

SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY



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SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY
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Cover Illustration: from a volume of John Seymour Lucas' original designs for Henry Irving's production of Shakespeare's *King Henry the Eighth*, 5 January 1892. (Folger Library Art Vol. 52.) Photograph by Horace Groves, Folger Library.

Editor's Preface

This is the inaugural issue of the second quarter-century of publication for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, and as such it offers what would seem to be a suitable moment for some brief reflections on the future of the journal. How may the *Quarterly* best maintain the integrity of its rich heritage while at the same time responding to emerging needs with appropriate modifications in policy, emphasis, and content? Perhaps it is sufficient for the present merely to have raised the question—particularly if, as I hope, it elicits thoughtful replies by readers of the *Quarterly*. Having broached the issue, however, I feel an obligation to express a few of my own views, views that I hope readers will find generally acceptable.

Above all else, I think, *Shakespeare Quarterly* must persevere in its efforts to reflect the highest standards of Shakespearean scholarship, endeavoring by various means to contribute to the advancement of knowledge about Shakespeare and his works and about the many contexts that illuminate both. By continuing to publish conscientiously researched and carefully reasoned articles and notes, by expanding the review sections of the journal to provide more thorough and more current assessments of new publications, by enlarging the scope of the annual world Shakespeare bibliography, and by adding important new features such as periodic surveys of scholarship in particular areas of investigation, the *Quarterly* may expect to remain true to its central purpose as a learned journal.

One of the oldest traditions of *Shakespeare Quarterly* is its interest in recording and evaluating contemporary productions of Shakespeare. This feature has merit, I think, and in the years ahead the *Quarterly* will seek to broaden and strengthen its coverage of various kinds of performance. At the same time, the *Quarterly* will be exploring other ways of developing more effective communication between scholars and critics, on the one hand, and producers, directors, and performers, on the other.

Shakespeare's works have always attracted a "great Variety of Readers" and viewers; indeed, as Harry Levin has recently observed (in a distinguished lecture to be published in the next issue of *SQ*), there is perhaps no other author whose appeal and acclaim have been so nearly universal. Whether or not we now find it possible to agree with Ben Jonson's remark that Shakespeare was "not of an age," therefore, we must nevertheless lend credence to his assertion that Shakespeare was "for all time." Shakespeare is not easily circumscribed, and it can be argued, I think, that a journal devoted to study and appreciation of his work should not be easily circumscribed either. For that reason, I shall consider it one of my responsibilities as editor to insure that *Shakespeare Quarterly* remains open to new ideas, approaches, and features, in the hope that every issue will contain something of value to each reader, however special his interests and tastes.

J.F.A.