

DOCTOR FAUSTUS Christopher Marlowe, edited by John D. Jump (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press) 1962

p. xxviii Critics used to hold that the passages contained in B but not in A were chiefly those added, as recorded by Henslowe, late in 1602. But a Shakespearian allusion of 1600 or 1601 to the punishment which Faustus inflicts upon the injured knight and his friends (see comment on xiv.4-5) suggests that the scenes concerned with the hostility of this knight, Benvolio, to Faustus must have been in existence before Birde and Rowley intruded. If so, the passages concerned with Bruno and antipope were presumably also in existence by 1600 or 1601, since Benvolio and his friends in scene xi speak with constant awareness of Bruno's recent arrival from Rome. The remaining passages peculiar to B would hardly have sufficed to command 4 from Henslowe.

xxix In any case, there is something extravagantly silly about the picture of Birde and Rowley, armed with scissors and paste, busily and meticulously dovetailing the disconnected episodes of A into more coherent 'adicyones' of their own. Surely it is clear that B is not an expansion of A at all; that, on the contrary, A is a curtailment of a more original text that has come down to us as B. This is Greg's view. He supports it by pointing out that on three occasions scenes which should be distinct from each other are run together in A owing to the suppression of the matter which separates them in B; by explaining the misplacement of scene vii, which in A appears immediately before scene x, as meaning that A retained both scenes only as alternatives; by showing that the House-courser's account of his ducking in A derives not only from the corresponding passage in scene xv of B but also from his second account of the calamity in scene xvi of B, a scene which is not in A but which must already have been in existence when A's conflated account was composed; and by setting forth other evidence and arguments which it is impossible, if only for reasons of space, to reproduce here. But perhaps this is the best place for an acknowledgement that the whole present analysis of the two texts is substantially his.