

## GOSNOLD AT CUTTYHUNK.

BY EDWARD E. HALE.

THREE years ago I was preparing for a lecture on Gosnold, which I delivered before the Lowell Institute. I read again with great interest the four reports which we have in the twenty-eighth volume of the Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections, of Gosnold's voyage of 1602. I had often read them before.

But on this occasion when I came to the cutting of the sassafras logs by the "gentlemen adventurers," I could not but recall a fifth writer of Elizabeth's time who spoke of the cutting of logs (undoubtedly of sassafras). I took down my "Tempest" and read the stage directions which represent Ferdinand entering Prospero's cave "bearing a log." If you recollect, the conversation which follows has immediate reference to the hardship of this cutting of logs.

*Ferdinand* . . . I must remove  
some thousands of these logs and pile them up.

. . . .

*Miranda.*

I would the lightning had  
Burned up those logs. . . .

If you will sit down  
I'll bear your logs the while,  
Pray give me that, I'll carry it to the pile.

And in the other group of performers,

*Caliban.* [Enter Caliban with a burden of wood.]  
"Thou mayest brain him . . . with a log."

And again,

"I'll get thee wood enough."

And again,

Here comes a spirit of his, and to torment me  
For bringing wood in slowly.

This suggestion of a bit of local color in "The Tempest" set me at once re-reading the four narratives of Cuttyhunk, with reference to Shakespeare's local knowledge of that voyage of Gosnold's. Any person who gave the account of the Gosnold voyage in brief would say that, "here was a small island, heavily wooded, with little brooks of fresh water where the ship could supply itself." He would describe the arrival of the small vessel in one of those coves from which two parties of men go out, one of whom contracted a jealousy for the other,—the "gentlemen adventurers" and the seamen. What the "Gentlemen Adventurers," who write our accounts, say of the seamen is greatly to their discredit. These parties go to work separately, and the gentlemen cut sassafras *logs* for the return cargo. They are lost out at night in a storm. They are obliged to feed on the products of the island, which prove to be mussels from the streams, pig-nuts dug from the ground and scamels or sea-mews from the rocks. In their description of the island they speak of it as a small island, heavily wooded, with little brooks of fresh water.

Now, when you turn to Shakespeare, you find that the vessel arrives at one of the coves of an island after the tempest, from which two parties straggle off into the island, which is small and heavily wooded, with little brooks of fresh water. One of these parties is kept out in the woods in a storm of thunder and lightning, and the food of the island appears in what Caliban says to the sailors when he is trying to persuade them to give him more liquor.

"I'll show thee the best springs; I'll pluck thee berries;"

"With my long nails I'll dig thee pig-nuts, show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how to snare the nimble marmoset. I'll bring thee to clustering filberts; I'll get thee young sea-mews from the rock."

This parallel was so close that I immediately looked up the relation of Gosnold's voyage to Shakespeare and "The Tempest."

It appears at once that the "Concord," Gosnold's vessel, was sent out by the Earl of Southampton, *Shakespeare's patron*. The Earl of Southampton was responsible for the whole thing. Immediately on their return to England, having quarreled with each other, all parties must have had to proceed to Southampton's house in London and tell their story. Now, observe, that William Shakespeare is on Southampton's staff at that moment, probably living with him, and that he is contemplating already, probably, writing "The Tempest." I think the critics now all unite in saying that the date of the production of "The Tempest" is 1603. This corresponds exactly with the time of Gosnold's return. In Southampton's house, Shakespeare must have met the drunken sailors on one side, and the "gentlemen adventurers" on the other. He heard there, possibly for the first time, of mussels from the rocks, of pig-nuts, of scamels from the rocks, whatever they were, and the rest of the bill of fare of the island. From the narrative he learned "how lush and lusty the grass looks, how green." "Meadows very large and full of green grass," is Brereton's phrase. And a trace of the unfortunate quarrel between the "gentlemen adventurers" and the seamen runs all through the play. One doesn't wonder, indeed, that "gentlemen adventurers" who camped out for the first time in the Cuttyhunk woods, were able to supply Shakespeare with some suggestions as to Calibans with long nails, as to devils and as to Ariels.

In brief, I think there can be no doubt that the local coloring of "The Tempest" is in part derived from the narrative of Gosnold's adventures. This conviction gave me courage to say, before an audience of the Lowell Lectures, that we have a right to claim Miranda as a Massachusetts girl.

Here are six or eight of the most obvious of the parallels between the accounts of Gosnold, Archer and Brereton,

on the one side, and Mr. William Shakespeare, Caliban, Prospero and Ferdinand on the other.

*Brereton's bill of fare.*

. . . "Fowls which breed . . . on low trees about this lake, whose young ones . . . we ate at our pleasure."

"Also great store of ground nuts, forty on a string,— which nuts we found as good as potatoes. Also divers sort of shell-fish as mussels . . . etc."

*Brereton's scenery.*

"Lakes of fresh water . . . meadows very large and full of green grass."

*Shakespeare.*

"How lush and lusty the grass looks — how green."

Shakespeare speaks of a *marmoset*, never in any other play. Did one of Southampton's seamen bring home a flying squirrel?

*Gosnold's bill of fare.*

"Stearnes, geese and divers other birds which did breed upon the cliffs, being sandy with some stones, — and had young."

*Caliban's*: "I'll get thee young sea-mews (scamels) from the rock."

*Gosnold's*: . . . . herbs and roots and *ground nuts*  
. . . . mussel-shells . . . ground nuts again.

*Prospero to Caliban*: "Thy food shall be the fresh-brook mussels,—roots and herbs."

*Gosnold's party* — "Driven to lie all night in the woods — weather somewhat rainy —" "Solaced ourselves with Alexander,— *ground nuts* and tobacco."

*Tempest, stage direction*. "A noise of thunder is heard."  
"The storm is come again."

*Gosnold's island*: "full of oaks . . . hazle-nut trees, . fowls on low trees whose young ones we took and ate at pleasure,—great store of ground nuts."

*Caliban* as above — "sea mews from the cliffs" and "dig thee pig-nuts with my long nails. I will bring thee where crabs grow" — not crab-apples, as the critics supposed, but shell fish, as we learn from Gosnold's voyage: "lobsters, *crabs* and mussels."

*From Archer's List.*

"Strawberries, red and white raspberries, gooseberries, whortleberries."

*Caliban.* "I'll show thee best springs. I'll pluck thee berries. I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough."

It is to be observed also, that the only trees mentioned in "The Tempest" are oak, pine and cedar.

In closing this paper I may say personally that my own convictions that Shakespeare worked from close conversation with the people from the Concord, is confirmed by the observation that "The Tempest" does not contain one tropical allusion. Here was Shakespeare who must have met Hawkins and Drake and many adventurers, from the Gulf of Mexico and tropical seas. He is describing an island which is in communication with the vexed Bermoothes. Yet there is no allusion to an orange, a banana, a yam or a potato, a feather cloak or a palm tree, or a pineapple, or a monkey, or a parrot, or anything else which refers to the Gulf of Mexico, or to the tropics. Does not this seem as if he meant that the local color of "The Tempest" should be that which was suggested by the gentlemen adventurers and the seamen who were talking of Cuttyhunk, its climate and its productions, as they told travellers' stories up and down in London.

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