

insatiable fury, Mary Queen of Scots, is equally applicable to his own unjustifiable execution :

"Some things more perfect are in their decay,
Like spark that going out gives clearest light ;
Such was my hap, whose doleful dying day
Began my joy, and termed Fortune's spite.
Rue not my death, rejoice at my repose ;
It was no death to me, but to my woe :
The bud was opened to let out the rose ;
The chains unloosed to let the captive go."

With the name of Southwell we always associate that of his brother-Jesuit, Edmund Campion, likewise one of the English martyrs, who is known as the author of several meritorious books in defence of the Faith. We might mention several other more or less forgotten Catholic authors of the time, but we must pass on towards the master-mind, him whose name is synonymous with everything that is best in our literature, William Shakespeare, the "soul of the age."

As the greatest master of our language, Shakespeare is in a certain sense above all praise. The chief of the new literary school, to him is due more than any other the final moulding and union of many diverse elements into one grand, composite whole, the finishing touches which made English literature "a thing of beauty." But can we reckon this wonderful influence of Avon's bard as thrown into the Catholic scale? Theories, as ingenious as numerous, have been repeatedly brought forward to prove that he belonged to the old faith, but the evidence is neither complete nor decisive. So little is known of his personal career, that his religion, like many other matters, can only be conjectured. In his day, however, the embers of Catholicism yet smouldered, kept alive by a glorious martyr-spirit. The historic Catholic times, whence he drew the greater part of his material, were not long past. Naturally, therefore, his mind would be permeated with Catholic ideas and associations, and not unreasonably can we claim him as a product of the Old England. In this assertion we are borne out by Carlyle, who allowed that the Catholic Church "gave us English a Shakespeare and era of Shakespeare, and so produced a blossom of Catholicism."