

PK
2932
H15s

Shakespeare-Autotype committee at
Stratford-on-Avon

A
A
0
0
3
6
9
4
9
7
3



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

THE
Shakespeare - Autotype Committee
at Stratford-on-Avon.

TRANSFORMATION SCENES.

AND A RETROSPECT.

THE SECOND EDITION.

What I gather clearly from all this, quoth Sancho, is that these adventures will, in the long run, bring us into so many disventures that we shall not know which is our right foot.—*The Life and Adventures of Don Quixote de La Mancha*, Part 1, Book iii., Chap. 4.

BRIGHTON :
PRINTED FOR THE USE OF STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

1883.



THE SHAKESPEARE AUTOTYPES.



THE
Shakespeare - Autotype Committee
at Stratford-on-Avon.

TRANSFORMATION SCENES.

AND A RETROSPECT.

THE SECOND EDITION.

What I gather clearly from all this, quoth Sancho, is that these adventures will, in the long run, bring us into so many disventures that we shall not know which is our right foot. -- *The Life and Adventures of Don Quixote de La Mancha*, Part 1, Book iii, Chap. 4.

BRIGHTON ;
PRINTED FOR THE USE OF STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

1883.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

P R
2 1
H 11
1 1

NOTE TO THIS EDITION.

The following remarks, up to page 25, comprise an exact reprint of the first edition of this little pamphlet. The additional observations have been rendered necessary by subsequent events.

It will be observed that my only serious ground for complaint, so far as concerns myself, is an insinuation that I have acted improperly in my late dealings with the records. That insinuation has been, so far as I know, restricted to the utterances of one individual, but it has nevertheless been publicly disseminated by Warwickshire newspapers of large circulation. It is only natural for me to defend myself against such an attack, and if vigorous language is introduced into my side of the controversy, the latter result is obviously the sole fault of the aggressor, not that of the hard-working student to whom the Town Council has, for the last thirty years and more, and with the kindest confidence, practically entrusted the care of their invaluable muniments.

Hollingbury Copse,
Brighton.—December, 1883.



NOTE.

So many years have elapsed since a safe and permanent arrangement of the Stratford records was effected through the exertions of the late Mr. W. O. Hunt and myself, nearly all the local rulers belong to a new generation. It is, therefore, no great matter for wonder that hazy and erroneous notions should prevail respecting the history of their ancient treasures, and even the present esteemed and respected Mayor has publicly acknowledged, within the last few months, that he was not aware of the existence of any sort of calendar of them.

In view of the probable future deliberations of the Council on this important subject, it is obviously desirable that correct information should be accessible, and this is the main object of the following brief notes. That I should have taken the opportunity of entering into one or two correlative matters, will surprise no one who has perused the reports of certain observations that have been made at a recent meeting of the Council.

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

Hollingbury Copse,

Brighton.—November, 1883.

THE AUTOTYPE COMMITTEE.

At the meeting of the Town Council held on the 6th of March, 1883, the following letter was read by the Mayor :—

Hollingbury Copse, Brighton,
15th February, 1883.

MY DEAR SIR,—The recent action of the Trustees of the British Museum in ordering autotypes of their Shakespear estate-deed to be made for public sale, has led me to think that a similar course might be advantageously pursued in respect to some of the valuable papers preserved amongst the archives of the Corporation. If some of the most interesting of these were nicely autotyped and published with a little explanatory letter-press, there could hardly fail to be a demand that would not only defray the expenses incurred by the Corporation in their production, but also ultimately yield a profit. Or, if it were preferred, I should be most happy to undertake whatever risk there may be by paying the expenses of bringing out the work, merely provided that the Council would, when the copies were delivered into their hands, undertake to arrange for their sale at Stratford-on-Avon in any manner they may think expedient, the proceeds, after the bare expense of autotyping and printing had been repaid, to be of course at their sole disposal.

Hoping that you will do me the favour to submit this proposal to the Council.

I am, yours faithfully,

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

To W. G. Colbourne, Esq.,
Mayor of Stratford-on-Avon.

The proposal contained in this letter was most cordially received, an unanimous vote, proposed by Mr. Hodgson, being passed,—“That the latter part of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps’s letter be accepted, with many thanks for his very kind and generous offer.” After this resolution had been adopted, another, proposed by Mr. Alderman Cox,—“That a sub-committee be appointed to give effect to the resolution that had been proposed by Mr. Hodgson, and to confer with Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps thereon upon the occasion of his next visit to the town, the sub-committee to consist of the Mayor, Councillors Flower and Hodgson,”—was also unanimously carried.

The latter resolution, as I understood and understand it, was an instruction to the sub-committee to arrange for the sale of the work at Stratford-on-Avon, *after the copies had been delivered into the hands of the Corporation*, and to confer with me on the former subject. There was nothing, either in my letter or in the resolution, to suggest that a supervision over my preliminary work was contemplated. The very essence of my offer involved the personal control of the work so far as its preparation was concerned, after which *the management of publication* was to be left to the Corporation, while at the

same time the negatives were of course to become their property. That this view was the one then generally taken by the Council is apparent from the following speech : —

Alderman Cox said the letter had reference only to the auto-typing of certain documents and records under the direction of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, with descriptive letter-press added, and, in his opinion, it was advisable that the resolution proposed by Mr. Hodgson should be adopted rather than that the Corporation should take upon themselves, as suggested by Mr. Kendall, the responsibility and cost of the work ; because, if the Corporation took upon themselves the publication of their records, it would be necessary that they should have complete control of the work.

At the last meeting of the Council I am accused of having “rather ignored” the sub-committee, but that this is really not the case will be apparent from the following letter which, a few months afterwards, I addressed to the then Mayor, having myself been unable in the interval to be more than a few days at Stratford-on-Avon :

Hollingbury Copse, Brighton,
22nd September, 1883.

MY DEAR SIR,—When at Stratford-on-Avon in June, my brief visit was entirely occupied in arranging the papers given us by Mr. Bush, a task which, in courtesy to the donor, I felt should not be delayed. You kindly promised to lay my letter of 25 June on that subject before the Executive Committee, and I have been expecting to hear their decision on the matters therein referred to.

This business prevented my then giving attention to the autotypes, but I hope to be at Stratford-on-Avon on Tuesday to

commence them. There was, you doubtlessly recollect, a sub-committee of Mr. Charles Flower and Mr. Hodgson appointed to confer with me on the subject. As I have to prepare the letter-press, the selection of the documents is necessarily left to myself, so that for the present there can be nothing for the sub-committee to consider. When there is, there may be some difficulty, for, after his treatment of my friend and nominee, Mr. Tyndall, it will not be agreeable to me to meet Mr. Charles Flower under conditions partaking of the nature of a personal conference.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPS.

To W. G. Colbourne, Esq.,
Mayor of Stratford-on-Avon.

It was painful to me to have to allude here to Mr. Charles Flower's inconsiderate and uncourteous treatment of a personal friend, one whom I had introduced to an official position at Stratford, and to whom, so far as his receiving ordinary civility while in the town was concerned, I was in a manner responsible. But, under the circumstances, the standpoint was an unavoidable one. The slightest expression of apology, or even of regret, would have terminated the occurrence amicably, but that slightest expression was unfortunately not forthcoming, and until it is, matters in this direction will, I fear, remain in an uncomfortable position.

TRANSFORMATION SCENES.

The sub-committee of three, appointed in March to have a conference with me respecting the ultimate publication of the autotypes, has been suddenly, and without notice, converted a few days ago into a larger one having the supervision and control of the whole work. What form the next forward movement will take is difficult to conjecture. Perhaps each document, as it is proposed for autotype, will have to be submitted to a public meeting at the Town Hall to adjudicate upon its merits. Gracefully held up in the hands of the Chairman, and illumined by lime-light, the effect anyhow would be pretty, if not touching.

I can only repeat that, when I made the proposal contained in my letter of February, no committee of supervision over my work was contemplated, and I should not for a moment have dreamt of consenting to work under such an arrangement. For very many years I have steadily and persistently declined to work under the supervision of any committee, no matter how friendly disposed that committee may have been,

and I do not observe a sufficient reason why, on the present occasion, I should depart from what has so long been my invariable practice.

Another curious and inexplicable transformation has taken place in the Council's opinion on the mode of dealing with the manuscripts that are to be autotyped. It was only in March last that it was understood that any documents I required were to be lent to me,—an extent of liberality for which there is now no sufficient necessity, and one which was far beyond my thoughts or wishes. I should be, and ever have been, opposed to a single document being removed beyond the limits of the town excepting in a case of indispensable urgency. Now, however, instead of proposing to lend me the documents, the Council is staggered at the idea of their being carefully taken the distance of a few hundred yards, and pass a resolution that none shall be removed from the Birth-Place, thus practically rendering the autotyping an impossibility. The annexed extracts from the report of the previous meeting held in March are in strange contrast with the resolution just mentioned, and which latter has positively been carried without a dissentient voice :—

THE MAYOR said that Mr. Phillipps had undertaken to supply autotypes at his own risk, and he (the Mayor) thought the offer a generous one, and ought in some way to be entertained by the

Council. He wanted the opinion of the Council on the subject.

ALDERMAN COX,—It has reference to the records of the Council?

THE MAYOR,—Yes.

MR. HODGSON,—Which are kept in the Shakespeare Museum?

THE MAYOR,—Yes.

ALDERMAN BIRD thought it was a very desirable thing to do; but he should disagree with the Corporation taking the risk. The public would be vastly benefited by the publication.

THE MAYOR considered Mr. Phillipps's offer very liberal indeed. (Hear, hear.)

MR. HODGSON, - These valuable documents would go out of our possession, I presume, into the custody of Mr. Phillipps.

THE MAYOR,—Necessarily.

MR. HODGSON said that before they did lend them, if the Council were of opinion that they should comply with the latter part of Mr. Phillipps's letter—and he hoped the Council would do so, for he thought it a very nice one—every care should be taken that the documents should be carefully numbered and registered. - *Report of the Council Meeting, as given in the Stratford-on-Avon Chronicle, 9 March, 1883.*



A RETROSPECT.

When I was introduced, between thirty and forty years ago, to the town records, there were a few,—about a dozen,—bound volumes, but the great mass, thousands upon thousands in number, were loosely scattered in boxes, entirely unarranged, modern and ancient ones mixed up together, all covered with dust, and a large number crumpled and injured.

A remedy for this deplorable state of affairs was a frequent subject of anxious deliberation between the late Mr. W. O. Hunt and myself. The time had not arrived for public interest to be taken in such matters, and for the town to be burdened with the large expense attendant on the engagement of a professional palæographer was a proposition only mentioned to be at once dismissed. Ultimately it was decided that I should gradually do my best to arrange the papers, numbering each for volumes, but without reference to a chronological arrangement, the latter process being one that would have greatly impeded progress without a compensating advantage.

A majority of the records required cleaning, flattening, repairing, and mounting, before they were susceptible of binding, and these operations, necessitating a special experience not to be met with at Stratford-on-Avon, the work was entrusted by us, in detachments, to the firm who then bound manuscripts for the Trustees of the British Museum. It will be conceded that no more judicious selection could have been made for the purpose.

Years passed on, and, in 1864, the work was terminated by the preparation of a calendar, and by its publication in a thick folio volume entitled,—*A Descriptive Calendar of the Ancient Manuscripts and Records in the Possession of the Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon, including Notices of Shakespeare and his Family, and of several Persons connected with the Poet.* In this work every scrap of manuscript then belonging to the Corporation, that bore date previously to the year 1750, was described and carefully numbered, thus ensuring, humanly speaking, for ever, its identification and safety. Upon its publication, Stratford-on-Avon possessed an account of its literary treasures in a far more elaborate form than has even yet been attempted for any other town in the kingdom. This important result was accomplished without

drawing upon the Corporate funds for a single halfpenny, beyond the comparatively insignificant cost incurred by the binding of the documents.

Having thus been the chief agent in rescuing the records from their perilous state,—every one of them, moreover, not only having been read and examined but numbered and foliated by myself,—holding, in fact, a position, in respect to them, which can never again fall to the lot of any other individual,—there has tacitly arisen, under these unique circumstances, a sort of prescriptive right to my use of the record keys. That right—one of courtesy—has been assumed, as a matter of course, by the three successive Town Clerks of my time, and they would, indeed, have been ungracious had they ignored the claim. Those who labour gratuitously for the public are not usually debarred from the sight of their own work.

When, therefore, it was found that the auto-typing of the documents could not possibly be satisfactorily conducted at the record-room, instead of asking the Town Clerk to superintend their temporary transfer to the artist's studio, I decided upon going to Stratford to attend to the matter myself. Having in advance requested the Town Clerk to leave

the keys for me at the Birth-Place, I took the documents, one at a time, to the studio, and, in this way, in the course of a few days, fourteen of them were successfully and beautifully facsimiled under the care of Mr. Smartt and Mr. Fuidge. My good friend, the Town Clerk, stated, at the last meeting of the Council, that he was not aware that any documents had been removed at all, and, indeed, I saw very little of him during my visit, and have no recollection that the subject of the autotypes was even casually alluded to by either of us.

There is a certain degree of humiliation in having to enter into these minutiae, but the necessity is enforced by the singularly uncalled-for tone in which my proceedings have been noticed. According to a report of the last Council meeting published a day or two afterwards in a county paper—a report which it is absurd to suppose could have been biased—Mr. Councilor Flower characterised those proceedings as *irregular!* Irregular, in what respect? Irregular, because I carried the documents across a couple of streets instead of accepting the Council's offer of taking them to my own residence, a hundred and thirty miles away? Irregular, because I travelled to Stratford-on-Avon for the express and sole purpose of taking per-

sonal care for their safety? Irregular, because I took only one at a time to the studio, and saw that each was placed under glass beyond the possibility of injury? Irregular, because I took special care to see that each one was safely returned, the same day and in daylight, to its place in the record-room?

According to the same report, Mr. Councillor Flower observed that "a Committee was appointed to superintend the autotyping process, and, if anything had been done, the sanction of the Committee ought first to have been obtained, so as to ensure proper supervision." These remarks are altogether unwarranted. At the time of my recent visit, no Committee with any such powers had been appointed, and, if it had been, I should have declined to have acted under it.

It has long been a subject of regret to me that, since the decease of Mr. W. O. Hunt, there has been no one at Stratford-on-Avon to study the numerous interesting questions that arise from an investigation of its ancient records. During the more than a quarter of a century that I have been at work on them, Mr. Councillor Flower has never appeared on the scene to study or consult a single document,—has never, until within the last few days, given the

remotest indication that he cared a halfpenny about them. It is cheering to observe that this apathy is now terminated,—that so influential a member of the Council should not only be suddenly awakened to the unrivalled importance of the records, but to take so earnest and affectionate an interest in their preservation. At the same time it is difficult to understand why this initial enthusiasm should be accompanied by an uncourteous demeanor towards the individual who has, for so many years, been their sole exponent.

THE RECORD ROOM.

The resolution passed, on the 9th inst., to the effect that no documents are, under any circumstances, to be taken from this room, was preceded by another which gave Dr. Ingleby permission to autotype the leaves of Greene's Diary. Let me assure the Council, from personal experience, that the observance of the first-named resolution will render the execution of the other one an impossibility. Being extremely well acquainted with the room in question, and having passed many hundreds of hours within its dimly-lighted precincts, I can bear witness that, in numerous cases, the mere reading of difficult passages, however much assisted by powerful glasses, is altogether impracticable therein. This being the case, it is useless to fancy that satisfactory photographs of ancient writings could be obtained in such a chamber, to say nothing of the inexpediency of permitting the erection of scientific apparatus in any portion of the Birth-Place. It is unlikely, moreover, that the Trustees would ever consent to the introduction, into that building, of operations that involve the use of powerful chemicals.

The autotypes of Greene's Diary, so kindly and generously offered by Dr. Ingleby to be taken at his expence, would be of invaluable service to the biographical student. There is one single letter (a letter of the alphabet, not an epistle) in that diary, the true interpretation of which letter can alone decide the character of one of the most interesting episodes of Shakespeare's life. This curious fact is well known to most students, but no one was aware till lately, nor until the circumstance was acutely suggested by Dr. Ingleby, that the interpretation of that letter is still further dependent on the marginal state of one leaf of the diary. Upon such apparently trifling minutiaë is the solution of important historical questions so often contingent! Yet, so long as the restrictive order continues in force, all such investigations will be necessarily either discontinued or imperfectly conducted. It is impossible to believe that the Council can desire such a result.

NOTES.

Page 11, line 6. The supervision and control.—It is true that the words themselves are not found in the Resolution, but the whole tenor of the conversation at the meeting shows that they were assumed to be included.

Page 16, line 19. Then belonging.—Some years after the publication of the Calendar, I happened to observe, at a friend's house at Stratford-on-Avon, two folio manuscript volumes which had obviously formed at one time part of the Corporation records. The holder was unacquainted with their history,—could not read a line of them,—and was only surprised that their leaves had not long since been put under pie-bottoms. It is hardly necessary to say that the books were cheerfully delivered into my hands and duly placed in the record-room. These are, I believe, the only volumes that are now uncalendared.

Page 19, line 21. There has been no one.—Although the present Town Clerk, Mr. Thomas Hunt, has never pretended to inherit the antiquarian tastes of his Father, he has been of invaluable assistance to my researches by giving me, during many years, the earliest intimation of everything at all likely to be useful in my local and Shakespeare-biographical studies. I take the present opportunity of recording my grateful acknowledgments to this dear old friend, and, at the same time, to state that it was practically owing to him that the estate of New Place was secured for the town. If he had not informed me of certain negociations the moment they came to his knowledge, it would unquestionably have passed into the hands of merciless speculators.

MR. CHARLES FLOWER'S SPEECH.

The following is a report of the speech delivered by Mr. Charles Flower at the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, December the 4th. Other reports in county newspapers include stronger language in reference to myself, but, as Mr. Charles Flower apparently prefers those in the journals of his own town, the one here given is taken from the *Stratford-on-Avon Herald*, and that in the *Chronicle* is practically identical with it.—

Councillor FLOWER, continuing, said he might now, perhaps, be allowed to refer to a personal matter. The Mayor, no doubt, and all the other members of the Council, had received a pamphlet sent by Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps. In that pamphlet there were several statements which would call for the full consideration of the Council, which consideration, he presumed, would be given at some future meeting, of which due notice would be given ; and probably the sub-committee which was appointed at the last meeting—from which he had now withdrawn, and at which the members of the Council would not be surprised—would make some inquiries in reference to those statements. And, although they would not then enter into the general subject of the pamphlet, he might be permitted to say a few words with regard to that portion of it which was personal to himself. He was never more surprised than to learn as he did for the first time from that pamphlet that there was any

personal unpleasantness between Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps and himself, and especially to learn from the letter printed on page 10 that Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps had a difficulty in meeting that sub-committee because he was a member of it. He must say that in alluding to that matter—the resignation of Mr. Tyndall—Mr Halliwell-Phillipps had behaved in a most extraordinary manner, to say the least of it. At the last meeting of the Birth-place Trustees in May, the Executive Committee were prepared to discuss certain charges which had been made by Mr. Tyndall and Mr. Phillipps ; but, at the most urgent request of Mr. Phillipps himself that the matter should be allowed to drop, the Trustees did not go into it, and the Executive Committee consented to waive their right to vindicate themselves from the very harsh and inaccurate statements that had been most recklessly circulated. The Committee, in deference to the wishes of Mr. Phillipps, consented to let bygones be bygones , and now, six months after, Mr. Phillipps referred to these things as if those charges had been substantiated ; and he chose to fix them personally upon him, he presumed, because he found it more convenient to attack an individual than a whole committee. He most emphatically denied those charges, and asserted that if the Trustees had been allowed to go into the matter they would have seen that the words “inconsiderate” and “uncourteous” should have been applied in a very different direction. From the tone of the remarks on pages 19 and 20 (*now 21 and 22*), they would be able to judge something of the accuracy of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps and of the style of his language, and he thought they could, perhaps, form an opinion as to whom the words “uncourteous demeanour” should apply. It appeared that Mr. Halliwell - Phillipps took exception to the word “irregular,” which he quoted from some county paper as having been applied to his proceedings. He had referred to the reports in the *Herald* and *Chronicle*, and he found that no such word or anything like it was used by him, for the very good reason that he did not use such a word. He did not use it for the very good reason that he knew nothing of those proceedings to which Mr. Halliwell-

Phillipps alluded until he read them from his pamphlet. It was usual when any gentleman had reason to feel himself aggrieved at words reported in a paper to have been spoken by another to inquire, in the first place, if the report was correct. Mr. Phillipps had not applied to him, but Mr. Phillipps had made other inquiries, and knew, before he sent that pamphlet, that he (Mr. Flower) did not use any such expression. Yet he deliberately applied, quoting from some county paper, expressions knowing that he (Mr. Flower) did not use them, because, if he had adhered to the exact facts, he would have been prevented from using that fine egotistical flourish on the word "irregular." Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps had drawn very largely on his imagination, and possibly his conscience might have told him that "irregular" was the mildest term that could have been applied to those proceedings. He was not aware—he did not think any member of that Council was aware—before reading that pamphlet that fourteen most valuable documents had been removed from the record-room without the knowledge of the Mayor, or any member of the Corporation, or even of the Town Clerk. He thought a stronger word than irregular might be applied to those proceedings, especially if, as he understood, Mr. Phillipps had allowed the photographer to retain the negatives and register the copyright in his own name. He thought he had replied to all that was personal to him ; the other part of the pamphlet would, no doubt, receive due consideration by the Council.



THE LIBRARIAN QUESTION.

The reader of the foregoing speech would naturally infer from it that I had induced the Executive Committee to abandon, as a personal favour to myself, a disagreeable adjudication in regard to Mr. Tyndall, and that I had then, with a scandalous dexterity, converted their silence into a virtual admission of my own views on the subject. It will, however, be clearly seen, from what follows, that such inferences could not possibly be more erroneous. The initial plain facts—those facts which are the real foundation of all my action in the matter are comprised in the following brief statement, here given in Italics.—*Mr. Charles Flower, on his own responsibility, ordered the payment of the Librarian's salary to be stopped, this very serious step being taken on his (Mr. Charles Flower's) interpretation of oral evidence respecting the correct time of the Librarian's taking a brief holiday, such oral evidence being distinctly repudiated by the Librarian himself.*

If Mr. Charles Flower can disprove these facts, I will not only at once withdraw the

paragraph relating to him which occurs in my letter of the 22nd of September (see p. 12), but also tender the fullest apology for having written it. If he cannot,—and no semblance of a disproof has yet come to my knowledge,—then, by all the laws of friendship and society, I am justified in taking up the cudgels in defence of my friend and nominee, and in not laying them down again until there has been something like an apology in another direction.

For what does the suspension of an official's salary mean before the public? It has ever been the last resource in serious cases of suspicion culminating into investigation, and it means, for the time, loss of position and character. And yet here was my poor friend—a gentleman not only afflicted with a highly nervous temperament, but suffering from weak and delicate health—allowed to endure the torture of mental anxiety in this matter for upwards of a month.

I was determined that there should be some kind of reversal in the line of conduct that had been adopted, and a long correspondence took place in which I never ceased to urge that view upon the Executive Committee. The Librarian had of course immediately resigned, and had afterwards left the Town. Shortly, however,

before the next annual meeting of the Trustees, held on the 5th of May last, I understood that all the correspondence on the subject was to be laid before that meeting, and, ascertaining that the Executive Committee were to assemble on the 25th of April, I addressed the following letter to the then Mayor (now copied from my draft, not having made a fair transcript, but it is no doubt substantially accurate)—

HOLLINGBURY COPSE, BRIGHTON,
24 APRIL, 1883.

MY DEAR SIR,—

Your telegram reached me yesterday afternoon when in the midst of receiving guests to my daughter's marriage, which takes place here to-morrow morning. The consequence is that I have but a short time for writing to-day before our country post leaves, and, under these circumstances, I am sure that the Committee will kindly excuse the necessarily somewhat fragmentary and hurried nature of this communication, as also my temerity in addressing them so freely. But the very great interest I take in the progress of the Museum and Library, united with a special life-long study, and a desire for the preservation of harmony, will, I hope now, as heretofore, plead in my favor.

I. *The Report.*

In the place of the paragraph commencing, "a further selection,"—which is hardly explicit—I would venture to suggest the following,—“In compliance with a Resolution passed at the last meeting of the Trustees, the library at the Birth-place was carefully examined by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps with a view to the elimination of those books which were unconnected with the biography of Shakespeare or with the history of Stratford-on-Avon. The examination resulted in the transfer of six

“hundred and fifty volumes, in accordance with the terms of that Resolution, to the Memorial Library.”

The rejection of presents offered to the Museum may sometimes be attended with difficulty, but if donors of inadmissible objects were informed of the strict rule respecting them, and that there was a more appropriate receptacle at the Memorial Theatre, a person would be unreasonable to complain, while their acceptance for the latter institution would obviate the otherwise disagreeable necessity for the ungracious task of returning gifts.

Mr. Bush's present clearly requires careful sorting and arrangement, the appropriate papers being accepted and described, and perhaps, in this instance, the donor might prefer the rejections being returned. Would it not be as well to limit the description at present somewhat as follows?—“A large collection of papers, chiefly in manuscript, respecting Stratford-on-Avon, the Hart and Jordan families, correspondence on Shakespearean and local subjects, &c., presented by W. Harrington Bush, Esq.”

And when I am next at Stratford-on Avon, if the Committee will permit me, I will go carefully through the lot, and report on its contents.

II. *Mr. Tyndall.*

In the very earnest and anxious hope that the tiresome and disagreeable matters connected with Mr. Tyndall's retirement may be relegated to the past, and not be unnecessarily brought forward to the danger of creating serious differences of opinion, or leading to a public discussion, I venture to enter into the question. Of course the view I take may be modified if I have been in any way misinformed, but judging from the plain facts—those facts which, unless they can be controverted, would be the basis of an appeal to public opinion—an opinion which invariably, in its ultimate form, is delivered on facts, and not from the impressions of A or the recollections of B,—then on those facts, so far as I know them, that is to say, if they are facts, and are not capable of refutation,—then I am reluctantly compelled to say that Mr. Tyndall has been discourteously and un-

generously treated, and that I, as his friend and nominee, should be excused if, in the earlier intimations of the case, and with emotions unexpectedly raised, I expressed myself in stronger language than I should now do after this lapse of time.

The facts, as I understand them, are these.—Mr. Tyndall was entitled in 1882 to an annual vacation, the time of taking it having hitherto been at his own selection. It then seems that, at a meeting of the Committee in the spring of last year, verbal instructions were given to Mr. Leaver to inform Mr. Tyndall that he was not to leave at any time without the special permission of the Committee. Mr. Tyndall, however, took his holiday in June, 1882, without applying for such permission.

It then seems that, after a Committee Meeting on the Second of August, Mr. Leaver informed Mr. Tyndall that his quarter's salary (then due) was to be withheld until the subject of his departure without leave was considered at the September meeting. I have been subsequently informed that there was not a quorum present on the second instant, but that circumstance does not in the least degree affect the gravity of the step taken against Mr. Tyndall.

Now even admitting, as I do not, that such a step would have been justified had a resolution respecting the leave been passed and communicated to Mr. Tyndall in writing before his departure for his vacation, no one can doubt that it was contrary to all precedent to take that step in the absence of such a formality. Every one knows how conversations are apt to be variously interpreted, even when there is not the remotest intention to equivocate. It is quite likely that Mr. Leaver may be fairly under the impression that he explicitly communicated the wishes of the Committee to Mr. Tyndall, and yet the acceptance of such a view does not invalidate a disclaimer I received from Mr. Tyndall on the following day.

Mr. Tyndall speaks, in the same communication, of the action taken about the salary as exceedingly derogatory to himself, and as one necessitating his resignation : That the step was in the highest degree uncourteous to Mr. Tyndall cannot be

questioned, and no action of the kind taken against a public officer has been recorded excepting in serious cases of dishonesty.

I have ventured also to assert that Mr. Tyndall has been ungenerously treated, for there was no pretence for refusing payment of the salary (as, indeed, the Committee virtually acknowledged by their subsequent unanimous vote for its discharge), and if there had been thought to have been reason for its deferment, surely a special meeting should have been at once summoned,—this not only in the possibility of inconvenience being created by the delay (the inquiry was not made), but to limit the anxiety necessarily involved by what was, at all events, a question of position, if not of character

It was very natural, under such conditions, that Mr. Tyndall should have felt indignant at the treatment he received, and not wonderfully surprising that, when he addressed the Trustees on the 30th of August, he should have written some passages more fiercely than I, for one, should have advised. This letter, it seems, is to be laid before the general meeting, but surely now that Mr. Tyndall has left, and no inducement would secure his return, the discussion of the circumstances which led to his resignation can only end in a debate at once as useless as it might be unpleasant,—at the same time that you will, I hope, allow me to express my conviction that the result would not be adverse to Mr. Tyndall.

But I am in great hopes that the Committee, on a dispassionate review of the whole case, will feel that, however unintentionally, Mr. Tyndall has received inconsiderate treatment, and, if so, that they will kindly excuse my respectfully but most earnestly entreating them to salve over all matters by coupling with an announcement of Mr. Tyndall's resignation some expression of recognition of the conscientious manner in which he performed his duties while in office. Whatever opinion may be formed of his efficiency as a librarian, none can be given adverse to his thorough conscientiousness or to his

gentlemanly reception of all visitors to the Museum. Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

To W. G. Colbourne, Esq.,

Mayor of Stratford-on-Avon.

Now, so far from there having been an approach to a contract on the terms suggested in the latter part of this letter, *I never received any communication on the subject at all!* It was only by continually writing and telegraphing that I could get at a faint knowledge of what was going on, and it was not till late on the 3rd of May, two days before the general meeting, that I heard that the correspondence was to be laid upon the table. There was no time to lose, and I at once decided to address the Trustees. The following is a copy of the humble and supplicatory letter which was posted the next day (May 4th) to every member of that body:—

HOLLINGBURY COPSE, BRIGHTON,

4th MAY, 1883.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—

You will, I feel sure, permit me to address you under the following singular circumstances.

Early in the year 1880 it was proposed to secure a librarian for the Birth-place, the salary to be £100 a year without a house or contingent advantages of any description. It was of course nearly hopeless to expect the services of an experienced librarian at so low a scale of remuneration, absolutely so for those of a scholar competent to interpret and calendar the numerous recondite documents preserved in the library. And several

experienced librarians, to whom the acceptance of the post was suggested, did decline on account of the insignificance of the salary. In the midst of these difficulties, I ventured to recommend Mr. Tyndall as the most eligible person that I could hear of who was willing to undertake the duties, a gentleman whom I described in my letter of recommendation of May the 4th, 1880, as "most strictly conscientious, willing to accept a "small salary, not above helping the Misses Chattaway in conducting visitors, and, as he can talk French, Italian, and German "perfectly well, he might occasionally prove useful in explaining "the relics, &c., to foreigners." The recommendation was favourably received, and Mr. Tyndall accepted the situation on the understanding (a condition, indeed, on his part,) that he was to have a tolerably long vacation, the engagement to terminate by three months' notice on either side. The length of the vacation was fixed by the Executive Committee at six weeks, no stipulation being made as to the time it was to be taken. Mr. Tyndall accordingly selected his own periods for it in his first two years of office, merely giving notice of the times of his departures to the Secretary.

It seems that, early in the last year, some member of the Committee, unarmed by a resolution of the Committee, verbally told the Secretary to verbally inform Mr. Tyndall that he was not to leave without previously obtaining the special permission of the Committee. Verbal messages, as every one knows, are apt to be verbally misinterpreted. The above-mentioned purport of the one in question, if delivered, was not realized by Mr. Tyndall, who departed for the first instalment of his vacation in happy ignorance of his liability to an accusation of having committed a high crime and misdemeanor.

The first meeting of the Committee that took place after Mr. Tyndall's return was held on August the 2nd, and, however incredible it may appear, Mr. Tyndall, after its termination, was informed by the Secretary that, in consequence of his having taken his vacation without a special warrant, the payment of his quarter's salary due on the 5th inst. would be withheld for the present, the generous intimation being added that consideration

would be given to a doubt as to whether three weeks' remuneration should not be deducted from the amount.

In the face of this deliberate insult,—one without precedent in the annals of English librarianship,—Mr. Tyndall, as might have been expected, immediately decided to tender his resignation, but he had no opportunity of doing so, nor was his salary paid, until the expiration of another month.

When the Executive met in September, not the semblance of an apology was offered to Mr. Tyndall for the grave discourtesy to which he had been liable,—not the faintest expression of regret for the pain and anxiety which he had been unnecessarily allowed to endure for weeks under an action that seriously affected his position as a gentleman. So far from such matters being taken into consideration, exception was taken to the terms in which he announced his resignation, his letters respecting which were requested to be withdrawn, the Committee apparently overlooking the fact that the terms alluded to resulted from the feelings of indignation naturally elicited by the cruel treatment to which he had been subjected.

It is scarcely necessary to add that Mr. Tyndall retired the moment the terms of his agreement enabled him to do so, and nothing more was heard of the matter until it was announced, in the draft Annual Report dated on the 20th ult., that a correspondence on the subject of the resignation would be laid before the Trustees.

Deeply impressed with the probability that a discussion on the subject would disturb the harmony at present existing amongst the Trustees,—a harmony always of course most desirable to maintain, but specially so just now amidst the serious difficulties attending the management of the Trust,—I took an early opportunity of addressing a letter to the Mayor, to be laid before the Executive, in which I ventured to suggest, in the interest of peace, that, now that Mr. Tyndall had left, and no inducement would secure his return, whether it might not be desirable to limit the notice in the Report to the mere announcement of his resignation, accompanying the notice with some kind expressions towards Mr. Tyndall that might tend to obliterate

the recollection of the past. To that appeal—the terms of which the Mayor is of course at liberty to produce—I have received no reply, and the only intimation I have of the line to be adopted is in a letter from the Secretary, dated the 2nd inst., and reaching me yesterday afternoon, in which he says, —“ I have to inform “ you that, as the subject has been named in the preliminary “ report, the paragraph relating to the correspondence with the “ late librarian will be read, but it will depend on the Trustees “ present at the annual meeting as to the production of the letters “ and their being read or not.”

It is thus highly probable, if not inevitable, that the letters will be read at the annual meeting, and, in Mr. Tyndall's absence a discussion upon them could hardly fail to be accompanied by, verbal evidences that must necessarily to some extent partake of an *ex parte* character. As I cannot stand quietly by and see the position of my friend and nominee—one of the most amiable and conscientious of men—unfairly jeopardized, I have endeavoured thus hastily to give a fair version of the case, omitting much that I could have adduced in confirmation, the fewness of the hours that have elapsed since I was acquainted with the failure of my appeal rendering it impossible for me to do more in time for copies of this letter to reach Stratford to-morrow.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your faithful Servant,

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

P.S.—It was not until long afterwards that I heard there was not a quorum on the 2nd of August, but the circumstance does not in the least affect the gravity of the action taken against Mr. Tyndall.

It is more than idle to say, in the face of all this, that the matter was dropped in deference to my urgent request to the Trustees. But even, under the then circumstances, if, at the Trustee meeting, Mr. Charles Flower or any

member of the Executive Committee, had proposed a complimentary vote to Mr. Tyndall *in the name of the Committee* (that was, of course, what was meant in my letter of the 24th of April), I should have accepted that course as a sufficient vindication of my friend. But so far from any design of the kind being even contemplated, the correspondence was admittedly ready for production in the assumed defence of the action that had been taken against the Librarian (see the *Herald* report of May 11th), and it was reserved for an independent member, Dr. Ingleby, to propose and carry the following resolution,—

That the Trustees hear with regret that Mr. Bruce Tyndall has resigned his office of librarian, and wish to record their sense of the ability with which he discharged the duties of the office; and that, *in their opinion*, it is not expedient to go into the correspondence which has taken place between the Executive Committee and Mr. Tyndall.

This Resolution was satisfactory, so far as it went, but it ignored altogether the very serious and important point (see p. 32) in respect to which all along I had insisted upon the necessity of a verbal reparation. I had failed in this, and yet because for a few months afterwards I adhered (see p. 12) to the still remaining determination to insist on that necessity,—and was compelled to state this frankly (see p. 12) to

avoid the imputation of ignoring a sub-committee appointed by the Council, I am accused of ungenerously violating the golden and inestimable rule of letting by-gones be by-gones. But the by-gones had not commenced! If Mr. Charles Flower will express his regret for the pain that was inflicted on Mr. Tyndall by the suspension of his salary, or even if he will admit that it was an act of inadvertence through which no reflection upon that gentleman was contemplated, then, indeed, I will consider the librarianship dispute finally disposed of.

There is a point referred to at the commencement of Mr. Charles Flower's speech which, in justice to him, should be particularly mentioned, for it explains to some extent his idea that I was unnecessarily raking up by-gones. It appears, from the commencement of that speech, that my letter of the 22nd Sept. (pp. 11, 12) had never been brought before his notice. That this could have been the case never occurred to me. It was an official letter on official subjects, addressed to the Mayor in his official capacity, and it referred to matters under the cognizance of the Town Council and the Executive Committee, of both of which bodies Mr. Charles Flower is an active member. I may, perhaps, have been somewhat too precipitate in assuming that it would have been understood that my

attempt to secure a reparation for the suspension of the librarian salary was by no means abandoned ; but I took the earliest legitimate opportunity in my power of declaring that it was not.

In another part of his speech Mr. Charles Flower observes that I have chosen to restrict my remarks to his own share in the matter, because, " he presumed, he (that is, I) found it more convenient to attack an individual than a whole Committee." These words are calculated to convey an erroneous impression. As I stated in a postscript to my letter of May the 4th (see p. 40), I was not aware at the time that Mr. Charles Flower was the only member of the Committee present when the suspension of the librarian's salary was ordered. Believing for long afterwards that it was the action of the Committee, I *did* remonstrate with the Committee, and in terms which some of its members considered too vigorous. See my explanation of this at p. 34. Now, however, knowing that Mr. Charles Flower was the sole representative of the Committee on that occasion, and that the rest, as a body, had nothing whatever to do with the suspension, it would have been a mere piece of impertinence on my part if I had attempted to involve the Committee in the responsibility.



VERY IRREGULAR INDEED.

The reader's attention is now particularly directed to the following paragraphs in Mr. Charles Flower's speech,—

It appeared that Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps took exception to the word "irregular," which he quoted from some county paper as having been applied to his proceedings. He had referred to the reports in the *Herald* and *Chronicle*, and he found that no such word or anything like it was used by him, for the very good reason that he did not use such a word. He did not use it for the very good reason that he knew nothing of those proceedings to which Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps alluded until he read them from his pamphlet. It was usual when any gentleman had reason to feel himself aggrieved at words reported in a paper to have been spoken by another to inquire, in the first place, if the report was correct. Mr. Phillipps had not applied to him, but Mr. Phillipps had made other inquiries, and he knew, and knew before he sent that pamphlet, that he (Mr. Flower) did not use any such expression. Yet he deliberately applied quoting from some county paper expressions knowing that he (Mr. Flower) did not use them, because, if he had adhered to the exact facts, he would have been prevented from using that fine egotistical flourish on the word "irregular."

These words include a grave charge against me, and should not have been uttered if the speaker could not have substantiated them. So far from the latter being the case, I now

proceed to refute the charge, and that on the clearest evidence.

It is well known that conductors of newspapers very seldom give complete verbatim reports of everything that is said at public meetings. They may be said never to do so when, as was the case at the meeting held on Nov. 9th, there was a desultory conversation. Wishing, therefore, to know, as far as possible, everything that was said, I applied for the short-hand notes of the reporters engaged by *The Chronicle* and *The Herald*, receiving, however, only those of the former. *The Chronicle* reporter informed me that his notes were not a *verbatim* report, and that the report given in *The Herald* was also a condensed one is clear from the fact that there are a considerable number of speeches found in *The Chronicle's* short-hand notes which do not appear in the report given in *The Herald*.

It is, therefore, perfectly clear that there was no evidence before me which excluded the possibility of the use of the word *irregular*.

A VARIATION.

At the same time I feel, on reflection, that I ought to have communicated with Mr. Charles Flower on the subject of the objectionable word, and, if he had restricted himself to a denial of the use of the word, I should at once have expressed my regret for the inadvertence, and cancelled the portion of the pamphlet that refers to it. But so far from taking any step of the kind, Mr. Charles Flower returns to the attack with redoubled severity, and virtually owns that he regrets not having used a stronger term. Under these circumstances I may be pardoned for retaining my observations on what was, according to what he now says, but the milder expression of his original sentiment. The earliest intimation that I had of the enlarged nature of his attack upon me was on the receipt of a county paper that arrived on December the 6th, and which occasioned the transmission of the following letter on the next day,—

Hollingbury Copse,
Brighton, 7th Dec., 1883.

SIR,—

A copy of a Birmingham paper, containing a report of your recent speech at Stratford-on-Avon, has just been sent here,

and is the earliest intimation I have had of the remarks upon me which you have thought proper to make. Reserving my notice of the inaccurate versions of my conduct in the librarianship and copyright matters, it is only necessary at present to call your serious attention to the following observations which you are reported to have made in reference to my late proceedings on the "records." "Possibly," you say, "his conscience had told him that *irregular* was a very mild word to be applied to his proceedings," and you shortly afterwards proceed to observe that "a much stronger word," that is, a much stronger word than irregular, "might be applied to those proceedings."

This kind of language, especially after the explicit account of the whole matter given in the pamphlet you were criticizing, is, to use the gentlest terms, so peculiarly discourteous, that I can only trust that some oversight has been committed in the report. It is, at all events, only right to give you the opportunity of explanation, and requesting an early reply.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

To Charles E. Flower, Esq.

P.S.—It is hardly necessary to add that this letter, as well as any reply that may be made to it, will be subject to publication.

To this letter I have received the following reply :—

Avonbank,

Stratford-on-Avon,

December 8th, 1883.

SIR,—

As you did not think fit to answer my letter of Dec. 1st, which was couched in the terms of that friendship which I supposed had hitherto existed between us, I don't think that I am called upon to answer yours of yesterday, which is written in a very different tone.

At the same time, as you ask me whether the words which

you quote from a Birmingham paper were those used by me at the meeting of the Town Council, I beg to say that they are substantially correct, and I am quite prepared to abide by them.

As you speak of publishing the correspondence, no doubt you will think it right to include my letter of Dec. 1st.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES E. FLOWER.

J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, Esq., LL.D.

It is hardly necessary to say that I comply with the suggestion made at the conclusion of the last letter. The communication of the 1st of December is here given.

Avonbank,

Stratford-on-Avon,

Dec. 1st, 1883.

DEAR SIR,

On reading the pamphlet you have forwarded to me, I am amazed to learn for the first time, that there is a quarrel between us, and that there is a difficulty in your meeting the sub-committee appointed by the Corporation because I am a member of it.

This accounts for what I supposed was accidental, my not having had the pleasure of seeing you when you were in Stratford, which I much regretted, as I wished to consult you on some Shakespearean matters of mutual interest and also to disabuse your mind of the idea that the Birth-place Committee had behaved with any discourtesy to your friend, Mr. Tyndall. I was not, however, aware that you fixed this upon me personally.

I now think it was most unfortunate that the Committee consented, at your urgent request, to let the unfortunate Tyndall affair drop, and that they did not insist upon bringing the whole matter before the Trustees at their last meeting, when I feel sure that the Trustees would have seen the matter in a different light from what you appear to do upon only a partial knowledge of what took place.

I can distinctly assert that there never was on my part (or on the part of any of the Committee) the slightest intention to treat that gentleman uncourteously, and that his nervous temperament and vivid imagination has caused him to misconstrue matters and to present them to you in a most distorted form. However, when, at your request, the Trustees agreed to let the subject drop, I presumed that bygones were to be considered as bygones, and that, as the matter was not to be discussed fully and openly, we were not at liberty to do anything more to vindicate ourselves from the very harsh *ex parte* statements which you and others had made. I am, therefore, very much pained that you should have re-opened the matter in the way you have now done.

It appears to me from the further contents of your pamphlet that you are under the impression that I desire to oppose your wishes as to the autotyping the records. Nothing can be further from the fact; and, if you had been present at the meeting—of which of course only a very condensed report would appear in a newspaper—you would have known that the subject received my hearty support, and that then, as always, I most thoroughly appreciated what you have and are doing.

Although I am very much interested in the subject (not, as you suppose, with an entirely new interest), I shall at once withdraw from the sub-committee of the Corporation, and so avoid being the cause of there being any difficulty in your working with—*not under*—that Committee, which was appointed to assist you. At the same time, I trust that we may have an early opportunity of meeting, in order that any present misunderstanding, such as I now learn exists, may be cleared up.

At any rate, I can assure you that my interest in Shakespearean matters would always induce me to give my support to your action, even if I did not (as I most certainly do) fully appreciate your personal exertions and sacrifices in the work of elucidating all that relates to his life.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES E. FLOWER.

J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, Esq.

This letter, it will be owned, is couched in the most polite terms, and, if no disturbance had intervened, would have been acknowledged in the course of a few days in language that would have been at least equally courteous. It was posted at Stratford on the 1st inst., and reached me at Brighton on Monday morning, the 3rd inst. There were remarks in it that required deliberate consideration, but I was not even favored with the grace of an intermission of one day's post, Mr. Charles Flower opening fire upon me *on the very next morning*, Tuesday, the 4th inst. Mr. Charles Flower complains of my letter of the 7th inst. having been written in a very different tone from that of his of the 1st inst., but what other could he possibly have expected after the appearance of the speech he delivered on the 4th inst.

The letter of December 1st perplexed me very seriously. Passing by the opening paragraph, the subject of which has been elsewhere noticed (see p. 42), in the first place, if conciliation had been intended, I was puzzled at the letter containing no repudiation of the word *irregular*, at the use of which every reader of my pamphlet must have seen that I was, as I am now, naturally indignant. There was no allusion in it to that word in any way, and no

denial of its use. In the second place, there was the strange announcement that the Trustees had consented to let the Librarian dispute drop at my request, a mistaken statement which it would have taken me some time, as it has since, to investigate. In the third place there was no reference to the suspension-of-salary business ; so that altogether a somewhat elaborate answer was requisite. I was, however, on the point of replying, in as friendly a tone as could possibly, under the circumstances, have been adopted, when the appearance of the speech of the 4th inst. of course at once changed the aspect of affairs, and put to flight the notion of present "friendship." It was a new experience to me to find a species of the latter which could be so exceedingly polite on a Saturday, and then, no provocation having intervened, could be so exceedingly the reverse on the following Tuesday.

THE COPYRIGHT QUESTION.

Here are another couple of charges against me! Upon my word, I am really beginning to think that I shall never get to the end of them.

Mr. Charles Flower thought a stronger word than *irregular* might be applied to those (that is, my) proceedings especially if, as he understood, Mr. Phillipps had allowed the photographer to retain the negatives, and register the copyright in his own name.

I. *Mr. Phillipps had allowed the photographer to retain the negatives.*—Of course I had. The diminutive negatives taken in the first instance are of no practical use until they are enlarged. They have no doubt a negative value, but, unless I had sent for the beadle or the police to take them to the lock-up, I do not know any other course that could have been adopted.

II. *Mr. Phillipps had allowed the photographer to register the copyright in his own name.*—All that I have got to say to this is that I have never had any communication whatever with the photographer upon the subject.



RED-TAPE AMENITIES.

In the course of his speech, Mr. Charles Flower observed that "he did not use" the word *irregular* "for the very good reason that "he knew nothing of those proceedings to "which Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps alluded until he "read them from his pamphlet." The speaker's memory must anyhow here have sadly deserted him. It is recorded, in *The Herald's* printed report of the meeting of November the 9th, that "Mr. Councillor Flower said he understood "something had been done ;— certain documents had been removed and photographed." The same words occur in the shorthand notes taken on behalf of *The Chronicle*.

We are now arriving at the last scene of this "strange eventful history." In the following words Mr. Charles Flower frames what he evidently considers to be a very serious and formidable indictment,—

Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps had drawn very largely on his imagination, and possibly his conscience might have told him that *irregular* was the mildest term that could have been applied to those proceedings. He was not aware—he did not think any member of that Council was aware—before reading that pam-

phlet that fourteen most valuable documents had been removed from the record-room without the knowledge of the Mayor, or any member of the Corporation, or even of the Town Clerk. He thought a stronger word than *irregular* might be applied to those proceedings.

These words are clearly liable to the interpretation that my recent proceedings have partaken somewhat of a surreptitious character. Now, although I can afford to treat such insinuations with contempt, it is none the less deplorable that any member of the Town Council should have had the bad taste to utter them. I have already explained (see p. 19) that for years and years, and until Mr. Charles Flower has of late commenced to take such an absorbing interest in the records, I have had a prescriptive and hitherto unchallenged right to consult them at my own discretion. It never occurred to me that the recent proceedings were of so very distinct a character that they necessitated a special application to the officials, for it must be borne in mind that, in the exceptional position I had so long occupied in respect to the records, I was as much responsible to the Corporation and to public opinion for their safety as any official could possibly be. So far from considering it necessary, under the circumstances, to apply to the Town-

Clerk or to the Mayor, I should as soon have thought of engaging the public crier to screech out what was going on, or of asking the town-band to greet my arrival at the railway station with the inspiring air of,—“See the autotyping hero comes!” The whole affair is a lesson to people not to attempt good work when there is red-tape about. Mr. Charles Flower’s onslaught is, at present, all I have got by going down to Stratford to carry out the wishes of the Corporation, and by making myself, day after day, a pendulum between the Birth-Place and Ivy Cottage, to the great satisfaction of the boys in the Rother Market, who were evidently under the impression that there was a wager ahead on the interesting question of the number of times I could walk to and fro during the six hours allotted to my daily task.

Yes!—to carry out the wishes of the Corporation. The impartial reader, who will refer (see p. 15) to what took place at the Council held in March, *and will carefully bear in mind that, at the time of my visit, no further discussion on the records had taken place at any of the Council meetings*, then he or she must perforce admit that I was not only carrying out the wishes of the Council, but doing so in a manner that involved infinitely less risk to the records

than if I had followed the line of proceedings they had themselves suggested and authorised. I am the last person in the world either to treat the wishes of the Committee with disrespect or to intentionally disobey any of their orders. If my recent action had been taken after, *instead of before*, the promulgation of their last order on the subject, then, indeed, I should have been seriously to blame.

I contend, therefore, that no irregularity whatever has been committed ; but even if there had been, the most pronounced red-tapist must admit that a desirable work has been done, and that in the most careful manner. Under these circumstances, one would have thought that the veriest scintillation of good feeling would have protected an old and tried honorary servant of the Corporation from the language of insult.

NOTICE.

Three words are accidentally omitted in the report of Mr. Charles Flower's speech at p. 29, but they will be found correctly given in the extract from that speech at p. 45.





Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

Form L9-10m-6, '52 (A1855) 444

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

PR Halliwell-
2932 Phillips -
H15s The Shakespeare-
Autotype commi-
ttee.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FAC



AA 000 369 497

PR
2932
H15s

