

SECRET MARKS

From Lord Bacon's "Operum Moralium et Civilium," 1638, and "Resuscitatio," 1671. The Rose is copied from the title-page of the "New Atlantis" and "De Augmentis," and bears a striking resemblance to the Lutheran seal, or emblem of the Rosicrucians, reproduced in the Real History of the Society, by Mr. Waite.

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HERMES STELLA

OR

NOTES AND JOTTINGS

UPON THE

BACON CIPHER

BY

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AUTHOR OF "A NEW STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE," "BACON, SHAKESPEARE,
AND THE ROSICRUCIANS."

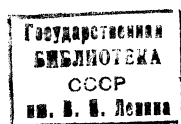
"Another error induced by the former is, a suspicion and diffidence, that anything should be now to be found out, which the world should have missed and passed over so long time."—(Page 36, "Advancement of Learning" 1640.)

LONDON

GEORGE REDWAY

1890

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PREFACE.

THIS volume was never intended to be more than an appeal for the re-examination of Mr. Donnelly's claim to the discovery of a secret cipher in the plays known as Shakespeare's, and in its present form it can only be regarded as a collection of rough notes and jottings on this subject, hurried into print by circumstances connected with the theft of a portion of my manuscript. The indulgence of the few students who may consult these pages is therefore entreated for the errors of style and punctuation, and for the faulty arrangement of material which involves so much repetition. I am not without hope, however, that the labour of scanning the following pages will be repaid by the acquisition of many facts bearing on the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy, which it has cost me years of toilsome research to accumulate.

W. F. C. WIGSTON.

INTRODUCTION.

AFTER reading Mr. Donnelly's "Great Cryptogram," I made up my mind to give the problem of whether there existed in the plays known as Shakespeare's a cipher or no, a thorough and searching examination. The first thing that suggested itself to us was to make Tables of those pages in the 1623 Folio Plays upon which we found the word "*Bacon*;" because we argued, if there really exists a cipher in these plays, it is sure to circle and concentrate itself round this word; and by collating these tables, I shall be in a position to judge, whether there was any collusion or agreement of numbers and names. The first thing that struck us as excessively curious was to find the word "*Bacon*" always upon pages numbered 53 or 52. Twice we find Bacon upon pages 53 M. W. W. and 53 1st K. H. IV., and twice upon page 52, 1st K. H. IV. (which is mispaged 54).^{*} Shakespeare died in April 1616, 52 years of age, but evidently he had just entered his 53rd year, for upon the Stratford Monument we read that he was in his 53rd year (*etatis*). So that the two factors of his life, indicating 1616 and pointing obviously to him by mathematics, are these numbers 52 and 53. It seems to us there is a singular fitness suggested in this trifle. Because if Bacon's intention was by means of a cipher to identify himself with Shakespeare, nothing could be more apposite or pointed than this introduction of the word "*Bacon*" upon pages suggesting by mathematics Shakespeare and thus suggesting Identification of Names 1616. Upon page 36 of Lord Bacon's Distribution Preface (1640 "Advt.") he writes, "For it came into our mind, that in MATHEMATICS the frame standing, the demonstration inferred is facile and perspicuous; on the contrary without this accommodation and dependency, all seems involved and more subtle than indeed they be." Bacon does not further

^{*} The mispaging 1st K. H. IV. commences with the opening of the play (47, 49) and is carried on falsely two in advance.