'y thee
3138	easyly	easyly	easily	easily

I may add that most of the small points of spelling in which Holme's second edition differs from his first reappear in that of Linge. Only in one case out of every five or six in the passages I have collated does Linge's print return, evidently by

accident, to the original spelling. The following are the most noteworthy of both classes :

<i>Line.</i>	<i>Holme 1.</i>	<i>Holme 2.</i>	<i>Linge.</i>	<i>Folio.</i>
132	publicke	publike	publike	publicke
181	furie	fury	fury	fury
182	bodie	body	body	body
196	Cheefely	Chiefely	Chiefely	Chiefly
444	Gentlewomen,	Gentlewomen	Gentlewomen	Gentlewomen
2231	<i>moodie</i>	<i>moody</i>	<i>moody</i>	<i>moody</i>
2232	<i>Heauen</i>	<i>beauen</i>	<i>beauen</i>	<i>beauen</i>
2233	Let's	Lets	Lets	let's
2246	Sbloud	S'bloud	S'bloud	Sbloud
2250	ask't	askt	askt	ask't
2257	mou'd	moou'd	moou'd	mou'd
2270	Looke you	Lookey ou	Looke y ou	Looke you
4386	strange	straunge	straunge	[<i>passage omitted</i>]
443	well . . . fill	wel . . . fil	well . . . fill	well . . . fill
446	Prologue	prologue	Prologue	prologue
448	calls	calles	cals	calls
2204	peece	piece	peece	peece

(and six instances of the addition or omission of final -e)

Whether all these editions really appeared in 1600 is open to doubt. The play was duly entered to Holme in the Stationers' Register on 8 April 1600. Little is known of Holme, who worked partly at Chester and only published a few books in London. He only made one transfer of a single book, a biblical dialogue, and that to J. Helme : nothing is known as to what became of his rights after his disappearance in 1615. But there is a transfer of our play, dated 28 April 1638, to Richard Bishop (the printer of the 1640 folio) from John Smethwick, who must therefore have claimed some rights in the play, and Smethwick is known to have acquired Linge's rights on his retirement in 1607, though our play is not mentioned as among the books transferred on 19 November that year. It looks therefore as though Linge's rights, however acquired, were recognized, and if his edition really appeared in 1600 we may

presume that he had come to some private arrangement with Holme. At the same time there is, I think, something a little suspicious about the extreme brevity of the imprint: 'London, Printed for Nicholas Linge, 1600', which is unpleasantly suggestive of Pavier's frauds in 1619. Linge's device, which appears on the title-page, is not known in any book with a later date than 1607, but if we suppose that it passed in that year along with other property to John Smethwick, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that he used it for ventures of doubtful honesty, for his reputation at the beginning of his career was not of the best. Be this as it may, his ownership was clearly recognized in 1616, when Holme was no longer in business, and William Stansby, printing the first folio of Jonson's 'Works', placed Smethwick's name on the special title-page of *Every Man out of his Humour*.

Holme's second edition was, of course, printed by Peter Short, whose device appears on the title-page. The ornament in his first edition ought to enable the printer of this likewise to be identified, but I have not yet succeeded in doing so.