

# THE PORTFOLIO.

"VITA SINE LITERIS MORS EST."

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## +A Life Lesson.+

HERE! little girl; don't cry!  
They have broken your doll, I know;  
And your tea-set blue,  
And your play-house, too,  
Are things of the long ago;  
But childish troubles will soon pass by.  
There! little girl; don't cry!

There! little girl; don't cry!  
They have broken your slate, I know;  
And the glad, wild ways  
Of your school girl days  
Are things of the long ago;  
But life and love will soon come by.

There! little girl; don't cry!  
They have broken your heart, I know,  
And the rainbow gleams  
Of your youthful dreams  
Are things of the long ago;  
But heaven holds all for which you sigh.  
There! little girl; don't cry!

*James Whitcomb Riley.*

## The Influence of Shakespeare UPON ENGLISH LITERATURE.

(Prize Essay.)

DO not justly estimate Shakespeare's influence upon English literature is like estimating the influence which a spring shower exerts upon the thirsty fields. The rain gives to the slowly growing verdure a strength, a richness of tone and a development it never possessed before, but unless we can understand the wonderful processes taking place in stem, leaf and bud, we can never know all the magic which the rain is working. So it is with Shakespeare's influence. He regenerated English literature and made it what it never was before, but the full effect of his work can neither

be measured nor appreciated, for our human eyes cannot see the strange and beautiful process by which the product of one man's mind may travel down the ages, multiplying itself a thousand fold, lodging in many hearts and influencing many lives. The genius and power of his mind have gone out to other minds and his thoughts have become theirs.

Shakespeare's widest influence upon literature is that which he exerts indirectly by influencing the language, thought and morals of the world in general. Books do not spring up spontaneously. If the impress of Shakespeare's genius is upon them, it was put there by impressing the mind of the writer. All scholars of modern times have studied Shakespeare; words and expressions originated by him have become current throughout English speaking nations; and our writers coming from the ranks of both the scholarly and the ignorant, transfer to their books that which they have gained from the Prince of Poets. So it necessarily follows that the influence which he has exerted upon society, he has exerted upon literature. His ideas on social, moral and intellectual subjects, and his modes of expressing them are instilled into all modern literature until there has scarcely been a volume given to the world since his time that does not in some degree bear the impress of his thought.

Perhaps that department he most directly influenced, is the English drama. He wholly transformed it. While his plays are still taken as models of strong, graceful English, wit, pathos and dramatic power, all other dramas of his time and prior to it are no longer of any interest except to the antiquary. What is conceded to have been the first drama of any permanent merit, was written after the best of Shakespeare's plays were