

possible experiences are artfully woven into a story which holds the interest of the young reader throughout.

No one today can know whether such adventures actually came to William Shakespeare when he was a boy. But, as Miss Sisson says in her "Letter to the Reader", they well might have.

The environment which the author describes so vividly in this book is perhaps a more prosperous one than that sometimes attributed to William Shakespeare by his detractors. But his father, John Shakespeare, the glover, was an important man in the community. In his prosperous period he owned five different houses, three in Stratford, and two in the country. His several responsible civic offices included that of Chief Alderman. Two maids served in the comfortable Shakespeare home, according to this story, and the family even had silver spoons to eat with. Miss Sisson's description of the possible breadth of the youth's education and experience, and of the glamorous fashionable world with which he was familiar, confirm the fact that the William Shakespeare of Stratford was not necessarily the uncultured, unlettered person who, modern followers of the Earl of Oxford or Francis Bacon contend, could not have produced such works of genius.

For boys and girls of today, reading *The Young Shakespeare* should be a happy introduction to the study of his plays. This is a book which should have a place not only on their own bookshelves at home, but also on those of their school libraries.

The attractive illustrations by Denise Brown are in the spirit of the 16th century. It is a pity that there are not more of them.

Washington, D. C.

FRANCES CARPENTER

*Shekspir na ukrayinskij steni.* By I. VANINA. Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo obrazotvorchoho mystetstva i muzychnoyi literatury URSR, 1958. Pp. 103.

In the book under review, I. Vanina deals with the history of Shakespeare's plays on the Ukrainian stage; she discusses also translation of them into Ukrainian.

The interest in Shakespeare in Ukraina arose in the first half of the nineteenth century. Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861), a great Ukrainian poet and artist, frequently spoke of the great English playwright with reverence, read his plays and even showed some influence of them in his own works (cf. my review of Jurij Bojko's *Taras Shevchenko and West European Literature in Comparative Literature*, 1958, IV).

The nineteenth century was extremely difficult for Ukrainian culture because the territory of the country was forcibly divided between Russia and Austria. To russify non-Russian nationalities, the Tsarist imperialistic government banned publication of books in the Ukrainian language. The ban was extended in 1876 to "various stage performances and readings in Ukrainian" (p. 22). Panas Myrny, a Ukrainian author who wrote his novels and stories in absolute secrecy, stated of these cruel measures: "translation into Ukrainian from foreign languages was strictly forbidden" (M. P. Pyvovarov, *Proza Panasa Myrnoho 70-kh rokiv*. Kyiv, 1959, p. 224). No wonder that the Ukrainian version of *Hamlet* done by Mykhaylo Starytsky in 1872 passed, quite accidentally, through the Russian government censorship as late as 1882. By the way, this was the only Ukrainian translation of Shakespeare's works published in Eastern Ukraina under Russian domination prior to the Revolution of 1917, though there were many attempts to print renderings and adaptations of his other plays.

However, in Western Ukraine under the Austrian administration the conditions for Ukrainian culture were somewhat better. A fragment of *Hamlet* translated by Pavlyn Sventsyt'sky appeared in the magazine *Nyva* as early as 1865. Yuriy Fedkovych rendered into Ukrainian *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in 1872-74 (printed in 1902). Pantaleymon Kulish published his rather free but good translations of *Othello*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Comedy of Errors* in 1882. Moreover, Ivan Franko, a poet, writer and scholar often called the first Shakespeareologist of the country, participated in translating of Shakespeare's works and in editing of translations by other Ukrainian authors (cf. Orest Starchuk's study in the *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, II). It is worthwhile to mention that Ivan Franko organized in 1899 the Shakespeare Foundation under the auspices of which ten plays in Ukrainian translations were soon published. Ivan Franko also wrote forewords and commentaries to most of these books.

After Ukraine was finally united in a republic, though under the Soviet totalitarian regime, Shakespeare's works appeared in voluminous editions. Among the best contemporary translators are Maksym Ryl'sky (*King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*), Ivan Kocherha (*Taming of the Shrew*), I. Steshenko (*Othello*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet* and others), Borys Ten (*Richard III*), and Yuriy Koretsky (*Macbeth*).

I. Vanina has diligently gathered all accessible facts of the very first stagings of Shakespeare's plays in Ukraine. She discovered that *Hamlet* was staged by travelling actors, but in a Russian translation, as early as 1808 in the city of Kharkiv. The first staging in a Ukrainian translation occurred, in spite of the Russian government's ban, in 1873 in Kyiv; an amateurish group performed *Hamlet* in a private home several times. The play was in Mykhaylo Starytsky's translation with Mykola Lysenko's music to certain scenes.

Mykola Kropyvnytsky, a Ukrainian playwright and actor, tried many times to stage Shakespeare's plays but was constantly handicapped by the Russian governmental censorship. Full of despair, he died in 1910, and his Ukrainian adaptations of Shakespeare's works disappeared under suspicious circumstances.

I. Vanina is quite right that the first performance of *Othello* in Ukraine took place in 1923 in Lviv, but she is wrong in her statement that *Hamlet* saw the Ukrainian professional stage first in 1956 in the city of Kharkiv. For some reason, she overlooked the known fact that this play was staged in 1943-44 in the city of Lviv under the German occupation, and Volodymyr Blavatsky successfully played the leading role. The author of this review attended these performances quite often.

Analyzing the stagings of Shakespeare's plays, I. Vanina does a good and pioneering work in Ukrainian Shakespeareology. She compares the characters created by one theatre to those of others and often gives interesting conclusions. The unavoidable Soviet phraseology on Shakespeare and "Communist care of cultural heritage" is scattered throughout the book, fortunately, in small doses.

Though I. Vanina's book is incomplete and in some places synoptical, it is of considerable value as a first outline of the history of Shakespeare's plays on the Ukrainian stage. The great English playwright is much loved in Ukraine now; the theatres there frequently stage his deathless works, such as *Othello*, *Hamlet* and others, and there is never lack of audience.

The book has a dozen of illustrations representing various scenes and characters of Shakespeare's plays.

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