

**SHAKESPEARE'S LOST YEARS IN LONDON
1586-1592, GIVING NEW LIGHT ON THE PRE-
SONNET PERIOD; SHOWING THE INCEPTION OF
RELATIONS BETWEEN SHAKESPEARE AND THE
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON AND DISPLAYING
JOHN FLORIO AS SIR JOHN FALSTAFF**

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Shakespeare's lost years in London 1586-1592, giving new light on the pre-sonnet period; showing the inception of relations between Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton and displaying John Florio as Sir John Falstaff by Arthur Acheson

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ARTHUR ACHESON

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ARTHUR ACHESON

AUTHOR OF "SHAKESPEARE AND THE RIVAL POET"
"MISTRESS DAVENANT, THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS" ETC.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK
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1920

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add'l

NO MORE
IN MEMORIAM
Evan L. Reese

TO MY SONS
ARTHUR MURRAY ACHESON
AND
ALEXANDER G. ACHESON
I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME

901582

"THE purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."

Hamlet, Act III. Scene ii.

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

SHAKESPEARE'S LOST YEARS IN LONDON

1586-1592

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE most interesting and important fifteen years in the records of English dramatic literature are undoubtedly those between 1588 and 1603, within which limit all of Shakespeare's poems and the majority of his plays were written; yet no exhaustive English history, intelligently co-ordinating the social, literary, and political life of this period, has ever been written.

Froude, the keynote of whose historical work is contained in his assertion that "the Reformation was the root and source of the expansive force which has spread the Anglo-Saxon race over the globe," recognising a logical and dramatic climax for his argument in the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, ends his history in that year; while Gardiner, whose historical interest was as much absorbed by the Puritan Revolution as was Froude's by the Reformation, finds a fitting beginning for his subject in the accession of James I. in 1603. Thus an historical hiatus is left which has never been exhaustively examined. To the