

not obtruded, the lesson that envy, jealousy, pride, hatred, lust, meanness, selfishness, greed, are not good and cannot establish themselves in men's minds; and that what is true and right, however it may be obscured or suppressed for a time, will be acknowledged at last. Richard III and Macbeth may seem to be successful in gaining a throne by wickedness, Iago in constructing and carrying into effect his plot of villainy, but the success is only on the surface, and its terrible failure is disclosed, as manifestly as if "thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting" had been written on the wall. Such a conception, although not consciously grasped by the child, is yet vividly felt, and its influence will secretly make for sobriety and reverence. Here, too, I cannot suffer myself to dwell on the refining, chastening and subduing power of great tragedy, even for the pupil, whose chief, or indeed sole, conscious interest is in the mere tale. It is marvellous how the plot, simple though it is, brings into the open light the secrets of the human heart and holds them up for inspection. Even the casual reader is not wholly oblivious to the fact that he, too, is in some way being judged, as well as the persons in the drama. In daily life we are, it may be, often at a loss to distinguish between what is really good and what really evil, what noble and what ignoble, but in the unrolling drama of Shakespeare we find the clue to all mystery and confusion. There we have light; there the superficial and base are seen in their exact proportions; no mawkish sentiment creeps in there; there is no evasion of the laws of life, no shirking the inevitable consequences of a deliberate choice. Yet even the tragic climax is understood to

be beneficial. The surgeon's knife heals while it cuts, and we close the last page of the story, fortified in our conviction that chastisement, however grievous it may seem to be, is after all but the other side of a love which never fails.

In these tremendous revelations of the human mind there may be little direct reference to God or to what we commonly call religion; but none the less are we, as it were, taken behind the curtain and shown the judgment passed upon men, and rash indeed would he be who would maintain that in getting a direct look into this mysterious chamber of justice and love we did not see the hand of the Eternal Spirit in whom all things subsist.

B.

(1) Before passing to ask how to teach English literature to public school children, let me notice two false trends in our education here. There is a movement, more or less widespread, to introduce into our elementary schools the direct study of abstract moral and social ideas. Now, such a movement rests on a misapprehension of the way in which the child's mind necessarily works. It can be inspired by a noble example long before it can take any interest in the abstract ethical principle. The child will love Santa Claus and Christ long before he can be interested in the ideas of love and self-sacrifice. Give the child enthusiasms, faith, inspirations, hopes, ambitions; give the little hero-worshipper a hero, and reflections and ideas will come in due season. The child's mind is something like a vast granary, in which many things, as yet only half understood, are stored away as food for future thought. Only it must be