APPENDIX A.

THE FAIRY WORLD.

§ 1. **Introduction.**—Two conceptions of Fairyland have impressed themselves upon the popular imagination. One is that of Shakespeare, who paints the Fairies, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and elsewhere, as minute ethereal beings, invisible to mortal eyes, who hide themselves in the hollow of a nut, or the petals of a flower. Drayton and Herrick, to name no lesser names, have adopted this conception, and through them it has become traditional in English poetry and English art. The other is found in Perrault, and in the innumerable collections of fairy-tales, largely of French origin, which derive their inspiration from Perrault. Here the fairies are represented rather as enchanters and enchantresses than as spirits, more or less human in stature and appearance, but gifted with supernatural or magical powers. But it should be noticed that both of these are essentially *literary* conceptions. The traditional fairies of rural belief, the little green creatures who dwell in the fairy hills and dance in the fairy-rings, are not quite the same as either the fairies of Shakespeare, or the fairies of Perrault. How then is the fairy of literature related to the fairy of folk-lore?[1]

§ 2. **Fay and Fairy.**—A good deal of ink has been spilt on the derivation of the word *Fairy*. But philologists seem to

[1] The student who wishes to pursue the subject of fairy lore will find the following books, amongst others, useful:—W. C. Hazlitt, *Fairy Mythology of Shakespeare* (1875). [This is a collection of illustrative texts, including those printed in Ritson's *Fairy Tales* (1831) and Halliwell's Shakespeare Society *Illustrations of the Fairy Mythology of a Midsummer-Night's Dream* (1845).] T. F. Thistleton Dyer, *Folk Lore of Shakespeare* (1883). T. Keightley, *Fairy Mythology* (1852). Drake, *Shakespeare and his Times* (1817). W. Bell, *Shakespeare's Puck* (1859). L. F. A. Maury, *Les Fées du Moyen Age* (1853). E. S. Hartland, *The Science of Fairy Tales* (1891). W. J. Thoms, *Three Notelets on Shakespeare* (1865). R. Kirk, *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies*; ed. A. Lang (1691–1893). Perrault, *Popular Tales*; ed. A. Lang (1888). D. M'Ritchie, *The Testimony of Tradition* (1890). T. Rhys, *Hibbert Lectures on Celtic Heathendom* (1888). K. Meyer and A. Nutt, *The Voyage of Bran and the Irish Vision of the Happy Otherworld* (1895). R. Scot, *The Discovery of Witchcraft*; ed. Brinsley Nicholson (1584–1886). B. C. A. Windle, *Introduction to E. Tyson's Pygmies of the Ancients* (1894). C. C. Hense, *Shakespeare's Sommernachtstraum Erläutert* (1851); *Untersuchungen und Studien* (1884).

have come to an agreement that it is descended in one way or another from the Latin *fatum*, which means literally 'the thing spoken', and so 'destiny'. Properly speaking, the name for an individual fairy is *fay*, the Old French *fae*, and modern French *fée*. The English *fairy*, O.F. *faerie*, M.F. *feerie*, is an abstract substantive derived from *fae*. Thus in Middle English *faerie* or *fairy* meant originally—

(*a*) the *fairy land*.

> "The Kyng of Fayré with his route
> Com to hunte all about" (*Orfeo*, 273, c. 1320).

(*b*) the *fairy folk*.

> "Away with the fayré sche was ynome" (*Orfeo*, 189).

(*c*) 'enchantment', 'illusion'.

> "Me bi-fel a ferly
> A Feyrie me thouhte" (*Piers Plowman*, Passus A, prol. 6).

Gradually, however, it took the place of the concrete substantive *fay*. The earliest instance quoted in the *New English Dictionary* is

> "And as he were a fairie" (Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, ii. 371).

§ 3. **Fae and Fatum.**—But how was the Old French *fae* derived from the Latin *fatum*? When the Romans conquered Gaul, they found everywhere a worship of local divinities, *Matrae*, *Matres*, *or Matronae Augustae*, as they were called in inscriptions written in Latin.[1] These were generally represented as three in number, and thus afforded a remarkable analogy to the three *Parcae* or 'Fates' of classical belief. The two sets of goddesses were naturally identified. But in the vulgar speech of the soldiers and colonists the Roman Fates were called, not *Parcae*, but *Fatae*, a Low Latin form obtained by treating the neuter plural of *fatum* as if it were a feminine singular. *Fatae* then became a name of these *Matronae* or local 'mother goddesses'. The cult of the *Matronae* was in the hands of colleges of priestesses or druidesses, generally nine in number; and these druidesses appear to have practised magical rites, and to have possessed great power over the minds of the Celtic element in the population. It need hardly be said that when Christianity came, the reputation of the druidesses did not immediately vanish. No doubt they still exercised their priestly

[1] L. F. A. Maury, *Les Fées du Moyen Age*; Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 100.

functions in secret, and, as they gradually died out, lingered in the popular memory as a centre for the universal belief in sorcery and enchantment. The fame of these mysterious women crept into literature. The *faes* of the earlier romances are in reality nothing but enchantresses; they differ only from the other characters by the possession of superhuman knowledge and power. But to come back for a moment to etymology. How did these priestesses of the *Fatae* themselves get the name of *faes*? Possibly through a natural confusion, when the old religion was forgotten, between the devotees of certain divinities and those divinities themselves. If so, *fae* is derived directly from *fata* by the suppression of the *t* and the conversion of *a* into *e*. Or, possibly, through the medium of a Low Latin verb *fatare*, 'to enchant'. These priestesses may have been regarded as *fatatae*, enchanted or inspired by the *Fatae*; and *fatata* might become *fae* by the suppression of *tat*, and the conversion of *a* into *e*, as before. If so, *fae* began as a participle or adjective exactly equivalent in sense to the Scotch *fey*; and we occasionally find it so used in the romances. Thus in the romance of *Brun de la Montagne* we read: "Il a des lieux faés es marches de Champagne"; and in that of *Parthenopex de Blois*, it is said of the forest of the Ardennes: "Ele estoit hisdouse et faé". So, too, at a later date, in Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (1393), i. 193: "My wife Constance is fay".[1]

§ 4. **The Fay of Romance.**—The *Fays* of the romances, then, are primarily enchantresses. They have the command of supernatural arts, but they are human in size and appearance, and are often regarded as mortal. The *locus classicus* to quote, is from *Lancelot du Lac* (ed. 1553), p. v.: "En cellui temps estoient appellées fées toutes celles qui s'entermettoient d'enchantements et de charmes, et moult en estoit pour lors principallement en la Grand Bretagne, et scavoient la force et la vertue de parolles, des pierres et des herbes, parquoy elles estoient tenue en jeunesse, et en beaulte et en grandes richesses comment elles divisoient. Et ce fut estably au temps de Merlin le prophete". The fays play a considerable part in the romances both of the Arthur and Charlemagne cycles. Morgan le Fay, for instance, is sister of Arthur, and lover of Ogier le Danois. Vivien or Nimue, the Lady of the

[1] With *Fatum* are connected the Latin names for wood-divinities, *Faunus*, *Fatua*; and Mr. H. C. Coote has argued in *The Folk-lore Record*, vol. ii., that the *Fays* are descendants rather of the *Fatuae* than the *Fatae*. Certainly *Morgan le Fay* corresponds to the Italian *Fata Morgana*, the *Will-o'-the-wisp*, or *ignis fatuus*. Earlier writers tried to derive *Fairy* from the Homeric φήμη, the Persian *Peri*, and other impossible sources in every tongue. See Keightley, p. 4.

Lake, becomes a fay through the magic learnt from Merlin. Often the fays attend at the birth of children, and dower them with supernatural gifts of blessing or curse. And it is from this point that Perrault's conception of the fairy takes its rise. Perrault borrowed the fays of romance, and introduced them, in the form of fairy godmothers, into innumerable stories with which they had originally nothing to do.[1]

§ 5. **Fairies and Elves.**—But between the Lady of the Lake and Titania a great change has come over the conception of fairydom. This change is due to the identification or confusion of the fays of romance with the elves of popular belief. Every Aryan people has its tradition of a race of supernatural beings, of diminutive stature, who dwell in a realm of their own underground, and occasionally mingle in the affairs of men. These are the *dwarfs*, *trolls*, and *alfs* of Scandinavia; the *kobolds* and *nixies* of Germany; the *elves*, *pixies*, and *pisgies* of England; the *brownies* and *sleagh maith* or 'good people' of Scotland; the *korrigan* of Brittany; and the *fir sithe* or *sidthe* and *leprechauns* of Ireland. Comparative mythology has shown that this belief extends, in one form or another, over and beyond Europe. To its origin, or origins, we may refer presently; but the immediate point is that in time this supernatural race was identified with the enchantresses of the romances; the name of fays or fairies was transferred to the elf-folk, their shadowy dominion became known as fairy-land, and for the first time the 'fairy king' and the 'fairy queen' are heard of. This process was most marked when English literature began to be really English, and ceased to be Anglo-Norman. It was natural, just then, that native superstitions should be taken up into the stories from which they had hitherto been shut out by barriers of speech.

§ 6. **Huon of Bordeaux.**—But even in the romances themselves, the altered conception of the fairies may be traced. In the beginning it seems to have been due, not to English, but to German influences. The dwarf Albrich (from *alb*, the English *elf*, and *rich*, 'king') is an important figure in the *Nibelungen Lied*, the guardian of the Hoard of the Nibelungen, which was won by Siegfried. In the *Heldenbuch*, Elberich is a dwarf king, who assists the Emperor Ortnit to win his bride. A very similar part is played in the famous romance of *Huon of Bordeaux* by "the dwarfe of the fayry, Kinge Oberon". Oberon is the English form of the French

[1] See Mr. A. Lang's Introduction to an English version of Perrault's *Popular Tales* (1888).

Auberon, which is probably only a translation of the German name Alberich, the termination *-ich*, which does not exist in French, being replaced by *-on*. The connection of Oberon with the Huon legend has been traced back to the 13th century.[1] He is mentioned, for instance, by Albericus Trium Fontium in his Chronicles (1240) as *Alberonem virum mirabilem et fortunatum*. In a *chanson* of the same century he is the son of Julius Cæsar and Morgan le Fay.[2] The later romance of *Huon of Bordeaux* was turned into English by Lord Berners about 1540. Here Oberon is described as "of height but of three foote, and crooked shouldered". He was bewitched at birth by four fairies, and is king of 'the fairie' in the Eastern realm of Momur. When he dies, for he is mortal, he leaves his realms to Huon and Arthur. In Oberon we have the Teutonic 'dwarf' and the romantic 'fay' very completely blended together.

§ 7. **The Fairy Lore of Chaucer and Spenser.** — Chaucer thoroughly identifies elves and fairies. In *The Tale of the Wyf of Bathe*, 1–25, he says—

> "In th' olde dayes of the king Arthour,
> Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
> Al was this land fulfild of fayerye;
> The elf-queen with hir joly companye,
> Daunced full ofte in many a grene mede;
> This was the olde opinion, as I rede.
> I speke of manye hundred yeres ago;
> But now can no man see none elves mo.
> For now the grete charitee and prayeres
> Of limitours, and othere holy freres,
> That serchen every lond and every streem,
> As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
> Blessinge halles, chambres, kitchenes, boures,
> Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures,
> Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes,
> This maketh that there been no fayeryes;
> For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
> Ther walketh now the limitour himself
> In undermeles and in morweninges,
> And seyth his matins and his holy thinges,
> As he goth in his limitacioun".

The same conception runs through *The Faerie Queene*. The knights of Fairy-land are frequently called Elfs and Elfins.

[1] Sidney Lee, *Huon of Bordeaux* (E. E. T. S.), p. xxix.
[2] *Huon de Bordeaux* (ed. Guessard, 1860), ll. 3492-6—

> "Jules Cesar me nori bien soué;
> Morge li fée qui tant ot de biauté,
> Che fu ma mère, si me puist Dix salver
> De ces ii fui concus et engerrés."

In some passages, Elf appears to be regarded by Spenser as the male, and Fay the female sex of the same species. Thus we have the following description of Arthegall in iii. 3. 26—

> "He wonneth in the land of Fayeree,
> Yet is no Fary borne, ne sib at all
> To Elfes, but sprong of seed terrestriall,
> And whylome by false Faries stolne away,
> Whyles yet in infant cradle he did crall;
> Ne other to himselfe is knowne this day,
> But that he by an Elfe was gotten of a Fay".

In ii. 10. 70–76, Spenser gives an imaginary lineage of the royal house of Faery, which reigned in India and America. He starts with the first Elf and the first Fay created by Prometheus, and ends with Oberon and his daughter Tanaquil or Gloriana, whom we may, of course, take for Henry VIII. and Elizabeth.

§ 8. **Fairyland and Classical Mythology.** — Not only were elves and fairies regarded as one and the same, but they were also, when men began to read the classics, identified with the somewhat similar beings, Nymphs, Fauns, Satyrs, and the like, of Greek mythology. Spenser, in *The Shepheards' Calender* (June), groups the 'friendly Faeries' with the 'Graces and lightfote Nymphes'. More especially, the king and queen of the fairies were identified with some of the greater pagan gods and goddesses. In the romance of *Sir Orfeo*, the fairies steal Erodys, Meroudys, or Heurodis, as the various MSS. have it, the wife of Orfeo, and he wins her back by harping. This is merely a variant of the descent of Orpheus into Hades to recover Eurydice. So, too, Chaucer speaks in *The Marchantës Tale* (983–985) of—

> "Pluto, that is the king of fayërye,
> And many a lady in his companye,
> Folwinge his wyf, the quene Proserpyne",

while King James the First (*Dæmonologie* (1597), iii. 5) has—"That fourth kind of spirites, which by the Gentiles was called *Diana*, and her wandring court, and amongst us called the *Phairie*".

§ 9. **Shakespeare's Literary Sources.** — No doubt when Shakespeare came to write of the fairies, he was acquainted with the previous treatment of the subject by Chaucer and Spenser, and in the English versions which Malory, Lord Berners, and others had made of such romances as *Huon of Bordeaux*. Had he any other literary sources to go to?

Drayton's *Nymphidia* and a black-letter tract called *Robin Goodfellow, his Mad Pranks and Merry Jests*, have both been pointed to as possibly preceding *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. But the *Nymphidia* was first printed in 1627, and there is no reason to believe that it was written long before. Probably it was inspired by, instead of inspiring, Shakespeare's play. Similarly, the prose *Robin Goodfellow* is only known in an edition of 1628, and the existence of an older issue is a flimsy conjecture. The tract itself bears internal evidence of being later in date than the play. Shakespeare is more likely to have come across some of the stray allusions quoted below (§ 18).

§ 10. **The Fairies on the Stage.**—But he was not the first to introduce fairies on the stage. There are two allusions to an old play, now lost, on the King of the Fairies. Nash, in his preface to Greene's *Menaphon* (1589), says of the actors of the day, that, but for the poets, "they might have anticked it until this time up and down the country with the *King of Fairies*, and dined every day at the pease-porridge ordinary with *Delphrigus*". And Greene himself, in his *Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), introduces an old actor, who boasts that he was "as famous for *Delphrigus* and the *King of the Fairies*, as ever was any of my time". Possibly this old play was the same as that played three times by Lord Sussex's men at the Rose in December, 1592, and January, 1593, and entered by Henslowe in his diary as *Huon of Bordeaux*. Aureola, wife of Auberon, and Queen of the Fairies, appeared in an entertainment given before Elizabeth at Elvetham in 1591;[1] and 'Oberon, King of the Fairies', is a character in the Induction of Greene's *James IV.* (acted 1589). The name is misprinted Oboram on Greene's title-page.

§ 11. **The Fairies in Tradition.**—But we cannot doubt that Shakespeare found less ample material for his fantasy, whether in book or stage, than in the living traditions of the Warwickshire peasantry. The extent of the belief in the fairies which prevailed in England up to a comparatively recent date may be well illustrated from the stories collected in Keightley's *Fairy Mythology*. Probably it is not yet extinct in the remoter regions of the west. It is true that Scot, in the passages

[1] Two editions of *The Honourable Entertainment given to the Queen's Majesty in Progress at Elvetham in Hampshire by the Right Hon. the Earl of Hertford* appeared in 1591. The second of these was reprinted by Nichols in his *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*. The Queen of the Fairies appears without a name in other Elizabethan entertainments, in 1578 (Nichols, ii. 211) and in 1592 (Nichols, iii. 365).

quoted below (§ 18), speaks of the old superstitions as having died out within his memory; but his statement must have applied, if at all, only to the educated classes. Doubtless they were dying out. The fairies were supposed still to exist, but no longer to appear. Chaucer (§ 7) speaks of them, with a touch of irony, as driven away by the piety of the 'limitours'; and Bishop Corbet (1582–1625), in his *The Fairies' Farewell*, connects their disappearance with the Reformation.

"At morning and at evening both
You merry were and glad,
So little care of sleep or sloth,
These pretty ladies had;
When Tom came home from labour,
Or Ciss to milking rose,
Then merrily merrily went their tabour,
And nimbly went their toes.

"Witness those rings and roundelays
Of theirs, which yet remain,
Were footed in Queen Mary's days
On many a grassy plain;
But since of late Elizabeth,
And later, James came in,
They never danced on any heath
As when the time hath bin.

"By which we note the Fairies
Were of the old profession;
Their songs were Ave Maries;
Their dances were procession:
But now, alas! they all are dead,
Or gone beyond the seas;
Or farther for religion fled,
Or else they take their ease."

§ 12. **The Origin of the Belief in Fairies.**—The origin of the belief in fairies is a difficult problem of folk-lore. Probably no single explanation will altogether account for it. It is a complex growth. But in the main it is clearly a relic of the pre-Christian religious ideas of our ancestors. These were much the same amongst Celts, Teutons, and the primitive Graeco-Latin peoples. But they may be most closely studied in Celtic legend. The Celts believed in a shadowy land, either underground, or beneath the sea, or in some island of the west, which was the abode both of the spirits of the dead and of certain dark deities, hostile to men. There were many tales of culture-heroes, men who visited this realm, and wrested from the inhabitants the gifts of civilization.[1] When

[1] See Professor Rhys' *Celtic Heathendom* (*passim*), and Mr. Alfred Nutt's Essay on the Celtic Otherworld in Meyer and Nutt's *Voyage of Bran*.

Christianity came, this belief in a Hades, as we have seen was the case also with the Gaulish belief in *Fatæ*, did not disappear; the Chthonian deities were no longer looked upon as gods, but they were still revered as supernatural beings of a lower type: they became, in fact, fairies. The fairies, like the old gods, are invisible, powerful, spiteful, and dwell underground; just as the beginnings of human civilization came from Hades, so the fairies superintend and assist in the domestic details of which primitive civilization consists (§§ 16–18). It need hardly be said that, a belief in the fairy-folk once existing, and the original significance lost, an easy explanation was afforded for anything which struck the uneducated intelligence as unusual. The stone arrow-heads of past ages became known as 'elf-bolts', the queer circles made by decaying *fungi* on the turf, as fairy-rings; mysterious disappearances, the sudden illnesses of children, the odd sounds of a house at night, the phosphorescence of marshy places, the unpleasant sensations of nightmare, all were put down to the same convenient supernatural agency. Abnormal psychic phenomena, such as afterwards fostered the belief in witchcraft; possibly also, reminiscences of extinct pigmy races, did their part to swell the superstition.[1]

§ 13. **Characteristics of Shakespeare's Fairies.**—We have now to consider what Shakespeare says of the fairies, and to see how much of it is due to tradition, popular or literary, and how much to his own fusing imagination.

(*a*) They form a community, under a king and queen. The king has his jester (ii. 1. 43), the queen her special attendants (ii. 1. 8). The ordinary fairy subjects are sometimes called elves (ii. 1. 17, 30; ii. 2. 5; iii. 1. 177). The fairy court is apparently in 'the farthest steppe of India' (ii. 1. 69, 124).

(*b*) They are exceedingly small. Titania's robe is the cast slough of a snake (ii. 1. 256); the elves creep into acorn-cups (ii. 1. 31), and wear coats made of the wings of bats (ii. 2. 4): butterflies' wings are their fans (iii. 1. 175), and Cobweb is in danger of being 'overflown with a honey-bag' (iv. 1. 15).

(*c*) They move with extreme swiftness. Titania bids her attendants depart 'for the third part of a minute' (ii. 2. 2). Puck will 'go swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow' (iii. 2.

[1] Mr. D. M'Ritchie, in *The Testimony of Tradition* (1890), derives the Scotch fairies from a race of earth-dwellers, Feens or Pechts, "unco wee bodies, but terrible strong, dwelling in fairy-hills or howes". For criticisms of this theory, cf. Mr. A. Lang's Introduction to Kirk's *Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies* (1893); and Mr. B. C. A. Windle's Introduction to Tyson's *Pygmies of the Ancients* (1894), pp. lxiii. *sqq.*

101), swifter than the wind (iii. 2. 94). He 'will put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes' (ii. 1. 175), and returns from his mission 'ere the leviathan can swim a league' (ii. 1. 174). Another fairy wanders 'swifter than the moonës sphere' (ii. 1. 7). Oberon and Titania themselves compass the globe 'swifter than the wandering moon' (iv. 1. 103).

(*d*) They are elemental, airy spirits (iii. 1. 164). Titania says (iii. 1. 157)—

> "I am a spirit of no common rate,
> The summer still doth tend upon my state".

Their brawls incense the winds and moon, and cause tempests (ii. 1. 82, *sqq.*). They take a share in the life of nature, live on fruit (iii. 1. 169), deck the cowslips with dew-drops (ii. 1. 9), and war with noxious insects and reptiles (ii. 2. 3, 9, *sqq.*; iv. 1. 10). They know the secret virtues of herbs (ii. 1. 170, 184), can fetch jewels from the deep (ii. 2. 161), shake the earth with a stamp (iii. 2. 25; iv. 1. 90), and overcast the sky with fog (iii. 2. 355).

(*e*) They dance in orbs upon the green (ii. 1. 9), ringlets (ii. 1. 86), rounds (ii. 1. 140), roundels (ii. 2. 1). In *The Tempest* (v. 1. 36) they are spoken of as the

> "demi-puppets that
> By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
> Whereof the ewe not bites".

(*f*) They sing hymns and carols to the moon (ii. 1. 102). In this they are associated with human beings. Titania had a mortal friend, a votaress of her own order (ii. 1. 123); and Hermia is to become a nun, and chant 'faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon' (i. 1. 73).

(*g*) They are invisible (ii. 1. 186), and, unlike the Oberon of *Huon of Bordeaux* (§ 6), apparently immortal (ii. 1. 101, 123, 135; iii. 1. 163).

(*h*) They come forth mainly at night (iv. 1. 101; v. 1. 393), but are not, like ghosts, forced to vanish at cock-crow. Oberon 'with the morning's love has oft made sport' (iii. 2. 389). But midnight is properly fairy-time (iv. 1. 93; v. 1. 371). They are shadows (v. 1. 430); Puck addresses Oberon as 'king of shadows' (iii. 2. 347). Perhaps their whole existence is but a dream (v. 1. 435).

(*i*) They fall in love with mortals (ii. 1. 65–80; iii. 1. 140, &c.).

(*j*) They steal babies, and leave changelings (ii. 1. 22, 120).

(*k*) They come to 'bless the best bride-bed', and so make the issue thereof fortunate (iv. 1. 93; v. 1. 399–429).

Oberon, Titania, and Puck require more special consideration.

§ 14. **Oberon.**—The name of Oberon, as we have seen, is derived, through the French, from the German Albrich. Chaucer calls the king of fairies Pluto, but Oberon is the name used in *Huon of Bordeaux*, by Spenser and by Robert Greene. In ii. 1. 6 of *The Faerie Queene* we find it said of Sir Guyon, that he

> "Knighthood tooke of good Sir Huon's hand
> When with King Oberon he came to Faery land".

See also § 6. In the *Entertainment at Elvetham*, the name appears as Auberon. After Shakespeare, Drayton, Herrick, and others adopt Oberon, while in the prose *Robin Goodfellow* we get Obreon.

In *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Oberon has certain powers above those of his subjects. He was able to see 'Cupid all armed', when Puck could not (ii. 1. 155).

§ 15. **Titania.**—There is far less unanimity as to the name of the fairy queen. In Chaucer she is Proserpine; and so, too, Campion sings of 'the fairy queen, Proserpina', in one of his prettiest lyrics.[1] In the *Entertainment at Elvetham* she is Aureola; in Spenser, Tanaquil, who is also Gloriana. James the First identifies her with the pagan Diana (§ 8). So does Scot (§ 18). And this really brings us to the meaning of Shakespeare's name. For Titania is only a synonym of Diana. It is so found in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, iii. 173: "Dumque ibi perluitur solita Titania lympha". Here 'Titania' is an epithet, 'Titan-born'. It is remarkable that Golding translates the word by 'Phebe'; but there can be little doubt that Shakespeare knew his Ovid in the original.

It is to be noticed that elsewhere he has quite another name for the fairy queen. In the famous description of her in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 4. 53–95, she is Queen Mab; and this is apparently one of the Irish names for a fairy, Mabh, though others derive it from the *domina Abundia*, a domestic spirit known to mediæval writers.[2] The account of Mab given in *Romeo and Juliet* has many points which resemble the characteristics of the domestic spirit as found in Robin Goodfellow (§ 16). Herrick adopts the name Mab, and so

[1] Printed by Mr. A. H. Bullen in his *Lyrics from Elizabethan Song-books*, p. 169, from Campion and Rosseter's *Book of Airs* (1601).

[2] Thoms, *Three Notelets on Shakespeare*, p. 100; Keightley, pp. 331, 476.

does Drayton, for the fairy queen, though in the eighth Nymphal of *The Muses' Elizium* the Nymph who is to be wedded to a Fay is called Tita.

§ 16. **Puck.**—Puck occupies a peculiar position in the fairy world. He is Oberon's jester (ii. 1. 43) and body-servant. He is known by diverse names, as Robin Goodfellow (ii. 1. 34) or Robin (v. 1. 445), as Hobgoblin (ii. 1. 40), as sweet Puck (ii. 1. 40). He calls himself a goblin (iii. 2. 399), and again *the* Puck (v. 1. 442), and *an* honest Puck (v. 1. 438). A fairy calls him a 'lob of spirits' (ii. 1. 16). He is essentially mischievous (ii. 1. 32–57), he frights the maidens of the villagery (ii. 1. 35), he plays tricks on old women (ii. 1. 47–57), and upsets the housewife's domestic arrangements by stealing cream (ii. 1. 36) and preventing the butter from coming (ii. 1. 37), and the beer from fermenting (ii. 1. 38). He esteems the jangling of mortals a sport (iii. 2. 352); he can counterfeit noises (iii. 1. 113; iii. 2. 360), and transforms himself to a horse (ii. 1. 45; iii. 1. 111), a roasted crab-apple (ii. 1. 48), a three-foot stool (ii. 1. 52), a hound, a hog, a bear, and a fire (iii. 1. 112). It is doubtless in this last guise that he misleads night-wanderers (ii. 1. 39) as a Will-o'-the-wisp (cf. § 18). He also transforms Bottom into an ass. On the other hand, when he is pleased, he does work for mortals, such as sweeping the floor (v. 1. 397), and perhaps grinding the corn (ii. 1. 36, note), and brings them good luck (ii. 1. 41).

§ 17. **The Element of Tradition in the Fairies.**—Many of the characteristics of Shakspeare's fairies may be abundantly paralleled from English folk-lore, not to speak of that of other countries. The conception of Robin Goodfellow may be taken either directly from popular belief, or from popular belief as reported in Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584). Robin Goodfellow is the tricksy domestic sprite, who was supposed to come into houses at night and perform domestic services, expecting some simple food to be left out for his reward. If clothes were laid for him, he resented it. If the house was untidy, he pinched the maidens; if neat and clean, he sometimes left money in their shoes. This love of order is characteristic of the fairies in general, and not only of Robin in particular (cf. *e.g. Merry Wives*, v. 1. 41, *sqq.*). Similar stories are told of the Brownies in Scotland, and the Kobolds in Germany. Robin was identified with Will-o'-the-wisp, the deceitful spirit, that lured travellers into marshes; and also with the Incubus, or nightmare. His functions in this last quality are shared by other fairies, such

as the Queen Mab of *Romeo and Juliet*. A full account of the life and manners of Robin Goodfellow is to be found in the prose *History* of him already referred to, but as I believe this to have been largely founded on Shakespeare, and not his authority, I prefer to quote some illustrative extracts from earlier writers.

§ 18. **Early Testimonies to Robin Goodfellow and the Fairies:**

(*a*) From Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584)—

"I should no more prevail herein [in getting an impartial hearing] than if a hundred years since I should have entreated your predecessors to believe, that Robin Goodfellow, that great and ancient bull-beggar, had been but a cozening merchant and no devil indeed. . . . . But Robin Goodfellow ceaseth now to be much feared, and popery is sufficiently discovered" (ed. Nicholson, p. xx).

He includes amongst the causes of the belief in witches—

"The want of Robin Goodfellow and the fairies, which were wont to maintain that, and the common people talk in this behalf" (p. xxii).

Of the Fairies he says:—

"The Fairies do principally inhabit the mountains and caverns of the earth, whose nature is to make strange apparitions on the earth, in meadows or on mountains, being like men and women, soldiers, kings, and ladies, children and horsemen, clothed in green, to which purpose they do in the night steal hempen stalks from the fields where they grow, to convert them into horses, as the story goes. . . . Such jocund and facetious spirits are said to sport themselves in the night by tumbling and fooling with servants and shepherds in country houses, pinching them black and blue, and leaving bread, butter, and cheese sometimes with them, which, if they refuse to eat, some mischief shall undoubtedly befall them by the means of these Fairies; and many such have been taken away by the said spirits for a fortnight or a month together, being carried with them in chariots through the air, over hills and dales, rocks and precipices, till at last they have been found lying in some meadow or mountain, bereaved of their senses and commonly one of their members to boot" (Bk. iii. ch. iv.).

Of the Incubus:—

"Indeed your grandam's maids were wont to set a bowl of milk before him and his cousin, Robin Goodfellow, for grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight; and you have also heard that he would chafe exceedingly, if the maid or goodwife of the house, having compassion of his nakedness, laid any clothes for him, besides his mess of white bread and milk which was his standing fee. For in that case he saith: What have we here? Hemton hamten, here will I never more tread nor stampen. . . . [Robin was probably] a cozening idle friar, or some such rogue" (Bk. iv. ch. x. p. 67).

Of Robin Goodfellow:—

"Know you this by the way, that heretofore Robin Goodfellow and Hobgobblin were as terrible, and also as credible to the people, as hags and witches be now: and in time to come a witch will be as much derided and contemned, and as plainly perceived, as the illusion and knavery of Robin Goodfellow. And in truth, they that maintain walking spirits with their transformation, &c., have no reason to deny Robin Goodfellow, upon whom there hath gone as many and as credible tales as upon witches; saving that it hath not pleased the translators of the Bible to call spirits by the name of Robin Goodfellow, as they have termed diviners, soothsayers, poisoners, and cozeners by the name of witches" (Bk. vii. ch. ii. p. 105).

"But certainly some one knave in a white sheet hath cozened and abused many thousands that way; specially when Robin Goodfellow kept such a coil in the country . . . But in our childhood our mothers' maids have so . . . fraid us with bull-beggars, spirits, witches, urchins, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, pans, fauns, sylens, Kit with the canstick, tritons, centaurs, dwarfs, giants, imps, calcars, conjurors, nymphs, changelings, Incubus, Robin Goodfellow, the spoorn, the mare, the man in the oak, the hell wain, the fire-drake, the puckle, Tom Thumb, hobgoblin, Tom tumbler, boneless, and other such beings, that we are afraid of our own shadows" (Book vii. ch. xv. p. 122).

"So as St. Loy is out of credit for a horseleach, Master T. and mother Bunzy remain in estimation for prophets: nay, Hobgoblin and Robin Goodfellow are contemned among young children, and mother Alice and mother Bunzy are feared among old fools" (Bk. viii. ch. i. p. 126).

"The Rabbins and, namely, Rabbi Abraham, writing upon the second of Genesis, do say that God made the fairies, bugs, Incubus, Robin Goodfellow, and other familiar or domestic spirits and devils on the Friday; and being prevented with the evening of the Sabbath, finished them not, but left them unperfect; and that therefore, that ever since they use to fly the holiness of the Sabbath, seeking dark holes in mountains and woods, wherein they hide themselves till the end of the Sabbath, and then come abroad to trouble and molest men" (*Discourse upon Devils and Spirits*, ch. xi. p. 425).

"*Virunculi terrei* are such as was Robin Goodfellow, that would supply the office of servants—specially of maids: as to make a fire in the morning, sweep the house, grind mustard and malt, draw water, &c.; these also rumble in houses, draw latches, go up and down stairs, &c. . . . There go as many tales upon this Hudgin in some parts of Germany, as there did in England of Robin Goodfellow" (*Discourse*, ch. xxi. p. 436).

Scot's book was primarily written as an attack on the belief in witchcraft. Incidentally it affords much information as to all the superstitions of the day. Two other points in it serve to illustrate a *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.

(1) He mentions the belief in the power of witches to transform men into asses, &c. (Bk. i. ch. iv. p. 8), and discusses at length a story of such a transformation told in

Bodin's *Liber de Daemoniis*, and in Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum*, and referred to by St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, Lib. 18. He also refers to the similar fable in the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius (Bk. v. ch. i.–vii. p. 75). Apuleius' ass recovered his human form by eating rose leaves. Scot tells another story of an appearance of Pope Benedict IX., a century after his death, with an ass's head on (*Discourse*, ch. xxvii. p. 447), and prints a charm to put a horse's or ass's head on a man (Bk. xiii. ch. xix. p. 257).

(2) He speaks of the fairies as the supposed companions of the witches in their nocturnal flights, and especially "the lady of the fairies", called "Sibylla, Minerva, or Diana" (Bk. iii. ch. ii. p. 32). Elsewhere he quotes the statement of a council that witches "ride abroad with Diana, the goddess of the Pagans, or else with Herodias, . . . and do whatsoever these fairies or ladies command" (Bk iii. ch. xvi. p. 51). He gives also several charms or conjurations for obtaining the services of 'the fairy Sibylia'. According to *Huon of Bordeaux* (ch. cxlvii.) Sibylla held a realm in fairy-land under King Oberon.

There can be little doubt that Shakespeare knew the *Discovery of Witchcraft*. See my edition of *Macbeth* in this series, Appendix D.

(*b*) From *Tarlton's News out of Purgatory. . . . Published by . . . Robin Goodfellow* (1590). [ed. Shakespeare Society, p. 55.]

"Think me to be one of those *Familiares Lares* that were rather pleasantly disposed than endued with any hurtful influence, as Hob Thrust, Robin Goodfellow, and such like spirits, as they term them, of the buttery, famoused in every old wive's chronicle for their mad, merry pranks. Therefore, sith my appearance to thee is in resemblance of a spirit, think that I am as pleasant a goblin as the rest, and will make thee as merry before I part, as ever Robin Goodfellow made the country wenches at their creambowls."

(*c*) From Churchyard's *A Handfull of Gladsome Verses given to the Queen's Majesty at Woodstock this Progress.* (1592.)

Strange farleis fathers told,
  Of fiends and hags of hell;
And how that Circe, when she would,
  Could skill of sorcery well.

And how old thin-faced wives,
  That roasted crabs by night,
Did tell of monsters in their lives,
  That now prove shadows light.

Of old Hobgobling's guise,
  That walked like ghost in sheets,
With maids that would not early rise,
  For fear of bugs and spreets.

Some say the fairies fair
  Did dance on Bednall Green;
And fine familiars of the air
  Did talk with men unseen.

And oft in moonshine nights,
  When each thing draws to rest,
Was seen dumb shows and ugly sights,
  That feared every guest

Which lodged in the house;
  And where good cheer was great,
Hodgepoke would come and drink carouse
  And munch up all the meat.

But where foul sluts did dwell,
  Who used to sit up late,
And would not scour their pewter well,
  There came a merry mate

To kitchen or to hall,
  Or place where spreets resort;
Then down went dish and platters all,
  To make the greater sport.

A further sport fell out,
  When they to spoil did fall;
Rude Robin Goodfellow, the lout,
  Would skim the milk-bowls all,

And search the cream-pots too,
  For which poor milk-maid weeps,
God wot what such mad guests will do
  When people soundly sleeps.

I do not know whether this bit from poor old Churchyard has been hitherto used to illustrate the play.

(*d*) From Nash's *Terrors of the Night.* (1594. Nash's Works. Ed. Grosart, iii. 223.)

"The Robin-good-fellows, Elfs, Fairies, Hobgoblins of our latter age, which idolatrous former days and the fantastical world of Greece ycleped Fauns, Satyrs, Dryads, and Hamadryads, did most of their merry pranks in the night. Then ground they malt, and had hempen shirts for their labours, danced in rounds in green meadows, pinched maids in their sleep that swept not their houses clean, and led poor travellers out of their way notoriously."

Other allusions to Robin Goodfellow may be found in Munday's *Two Italian Gentlemen*, in *Skialetheia*, in *The Cobler of Canterbury*, in Harsnet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, and in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. I have thought it necessary to quote only such as are of earlier date than *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.

§ 19. **The Various Names of Puck.**—The passages quoted above from Reginald Scot show that *Robin Good-fellow* and *Hobgoblin* were popular names for much the same being. Tarlton adds *Hob-thrust*, and Churchyard *Hodgepoke*. 'Hob' and Hodge are indeed only shortened forms of 'Robin', and 'goblin' (see Glossary) simply means a 'spirit' or 'demon'. *Puck*, the polke of 'Hodgepolke', is also a generic term for a 'demon' or 'devil', and it is to be noted that in the text of the play Robin calls himself '*an* honest Puck', '*the* Puck'. And this is consistent with the use of earlier writers. Thus we have in *Piers Plowman*, B. xvi. 264–266—

> "Out of the pouke's pondfolde· no meynprise may vs feeche,
> Tyl he come that I carpe of· Cryst is his name,
> That shal delyure vs some daye· out of the deueles powere".

And in Golding's version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, ix. 646—

> "The country where Chimæra, that same pouke
> Hath goatish body, lion's head and breast, and dragon's tail".

And in Spenser's *Epithalamion*, 340—

> "Ne let the Pouke, nor other evill sprights,
> Ne let mischievous witches with theyr charmes,
> Ne let hob Goblins, names whose sence we see not,
> Fray us with things that be not".

The name has wide affinities. It appears as *Pug* and *Bug*. It is Reginald Scot's *Puckle*, the Devonshire *Pixy*, the Cornish *Pisgy*, the Icelandic *Puki*; Ben Jonson's *Puck-hairy*, and the *Pickle-häring* of German farce. A strayed traveller is *Pixy-led* in Devonshire and *Poake-ledden* in Worcestershire. The list might be increased indefinitely.

Puck is called a '*lob of spirits*'. Lob is the Celtic *llob*, 'a dolt', and the phrase may be explained by the rougher aspect of him among his fellows. He is a "fawn-faced, shock-pated little fellow, a very Shetlander among the gossamer-winged, dainty-limbed shapes around him". Milton in *L'Allegro* speaks of 'the drudging goblin', or 'lubber-fiend', that

> "stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
> Basks at the fire his hairy strength".

And the cognate name of *Lob lie by the Fire* is familiar from Mrs. Ewing's charming story of a domestic Brownie. The phrase 'Lob's pound', perhaps the 'Lipsbury pinfold' of *Lear*, ii. 2. 9, signifies a 'scrape' or 'difficulty'; and is doubtless in origin the same as 'the pouke's pondfolde'. It was believed that he who set foot in a fairy-ring would never come out, another proof that the fairies were originally the dwellers in Hades.

Puck is called *sweet* Puck to propitiate him, and doubtless *Good* Fellow has a similar intention. So Kirk tells us of the Irish that "these Siths, or Fairies, they call Sleagh Maith, or the Good People, it would seem to prevent the dint of their evil attempts (for the Irish use to bless all they fear harm of)". And in the same spirit of euphemism the Greeks called the Erinnyes, the dread ministers of divine vengeance, by the title of Eumenides or 'gracious ones'.

§ 20. **The Evidence of Folk-lore.**—I have dealt at some length with Robin Goodfellow, because he is perhaps the most prominent and characteristic figure in the play. But many other points in the fairy-lore may be equally well illustrated from popular tradition, as we find it for instance in the collection of stories given in Keightley's *Fairy Mythology*. The invisibility of the fairies, their supernatural powers and night-tripping propensities, their monarchical government, the fairy ointment and the fairy-rings; all these are well-recognized features in their natural history. Their habit of stealing children and leaving changelings is the subject of a delightful chapter in Mr. Hartland's *Science of Fairy Tales*. From romance, on the other hand, we may consider that Shakespeare derived, with the name Oberon, the conception of a fairy dominion in the East, and the belief in love-relations between fairies and mortals. We have now to see finally how he modified these transmitted ideas by the workings of his own genius.

§ 21. **The Size of Shakespeare's Fairies.**—The fairies, as has been said, generally appear in the romances as of human stature. In the popular stories they are usually dwarfs or pigmies, about the size of small children. This is not an invariable rule. There is Tom Thumb, for example; Thoms cites a Danish troll 'no bigger than an ant'; and a thirteenth-century writer, Gervase of Tilbury, describes the English Portunes as being in height *dimidium pollicis*. But Shakespeare has carried this idea further than any of his predecessors. His fairies, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and in

Romeo and Juliet, though perhaps not in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, where children are dressed up to imitate fairies, are at least spoken of as infinitesimally small. I think the object of this is to make them elemental, to bring them into harmony with flower and insect, and all the dainty and delicate things of nature. They are in a less degree, what the spirits of *The Tempest* are entirely, embodiments of natural forces. It is to be observed, however, that this illusion of infinitesimal smallness could not be visibly produced on the stage. If Cobweb and Peaseblossom and Moth and Mustardseed were dressed to suit their names, this must have been done on a magnified scale, such as is used in staging the *Birds* of Aristophanes, or in the 'fancy dress' of a modern ball. And yet critics say that Shakespeare always wrote for the spectator, and never for the reader of his plays.

§ 22. **The Classical Element in Shakespeare's Fairies.**—Shakespeare is not afraid of anachronisms, but it is not true that he has no regard to the place and time in which his plays are cast. In *King Lear* he is careful to suggest the atmosphere of a boisterous pagan age: the Italian plays are flushed with southern sunshine: *Hamlet* is not without its touches of Danish local colouring. So, too, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* Shakespeare does not altogether forget the Athens of Theseus. He deftly brings his fairies into sympathy with Greek myth. Titania, as we have seen (§ 15), is but a synonym for Diana-Artemis, the chaste maiden-deity who roves the forests. I do not know whether Shakespeare had in mind the essential identity of Artemis, Phœbe, and Hecate; but it is noteworthy that Titania heads the band of the moon's votaresses (§ 14 (*f*)), while the fairies, spirits of night, are said by Puck (v. 1. 370–372) to run

> "By the triple Hecate's team,
> From the presence of the sun,
> Following darkness like a dream".

Again, he has woven the closing scene into the semblance of an Epithalamion. The fays of romance and of Perrault make their appearance at birth or at christening. Shakespeare brings his fairies to 'bless the best bride-bed', fulfilling there the precise functions assigned in Greece to Hymen, god of bridals, and his train. The greatest minds have their touches of mysticism, and take delight in these curious reconciliations of things set asunder.

APPENDIX B.

THE TWO QUARTOS OF 1600.

The admirable Introduction contributed by the Rev. J. W. Ebsworth to Griggs' facsimile of Q 2 has, I think, made it quite clear that the relations of the texts of the two Quartos to each other and to that of the Folio are such as I have stated them to be in the Introduction. I have carefully examined the question for myself, and agree with his conclusions on almost every point. The main facts may be briefly set out.

(1) Q 1 is much superior in accuracy to many of the Shakespearian quartos. Just about 1600, the policy of the Chamberlain's company seems to have been to checkmate the piratical booksellers by putting their plays into the hands of some trustworthy man, and in this way Fisher was doubtless furnished with a reliable copy of the original manuscript.

(2) Q 2 is printed from Q 1. It agrees with it page by page, although it is set up with greater attention to typographical details, and in a simpler and much less archaic spelling. The proof of the priority of Q 1 rests partly on this spelling. Thus, as Mr. Ebsworth points out, Roberts' '*looke to it*' is clearly a correction of Fisher's '*looke toote*', and not vice-versa. On the other hand, the fact that, on the whole, Fisher's Quarto gives the best readings, is also in favour of its being the earlier version. And where the typographical correspondence of the two editions gets out, the spacing of Q 2 is always arranged so as to recover it as soon as possible. The printer is evidently working from a model.

(3) Nor can there be any doubt that F 1 is printed from Q 2. For wherever the Quartos differ, F 1 always agrees with Q 2 and not with Q 1, even when the latter is manifestly right. Many of the plays in F 1 appear to have been printed from copies in the theatre library. Sometimes these were manuscripts, sometimes printed editions. Some, such as *Macbeth* and *Lear*, had been cut down for the purposes of representation; in some, and of these our play is an instance, the stage-directions had been carefully revised and completed.

I now come to the one point in which I differ from Mr. Ebsworth. He holds that Roberts' Quarto was "an unauthorized, and presumably a spurious or pirated edition". And here he has the support of the Cambridge editors, who say, "The printer's errors in Fisher's edition are corrected in that issued by Roberts, and from this circumstance, coupled with the facts that in the Roberts Quarto the 'Exits' are more frequently marked, and that it was not entered at Stationers' Hall, as Fisher's edition was, we infer that the Roberts Quarto was a pirated reprint of Fisher's, probably for the use of the players". Now, I do not know whether Mr. Aldis Wright seriously supposes that every new edition of an Elizabethan book was entered