

spelling has to a certain extent been followed in the text variants; but the original spelling has been retained wherever its peculiarities have been the basis for important textual criticism and emendation.

With the exception of the position of the textual variants, the plan of this edition is similar to that of the old Hudson Shakespeare. It is impossible to specify the various instances of revision and rearrangement in the matter of the Introduction and the interpretative notes, but the endeavor has been to retain all that gave the old edition its unique place and to add the results of what seems vital and permanent in later inquiry and research.

While it is important that the principle of *suum cuique* be attended to so far as is possible in matters of research and scholarship, it is becoming more and more difficult to give every man his own in Shakespearian annotation. The amount of material accumulated is so great that the identity-origin of much important comment and suggestion is either wholly lost or so crushed out of shape as to be beyond recognition. Instructive significance perhaps attaches to this in editing the works of one who quietly made so much of materials gathered by others. But the list of authorities given on page li will indicate the chief source of much that has gone to enrich the value of this edition. Professor W. P. Trent, of Columbia University, has offered valuable suggestions and given important advice; and to Mr. M. Grant Daniell's patience, accuracy, and judgment this volume owes both its freedom from many a blunder and its possession of a carefully arranged index.

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INTRODUCTION

NOTE. In citations from Shakespeare's plays and nondramatic poems the numbering has reference to the Globe edition, except in the case of this play, where the reference is to this edition.

I. SOURCES

No event in the history of the world has made a more profound impression upon the popular imagination than the assassination of Julius Cæsar. Apart from its overwhelming interest as a personal catastrophe, it was regarded in the sixteenth century as a happening of the greatest historical moment, fraught with significant public lessons for all time. There is ample evidence that in England from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign it was the subject of much literary and dramatic treatment, and in making the murder of "the mightiest Julius" the climax of a play, Shakespeare was true to that instinct which drew him for material to themes of universal and eternal interest.

THE MAIN STORY

1. *North's Plutarch*. There is no possible doubt that in *Julius Cæsar* Shakespeare derived the great body of his historical material from *The Life of Julius Cæsar*, *The Life of Marcus Brutus*, and *The Life of Marcus Antonius*