

never to return, and poor old César is left in despair, almost crying and unable to eat his breakfast. Cascarel proposes getting turtle-doves in a cage, a canary, or some other domesticated pet, but in vain, the old man is furious at the idea. The last order he gives is to bid Cascarel keep the cage, for he thinks the sparrows will return, and Cascarel leaves him 'watching the hole with all his eyes.'

But if he is miserable, so are Theodore and his mother, who don't know what to make of this lengthened penance. They are kept so close, too, in the way of household expenses, that the nephew looks to what can be cut off the old man's outlet without being noticed, for his chief meat diet. And yet he lives on, upon his expectations! Years roll by, he has no profession, no income, and as we see, next to no dinner, he is desperately in love, and yet—he waits. One cannot imagine that all French writers are in league to vilify their young compatriots, so we are driven to the belief that a young Frenchman will waste the best years of his life in subjection to a doting old man, rather than run the risk of losing a problematical inheritance. It is the case with all the heroes of French novels. They live on with their fathers and uncles, miracles of subordination, and never venture to marry the girl of their choice, unless the relative dies or relents, and under no conceivable circumstances do they abandon the paternal table and seek their fortunes elsewhere. M. Theodore, in this story, is not rewarded for his patient forbearance in the way he expects, and we can only say that it serves him right.

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*The Dramatic Art of Shakespeare*, with especial reference to 'A Midsummer Night Dream,' being an Inaugural Lecture delivered at McGill University, Montreal, by Prof. CHARLES E. MOYSE, B.A. Montreal: Lovell Printing and Publishing Company. 1879.

Mr. Moyses finds the key-note of his lecture in the statement of M. Taine, that in all English literature the pulse of seriousness is discernible beneath the most playful exterior. A moral purpose underlies our poems and our plays. If our old writers tell an immoral tale, they adopt the least immoral phase it is

capable of, and let so much of the fresh out-of-doors air of ordinary life in upon it, that the close, feverish feelings which are induced by the perusal of the French or Italian original are entirely missing.

In the elaboration of this idea Mr. Moyses points out the lesson which he conceives Shakespeare intended to impart by his 'Midsummer's Night Dream.'

'The dream is simply the experience of years narrowed to a span by the active mind of the dreamer, and intensified;' again, 'the *wood near Athens* is the world.' In other words, the dream 'is allegorical.'

We hope Mr. Moyses will feel inclined to qualify these views a little on reconsideration, and particularly to dismiss the use of the term 'allegory.' In an allegory the tale exists, and is told for the sake of the truth which it conveys, which is the *vera causa* of the work, and which usually could not be related in a vivid form without being clothed upon by the attributes of persons and of things. How does this agree with the case under discussion? The every-day life of two pairs of lovers, their jealousies and conflicting passions evolving slowly by means of natural causes—these form the central truth, according to Mr. Moyses, upon which this allegory depends. In the first place, this central truth is capable of being told directly, having already all the necessary machinery with which to display itself, and does not need the aid of allegory in order to display itself in a concrete form. And, secondly, the play does not need this 'apologia pro vita sua,' but bears upon the surface its own effective cause.

Postulate the existence of fairies and of the limited range of superhuman powers which these tricky fays possess, practically limited here to the power of 'translating' Bottom (not 'transporting' him, as Mr. Moyses has it), and to the possession of the wonder-working flower, love-in-idleness, and with these disturbing elements at work upon our Athenian lovers, the results come naturally enough to pass. It is this marvellous power of our greatest dramatist, the power which enabled him to make his Calibans and his Ariels act upon his other characters, and be acted upon in turn by them, exactly after the fashion in which such beings, if they really existed, *would* interact with ordinary flesh and blood, that has induced so many Shakespearean