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PHILIP MASSINGER.

JAMES PHELAN

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PHILIP MASSINGER.

I. Life of Philip Massinger.

Philip Massinger, one of the greatest English dramatic poets, was born in the year 1584, in or near Salisbury and Gifford¹⁾ conjectures, at Wilton, the country-seat of Henry Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. His father's name was Arthur, his mother's Ann.²⁾ The family was originally from Gloucester.³⁾ According to Massinger's own testimony⁴⁾, his father was a servant to the Herbert family, in the service of whose honourable house he 'spent many years happily'. In the first edition of *'The Bondman'* the name of his father is given as Arthur Massinger; through ignorance, or most probably carelessness, the name is printed in the second edition, which appeared fourteen years later, about the time of Massinger's death, Philip. This change caused much confusion until the time of Oldys⁵⁾, who first pointed out that the real name was Arthur. Gifford⁶⁾ of course chastises the previous editors of Massinger for their carelessness in not having noticed the discrepancy. Considering that of the large amount of evidence which proves the name to have been Arthur, Gifford knew but

¹⁾ The Plays of Philip Massinger, with notes critical and explanatory, by William Gifford Esqr. 4 vols. London 1805: vol. I. Introduction p. III.

²⁾ We learn the name of his mother, who was buried in Gloucester, from an inscription in the cathedral church, given in *'A new History of Gloucestershire'*, by Samuel Rudden, Cirencester 1779. p. 173.

³⁾ For an accurate history of the Massinger family, see *'Genealogy of the Massinger family'*, by Geo. W. Messinger, published in Boston.

⁴⁾ Dedication of *'The Bondman'* and *'A new Way to pay Old Debts'*.

⁵⁾ MS. notes to Langbaine, in British Museum.

⁶⁾ Introduction p. I. note.

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