


SHAKESPEARE'S LOVE FOR CHILDREN.

N the study of the lives of great men, it is a fact worthy of note that those who have made their names immortal by their physical and intellectual achievements have been the happy possessors of large and noble hearts. Search the records of the past, as assiduously as you may, and in no single case, will you find the astute villain or the brutal tyrant handing down his name to posterity because of his literary qualifications. If he live and occupy a place in history, it is on account of his unnaturalness, because of the many atrocious and heart-rending deeds perpetrated by him during his sojourn here below. None succeed in becoming great or in winning for themselves undying fame, unless they can share the sorrows and pleasures of those with whom they have intercourse. He whose heart is so moulded as to be able to derive pleasure from all that is pure just and honorable, gives every promise of success. The man of genius will feel a sympathetic throb for the pure and innocent; children shall be his favorites and as Shakespeare, somewhere says "the varying childness of youth shall cure in him thoughts that would thicken his blood."

History illustrates this by innumerable examples. Whatever path of life our heroes have followed, be they generals, statesmen, orators or authors, all without exception, have cherished a love and affection for those little ones, the joy and delight of every happy fireside. Let us revert our minds to the early days of France. There our attention is called to the grand warrior Charlemagne, a sovereign whose mighty sword and thorough generalship had quelled the insurrections of countless hordes of

enemies and carried victory far and wide throughout the land. Perusing the history of this country, we read that so ardent was the love of this man for his children that whenever possible he was wont to have them at his side. Their childish prattle soothed his aching brow and enkindled in him that genuine love which warfare itself could not eradicate.

Canada's "uncrowned king" John A. Macdonald is another example of this affectionate nature; the love Sir John A. bore his children was unbounded. When the toils of the day were over and he had once more returned to his home his first inquiry was ever about his gleeful children. For hours he could amuse himself by narrating to them stories of his own ingenious creation. Their attentiveness and innocent questions gladdened his fatherly heart and stimulated him to greater acts of valor for both theirs and his country's sake. Nor was his love confined to his own family; he was the friend of all little ones and he took much pleasure in caressing them whenever he chanced to meet them. On his last birthday, as Shamus O'Toole has related in the October number of *THE OWL*, Sir John received a congratulatory letter from a small girl unknown to him informing him that her birthday was on the same date as his; at the conclusion of her simple remarks, she requested that he would give her letter consideration. This he did. The reply made by the venerable old man greatly rejoiced the young correspondent, and is one that merits commendation and is worthy as being taken as a lesson by those whose haughty self-love lead them to neglect as degrading to their dignity the spending of a few spare moments in the company of innocent youth.