

is all right. I take Shakespeare as the father, or probably as the exponent of the legitimate drama of modern times and I affirm that on the principles of morality as these are now admitted and acknowledged by every Ethical School of any authority the tendency of Shakspeare's plays even in private reading is immoral, and a thousand fold more so when acted on the stage. There are passages even in the finest of his plays that should not be read at the parlour table, and which would make a virgin in her purity blush all over even though she read them in the privacy of her own room. He himself indeed took a very different view of his art when he makes Hamlet say in his celebrated speech to the players that "The end of acting, both at the first and now, was and is, to "hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time her form and pressure." This is a mere fallacy founded on the assumption that as to virtue and vice man is *in equilibrio* and that nothing more is necessary in order to make man virtuous than exhibiting to him in living form the advantages of the one and the detriment of the other. He is not *in equilibrio*. There is a fatal bias on the side of vice, and no matter how the play may develop the pangs of despised love, the gnawings of green-eyed jealousy, the whinings of cunning artful hypocrisy as these are seen in the wondrous impersonations of the Shakspearian characters, and though it comply with the dramatic canon of awarding their appropriate fate to each, the playgoer does not learn to be the less lawless in his loves, nor to be less the victim of this same jealousy and hypocrisy than he was before. By its fruits let the tree be tested. Show me your faith in the power of the legitimate drama to make men wiser and better, by example. Where are your converts from the grovelling of covetousness, from the soarings of ambition, from the gloatings of revenge, from the gripings of despair, which your Falstaffs, and your Macbeths, and your Shylocks, and your Lears have ever made. Can any venture to say of the play-goer, what Paul said of the church-goer, "Such were some of you, but",—I fear me I am going too far and instituting comparisons which are bordering on the unlawful.

And from the Stage turn to the accessories of the Stage. Everything connected with the Theatre exhibits the baser pas-