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to convey its most important lesson if it did not enforce the truth that the essential value of morality consists in its practice. "We do not engage in these inquiries," said Aristotle, "merely in order to know what virtue is, but in order to become good men." ¹ There is, of course, a certain sense in which a similar remark may be made of all practical sciences ; but not to the same extent. For arts that are not intrinsically connected with morality have a purely scientific interest ; they may be, and often are, studied merely for the interest of knowing them, without any intention of carrying the knowledge to practical account. But this is because these arts do not form absolutely essential factors in the life of every man ; the ends which they have in view are merely particular purposes which individuals may form or not, as they choose. But the end of moral culture is precisely the essential end of all human existence. It forms the stake that is cast in life by all men, with but one chance to win or lose. It is therefore only by the attainment of this end, that life becomes in any sense a success : without this end it is an irreparable failure.

Accordingly, it is by the light of its moral end alone, that life receives any rational meaning. Apart from this, it becomes, in its ultimate analysis, absolutely unintelligible. And therefore it is singularly fitting that the genius of our great dramatist should describe a typical representative of the man who loses hold of ethical aims as finding in human existence nothing but a meaningless show.

¹ *Eth. Nic.*, II. 2, 1. See also X. 9, 1 ; and compare Epictetus, *Ench.*, 51.