

ANTHONY MUNDAY AND HIS BOOKS

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ANTHONY MUNDAY has sometimes been under-rated, but I have no wish to put in a claim for him as a long-neglected genius. If justification for this paper is needed I would rather base it on his inconvenient Jack-in-the-box habit of appearing suddenly in the midst of some respectable academic controversy, as if maliciously determined to introduce as many complications and uncertainties as possible. He has thus succeeded in compelling every now and again the more or less grudging consideration of the scholar, so that the results of an independent study of his career may have some interest. He was associated at one time or another with many of the finest dramatists of the age, he worked in collaboration with Dekker, Webster, and Middleton, and he seems to have been the chief writer of a play to which Shakespeare himself may have contributed. Independently, too, he has this claim to urge—that he was an Elizabethan of remarkable longevity—being eighty when he died—and that he moved all his life, as one might say, in the best circles—best, that is, in so far as the production of literature was concerned. He comes before us as an actor, apprentice, poet, spy, journalist, recusant-hunter, pamphleteer, playwright, pageant-poet, antiquary, translator, citizen, and draper. The bare facts of his life provide us with an ‘Elizabethan document’ which more than repays study, and there is, finally, as I hope to show, intrinsic literary merit in some of his work.

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In Munday's case there are no materials for a genealogical preamble. Like Joseph Andrews 'it is sufficiently certain that he had as many ancestors as the best man living', and with that we can be well content, knowing only of his father that he was named Christopher, that he was a freeman of the Drapers' Company, and that he died before 1576. Although Munday is a common name in the London parish registers of that time, no record of Christopher's marriage has yet been discovered, so that his wife's name is unknown, and the only information we have about her is that she survived her husband and was still living in 1581. No record of Anthony's birth has yet been traced, but he speaks of himself as 'a City child', and couples himself with his friend, the antiquary Stow, when speaking of 'this Royal City . . . birthplace and breeder to us both'. The year of his birth is known because, although his monument in St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, was burnt in the Great Fire, his epitaph is recorded in the 1633 edition of Stow's *Survey of London*, and states that he died on 10 August 1633, at the age of eighty. There appears, therefore, no reason to doubt that he was born in 1553.

As far as facts are concerned the first twenty years of his life are a blank. It is legitimate, however, in view of his tolerable facility as a translator, and his delight in the conventional Elizabethan habit of quotation from and reference to, the classics, to postulate for him some schooling, apparently good. Three of his manuscripts survive, and it is noticeable that he writes a good easy flowing hand. At some time or another—though almost certainly not during his boyhood—he was a pupil of one 'Claudius Hollyband, Scholemaister, teaching in Paules Churcheyarde by the signe of the 'Lucrece'. Hollyband was a teacher of French and Italian. He dates his *French Scholemaister* from 'Lewisham October 7th 1573', and speaks of his school. In his *French Littelton*,

1566 (1576) and 1578 he writes from his school in 'Paules Churcheyarde', and it is here, presumably that some time between 1576 and 1578 (i.e. most probably before Munday's journey to Rome in 1578) he was Munday's instructor in one or both of these languages. He speaks of him, at all events, as his 'scholler' in a piece of commendatory verse in French, prefixed to Munday's *Mirror of Mutability* in 1579.

There is only slightly more basis to build upon in dealing with those years of his youth immediately preceding his apprenticeship in 1576. It seems that at some time prior to this date he was an actor, but there is no unimpeachable or definite detail regarding his career as such. In 1576, however, there is the following entry in the Stationers' Register, under the Inrollments of Apprentices :

primo die Octobris 1576

John Aldee/Anthonie Mondaie sonne of Christofer Mondaye late of London Draper Deceased hath put himself app[re]ntice to John Aldee stationer for Eighte yeres begynnyng at Bartholomewtyde laste paste.

(Arber, *S.R.* ii. 69.)

Munday must have been a somewhat elderly apprentice, as in the ordinary course of events a boy would have been finishing his term of service at twenty-three, the age at which he bound himself to Alde, the owner of the famous 'Longe Shoppe in the Pultry'. Possibly drapery had been previously tried, under pressure from Christopher Munday, to be forsaken with alacrity once the youth was free to follow his own bent ; or possibly when parental subsidies were at an end the precarious existence of an actor had to be exchanged for the comparative security of a business.

Fifteen months later he is again mentioned in the Register, when on 18 November 1577, there is entered to John Charlwood *The Defence of Pouertie againste the Desire of worldlie riches Dialogue wise collected by Anthonie Mundaye.*

(Arber, *S.R.* ii. 320.) With this pamphlet, of which no copy is known, he makes his literary *début*. It is amusing to note his use of the word 'collected': capable of original work, he seems to have had an almost mediaeval preference for plagiarism, and it is typical of his whole career that this firstling of his imagination should probably have been a mere collection of sententious apothegms culled from various writers.

It is at this point that his life begins to be interesting. Towards the end of 1578 he cancelled his indentures with Alde, and set out on his travels. Whether he went to Europe in search of a fortune or from some more definite motive, certain it is that his fortune found him; so that by what was apparently nothing but a stroke of luck, turned to the best advantage with journalistic promptitude, he managed to get an entry into the English Roman Catholic seminary at Rome, nominally as a likely convert, but actually as a spy to gather information that might be disposed of to the Government at home. It is only possible in this paper to give the briefest outline of his career, but there is so much amusement to be extracted from his *English-Romayne Lyfe*, which gives his own account of his adventures, that one cannot pass straight on. He has no qualms about exposing his own character, and evinces a naïve appreciation of his own duplicity. He has the most delightful journalistic euphemisms for a tip: the English ambassador at Paris, he says, 'bestowed his honourable lyberalitie vppon vs,' and three Englishmen whom they met at Milan 'both in cost and courtesie behaued themselves like Gentlemen vnto vs'. We get glimpses, too, of a not unattractive rascal. In his third chapter he gives an interesting account of the daily life of the students in the seminary, and describes the penances inflicted on the erring scholars who forgot to make their beds 'hansomlie' in the morning, or who otherwise neglected their manifold

duties. Perhaps the most ingenious of these torments was 'to stand vpright and haue a dish of potage before him on 'the ground, and so to bring vp euerie spoonful to his mouth'. At the end of the list he adds suggestively 'All these penances 'I haue been forced to do, for that I was always apt to breake 'one order or other'. Chapter six is also extremely entertaining. Munday seems to have managed to arouse the enmity of the Welsh head of the seminary, Dr. Maurice Clenocke, so that, as he admits himself, 'He could not abide me in any case.' Clenocke tried to get rid of him, but the English students took his part and Munday stayed on, until finally Clenocke complained to Cardinal Morone his patron. Munday would then have been turned out, had not the Jesuits obtained leave for him 'to lye in a very sweete Chamber, filled with old rusty Iron and all the trash of the house' for a fortnight. This chamber, Munday says, was haunted by a devil, and Clenocke evidently put him there in revenge, with the result that, as he writes :

'Euery night there was such a coyle among the old Iron, 'such ratling and throwing down the Boordes . . . [that] . . . 'I lay almost feared out of my wits, so that when I was layd 'in Bed I durst not stirre till it was fayre broad day, that 'I might perceiue euerye corner of my Chamber, whether 'the Deuill were there or no.'

Eventually, however, the devil was exorcised by the aid of holy water, and Munday relates that when he flung the water in the direction of the noise he also flung the stoup after it, and thereafter the devil troubled him no more !

Putting the case bluntly, Munday was a spy and seems to have been naturally fitted by his character for the part he played. What use, however, he made of his information on his return to England in 1579 is not clear. There is nothing to show that he was sent abroad as a Government spy ; nor, on the other hand, is there any evidence, save his own, to show

that he went abroad with the disinterested motives which he himself avouches—‘a desire to see straunge Countreies, as also affection to learne the languages’.¹ It is safest, and on the whole, most reasonable, to conclude that he was simply an enterprising journalist, ready for any ‘scoop’ that came his way.

Having thus brought himself to the notice of the Government as a useful fellow and one not over-nice of conscience he was employed in 1581 as a witness in the trials of Campion and other captured Jesuits, and was finally taken into some sort of definite Government employ from at least the year 1584, and probably even earlier. Munday in the witness-box is not an edifying spectacle. He was used, with others of his kind, to bolster up the Government’s fabricated charge of treason. Against Campion himself, according to all reports of the trial, he had next to nothing to say, but against those priests whom he asserts he saw at Rome he was voluble. In an account of the proceedings written by two Jesuits, John Fenn and John Gibbons, he gets what was probably no more than his deserts, in a marginal note against the narrative of the martyrdom of Robert Johnson :

‘Mundaeus producitur velut commune refugium quando
‘desunt veri testes et causa iusta.’

To be thus characterized as the usual last resource of the prosecution when no genuine witnesses could be obtained seems to have been no more than his due.

Every now and again details accumulate concerning his private life. From two pamphlets we know that in 1582 he was living in Barbican with his mother, and although the date of his marriage is not known it probably took place some time about this year. His eldest child was born in 1584,

¹ The genuineness of his original motives is perhaps supported by the fact that his companion, Thomas Nowell, became a convert to Romanism, and remained at the seminary when Munday returned to England.

and was christened at St. Giles, Cripplegate, on 28 June as 'Elizabeth Mundaye, daughter of Antonye Munday, gent.' During the next five years there are entries in the same register of the christenings of Rose, Priscilla, Richard, and Anne, and of the death of Rose at the age of three months. Again we are fortunate, this time in being spared a genealogical epilogue: except for a few facts about the son, Richard, Munday's posterity sinks into oblivion as completely as his ancestry. Both Munday and his son took up their freedom in the Drapers' Company,¹ the former in 1585 *per patrimonium*; and some time between 1582 and 1585 he left Barbican and removed to Cripplegate, where apparently he continued to reside until the end of his life.

From the time of Campion's trial until about 1592 Munday united the professions of literary hack and Government agent. Beginning as an informer he seems gradually to have become employed to ferret out cases of suspected recusancy, and finally to have become a 'messenger of her Majesty's Chamber', that is, a pursuivant, empowered to serve warrants and put people under arrest. He was a handy tool of the notorious Richard Topcliffe's, and he is mentioned by him in a letter to Sir John Puckering, the Queen's serjeant, as the person to whom the arrest of a certain Ralph Marshall had been entrusted. A curious point in this connexion is the fact that in the same year Munday dedicates the second part of his *Gerileon of England* to this same Ralph Marshall, and in his dedicatory epistle makes it evident that he was on terms of familiarity with both him and his wife, and had stayed at their house. It is perhaps hardly fair to draw any inference from this, but the inference, if drawn, would not appear to be to Munday's credit.

It is not possible here to do more than mention Munday's connexion with the Martin Marprelate Controversy, not

¹ I am indebted to Mr. A. H. Johnson for this information.

only as a pursuivant on the track of Martin and his travelling press, but probably also as a writer on the side of the bishops. I mention it, however, because the fact that he was one of the chief of Whitgift's officers from 1588 till 1590 has a slight bearing on another point to be dealt with later.

It is, perhaps, unfortunate for the reputation of Munday's dramatic work, that readers are apt to come to it by way of Ben Jonson's hearty gibes. Meres spoke of him in 1598 as 'one of our best for comedy' and then added specific praise by singling him out as 'our best plotter'. What exactly was involved by this 'plotting' it is not easy to say; but if one may judge from that portion of the play of *Sir Thomas More* in Munday's handwriting it would seem to imply at any rate the planning out of the material and the first draft of the entire story. Judging by the skill with which Munday manages to combine into a congruous whole the varied elements in his early play of *John a Kent and John a Cumber*, Meres's praise seems not unwarranted. The play is a pleasant fresh piece of work, with a real country atmosphere. Particularly noticeable is the way in which he manages to combine a really entertaining band of comic yokel characters with a romantic love story and with the Italian comedy motifs of disguise and of parental authority versus love. One has only to look at such a play as Greene's *James IV* to see what a vague idea even the best of Shakespeare's predecessors had of combining comic incidents with their story; but Munday not only works Turnop and his fellows into the fabric of his play with real skill, he also reveals in their prose scenes a genuine gift for humorous and natural dialogue. If, by 1594, Munday had written several other plays of this type and as good as this one extant specimen, there is no doubt that Meres's praise was in no way absurdly extravagant in 1598.

Of equal merit, but not so remarkable from the point of view of the development of the drama, are his two Robin Hood

plays, *The Death* and *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*. With *Sir John Oldcastle* they are the only three extant plays we have of the fourteen he wrote while working for the companies financed by Henslowe. In them he continues and elaborates the use of popular legend already begun in *John a Kent*. It is interesting to notice the form of the story which he uses: here, as elsewhere, Munday shows that he had a real instinct for what his audience of citizens and grocers' wives wanted: he raises the gallant yeoman to the hierarchy of bourgeois romance as Robert, Earl of Huntington.

Although little information regarding his non-extant plays can be gained from Henslowe's *Diary*, the inferences about his private life which can be drawn from the entries are significant. His finances must have been in a sorry state when we find him, only five days after he had earned £5 on the *Downfall*, borrowing 10s. from Henslowe on the security of the *Death*. Distinctly humorous, too, is the history of *Richard Coeur de Lion's Funerall*, as told by the brief entries in the *Diary*, although there may well have been a slightly grimmer aspect to it in the house in Cripplegate. The *Funerall* was begun by Robert Wilson the younger about 13 June, who on that date borrowed 5s. on it. Evidently his muse quickly proved unequal to the task, for on 14 June Chettle's aid was called in, and on the strength of this promised assistance Henslowe lent him 5s., 'in earneste of the booke,' and the next day advanced him yet such another sum. Two days later, after the hopeful collaborators have apparently cudgelled their brains in vain, 'our best plotter' is called in, and on the strength of this they all three promptly borrow 5s. each from Henslowe. Chettle and Munday had made enough progress with it by 23 June to be able to raise loans of 25s. and 20s. respectively. Inspiration failed them, however, on 24 June, and Drayton was added to the party:

he seems to have been a real acquisition, as Henslowe at once advances him 30s. After this they must have decided that the *Funerall's* credit was exhausted, because the next entry records that Wilson was paid in full for his part on 26 June, and after that nothing more is heard of the play, so presumably it was finished by their united efforts, and added to the repertory of the Admiral's men. Its history, however, gives us an amusing insight into the way that the wheels of Henslowe's drama machine went round.¹ As in August of the same year, Munday's credit with the players and Henslowe had sunk so low that not only was he unable to raise more than 10s. on an unwritten play, but also had to call in Drayton to guarantee its delivery within a fortnight, it is pleasant to record that on the first night of the playing of *Sir John Oldcastle* the position of these old friends had so improved that they actually received a bonus of 10s.

The later years of his life have not the interest of the early ones: from the time when he begins to subscribe himself 'Citizen and Draper' and occupies himself mainly with the business of City pageant-poet and with editing Stow's *Survey* the story undoubtedly grows duller. He would have been a much more effective figure if only he could have come to a violent end somewhere about 1600, instead of lingering on in a highly respectable old age, as 'servant to the City in sundrie employments'. His pageants are as dull as most, but they seem to have been an excellent source of income, when even a failure brought him in £45. Similarly with his edition of Stow: a municipal dedication proved financially valuable to the extent of £60, as is evident from an entry in the Guildhall Repertory, recording such a payment. From

¹ In case the 'apparently' and the 'seems' of this paragraph are not sufficient warning, honesty compels the admission that, if the history of the composition of the *Funerall* is sought for in all sober sadness, it is equally possible that all four were engaged on the play from the beginning.

this same source we get our only information concerning the last years of his life. In December 1623 Anthony Munday 'in consideration of his age and present wants' had 'granted unto him yearly, during his natural life, the nomination and benefit of one person to be made free of this Cittie by redemption'.¹ It would seem as if he had fallen on evil days, lingering on after his contemporaries. He died in 1633, and fate ironically accorded him an epitaph which is suggestively silent with regard to the facts which make his life and work of interest to-day, but confers upon him that crown of respectability after which he had so earnestly striven, commemorating him only as 'that ancient servant to the City Master Anthony Munday Citizen and Draper of London'.

In trying to determine the canon of Munday's works, amongst the problems that have had to be considered are the questions of his authorship of the Shepherd Tony poems, and of *Fedele and Fortunio*, *The Two Italian Gentlemen*, the question of his identity with Lazarus Pyott, the question of his authorship of *A Second and Third Blast of Retrait*, of *The Weakest goeth to the Wall*, and of two translations from the Dutch. As the first three of these have perhaps a slightly more general interest I shall concentrate on them, and then briefly consider the probable date of the play of *Sir Thomas More*.

There is, I consider, every reason short of absolute proof to attribute the Shepherd Tony poems of *England's Helicon* to Munday. On grounds of style there is more than sufficient evidence to justify it. Munday's acknowledged poems all go to prove that he had flashes of genuine lyric inspiration, although the greater part of his verse is very mediocre in quality. An impartial consideration of the seven poems in *England's Helicon* will lead the reader independently to a similar conclusion regarding the so-called Shepherd Tony. They are poems which would never have attracted any

¹ For this fact, also, I have to thank Mr. A. H. Johnson.

particular attention, had not one of them happened to be the exquisite 'Beauty sat bathing by a Spring'. It is difficult to see why those critics who have so stoutly denied the possibility of Munday's claim have not applied some of this energy to proving also that this poem could not possibly have been written by the same writer as the other six, which is only the inevitable corollary of their arguments. It is necessary also to remember that in his own day Munday had won high praise as a poet: Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie* is sufficient witness to his contemporary reputation:

'Anthony Munday, an earnest traeller in this arte, and in 'whose name I haue seene very excellent workes, among 'which, surely, the most exquisite vaine of a witty poetical 'heade is shewed in the sweete sobs of Sheeheardes and 'Nymphes; a worke well worthy to be viewed, and to bee 'esteemed as very rare Poetrie.'

Praise such as this certainly heightens the likelihood that some of his poems would be included in such a collection as *England's Helicon*, more especially as he seems to have been a friend of John Bodenham. The only real complication in the matter came to light recently when in 1919 a perfect copy of *Fedele and Fortunio* was discovered in the Mostyn Collection. This copy, by possessing the title-page and dedication missing in the Chatsworth quarto, showed that, apparently, both Collier and Hazlitt were unfaithful to the facts in giving the author of the play as A. M. instead of M. A. The question, therefore, comes to be: is Munday's supposed authorship of this play finally discredited by this discovery, and if so, what then is to be made of the fact that one of the Shepherd Tony poems is to be found in it as a song sung by Fedele to Victoria?

As the Mostyn quarto disposes of the question of Chapman's authorship of the play even more effectually than of Munday's, it will not be necessary here to enter into a refuta-

tion of that theory. It is conceivable that Munday might transpose his own initials, and perhaps, too, those of the patron of his work; but, as it stands, M. A. is an impossible signature for Chapman, even supposing the style of the play resembled his, which it does not.

In considering Munday's claim it should be premised that, although transposing of initials is not a likely or well-authenticated occurrence in Elizabethan literature, and that in none of his works at present known to us does he ever sign himself M. A., there is also the fact that he is certainly the most likely claimant, by reason of the play's early date, and because there is no more likely owner of those initials. Without wishing to over-emphasize points of style, it is only reasonable to notice two things: one, the fact that no less than 216 lines of the play are written in Munday's favourite six-line stanza, rhyming *ababcc*, of which there are examples in *John a Kent* and throughout his work; and the other, the decided resemblance between the mock-Latin of Crackstone in this play and that of the learned clown Turnop in *Kent*, as also their common use of the word 'pediculus' for 'school-master', and the similarity between their high-sounding 'cannibal' words. Another point which is perhaps worth mentioning is the resemblance between Medusa's song in this play when she enters with a pedlar's basket, and the song in Munday's play of the *Downfall*, when Jinny and Friar Tuck enter in a similar disguise, singing 'What lacke ye?' Aware of Munday's economical habits it seems to be more than likely that both these songs are his.

Another clue is perhaps furnished by Munday's bibliography, a glance at which will show that it was almost habitual with him to publish several works one after another with the same publisher. In view of this fact it seems to me significant that, of his three works published between the years 1584 and 1586, two should have been published by Thomas Hacket,

the publisher of *Fedele and Fortunio*, to whom also his *Banquet of Daintie Conceits* was entered in 1584.

There is, finally, the question of whom the patron of the work might be, if we suppose the writer to have been Munday. It does not seem to me likely that M. R. is a reversal of the initials of Sheriff Richard Martin to whom Munday dedicated his *Breefe and true reporte of the Execution of Certaine Traytours* in 1582. It is slightly more possible that they may be those of the Ralph Marshall to whom he dedicates his *Gerileon* in 1592, and with whom I suspect he may have been connected as early as 1582. A third possibility, which I am inclined to regard as the most promising, is that M. R. may be a transposition of the initials of Roger Mostyn, Lord Mostyn's ancestor. This Roger Mostyn, of Mostyn Hall, Holywell, Flintshire, was born in 1567, matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, in 1584, was knighted in 1606, and died in 1642. He was descended from Adda ap Iorwerth Dda of Pengwern, who married Isabel, a sister of Owen Glendower. It seems to me curious that the unique autograph manuscript of Munday's play of *John a Kent* and one of the only¹ three known copies of *Fedele and Fortunio* should both have been preserved at Mostyn Hall: that the one should be dedicated

¹ There can be no doubt that the copy of the play which Collier saw and described was neither the Mostyn nor the Devonshire quarto, but a third specimen differing from them both. As the dedication which he prints agrees in substance, and almost literally, with that of the Mostyn quarto, it would be curious that he should have produced a mythical John Heardson, Esq., as the patron of the work, if there was an M. R. there already to be identified at once as Matthew Roydon. It is possible that in this instance it is Munday who is guilty of dishonest tinkering, and not Collier: he was certainly morally capable of dedicating the same work to two different patrons, if anything were to be gained by it. That on one occasion he changed his mind about a dedication and transferred it from some one unknown to Ralph Marshall of Carleton in Nottingham he avows himself in the epistle to his *Gerileon of England, Part II*. In view of his 'John Heardson' it would not be surprising, if, when Collier's copy again comes to light, it should prove to be signed A. M.

to M. R.; that the other should be written around the doings of a magician popularly supposed to be Owen Glendower and a Llewellyn Prince of Wales with both of whom the Mostyn family was connected by descent, and that it should be definitely stated to have for the scene of its action the very neighbourhood of Mostyn Hall in several of the scenes; and that, lastly, there should be definite resemblances of style between these two plays, unless they are the work of one and the same author, and that author Anthony Munday. I do not presume to suggest that I have 'proved', even to my own satisfaction, his authorship; but I suggest that to swallow so many coincidences all pointing to the same conclusion, and to strain at the simpler solution of Munday's probable authorship is unnecessary. To put the conclusion as undogmatically as possible, I should say that there is no positive evidence beyond the initials M. A. to discredit Munday's claim to this play and to the Shepherd Tony poems, and that these initials of themselves are not sufficient to cancel the cumulative evidence of these other points which I have brought forward.

To pass abruptly to the next problem suggested—the question of Munday's identity with Lazarus Pyott, while being extremely complicated, has not the same literary interest as the foregoing, and can therefore be dismissed more briefly. He is generally identified with him on the grounds that, because Book II of *Amadis de Gaule*, published in 1595 as translated by Lazarus Pyott, was incorporated in Munday's collected edition of the first four books published in 1619, that therefore Pyott was merely a pseudonym of Munday's, and that therefore Pyott's only other work, *The Orator*, was also Munday's. It has been pointed out by Dr. Henry Thomas that this line of reasoning is manifestly unsound, and that there is a very strong probability that Munday simply purloined another man's work. It is certainly

a reasonable inference from the following poem, signed H.C., prefixed to Munday's *Primaleon of Greece* (Part III) in 1619. that Munday and Pyott are two distinct persons :

Of the Translation, against a Carper.

Delicious phrase, well follow'd acts of glory,
Mixture of Loue, among fierce martial deeds,
(Which great delight vnto the Reader breeds)
Hath th'Inuentor kept t'adorne this story.

The same forme is obseru'd by the Translator,
Primaleon (sweet in French) keeps here like grace ;
Checking that Foole, who (with a blushles face)
To praise himsele, in Print will be a prater.
Peace chattring Py, be still, poor Lazarus ;
Rich are his gifts that thus contenteth vs.

The play on the words in the last line but one leads to the obvious inference that Lazarus Pyott had recently made some adverse criticism of some production of Munday's ; if the poem is to be taken literally he had made some comparison, in Munday's disfavour, of their relative merits as translators, and this had appeared in print. Now the translation of Munday's that had immediately preceded *Primaleon* was the collected edition of *Amadis* ; it was at this presumably that Pyott had been carping. When, however, Dr. Thomas goes on to deduce from this that Munday had purloined Pyott's translation, and had been openly accused by him of the theft, I cannot see that the case warrants such an extreme statement. It is obvious that there are other alternatives which would account for the presence of Pyott's work in Munday's edition, and, also, that the poem does not say that it is rebutting a charge of theft, and would surely have been more vituperative if such had been the case.

My own distrust of Dr. Thomas's argument was heightened

when I found that he attributed this crucial poem, signed H. C., to Henry Constable. For Dr. Thomas's theory it is essential that this poem should have been written in 1619, between the publication of the collected edition of *Amadis* and that of this third part of *Primaleon* to which it is prefixed; but as Constable died in 1613 this is hardly possible! My own tentative suggestion is that the poem was written by Munday's old friend Henry Chettle, who also wrote a commendatory epistle for his *Gerileon* in 1592. As Chettle died in or about 1607 it would be necessary to postulate an earlier edition of this *Primaleon Bk. III*; and this, I think, it is possible to do. Books I and II were originally published by Burby in 1595 and 1596, and as Book III was entered to Burby's widow on 6 October 1607, it is quite possible that it may have been published then. Nothing is easier than for such an edition to disappear completely: it has happened, for example, in the case of Munday's first edition of *Palmerin of England*, published in 1581-2.

To summarize the conclusions arrived at after a detailed examination of the matter: in the first place, I do not consider there is any internal evidence in either of the two works signed Lazarus Pyott to make Munday's authorship unlikely, and the evidence of style, in so far as it goes, is in favour of it—one seems to be frequently tracking Munday in the snow of his favourite phrases. In the second place, there is on the whole more reason to suppose that the book would be Munday's rather than the venture of an unknown writer. Thirdly, it is curious that five cases of apparent anonymity on Munday's part all occur within the years 1595 to 1599, every single one of these books having some highly 'suspicious' element of one sort or another to distinguish it: fourthly, it is curious, if nothing more, that hitherto no other book of Pyott's and no mention of him has been traced in contemporary literature; and fifthly, that there are one or two discrepancies in the

statements which he makes about himself which make it impossible for us to do as Dr. Thomas asserts we should and take his statements at their face value.¹ In the absence of any conclusive evidence in favour of Pyott's existence it would be unsafe to assert that he and Munday can no longer be identified. Apart from the poem there is no real proof, and it may be possible to interpret this in some other way: although it does not seem to me a likely interpretation, Bolton Corney drew from the poem the impression that Chettle was twitting his old friend on his former pseudonym. The most, as I think, that can safely be said, is that it renders Munday's authorship of *Amadis Bk. II* and *The Orator* doubtful.

The problems of the play of *Sir Thomas More* were brought into prominence again recently when, in an article in *The Times Literary Supplement* in July of this year, Mr. W. J. Lawrence endeavoured to prove, firstly, that the play was acted and that the only existing manuscript is a prompt copy; and secondly, that it is possible to date it as early as 1589. My only excuse for promulgating an opinion on the matter

¹ All we know of Lazarus Pyott from his dedicatory epistles is that he was a soldier newly embarking on a literary career in 1595, with quite a good opinion of himself as a translator. These first two statements, Dr. Thomas considers, must be taken at their face value, and therefore make Munday's authorship an impossibility, as—so far as we know—he was never a soldier and had written some thirty books by this time. My own opinion of 'Pyott's' veracity is not encouraged when we find him in each case calling both his *Amadis II* (1595) and his *Orator* (1596) his first piece of literary work. The caution necessary in accepting any of Munday's statements warns one to be careful of accepting those of any of his Grub Street brethren, if there are any suspicious circumstances; so that, having found one 'inaccuracy' in Pyott's statements it seems to me that the internal evidence is more or less discredited. If we can adduce convincing external proof that Pyott is a separate individual, then these epistles give us so many details about him that may or may not be true: if it is possible to prove that Pyott is merely a pseudonym of Munday's, then these details are simply a part of his attempt to lend verisimilitude to 'an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative'.

and rushing in where even angels may very well fear to tread, is that thirteen pages of the manuscript are in Munday's handwriting. In the absence of any definite reasons or evidence to the contrary I consider it is legitimate to take this as equivalent to the fact of his authorship¹ of this portion of the play, which has thus been brought within the scope of my dissertation on his life and works. After being brought into touch with such a fascinating problem he would be indeed faint-hearted who set it aside without having made his own attempt to suggest a date for the play.

The details obtainable regarding Munday's career in the late fifteen-eighties and the first two years of the next decade make such an early year as 1589 an unlikely date for him. 1589 happens to be the year when the Marprelate controversy was at its height, and, as mentioned before, Munday was connected with the controversy as one of Whitgift's pursuivants and also probably as a writer on the side of the Bishops. There are various references to him in the tracts themselves, and in December 1588 there is a record of him at work in his capacity of pursuivant, in a long account of his arrest of a certain Giles Wiggington, a suspected Martinist. Similarly in 1589 it is evident from Whitgift's imagined address to his pursuivants in the Martinist tract, *The Just Censure and Reproof of Martin Junior*, that he was still one of the Archbishop's officers on the track of Martin and his travelling press. As we have already seen, he was also engaged during the years from 1584 until 1592 in hunting down recusancy under Topcliffe. In 1588 he dedicated his *Banquet of Daintie Conceits* to 'the worshipfull and his especiall good freend Master Richard Topcliffe', and in 1592 we know from the reference in Harleian MSS. 6998, p. 31, that he was still working under him. His own statements regarding his movements during these years are definite and by no

¹ i. e. authorship, more or less complicated by collaboration, in all probability.

means negligible. Taking 1588 as a downward limit and 1592 as an upward limit, the following significant references may be found in his books. In the epistle to his readers in his *Palladine of England*, published in 1588, he asks them to excuse its manifold faults 'for I beeying often absent'; and in a similar concluding epistle adds, 'Diuers foule faults 'are escaped in the imprinting, in some places words mistaken . . . and diuers others by mishap left out, and partly by 'want of my attendance to read the proues, beeing called 'away by matters of greater importance, and whereto I am 'bound by dutie of mine office.' Even more to the point is the statement he makes in his introductory epistle to his edition of *Gerileon of England*, published in 1592 :

' Since my first entring on this Historie, to translate it :
' I haue been diuers and sundrie times countermanded by her
' Maiesties appointment in the place where I serue, to post
' from place to place on such affaires as were enioyned mee,
' so that not hauing fully finished one sheete, and the Printer
' beginning almost as soone as my selfe, I haue been greatly
' his hinderance, and compelled to catch hold on such little
' leasures, as in the morning ere I went to horse-back, or in
' the euening comming into mine Inne, I could compasse
' from companie. . . .'

Farther on, to the patron of his work, Master Ralph Marshall of Carleton in Nottingham, he says :

' At your house I wrote a sheete or two, and elsewhere in
' your companie, as occasion serued ; and sithence in a long
' lingring journey I haue knit up the rest.'

And in a complimentary epistle prefixed to the same book Chettle further bears witness to Munday's frequent absences, and speaks of 'your late employment about her Maiesties affaires'.

It does not seem probable, on the face of it, that Munday is likely to have been occupied with the play of *Sir Thomas*

More during these years. In view of the perpetual conflict between the players and the civic authorities, and of the chance of coming 'up against' the censor with any play of this type, it is not likely that any playwright wrote in ignorance of a certain element of risk when dealing with matters even faintly and remotely political or topical. That Munday and any other mere playwright would have taken the risk on every occasion is probably true; but I very much doubt whether the astute pursuivant, characterized by Topcliffe as 'one that wants no wit' would have taken any such risk, however remote and slight.

There is also another small point in connexion with the authorship of the play which is, I think, unfavourable to an early date. Sir Edward Maunde Thompson has lately expressed himself as confident that Dr. Greg's attribution of *Hand E* to Dekker is correct. This possibility of assigning one of the additions to Dekker makes the fifteen-eighties again an unlikely date. Dekker was probably born about 1570—possibly even as late as 1577—which would make him a youth of not more than eighteen at most in 1589. The men who could enlist the craftsman capable of producing the famous 'Shakespearian' scenes would not be very likely to turn to a raw lad for help in such a critical moment, when, as Dr. Greg suggests, it was a case of all hands to the pump. There is no record of any literary or dramatic work done by Dekker prior to 1598, but the young man who was beginning to be known to the dramatic world in that year might quite well have been called in to help in an emergency about 1595 or 1596.

The second important objection to an early date for Munday's portion of the play, and therefore necessarily to the play with its additions, is based on the evidence furnished by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson's detailed study of Munday's handwriting. A brief summary of his views will

quickly show their bearing on the question. On the impression derived from a general survey of the handwriting of *More* and *Kent* he considers that *Kent* is the earlier. A detailed examination of the formation of the individual letters then leads him to the conclusion that *More* can unhesitatingly be dated later because it shows the full development of peculiarities only hinted at in *Kent*. He shows, for example, that Munday's G appears frequently in *Kent* in a normal form, that a more cursive form also appears, and that in *More* a development of this cursive form—for the sake of greater ease and speed in writing—has completely ousted the more normal and elaborate form. On examining the third of Munday's manuscripts, *The Heauen of the Mynde* (dated 1602), he finds in the first place, that 'the style is the same 'as the style of the hand in *More*, and especially that among 'the capital letters the modifications which differentiate the 'letters G, P, and T in *More* from the examples in *Kent* are 'repeated in this MS., but not further developed'; and, in the second place, that this manuscript conveys the impression that the hand of the writer is ageing and losing vigour. He then naturally suggests that, from the known circumstances of Munday's life, we are justified in thinking that these modifications of his handwriting as seen in *More* might perfectly easily have developed in a few years.

The application of his examination, therefore, comes to this: that in 1602 Munday writes in a hand considerably older and weaker than in the play of *More*, and that *More* and *Kent* need not be separated in date by more than a few years. If *Kent* could be dated with any certainty, both an upward and a downward date limit would then be acquired for *More*. December 1596, the date at the end of *Kent*, added in another hand, is generally held not to be the date of composition. Nevertheless there is not a scrap of evidence to justify us in putting *Kent* back any farther than 1594,

unless, indeed, one adopts seriously a suggestion which Sir Edward Maunde Thompson himself makes but does not use, namely the fact that as *Kent* is written on Dutch writing paper, with a water-mark which can be dated 1585-99, Munday may have been writing this play as early as 1585. In 1602, however, Munday used southern French paper, known to have been used in Toulouse and Lyons in 1587-90, which rather destroys the plausibility of any such argument.

The most, as it seems to me, that can be said with any confidence on the evidence furnished by palaeography, is this: that *More* and *Kent* are much more nearly related than *More* and *The Heauen of the Mynde*. If, therefore, we accept Dr. Greg's identification of *Kent* with *The Wiseman of West Chester*, we have as our downward date limit the year 1594, and 1602 as the upward limit. Taking, then, Sir Edward Maunde Thompson's suggestion of 'an interval of two or three years' between *Kent* and *More*, we get, approximately, 1596-7 for the latter, leaving an interval of five to six years between *More* and *The Heauen of the Mynde*.

What other evidence there is tends to confirm such a date. Fleay has cited two historical parallels which are both in favour of a date subsequent to October 1595. He considered that the insurrection scene intended a topical reference to the prentice riots of June 1595, referred to in Maitland's *London*, and more explicitly in Stow, who writes:

'In the year 1595 the poor Tradesmen made a Riot upon
' the Strangers in Southwark, and other parts of the City of
' London. Whereupon was a presentment of the great
' Inquest for the said Borough, concerning the outrageous
' Tumult and Disorder unjustly committed there upon
' Thursday June 12 1595 and the Leaders were punished
' and also the chief Offenders. The like Tumults began at
' the same time within the Liberties where such Strangers
' commonly harboured. And upon the Complaint of the

'Elders of the Dutch and French Churches Sir John Spenser, 'Lord Maior, committed some young Rioters to the Counter.' Even more pertinent is his second parallel, which, he suggests, exists between the committing of Rochester for 'capitall contempt' (fol. 17 b), and the actual imprisonment in the Tower of the Earl of Hertford in October 1595. In a letter from the Queen to the Countess of Hertford, dated 5 November 1595, the offence is described as 'an act of lewd and proud contempt against our own direct prohibition'. It is certainly curious that Tylney should have required the excision of ll. 1247-75, unless there was some 'modern instance' to which they bore too close a resemblance for his cautious taste. Dr. Greg has reminded us that naturally such an incident as the insurrection scene in *More* is not necessarily topical; but it seems to me that from the censor's point of view there would have been no harm in the play unless this scene was too topical, and that there would have been no question of such rigorous excision unless it touched too nearly on actual and recent civic or political disturbances. Some light would seem to be cast on the matter by a letter in the *Remembrancia* from the Lord Mayor and Alderman to the Privy Council, dated 13 September 1595; objecting to plays, they write

'they move wholly to imitacon and not to the avoyding of
' those vyces wch. they represent wch wee verely think to be
' the chief cause . . . of the late stirr and mutinous attempt
' of those fiew apprentics and other srvants who wee doubt
' not driew their infection from these and like places'
(*Remembrancia*, ii. 103).

Now either this letter refers to a fresh outbreak of rioting perhaps in the month of September, in which case the censor would have a double reason for taking fright at an insurrection scene in a play, seeing the potency with which such things were credited by the authorities: or else it refers to the

June rioting, in which case it was still sufficiently fresh in men's minds to make a cautious censor still wary of such play scenes. Either alternative supplies Tylney with a reasonable motive. Given in a play, written somewhere about the last few months of 1595 or the first few months of 1596, which contains a good insurrection scene, also an incident which might conceivably have appeared to allude to the case of an important nobleman imprisoned in the Tower from October to January because he was endeavouring to have acknowledged the legitimacy of a marriage that might affect the succession to the throne, and about which the Queen felt very strongly, and I think it is not difficult to account for Tylney's excisions, which, in view of the fact that plays such as the *Life and Death of Jack Straw* were allowed to pass, would otherwise be more or less unexplainable.

One more allusion that seems to point to 1595-6 must also be mentioned. It was noticed by Mr. Percy Simpson in his discussion of the play in *The Library* for January 1917. He shows that Jack Faulkner's complaint, 'Moore had bin better a scowrd More ditch than a notcht me thus', when More orders him to have his shaggy hair cut, may well be pointed at the scouring of Moore-ditch in 1595. Stow records that in this year the small portion of the town ditch between Bishopsgate and Mooregate 'was clensed and made 'somewhat broder, but filling againe very fast, by reason of 'overrasyng the ground neare adioyning, therefore never 'the better'. As Mr. Simpson suggests, 'the allusion would 'have point just before the scouring or just after the 'failure.'

To return to Munday: so far as he is concerned, and remembering that 1597-1602 is the period of his greatest dramatic activity, it is most reasonable to demand 1595-6 as the most possible date for *More*, when that date is supported also by various other items of evidence. Being uncon-

vinced by Mr. Lawrence's statements about composition, rehearsing, and prompt copies, I do not feel that the only unimpeachable item of evidence which he brings forward, namely the entry of the name of the actor Goodal against the part he was to play, is sufficient to warrant us in scrapping the above, which all favour a later date. I would suggest, therefore, on these grounds, that, until some more positive facts are forthcoming, it is reasonable to maintain that *More* was 'plotted' by Munday, and perhaps written and revised under much the same conditions as *The Funerall of Richard Coeur de Lion*, in the winter months of 1595 to 1596.

Such a digression has perhaps taken us a little way from Anthony Munday, but at this point, having tried to justify the devoting of this hour to him by showing that he is involved in questions, such as this of *Sir Thomas More*, which have a wider interest, I should now like to turn to a brief consideration of the intrinsic merit of his plays and his prose work, and justify it on this ground as well. His prose work has been even more generally neglected than his dramatic productions, and with equally little reason. Whereas he is generally dismissed with a contemptuous reference as one of the many imitators of Lyly's *Euphues*, the truth is that not only is his novel decidedly more interesting than Lyly's more famous work, but it is also a definite stage farther on in the history of the evolution of the English novel. There is a verve and a sprightliness about the conversation, and a mastery of dialogue that gives it a great advantage over Lyly's pointed but unnatural and often stilted wit. Munday has also a far better idea of telling a story; the second of the three parts of his book is a good story of adventure, told with considerable gusto and spirit, and though savouring strongly of knight-errantry and Munday's romance-reading, is redeemed from any dullness by the character of the hero, who bears a suspicious resemblance to Munday himself, and is

original enough to manifest a strong unwillingness to risk his life in rescuing the lady!

In his *Englishe-Romayne Lyfe* Munday gives us an autobiographical fragment at once simply written in a good, easy, straightforward narrative style, graphic, vivid, interesting, and amusing. The smug satisfaction with which he regards his own exploits as a spy, and the implied tributes which he pays to his own ingenuity in dissembling and lying, create for us a feeling of character as realistic and as complete as ever we get from Jack Wilton or from Greene's death-bed repentances. Munday in his own crude way manages to anticipate something of the method of *Jonathan Wild* and of *Barry Lyndon*. As in few other prose works of such an early date as 1582 the dialogue is extremely natural, and as in *Zelauto* gives the effect of actual conversation in a way that is never attained by *Euphues*. Often, too, he anticipates the familiar style that has been so justly praised in Nashe's mature work. Unlike Nashe, however, his style has in it nothing of the extravagant or boisterous, and he is in every way his rival in his use of the paragraph as an aid to the clearness of his story.

In 1580 Elizabethan prose fiction had barely come into being. Even *Euphues* has no hint of a story told for its own sake. Realism and the power of characterization belong to the last decade of the century—to the work of Nashe and Deloney. But in Munday's two unduly neglected prose works of 1580 and 1582 all these elements are already to be found, and what is more, he can be realistic without being merely animal or dirty.

Munday is also of more importance in the history of the development of Elizabethan drama than seems generally to have been allowed. Hitherto Lyly and Greene have shared the honours as Shakespeare's predecessors, but Munday's plays of *John a Kent* and *Fedele and Fortunio* demand that he should be ranked with them. In these two early plays of

1584 and 1594 he manifests a sense of dramatic construction, a feeling for good dialogue, an appreciation of native settings and native characters, a capacity for the free use of certain elements of Italian comedy, and the power to combine popular legend with romance or history. Greene has the advantage over Munday in his characterization of women, and probably in a certain priority of date. Lyly has the advantage of him in the matter of wit and repartee; but in these other respects enumerated Munday sometimes outrivals them both and generally equals them. He has unjustly, I think, been denied the praise that is due to the pioneer. Greene and Lyly were never forced into competing with that wonderful first decade of the next century; but Munday was contemporary with so many generations that one forgets to rank him, so far as these early plays are concerned, with these others who died in time to make sure of their fame as Shakespeare's predecessors.

Munday seems to have been fated to strike out in new lines only to show the way to other writers, and then to watch them outstripping him, instead of achieving himself. It is the same with his prose as with his plays: he had in his composition a formidable rival to both Nashe and Deloney, but after having given promise of it as early as 1582 he turned instead to journalism. He could have written an 'Elizabethan novel' that would have rivalled their best work in point of style, composition, and interest; and instead he devoted himself to the translation of *Amadis and Palmerin*, and to the business of city-pageant poet. His almost incredible voluminousness becomes more than aggravating if the imagination is allowed to dwell upon that unwritten novel. But even as it is, both *Zelauto* and *The Englishe-Romayne Lyfe* are of importance in the history of the antecedents of the novel; and there is, perhaps, even some profit for us in a perusal of a portion of his dreary and interminable moraliz-

ings and his wretched pamphlets. With his ballads and his romances these religious treatises and political catch-pennies formed the greater part of the ordinary reading of the men of his time. There is little use in imagining either the idle or the industrious apprentice as turning for his recreation to the reading of *King Lear* or *Much Ado*; they both probably spent their twopences and threepences on the *Taking of Campion* or *The Englishe-Romayne Lyfe*, and enjoyed the *Watchwoord to England* and *The Dumbe Diuine Speaker*. It would be superfluous to draw the obvious parallel to-day.

So far as character is concerned Munday is his own best biographer. We are continually getting sidelights on it from his books. The whole of the *Englishe-Romayne Lyfe* is full of autobiography and confession, and *Zelauto* has a strong personal flavour at times. Surely *Zelauto*'s story of his encounter with banditti near Naples is reminiscent of Munday's own similar adventure with disbanded mercenaries near Boulogne :

'When I was come thither I knew not what to doo, because
'I was freendlesse, moneylesse, and dispoyled out of my
'garments. At last, having espyed an Osteria I boldly
'entered, putting myselfe in the hands of God, to whome
'I referred the paying of my charges.'

Impecunious he may have been, but he was certainly no loiterer on the primrose path of Bohemianism. Especially in the later years of his life, those glimpses which we have of him show him busily engaged in picking up all the crumbs he can. There is an entertaining extract from the ledger book of the Fishmongers' Company, concerning the pageant *Chrysanaleia*, which he wrote for them in 1616.

'Court. 9 Dec. 1616.

'Anthony Munday, the poett, gratified. At this court
'Anthony Munday did exhibit his petition, to have some

‘ gratification gyuen him for cc books of the late shewes and
 ‘ speeches at the presentment of the Lord Maior, more than
 ‘ he agreed to deluyer them, and for lynks and for spoyling
 ‘ the silk cotes which the halberdiers did weare, losing their
 ‘ badges, and other things mentioned in a bill exhibited by
 ‘ him, for which he seith he doth desyre to have Xli. in
 ‘ recompense. And vpon consideration had of the particulars
 ‘ of his bill, it is agreed that he shall haue Vli. xvs. gyuen
 ‘ vnto him, which he is content thankfully to accept in full
 ‘ satisfaction of all his demands.’

He evidently knew how to send in a bill with a safe margin to allow of cutting down.

The impudent innocence of his defence of the part he played as a Jesuit spy is very characteristic ; but it does not equal the pious snuffle with which he defends himself and the other witnesses at the Campion trial. Quoting from a French pamphlet its description of them as ‘ all of very base condition ’ and ‘ so well seene in lyes that they seemed to be borne and nourished therein ’, he replies sanctimoniously :

‘ As for our baseness or simpleness, we will not stande to
 ‘ contend with him : though we know we haue all one father,
 ‘ and that we are all made of one mettall. Againe we know,
 ‘ God hath chosen the despised of the world, to cōfoūd
 ‘ them that thinke themselues moste mighty.’

At such irreproachable sentiments the shade of Pecksniff turns green with envy, and it is amusing to notice that in his translations of the *Amadis* and *Palmerin* romances he anticipates the lamented Mr. Bowdler. Citizen and Draper seems to have been the summit of his ambition : for him as for David Copperfield there was an ‘ Agnes ever pointing upwards ’, but Munday’s Agnes was named Respectability.

As a result there has gathered around Anthony Munday none of the attraction of the Marlowe legend : he has no picturesque accessories. What legend there is has been

begotten by Criticism on Insufficient Knowledge, and the offspring is Dullness—a ‘dismal draper with misplaced literary ambitions’. Browning would have enjoyed Munday however: he was no genius, but he was certainly a person of importance in his own day. I am very conscious that to make him as interesting to others as he has been to myself would have required the interpretive capacity of the author of the *Parleyings*, and perhaps some such method; in self-exculpation, therefore, I can only quote Munday himself: ‘You can haue no more of a cat but her skin, nor of me more then I am able to do.’

DISCUSSION

In the course of the discussion, Mr. Greg, after congratulating Miss Byrne on her most interesting paper, added a few remarks on *Fidele and Fortunio* and *Sir Thomas More*. He has supplied the following notes:

Collier quoted the dedication of *Fidele*, but gave the addressee as ‘Maister John Heardson, Esquier’ and the writer as ‘A. M.’, whereas in the Mostyn copy the former appears as ‘Maister M. R.’ and the latter as ‘M. A.’ Since no reason can be suggested why Collier should have invented a wholly unknown John Heardson, we must, I think, assume that the dedications vary. It is, however, for obvious reasons less likely that they should vary in the name of the writer than in that of the addressee, and it is still possible that Collier may have reversed the initials to make them fit Munday. It would appear, however, that Hazlitt, as well as Collier, had seen the now missing copy, for in his *Handbook* he not only mentions the Heardson—A.M. dedication (referring to Collier) but likewise ‘a Prologue spoken before the Queen, consisting of two 6-line stanzas’ which Collier does not mention, but which is now known to exist. Unless, therefore,

Hazlitt had access in 1867 to unpublished information of Collier's, the 'A. M.' signature must be genuine, and the reversal of the initials is not a speculation but a fact. This would greatly strengthen the case for Munday's authorship, and render quite plausible the suggestion that the initials 'M. R.' are also reversed.

In considering the date of *More* there is one palaeographical clue that has not yet been followed. Hand C of *More*, that of the playhouse reviser, is also found in the plot of the *Seven Deadly Sins* belonging to Strange's men, *c.* 1591, and in the fragmentary plot of an unidentified play belonging to the Admiral's men not later than 1598. Since, of course, the writer worked on *More* while still with the Strange-Chamberlain company, the date of his joining the Admiral's, if ascertained, would give us a *terminus ad quem* for *More*. The two most likely occasions of his transferring his services would be in the spring of 1594, when Alleyn and probably others left the Chamberlain's and refounded the Admiral's company, or in the autumn of 1597, when there was a further reconstruction of the latter company. On general grounds the former occasion would be the more probable, since the two companies concerned were then brought into direct relation, and probability would be raised almost to certainty could it be shown that the fragmentary plot was before October 1597. This, however, does not seem feasible: though the evidence is not conclusive, the fact that two of the cast mentioned also appear in the plot of *Alcazar* after the reconstruction, but not in that of *Frederick and Basilea* shortly before it, points to 1598 as the more likely date.