

broken spell to know that Shakespeare, with all his genius, is not superior to "the natural touches" of our humanity. This "inly touch of love," pure, passionate, human, reveals the man to us, softening as by a coloured lens, the fierce flame of his genius. In the words of his own King Henry: "I think the King is but a man, as I am: the violet smell to him, as it doth to me; all his senses have but human conditions: his ceremonies laid by, in his nakedness he appears but a man; and though his affections are higher mounted than ours, yet, when they stoop, they stoop with the like wing."

Sixteen years from the date of his marriage we catch another glimpse of our Apparition. He is now a man of thirty-four, in the very hey-day of his fame and fortune in London, having just written *Richard III.*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *King John*, and other plays; and is perhaps engaged upon his "Sugared Sonnets," of all his works the most dioramic of his inner soul, and which he himself calls "the dumb presagers of his speaking breast;" when two incidents occur of great biographical value.

In the Shakespeare Museum at Stratford is preserved a precious relic, in the form of a letter—the only one extant addressed to Shakespeare—bearing date, October 25th, 1598, and signed by one Richard Quincy, a fellow-townsmen, requesting the loan of £30, and couched in terms expressing implicit faith in the generosity of the man to whom the appeal is made. To say the least, this letter speaks volumes for the reputation in which the great dramatist must have been held for generous qualities of heart, and serves as a footlight showing him up to better view as he flits across the stage.

To the same effect is another fragment of history, if history it can be called.

In the year 1571, John Shakespeare, father of our poet, is a man in affluent circumstances, being high bailiff and chief alderman of Stratford. But, eleven years later, he has suffered a reverse of fortune, having mortgaged his landed property, and fearing arrest for debt. And yet, four years later still, viz., in 1596, he is found again in affluent circumstances, and even applying to the Herald's College for a coat-of-arms on the ground, among other claims, of official dignity and ample means. Now, what has brought about this happy change of fortune? "There can be but one solution," says Mr. Wise, in a charming little *brochure* on Shakespeare, "and that is, his son William was now prospering and helped him." Our Apparition thus steals to the front, or rather stands in the shadow, a man of generous impulses and filial, dutiful affection.