

GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOSED HEARE:
BLESE BE Y^E MAN Y^T SPARES THES STONES,
AND CVRST-BE HE Y^T MOVES MY BONES.

Tablet over Shakespeare's Grave, Stratford-on-Avon.

Misquotations.

Some one has said that to quote correctly is one of the signs which marks a gentleman. Judged by that standard, very few of us can lay claim to the "grand old name," says T. P.'s Weekly.

Not very long ago a popular daily newspaper in Scotland began a leading article with a reference to the "classic statement" that "there are no snakes in Ireland." Now, the writer ought to have known better. The "classic statement" refers not to Ireland, but to Iceland, and it occurs in a book by Niel Horrebow, and forms the opening sentence of a chapter on snakes in Iceland. It is as follows: "There are no snakes in Iceland." Who first misquoted is unknown. Probably it may have been only a printer's error, yet it has come "down the ringing grooves of change" until it has replaced the original.

Another very common misquotation is, "To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new." One comes across it often, and never finds it correct. If the reader turns up Milton's "Lycidas," he will find the last line runs, "To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

Who has not heard of Sidney Smith and his frequently quoted dictum regarding humour and Scotsmen?—a stock quotation among English writers. Smith is quoted as saying that "it requires a surgical operation to make a Scotsman understand a joke." He never said

anything of the kind. What he did say was infinitely more witty and sharp. He said, "There is humour in a Scotch skull, but the only instrument by which it can be extracted is—a corkscrew." "It is a wise child that knows its own father," ought to be the other way about, to wit, "It is a wise father that knows his own child." The quotation occurs in "The Merchant of Venice," Act II., scene 2.

Somehow or other Biblical quotations are generally quoted incorrectly, and some are attributed to it which are not in it at all. For instance, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," is commonly attributed to Solomon, which is a mistake. It occurs in Butler's "Hudibras," Part II., canto 1, line 844, and also in "Ray's Proverbs." "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" is also attributed to the Bible, but the reader may search all through it and never find it, for the simple reason it is not there. It occurs in Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," and is often fathered upon him. In reality, it is an old French saying, and occurs in a book by Henri Estienne. Macaulay's saying regarding the traveller from New Zealand, who, in the midst of a vast solitude took his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's, is not original, although it seemed to have been a favorite with him, as he repeats it twice in different articles.