

while to study them profoundly is a real and lasting benefit. Many of his best passages can only be mastered by the closest application, refusing to surrender their secrets save to the mature mind, and to it only gradually like the dawn of day. He is a school of mental gymnastics where intellectual athletes may find heathful exercise. The pious, but cultured Frances Ridley Havergal, in her writings gives us this charming bit of autobiography: "I have been for some time giving half an hour a day to careful reading of Shakespeare. I felt as if I wanted a little intellectual bracing, as if contact with intellect would prevent me from getting into a weak, wishy-washy kind of thought and language. I like intellect to rub against . . . and so I bethought me what Shakespeare would do for me." The higher qualities of our bard led Dr. Adam Clarke to remark that "the man who has not read Shakespeare should have public prayers put up for him." Dr. Sharpe, in the reign of Queen Anne, affirmed: "The Bible and Shakespeare have made me Archbishop of York." And to cite but one authority more, John Wesley, than whom few have had finer literary tastes and none a saintlier mind, had a keen appreciation of our dramatist. Again and again he enshrined him in his Journals. Once he speaks of a visit paid to "that bad Cardinal's tomb," Henry Beaufort's, and says he was reminded of "those fine lines of Shakespeare which he put into the mouth of King Henry VI:

'Lord Cardinal,
If thou hast any hope of heaven's grace,
Give us a sign. He dies and makes no sign.'

Shakespeare was one of the books to be studied in the fourth year's course in Wesley's Kingswood School. And what is most interesting of all, he left behind him, in manuscript, an annotated Shakespeare—its margin filled with critical notes by Mr. Wesley himself—which unfortunately one of his executors committed to the flames as not tending to edification, or the world might have had, not only Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, but also Wesley's Notes on Shakespeare.

Our Christian Plato owes his influence in literature to his teaching.

Much of Shakespeare's wisdom is aphoristic. It were easy to focus the solar rays of his terse, pungent, and epigrammatic teaching: "Truth will out." "Love is blind." "Comparisons are odious." "Brevity is the soul of wit." "The private wound is deepest." "Truth hath a quiet breast." "The better part of valour is discretion." "Too light winning makes the prize light."