

comes to hand by Prof. Frank C. Sharp, of the University of Wisconsin, on "Shakspeare's Portrayal of the Moral Life." This book contains much that is valuable and interesting to the general study of the question stated in the title, but it seems to us that Prof. Sharp makes far too much of the absurdities of the stories of the *MERCHANT OF VENICE* and other plays. No one cares to enquire closely into the reasonableness or otherwise of the story of "the pound of flesh" or the improbable conditions on which Antonio is alleged to have sought and found a loan of two thousand ducats. In studying the moral teachings of Shakspeare we do not concern ourselves about the fictions which he employed as the scaffolding from which to build his structure, any more than we stay to ask whether *Æsop's* fables are facts, when we apply their moral.

The reader is informed that the King James version of the Bible has been used in all Scripture quotations for this volume. There is no uniform standard text of Shakspeare's works so that it may be found that some quotations differ a little from the versions in the hands of the reader. These differences, however, are not of sufficient importance to affect their general accuracy or value.