

**SCENES FROM OLD
PLAYBOOKS, ARRANGED
AS AN INTRODUCTION TO
SHAKESPEARE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649380404

Scenes from old playbooks, arranged as an introduction to Shakespeare by Percy Simpson & William Shakespeare

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

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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

www.triestepublishing.com

PERCY SIMPSON & WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**SCENES FROM OLD
PLAYBOOKS, ARRANGED
AS AN INTRODUCTION TO
SHAKESPEARE**

SCENES FROM OLD PLAYBOOKS

ARRANGED AS AN
INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE

BY

PERCY SIMPSON, M.A.

ASSISTANT MASTER AT ST. OLAVE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL, FORMERLY
SCHOLAR OF SELWYN COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

WITH A REPRODUCTION OF THE SWAN THEATRE

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1906

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK AND TORONTO

PREFACE

THIS book is an attempt to solve in practical form some of the difficulties involved in a first reading of Shakespeare. The historical plays, which are comparatively simple for a beginner, and the comedies, with their vivid picture of contemporary life, were obviously the sources upon which to draw; in most cases a sequence of scenes has been given. To lighten the difficulty presented by the language, phrases, lines, and sentences have been lopped freely whenever this could be done without positive ruin to the context; and occasionally the easier of two readings has been deliberately adopted. The book has been edited solely with an eye to young readers.

The only notes are stage-notes, and these have been lavishly supplied; their helpfulness in a school edition seems as yet to be imperfectly recognized. They come from many sources. Some are traditional, as Falstaff's by-play with his shield (p. 223), or the exquisite suggestion for Thisby's suicide, taken from Edward Sharpham's play, *The Fleire*, 1607, sig. E verso—'Faith, like Thisbe in the play, a' has almost killed himself with the scabbard.' The scenes from *The Merchant of Venice* owe some incidental touches to Mr. R. G. Moulton's brilliant study of the plot in his *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*; in the trial scene I have used the suggestions of the distinguished actor, Edwin Booth, as recorded by Dr. Furness; for Shylock throughout I have drawn freely on my own memories of Sir Henry Irving's great impersonation. To my friend and old colleague, the Rev. F. A. Hibbert, Head Master of Denstone College, I owe warm thanks for the loan of his privately annotated acting-copies. A play of Shakespeare is performed at Denstone yearly, and my experience as a stage-manager there has contributed not a little to the making of this book. I desire to place on record my debt to the boys of my old company; they taught me much, whatever I taught or failed to teach them.

For further help than is given by stage-notes, there is the glossary, and, above all, there is, or there should be, the

teacher. With the extracts from *Cymbeline*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the charming narrative in Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* may be read with advantage; with the historical pieces, Holinshed and North's *Plutarch*. An attempt is made in the Introduction to show the dramatic significance of the sources.

Lastly, I am under the deepest obligation to Mr. Sidney Lee, and to his publishers, Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., for permission to reproduce from the illustrated edition of Mr. Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare* the old sketch of the Swan Theatre which reappears as the frontispiece of this book. The original is preserved in the University Library at Utrecht, and Mr. Lee's reproduction of it is more accurate in detail than earlier presentations. What use I have made of the privilege will be seen from the Introduction; those who use this book will be grateful to the distinguished scholar who has enabled them to see the old theatre instead of merely reading about it.

P. S.

ST. OLAVE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL,
TOWER BRIDGE, S.E.
December 28, 1905.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
i. A Shakespearian Play	1
ii. Shakespeare's Theatre	7
I. CARATACH AND HENGO, from Fletcher's <i>Bonduca</i>	17
i. The Lesson of Victory (Act i, Sc. i)	17
ii. A Capture (Act ii, Sc. iii)	21
iii. A Roman Leader (Act iii, Sc. ii)	22
iv. Defeat (Act iii, Sc. v)	23
v. The Fugitives (Act iv, Sc. ii)	24
vi. Honour to a Fallen Foe (Act v, Sc. i)	28
vii. The Trap (Act v, Scenes iii and v)	30
II. A KING'S DEFIANCE, from Shakespeare's <i>Cymbeline</i> (Act iii, Sc. i)	35
III. HUBERT AND ARTHUR, from Shakespeare's <i>King John</i> (Act iv, Sc. i)	37
IV. THE FALL OF EDWARD THE SECOND, from Marlowe's <i>Edward II</i>	41
i. The Capture (Act iv, Sc. vi)	41
ii. The Deposition (Act v, Sc. i)	43
iii. The End (Act v, Sc. v)	47
V. THE DYING PROPHET, from Shakespeare's <i>Richard II</i> (Act ii, Sc. i)	49
VI. KING HENRY THE FIFTH, from Shakespeare's <i>Henry IV</i> and <i>Henry V</i>	51
i. The Wearing of a Crown (<i>Henry IV</i> , Part II, Act iv, Scenes iv and v)	51
ii. The New King (ib., Act v, Sc. ii)	59
Chorus i. The Poet's Prelude (<i>Henry V</i> , Prologue)	63
Chorus ii. Conspiracy (ib., Chorus, Act ii)	64
iii. Conspiracy Unmasked (ib., Act ii, Sc. ii)	65
Chorus iii. The Voyage to France (ib., Chorus, Act iii)	70
iv. The Attack on Harfleur (ib., Act iii, Sc. i)	71
Chorus iv. The Eve of Battle (ib., Chorus, Act iv)	72
v. In Camp at Agincourt (ib., Act iv, Sc. i)	73
vi. A King of Men (ib., Act iv, Sc. iii)	78
vii. The Close of Battle (ib., Act iv, Scenes v and vii)	81
Chorus v. The Home-coming (ib., Chorus, Act v)	83

	PAGE
VII. RED AND WHITE ROSE, from Shakespeare's <i>Henry VI</i> , Part I, Act ii, Sc. iv	84
VIII. THE DREAM OF CLARENCE, from Shakespeare's <i>Richard III</i> (Act i, Sc. iv)	88
IX. THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER, from Heywood's <i>Edward IV</i> (Part II, Act iii, Sc. v)	90
X. THE EVE OF BOSWORTH, from Shakespeare's <i>Richard III</i> (Act v, Sc. iii)	91
XI. PERKIN WARBECK, from Ford's <i>Perkin War-</i> <i>beck</i>	95
i. A Royal Welcome (Act ii, Sc. i)	95
ii. The Departure from Scotland (Act iv, Sc. iii)	98
iii. Face to Face (Act v, Sc. ii)	99
iv. Faithful unto Death (Act v, Sc. iii)	102
XII. THE FALL OF WOLSEY, from <i>Henry VIII</i> , Act iii, Sc. ii, by Fletcher ?	108
XIII. BRUTUS AND CAESAR, from Shakespeare's <i>Julius Caesar</i>	118
i. In Even Scale (Act i, Sc. ii)	118
ii. The Turn of the Balance (Act ii, Sc. i)	122
iii. The Murder of Caesar (Act iii, Sc. i)	124
iv. Caesar's Funeral (Act iii, Sc. ii)	132
v. A Quarrel (Act iv, Sc. iii)	139
vi. The Death of Brutus (Act v, Sc. v)	143
XIV. A NOBLE REVENGE, from <i>The Custom of the</i> <i>Country</i> , Act ii, Sc. iv, by Massinger	146
XV. ANTONIO AND SHYLOCK, from Shakespeare's <i>Merchant of Venice</i>	150
i. The Second Arrow (Act i, Sc. i)	150
ii. The Merry Bond (Act i, Sc. iii)	152
iii. Loss upon Loss (Act iii, Sc. i)	156
iv. Bassanio's Triumph (Act iii, Sc. ii)	159
v. Forfeit (Act iii, Sc. iii)	165
vi. The Trial (Act iv, Sc. i)	166
vii. The Comedy of the Rings (Act v, Sc. i)	178
XVI. TANNER AND KING, from Heywood's <i>Ed-</i> <i>ward IV</i> , Part I	184
i. A Royal Guest (Act iii, Sc. ii)	184
ii. The Return Visit (Act v, Sc. v)	188

CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
XVII. A CONSTABLE OF THE OLDEN TIME, from Shakespeare's <i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>	191
i. Charging the Watch (Act iii, Sc. iii)	191
ii. An Official Report (Act iii, Sc. v)	193
iii. The Examination (Act iv, Sc. ii)	195
XVIII. A VERY TRAGICAL COMEDY, from Shake- speare's <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	198
i. The Company (Act i, Sc. ii)	198
ii. The Rehearsal (Act iii, Sc. i)	201
iii. The Court Performance (Act v, Sc. i)	204
XIX. SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, from Shakespeare's <i>King Henry IV, Part I</i>	213
i. The Start (Act ii, Sc. i)	213
ii. Stand and Deliver (Act ii, Sc. ii)	216
iii. A Plague of all Cowards! and the Power of Instinct (Act ii, Sc. iv)	219
XX. AN ELIZABETHAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL, from Marston's <i>What you Will</i> (Act ii, Sc. ii)	223
A NOTE ON THE VERSE	227
GLOSSARY	229
INDEX OF NAMES	246