

**THE TEMPLE
SHAKESPEARE: THE
LIFE OF KING HENRY V**

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The Temple Shakespeare: The Life of King Henry V by Israel Gollancz

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THE
TEMPLE SHAKESPEARE



*By the kind permission of Messrs Macmillan & Co.
and W. Aldis Wright, Esq., the text here
used is that of the "Cambridge" Edition.*

WHAT needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones
The labour of an Age in piled stones,
Or that his' hallow'd Reliques should be hid
Under a star-pointing Pyramid?
Dear Sonne of Memory, great Heire of Fame,
What needst thou such dull witness of thy Name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyselfe a lasting Monument:
For whilst, to th' shame of slow-endavouring Art,
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued Booke
Those Delphicke Lines with deep Impression tooke;
Then thou, our fancy of herself bereaving,
Dost make us Marble with too much conceiving;
And, so Sepulcher'd, in such pompe dost lie,
That Kings for such a Tombe would wish to die.

JOHN MILTON, 1630.

•MDCCLXV: PUBLISHED BY J. M. DENT
•AND CO: ALDINE HOUSE LONDON E.C.

THE prologues, which unite epic pomp and solemnity with lyrical sublimity, and among which the description of the two camps before the battle of Agincourt forms a most admirable night-piece, are intended to keep the spectators constantly in mind, that the peculiar grandeur of the actions described cannot be developed on a narrow stage, and that they must, therefore, supply, from their own imaginations, the deficiencies of the representation. As the matter was not properly dramatic, Shakspeare chose to wander in the form also beyond the bounds of the species, and to sing, as a poetical herald, what he could not represent to the eye, rather than to cripple the progress of the action by putting long descriptions in the mouths of the dramatic personages. The confession of the poet that "four or five most vile and ragged folla, right ill-disposed, can only disgrace the name of Agincourt," (a scruple which he has overlooked in the occasion of many other great battles, and among others of that of Philippi,) brings us here naturally to the question how far, generally speaking, it may be suitable and advisable to represent wars and battles on the stage. The Greeks have uniformly renounced them: as in the whole of their theatrical system they proceeded on ideas of grandeur and dignity, a feeble and petty imitation of the unattainable would have appeared insupportable in their eyes. With them, consequently, all fighting was merely recounted. The principle of the romantic dramatists was altogether different: their wonderful pictures were infinitely larger than their theatrical means of visible execution; they were everywhere obliged to count on the willing imagination of the spectators, and consequently they also relied on them in this point."

SCHLEGEL.

5 My. 20. FHW.
Reclass. I. E. 9. 12-3-29.

Preface.

Editions. The earliest edition of *King Henry the Fifth* is a quarto published in 1600, with the following title:—

"The | Chronicle | History of Henry the Fifth | with his battell fought at *Agin Court* in | *France*. Together with *Auntient Pistoll*. | *As it hath bene sundry times played by the Right honorable | the Lord Chamberlaine his servants.* | LONDON | Printed by *Thomas Creede*, for Tho. Milling | ton, and Iohn Busby. And are to be | sold at his house in Carter Lane, next | the Powle head. 1600. |"

This quarto was reprinted in 1602 and 1608.

In the First Folio the title of the play is *The Life of Henry the Fifth*.*

The text of the quarto edition differs in many important respects from that of the folio; (i.) it omits all the prologues and the epilogue; (ii.) some five hundred lines besides are in no wise represented therein; (iii.) the speeches of certain characters are transferred to other characters, so that the actors are fewer; † confusion in time-indications; (iv.) corruptions, obscurities, and

* Edited by W. G. Stone, *New Shak. Soc.*, 1880.

† Ely, Westmoreland, Bedford, Britany, Rambures, Erpingham, Grand-pré, Macmorris, Jamy, Messenger, II. iv., and IV. ii., and the French Queen, have no speeches assigned to them in the Quarto.

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minor discrepancies abound.* The Quarto is obviously derived from an edition abridged for acting purposes, evidently an imperfect and unauthorised version made up from shorthand notes taken at the theatre, and afterwards amplified. The original of this abridged edition was in all probability the Folio text, more or less, as we know it. This view of the question is now generally accepted, and few scholars are inclined to maintain that 'the original of the Quarto was an earlier one' without choruses, and following the Chronicle historians much more closely.†

The Date of Composition. The reference to Essex in the Prologue to Act V. (*vide* Note) shows that *Henry the Fifth* must have been acted between March 27 and September 28, 1599‡; the play is not mentioned by Meres in his *Palladis Tamia*, 1598, though *Henry IV.* is included in his list; the Epilogue to 2 *Henry IV.* makes promise of *Henry V.*, but 'our

* Cf. *Henry V.*, *Parallel Texts*, ed. Nicholson, with *Introduction*, by P. A. Daniel; *New Shak. Soc.*

† *Vide* Fleay, 'Life and Work of Shakespeare'; p. 205. Besides thus differentiating the two editions, Mr Fleay takes the scene with the Scotch and Irish captains (III. ii. l. 69 to the end of the scene) to be an insertion for the Court performance, Christmas 1605, to please King James, who had been annoyed that year by depreciation of the Scots on the stage.

This scene is certainly a contrast to the anti-Scottish feeling in Act. I. Sc. ii. The late Richard Simpson made some interesting, though doubtful, observations on the political teaching of Henry V. in a paper dealing with *The politics of Shakespeare's Historical Plays* (*New Shak. Soc.*, 1874).

‡ It is fair to assume that the choruses were written for the first performances, though Pope, Warburton, and others held that these were inserted at a later period; they must, however, have formed an integral portion of Shakespeare's original scheme; considerations of time may have necessitated their omission in the abridged acting edition.