A TOUCH OF GREENE, MUCH NASHE, AND ALL SHAKESPEARE

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1 Henry VI is a special text for the nerve endings of Shakespearean enthusiasts, providing as it does possible grounds for arguing for multiple authorship as well as evidence for Shakespeare's single responsibility for the play as it now exists. The more than thirty years that elapsed between the Folio of 1623 and the play's likely first performance allow for an interpretation of a Shakespearean revisionary effort which does not perfectly conceal traces of possible original contributions by other dramatists. This last view of the case has a touch of having one's cake and eating it too, but the following discussions of a canonical symmetry and of the indirect role of Thomas Nashe may lead the reader towards an integrationist view.

The final three scenes of 1 Henry VI are among those which several editors (and critics), including the Oxford editors, have deemed non-Shakespearean. Dover Wilson, for example, thought that 5.3.1–44 was possibly by Nashe but that the rest of the scene was Greene's, 5.4 was Greene's but revised by Shakespeare, and 5.5 was Greene's but the second half was a revision by Shakespeare. Taylor recently argues that 5.1 through 5.5, like 3.1–3.4 (and possibly other sections) is the work of an unknown author "Y," whose work "has particular links with Locrine... [with] strong similarities to the dramatic writings of Robert Greene and George Peele" (Wells and Taylor, Textual Companion 217). It is possible that we accept too easily the idea that these last scenes are non-Shakespearean, for there is a shapeliness in the arc of Shakespeare's career to be seen if we recognize that The Tempest echoes aspects of these passages from this early history. Of course, if one wishes to suggest that in Shakespeare's beginning was his end, whenever these last scenes were written/added to or not, 1 Henry VI has to be considered the earliest of Shakespeare's work.

The similarities between this part of the history and those in the
romance include two pairs of lovers (Suffolk and Margaret, Ferdinand and Miranda) in which each one is the offspring of the King of Naples; both women are "wonderful," with Margaret as "nature's miracle" (5.3.54) who has Suffolk's "wondrous praise" (5.3.190) and will herself bereave Henry's "wits with wonder" (5.3.195). Miranda's name signifies her wondrous nature, and she is addressed when first seen by Ferdinand, "O you wonder" (1.2.426). Other similarities are the temporary impotence of each of the male lovers, Suffolk's "I have no power to let her pass" (5.3.60) and Ferdinand's "My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up" (1.2.485); the issue of love's trial in Suffolk's "How canst thou tell she will deny thy suit? Before thou make a trial of her love" (5.3.75–76) and Miranda's "O dear father! Make not too rash a trial of him" (1.2.466–467), as well as her father's "All thy vexations! Were but my trials of thy love" (4.1.5–6). Both male lovers talk of wood and servitude, albeit the bondage is of Margaret in the first case and Ferdinand himself in the second: "Why for my king: tush, that's a wooden thing," and "would you not suppose Your bondage happy, to be made a queen" (5.3.89, 110–111), and Ferdinand, the patient log man, saying that but for his love of Miranda he would not endure/ This wooden slavery (3.2.61–62). Indeed, Margaret, like Ferdinand, of royal descent through Naples, shows a similar instinct for independence: "To be a queen in bondage is more vile! Than is a slave in base servility" (5.3.112–113). Both male lovers, Suffolk as surrogate, Ferdinand in his own person, offer to make the women queens (5.3.111, as just noted), and in Ferdinand's "I will make you The queen of Naples," (1.2.448–449). It will also be remembered that Ferdinand, in the midst of his comparison and contrast of Miranda with other women, speaks of their tongues having into bondage/ Brought my too diligent ear" (3.2.41–42), and that after Miranda expresses her desire to have him as her husband, Ferdinand replies: "Ay, with a heart as willing/ As bondage e'er of freedom" (3.2.88–89). Both suitors use the adjective "precious" in dialogue with the lovers. Suffolk speaks of the "precious crown" which Margaret will receive if she should marry Henry, even as the earl confuses the pronouns "his" and "my," while Ferdinand directly addresses Miranda as "precious creature" (3.2.25). Both women express their unworthiness; Margaret says "I am unworthy to be Henry's wife" (5.3.122), while Miranda tells Ferdinand that she weeps at her "unworthiness" (3.2.77). Both women describe themselves as maidens and willing servants; Margaret sends Henry "Such commendations as becomes a maid./ A virgin and his servant" (5.3.177–178), while Miranda tells Ferdinand, "If not, I'll die your maid. To be your fellow/ You may deny me; but I'll be your servant/ Whether you will or no" (3.2.84–86). Of course, both marriages are to be "solemnized," as Suffolk says at 5.3.168 and Prospero at 5.1.309.

Now, the tone of the remarks of Margaret differs from that of Miranda, and the duplicity of Suffolk contrasts with the innocence of Ferdinand, but the circumstances of love and status as well as diction are analogous in the first case and often identical in the second. Shakespeare may indeed have in an autoplagiaristic manner returned to his earlier work—1 Henry VI—with the lovers and a Neapolitan king, or he may have surrendered his resistance to using Greene, held to since the time of the attack in A Groatsworth of Wit, until the composition of The Winter's Tale, with its dependence upon Pandosto, and continued the relaxation in the writing of The Tempest by returning to the Greene-written section, Act V of 1 Henry VI, perhaps even Greene-written originally but revised by Shakespeare himself.

Whichever or whatever the case, Shakespeare may have linked the writing of The Tempest with his recollection of 1 Henry VI because of the fact that both plays have a dominant figure connected with magical powers—the white magician Prospero and the black magician Joan of Arc. Magic in and of itself is likely enough to draw upon a vocabulary naturally shared in 1 Henry VI and The Tempest. La Pucelle appeals to "ye charming spells" (5.3.2), York cites her "spelling charms" (5.3.31), refers to her as a "witch" and speaks of her "dainty eye" (5.3.38) and calls her a "bag" (42). She replies with a "plaguing mischief light on Charles and thee!" and asks for "leave to curse a while" (43).

In The Tempest it is Caliban (whose "mother was a witch" [5.1.269]), "The damn'd witch Sycorax" (1.2.263), guilty of "mischiefs manifold" (264), "blue-eyed bag" (269), whose profit from having learned language is to "know how to curse" (1.2.264). He urges "All the charms of Sycorax light" (339–340) on Prospero, and the "red-plague" (365) destroy him. Prospero promises to "plague" all his enemies (4.1.192), is told that his "charm" (5.1.17) has worked well on them, and calls upon his spirits "Ye elves" and so on in his speech of abjuration (5.1.33ff). And in his reference to "airies" (5.1.54), he sees the charmed enemy "spell-stopp'd" (61) and praises his "dainty Ariel" (95). Joan had also addressed her "friends," while Sebastian speaks of fighting "one friend at a time" (3.3.102).

All these terms, as I have said, could be merely the result of a common theme, the discussion of which necessitates similar vocabularies. However, there is a most unusual aspect which is shared by 1 Henry VI and The Tempest, and that is the theme of escape from punishment of crimes by death because of the culprit's pregnant/pregnant condition. It will be recalled that both Sycorax and Joan are connected with this theme. Joan herself announces (falsely) "I am with child, ye bloody homicides/ Murder not then the fruit of my womb" (5.4.62–63). Prospero reminds Ariel: this blue-eyed bag was hither brought with child/ And here was left by the sailors" (1.2.269–270), this was the "one thing she did/ [for which] They would not take her life" (266–267). An unusual topic, to say the least. One final point: Prospero destroys his art, returning to nature when he breaks his staff. At the end of the wooing scene Suffolk speaks of Margaret's "nat-
much that was like Shylock in the attitude of Nashe and the Master Barber as they set about to phlebotomize the luckless Cambridge don.

Even as the dramatist was working on Shylock, he had begun the creation of Falstaff in 1 Henry IV, where Dover Wilson himself was among the first to see that Shakespeare had made use of this most successful and certainly the fullest of Nashe's attacks on Harvey. I suggest that the variety of elements in the play that are derived from Saffron Walden are the products of the following central fictional image of Harvey, so unlike the real Cambridge academic and so close to the miles gloriosus of 1 Henry IV (and not unlike the Sir John Falstaff of 1 Henry VI, 1.1.136, who "Cowardly fled, not having struck one stroke"). "Gabriel Harvey, of the age of forty eight or upwards, (Turpe senex miles, tis time for such an old fool to leave playing the swash-buckler") (55).

It is perhaps enough to make the point that Shakespeare habitually borrowed from this particular text of Nashe, so that Nashean elements in 1 Henry VI are more likely to be instances of Shakespeare's incorporation of these materials rather than signs of Nashe's own direct hand. This habitual manipulation of Nashean elements is quite clear even if we pass over other instances and cite simply Saffron Walden elements in Hamlet.

In the dialogue sections of Saffron Walden Nashe develops the theme of the Harvey family's humble origins in rope-making. With affected seriousness he has one of his interlocutors, Domino Bentivole, point out that although the ropes made by the Harveys are sometimes used in the course of criminal acts, the Harveys are not therefore guilty of any crimes themselves. Then Pierce Penniless, the Respondent in this dialogue, makes some astute observations on the differences between cause and effect. In its rhythm and subject of logical tautology, with the added issue of insanity, this passage makes up the rhythm of Polonius's analysis of Hamlet's lunacy:

As though the cause and the effect (more than the superficialities and the substance) can bee seperated, when in manie things causa sine qua non is both the cause and the effect, the common distinction of potentia non acta approving it selfe vere crazed and impotent herein since the premises necessarily beget the conclusion, and so contradictorily the conclusion the premises: a halter including desperation, and so desperation concluding in a halter; without which fallall conclusion and privation it cannot truly bee termed desperation, since nothing is said to bee till it is borne, and despare is never fully borne till it ceaseth to bee, and hath depriv'd him of beeing that first bare it and brought it forth. So that herein it is hard to distinguish which is most to be blamed, of the cause or the effect; the Cause without the effect.
Carneades, another of the interlocutors, urges the Respondent to continue with the live story of Gabriel Harvey and hopes that there will be no interruption:

Better or worse fortune, I pray thee let us hear how thou goest forward in describing the Doctor and his life and fortunes: and you, my fellow Auditors, I beseech you, trouble him not (an ye more) with these impertinent Parentheses. (60)

Polonius is eager to describe the crazed desperation of Hamlet, interrupting and delaying his narrative by parenthetical pieces of self-criticism. His most comical lines are those devoted to premises which necessarily beg tautological conclusions ("for to define madness, /What is it but to be nothing else but mad") and to much play on the relationship of cause and effect:

Mad let us grant him then, and now remains
That we find out the cause of the effect,
Or rather, say, the cause of this defect.
For this effect defective comes by cause. (2.2.100–103)

No one has suggested that Nashe wrote parts of Romeo and Juliet or the Merchant of Venice or 1 Henry IV or Hamlet, yet the presence of the same kind of Nashean source material has been too confidently used as evidence that Nashe was the direct author of a whole scene in 1 Henry VI.

For example, Dover Wilson pointed to the conclusion of the Dauphin's speech as also clearly Nashean, albeit from yet another Nashean work, Christ's Tears over Jerusalem:

Otherwhiles the famished English, like pale ghosts
Faintly besiege us one hour in a month. (1.2.7–8)

He cites Nashe's "pale rawbone ghosts" (II. 69.23) in Christ's Tears over Jerusalem (1593) and points out that "otherwhiles" is used nine times by Nashe and this once in works attributed to Shakespeare. He is careful to admit that "rawbone" also occurs in The Faerie Queene, and we know that Spenser and his lengthy romance are frequent sources for Shakespeare.

This particular passage belongs to a set of pages in Christ's Tears which concern themselves with the bloodshed and famine in Jerusalem at the time of the siege of the city by the Romans under Titus and Vespasian, a set which captured the attention of Shakespeare in at least three tragedies, Titus Andronicus (1594), Julius Caesar (1599), and Macbeth (1606):

In Christ's Tears Nashe as moralist admonishes London for its sinfulness, likening its future to Jerusalem's past, particularly its divinely ordained siege, fall, and destruction in AD 70 at the hands of the Roman general Titus, the son of the newly crowned emperor Vespasian. As his chief illustrations of the terrors of such a fate Nashe tells the story of Miriam, a wealthy matron reduced by hunger and the imminent ignominy of Roman slavery to kill, roast, and serve up as dinner her only son. This is a Jerusalem from which "Titus led prisoners to Rome" (78), a city ignorant of the danger represented by Vespasian, a mere general when he arrived in Judea but "by his own soldiers (against his will) was there consecrated Emperor . . . leaving his sonn Titus behind to sack thee" (79), and a city in which a mother who is reduced to eating her son must explain to the child, "ratified it is (bad fated Saturnine boy) that thou must be Anthropophagiz'd by thyne owne Mother" (73). It is also a city whose ambition leads Nashe to reflect on the downfall of other ambitious figures of scripture and history: "... the truest image of this kind of ambition was Absalom. Julius Caesar among the Ethiicks surmounted ... and upon his returne to Rome was crowned Emperor . . . sent men skild in Geometry to measure the whole world a task not finished until ... the Consulshyp of Saturninus . . ." (82).

In the play the Roman general Titus is unwilling to accept his popular election as Emperor, and the Emperor Saturninus, sixteen times called "Saturnine" (a name, like Saturninus, unique in the canon to Titus Andronicus) is not the victim of maternal cannibalism, but is the appalled spectator to it. Historically, Saturninus, consul in 19 BC, was later Governor of Syria, in which capacity he presided over the trial of two of Herod's allegedly treasonous sons, the victims of their father's wrath, although, as Flavius Josephus, one of Nashe's sources, tells us, "none supposed that Herod would carry his cruelty to the length of murdering his children."

Shakespeare in writing for the stage seldom scrupled about consistency in the naming of his characters, but Nashe in writing about a known historical event, the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70 was dependent upon the names which history and his historical sources gave him and they gave him a "Titus" and a "Saturninus" in a context of the choice of a reluctant emperor and the killing and eating of a child by its mother.

In terms of Shakespeare's use of this section of Christ's Tears over Jerusalem in Julius Caesar, it is enough to note how much of Antony's
elements absorbed into Antony's oration that this interring of the bones of Caesar is a violation of Roman funeral practices which, as Plutarch tells us, involved the burning of the corpse. Nashe it is who speaks of "praises," "bury," and "inter." And it is Nashe who has Christ indict the citizens of Jerusalem for their "ingratitude," in spite of the fact that Christ had "loved them," even as Brutus is indicted by Antony for his especial "ingratitude," given "how dearly Caesar loved him" (3.2.185, 182). There is even Christ's preterition, "yet wil I not say ... there may be ambition," even as he goes on to analyze extensively the ambition of Jerusalem, which has stimulated Antony's instances of the same device at 3.2.125, 131.

There is a good deal more in Christ's Tears that has affected the texture of Julius Caesar, but it is enough perhaps to conclude with the essential point that Shakespeare's plays, and this play particularly, are full of borrowings from Christ's Tears over Jerusalem, borrowings which cannot be instances of Nashe's authorship of the dramas in which they appear. There is yet another moment in the Scottish tragedy—the response to the discovery of the murdered Duncan—which shows the detailed influence of the passage in Christ's Tears descriptive of the combined offences of treason, murder, rape, and sacrilege.

When Nashe has Christ tell how the outlaw army not only slew the high priest, but murdered children brought "to the Temple ... and ... most sacrilegiously ravish their mothers" (66), he provided Macduff with diction for his horrified announcement "Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope/ The Lord's anointed temple. ... " (2.3.67–68). These outlaws are "dreggy ees of Libertines" (63) and have reduced the Temple to a pudlie Vault of dead-mens bones" (67), the description of which has affected Macbeth's artificial but ontologically true lament, "renown and grace is dead/ The wine of life is drawn, and the mere ees! Is left this vault to brag of" (2.3.94–96). Nashe's description of the polluted Temple with its "Lake of blood ... silver gates ... jelliéd gore" (66) has become part of Macbeth's description of the murder scene, "His silver skin laé'd with his golden blood ... breéch'd with gore" (2.3.112, 116).

The image of moral and physical corruption is yet another in the series of images of famine, murder, barnyard violence, carcass-swollen rivers with their shoals and banks, croaking ravens, and tongue-tied inarticulateness which derive from Christ's Tears over Jerusalem, and still one more element of Shakespeare's career-long manipulation of Nashean material, not of Nashe's writing parts of Macbeth.

Even the sonnets show the poet's use of Christ's Tears, as in sonnets 29, 55, 116, 144. Each of these poems builds upon words and images from the pamphlet. Especially suggestive in 29 are the themes of mistaken ambition and reluctant exchange and the words "exchange my state," "kings," "scope," "heaven's gate," and "scorn to." For 55, in the midst of the theme of the vanity behind the building of transitory sculptured memorials, there
is the juxtaposition not present in the other contributing sources of Ovid, Horace, and Propertius of “marble” and “monuments.” In 116, along with the tautic of negative definition, the theme of unchanging integrity, and the closely related terms “admit,” “time,” and “sickle,” there is the syntax of the personal guarantee of what has been said, “I write, as no man . . .” which expression has become part of Shakespeare’s “I never writ, nor no man . . .” Finally in 144, the themes of betrayal and isolation, the first-person point of view, the competition for an unfaithful loved one, as well as the diction of “devil,” “pride,” “Hell,” “ill,” and “good angel out” derive from the image and diction of the competition between Christ and the devil for the affections of that “gargantuan strumpet” Jerusalem as presented in the pamphlet. But this is sufficient for our purposes of denying the presence of Nashean material in a Shakespearean work as evidence of Nashe’s direct involvement in the composition of the play or poem.

Others of Nashe’s works, beyond Saffron Walden and Christ’s Tears, show the same evidence of Shakespearean borrowing, borrowing often mistakenly interpreted as proof of Nashe’s hand in a Shakespearean play. Dover Wilson, in order to bolster his argument that the Nashean elements are not accidentally present in 1.2, argues that Alençon’s response to the Dauphin has still more extensive parallelism between 1 Henry VI and Nashean texts, this time with Four Letters Confuted (1592) and Summer’s Last Will and Testament (1592, published 1600). Dover Wilson cites both:

They want their porridge and their fat bull-beaves:
 Either they must be dieted like mules
 And have their provender tied to their mouths,
 Or piteous they will look, like drown’d mice.(1.2.9-12)

And:

pumpe over mutton and porridge into Fraunce? This colde weather
 our souldiers, I can tell you, have need of it, and, poore fieldes mise,
 they have almost got the coliche and stone with eating of provant.
(I, 331. 28-33)

He infers that “the similarity of diction evoked similarity of diction,” but he does not infer that the similarity was evoked in the mind of Shakespeare as he was reading Nashe. Yet this very text of Four Letters Confuted fascinated the author of The Comedy of Errors, to the point where Act IV, scene iv, and elements of other scenes show Nashean theme and diction. And no one has yet suggested that Nashe wrote The Comedy of Errors, 4.4 or any other part of that early comedy.

It is customary to see arguments that say parallels in phrasing are the result of a common source for both the Nashean and Shakespearean texts or that the finite limitations of a culture’s language together with the fact of similar themes naturally enough have led to similarities of expression, or indeed even that Nashe is the borrower from Shakespeare. Against these responses is the existence of very many instances of rare or unique terms not found in any known sources but belonging to both Nashe and Shakespeare, and of the clear and frequent evidence of Shakespeare’s borrowing from Nashe, as we have indicated above, sometimes in plays composed not only after the publication of Nashe’s works, but after his actual demise (1600 or 1601).

In the case of The Comedy of Errors, the editors of the play have sometimes made general observations of its Nashean quality, as in Stanley Wells’s remark in his New Penguin edition of the play:

The prose, too, is constructed with controlled artistry, rising in the description of the kitchen wench (III.2.92–154) to a virtuosic—and splendidly stately—piece of fantasy reminiscent of the best work of Shakespeare’s contemporary, Thomas Nashe. (13)

And R. A. Foakes in his New Arden edition of the play, drawing upon the work of Dover Wilson in the New Cambridge edition and commenting on two unusual expressions, both in Act IV, scene iv, and both found in Nashe’s Four Letters Confuted (1592) (also referred to as Strange News), remarks: “In Four Letters Confuted, Nashe was attacking Gabriel Harvey, and it is odd that two of his jests against Harvey should turn up in this scene” (83). Foakes here is referring to Dromio of Ephesus’s response to Adriana’s statement that she had sent the money to redeem her husband—“Heart and good will you might, /But surely, master not a rag of money” (4.4.85–86)—which is paralleled in Nashe’s words attributed to the deceased brother of Gabriel Harvey, a man who has left Gabriel and his other brother Richard “his old gowns” and his “notable sayings,” among which was this one: “Vale Gene, mine owne deare Gabriell: Valete humanae artes, heart and good will, but never a rag of money” (I, 301). Foakes had earlier noted, as had Quiller Couch, that Dromio of Ephesus’s response to the arrival of Adriana in the company of Doctor Pinch, “Mistress, respice finem, respect your end, or rather, the prophecy like the parrot, beware the rope’s end” (4.4.41–42) was “alluding to two jokes of the time; one was the substitution of respice finem (a rope, i.e. hanging) for the common tag respice finem (think on your end, cf. Nashe’s attack on Harvey in Four Letters Confuted (1592; McKerrow, 1.268), “to bee . . . bid Respice finem, looke backe to his Fathers house” (Harvey’s father was a ropemaker). . . .” (81). None of these editors notes that on this very same page of Four Letters there are references to a “Doctor,” to Nashe’s pamphlet An Almond for a Parrot, to another Harvey “brother,” and to the issue of not being believed—“there’s none will beleive him” (268).
These references follow the expressions on the previous page, “ropes in Saffron Walden” (Harvey’s hometown) and “the surreverence of his [Harvey’s] works” (267); It is Dr. Pinch who has a “saffron face” (IV.i.61) “saffron” is a rare term in the canon, unique in the sixteenth-century part of the Shakespearean canon. Dromio of Syracuse is it who uses “Sir-reverence” in his attempt to describe Nell the kitchen wench (3.2.91). On the page following the joke about the rope’s end there is an expression, one of several from this pamphlet, that Shakespeare would later use in Hamlet. Nashe writes of how he can describe Harvey—“from the foote to the head / can tell how thou art fashioned”—who, in keeping his brother, “hast rackt thy credit through the ring, made thy infamy current as far as the Queenes coyne goes” (269). Hamlet, in measuring the increased height of the boy actor who plays female parts, is concerned that “Pray God your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack’d within the ring” 2.2.427-28). Of course, before Hamlet, Shakespeare used Four letters/Strange News for the Comedy of Errors. G. H. Hibbard in his study of Nashe noted common elements, as had Dover Wilson before him, between Strange News and 1 Henry IV:

It is no accident that Shakespeare remembered Strange News when he was writing Henry IV. In some measure at least the disputation and slanging matches that the Prince and Falstaff engage in derive from the way Nashe goes to work here. Words such as “therefore” and “ergo,” the small change of the logic schools abound. The whole thing is conceived in terms that recall either those used in a learned disputation or those used in a court of law. (Thomas Nashe 200-201)

The Comedy of Errors, an anticipation of that other Nashean-influenced comedy with a known law-school audience, Twelfth Night, delighted the law students at Gray’s Inn in 1594. Without suggesting that Dr. pinch, with his saffron face, was designed to evoke Gabriel Harvey, Doctor f Civil Law, in the eyes of that original law-school audience, no more than the Harveian elements in Malvolio were designed to evoke Harvey in his rapping and self-congratulating but rather afforded material for generic laughter, I do want to point out that there are a good many other Nashean emblems to be found in The Comedy of Errors. No one believes that Nashe ad a hand in the composition of the play, but the logic of those who argue that the presence of Nashean material in Act I of 1 Henry VI is direct evidence of Nashe’s composition of that Act should lead the reader to accept ashe’s hand in this play and a good many other in the canon, even some posthumous efforts. Among the parallels between Strange News and The Comedy of Errors not already cited are “the Doctor,” “a Rope-maker,” and “I conjure thee” in the “Epistle Dedicatory” (257-258). Comparing Adriana’s “Good

Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer” (4.4.47) and Dromio of Ephesus’s “God and the rope-maker bear me witness” (4.4.90) (“rope-maker” is a term unique in the Shakespearean canon), as well as Doctor Pinch’s “I conjure thee” (4.4.57). Throughout the pamphlet Nashe refers to Harvey as “the Doctor,” even as he calls him “a mountebanke of strange words, a meere merchant of babies and conny-skins” (261), even as Antipholus of Ephesus refers to Pinch as “A meere anatomy, a mountebanke” (5.1.239). “Mountebank” is used only here in Errors in Shakespeare’s sixteenth-century works. Between the Nashean references to “rope-maker” and “mountebancke” there is a reference to the animal, the “porcupine,” spelled “Porpentine” (259). In Errors there are five references to the Porpentine” as the name of the Courtesan’s house. There is even a stimulating match for the egregious Nell of the play in the woman Harvey has slandered and who will revenge herself upon him—a big fat lusty wench it is, that hath an arm like an Amazon, and will hang thee abominationly, if ever she catch thee in her quarters” (289). One notes also that the pre-water-closet humor of the description of Nell—“where youse Belgia, the Netherlands? O sir, I did not look so low . . . . told me what privy marks I had about me. . . .” (3.2.138-139) is precisely that of Nashe in general, as is indicated on the title page itself, “Of the Intercepting certaine letters, and a convoy of Verses as they were going Privily to victual the Low Countries” (253). Even the chief characteristic of the schoolmaster/conjuror from which he gains his name is paralleled in Strange News just after the reference to “heart and good will, but never a ragge of money” (301). Nashe refers to Harvey’s description of Nashe as “Greene’s inwardest companion pinch’d with want . . . in a raving and franticke mode, most desperately exibitem a Supplication to the Devill.” Nashe then denies that he was “pincht with any ungentleman-like want when I invented Pierce Penniless” (303). From this passage Shakespeare has given Dr. Finch the key term for his victim: “Go bind this man, for he is frantic too” (4.4.113). And this pamphlet, with brothers, skepticism, debts, insanity, conjuring, a fat wench, bathroom humor, legal diction, “ergo” and “therefore,” specific jokes about ropes and ends, and with a “Doctor,” concludes with a figurative use of a term which is literally operative in the plot of Errors, as Nashe describes Harvey as lately “shipwrecked,” the very word used by Egeon to explain to the Duke the origins of his difficulties (1.1.114). Some or all of these elements might have prompted Shakespeare to use this particular pamphlet by Nashe in the composition of The Comedy of Errors. The borrowing from and manipulating of Nashe’s works were career-long tactics of Shakespeare.

Dover Wilson adds that “the mules with their provender tied to their mouths” finds an echo in the typical pair of lines from Summer’s Last Will and Testament:
A Touch of Greene, Much Nashe, and All Shakespeare

Autumne had previously indicted Sol for arrogance:
this sawcie upstart Jacke
That now doth rule the chariot of the Sunne.

The sonne of parsimony and disdain,
One that will shine on friends and foes alike,
That under brightest smiles hideth blacque showers. (472–473, 476–478)

When Richard asks for an almanac to determine the weather on the day of the battle of Bosworth Field, he reflects:

Then he disdains to shine, for by the book
He should have brav'd the east an hour ago,
A blacque day will it be to somebody. (5.3.278–280)

The sun will not be seen today...
Not shine today? Why what is that to me
More than to Richmond? For the self-same heaven
That frowns on me looks sadly upon him. (5.3.282, 285–287)

The theme of indifference, the shining upon friend and foe alike, and the diction of disdaigs, shine, sun, and black together suggest that Shakespeare kept in mind this passage from *Summer’s Last Will and Testament* both when he introduced the hypocrical Richard, sunlike in his ascendency, and also when he sent him into eclipse. Interestingly enough, he had also available to him between the lascivious of line 487 and the wanton and lute of line 497 the attractive image of the oriental richness of the rising sun:

Then doubled is the swelling of his looks;
He overloads his carre with Orient gemmes
And reynes his fiery horses with rich pearle. (493–495)

Richard is given some of the diction of these lines not in his early and late associations with the shining and obscured sun but in his debate with Elizabeth on the issue of his marrying her daughter, his niece:

Repair’d with double riches of content.
What? We have many goodly days to see:
The liquid drops of tears that you have shed
Shall come again, transformed to orient pearl,
Advantaging their love with interest.
Of ten times double gain of happiness. (4.4.319–324)

Summer concludes the sixty-line section of the pageant of the seasons with the indictment, “Usurping Sol, the hate of heaven and earth” (502).
Shakespeare, impressed with this description of the sun and seeing the advantages of the association with the house of York and Richard in particular, gave to usurping Richard words which Nashe had written at about the same time.

C. L. Barber, long ago building on some observations of Dover Wilson himself, demonstrated how Bacchus in *Summer’s Last Will and Testament* has become part of the nature of Falstaff in 1 *Henry IV* and Kenneth Muir has shown further instances of borrowing from this part of the pageant in 2 *Henry IV*.

It would be easy to cite further parallels that are indications of Shakespeare’s borrowing from Nashe in still other plays, including *Richard II*, where Autunme of the pageant plays the role of Bolingbroke and Summer is in the identical role of the hesitant and ambivalent King Richard:

> Autunme be thou successor of my seat:  
> Hold take my crowne—look how he grasps for it!  
> Thou shalt have it yet—but hold it too,  
> Why should I keep that needs I must forgo? (1240–1243)

Compare *Richard II*, 4.1.181ff, and note that these Nashean lines are only three pages later than those cited with the camel and the provender.

And not only is *Richard II* affected by *Summer’s Last Will and Testament*, but *Troilus and Cressida* and *King Lear*, also. In the former is Ulysses’ speech to Achilles regarding the inevitable transitoriness of power and glory, derived from Autunme’s lecture to inhospitable Christmas, where the themes found in this passage in *Troilus* (3.3.145ff) of hospitality, transitoriness, and ingratitude, together with the diction of “wallets,” “bakes,” “ghosts,” “almes,” “out of fashion,” and even the unique Ajaxian “Milo” are intertwined. In the case of *King Lear*, the old king’s game of who loves me the most and his anger at Cordelia’s “nothing” have been affected by the same section of Nashe’s folk play.

The play involves the imminent passing of Summer, who must transfer his power to the other seasons, as is the nature of things. Summer calls his officers to account, querying especially Ver and Solstitium:

> Come neer, my friends, for I am neere my end.  
> In presence of this Honourable trayne,  
> Who love me (for I patronize their sports),  
> Meane I to make my finall Testament:  
> But first Ie call my officers to count,  
> And of the wealth I gave them to dispose,  
> Knowne what is left, I may know what to give.