



MR. PHELPS AS HENRY IV.

"How many thousands of my poorest subjects
Are at this hour asleep! Sleep, gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?"

Second Part Henry IV. Act. III. Scene I.

Unknown photographer. *Mr. Phelps as Henry IV [in Shakespeare's play, King Henry IV, pt. 2]*. 19th century. Folger ART File P541.4 no.12 PHOTO (size XS)

Samuel Phelps was an English actor and theater manager, here portraying a grizzled and dying Henry IV for a late 19th-century production of *The Second Part of King Henry IV*. Phelps' productions of Shakespeare's works were known for their reliance on pre-adapted versions of the plays. Since the

Restoration period, the most performed and popular versions of Shakespeare's plays were often ones whose text was edited to fit a more contemporary taste: for example, Colley Cibber's 1699 adaptation of *King Richard III* was the standard version throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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