

### PART III

by Jean Charlot

WHEN this play was given to me for illustration, I must confess that I had not read it, my knowledge of Shakespeare being limited to the more popular plays. The critical estimate which is a foreword to the edition I used did little to fire me with enthusiasm; for it insisted on what it considered shortcomings, interpolated incidents, historical mistakes, endless monologues and doubtful authorship of parts. However, at first reading, the play spoke for itself; and eloquently so. The very defects from the point of view of the modern theatre-goer seemed good qualities to me, who had seen in Mexico medieval mysteries and historical pageants performed by Indian actors on open air stages: the scenery a mere sheet hanging on a rope, the facial expressions reduced to naught by the use of masks, the action as formal and symmetrical as that of the Chinese theatre. The scene wherein the son brings in the dead body of his father and where a father brings in the son he has slain, proves the acting of the original play to have been, not realistic, but of such a symbolic kind.

The drawings were, then, to function, hemmed in between the strong guiding style of the play and the usual problems of illustration: subservience to format, equivalence to the black-and-white of the printed page. The research into historical sources which put me in contact with original material of the last quarter of the fourteenth century, made it appear that the art style of the time would dovetail perfectly with the style I was desirous to adopt for purely functional reasons.

I used line drawing of the barest kind because it not only carried the different possibilities discussed before, but also the school-room memories associated for our generation with Shakespeare. Washes of color were added, to add artistry to the rather severe results.