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thirty-two years later than Shakespeare's death, a strong reaction against the stage, which had been too popular to please the preachers, and the London theatres were all closed by law. Thus, had he not appeared just when he did, the material—the developed drama, or the market for his work, the open theatre—would have been wanting.

Shakespeare arrived in London about the year 1586. He became at once connected with the stage, both as actor and writer of plays.



"LADY MACBETH."

For twenty-five years he lived there, in the most stimulating literary atmosphere the world has ever known. By the labors of those years he enriched not only English literature, but that of the world. Carlyle claims that if the English nation had to face the choice of relinquishing India or the honor of having given

Shakespeare to the world, there is no doubt that India would go. Wonderful both in quantity and quality was the work of these years. There is in his work such a union of wisdom and beauty, of common-sense and noble poetry, as no other writer exhibits.

How shall we get the good out of Shakespeare's work most readily? The dramatic form of poetry is difficult for some to read, and therefore it is best to read the story of the play first, so as not to be confused with stage directions and broken dialogues. Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare" gives us a perfect idea of the story of most of the important plays. Having thoroughly mastered the plot from such a source as Lamb, then take up Shakespeare and read the story in his verse. The characters will be at once recognized and also the situations, and nothing will interfere with a complete

appreciation of his verse, except it be in the reader himself.

If I were not afraid of the blue-pencil of the editor of this paper, I would like to say "a few words more." However, I will not conclude without citing a few examples from Shakespeare's writings, of wisdom expressed through beauty.

It is often said that if a man takes his reverses in a manly way he will be strengthened and improved by the experience of them.

Shakespeare says:

"The liquid drops of tears that you have shed  
Shall come again, transformed to orient pearl;  
Advantaging their loan with interest  
Of ten times double gain of happiness."

To educators he has given an epigram that might well adorn the walls of every public school:

"There is no darkness but ignorance."

And again:

"Ignorance is the curse of God;  
Knowledge, the wing wherewith we fly to heaven."

Learned articles are appearing in our magazines to-day to show that the curse of modern life is worry. What said the wise and merry Shakespeare, three centuries ago?

"With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,  
And let my liver rather heat with wine  
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.  
Why should a man whose blood is warm within  
Sit like his grandsire carved in alabaster?  
Sleep when he wakes? And creep into the jaundice  
By being peevish?"

There is little doubt but that if he had devoted the whole powers of his mind to the accumulation of wealth he could have out-distanced Cræsus. What says he?

"Gold, yellow, glittering, precious gold,  
Much of this will make  
Black, white; foul, fair; wrong, right;  
Base, noble; old, young; coward, valiant."

We hear much of those who preach but do not practice. To them our poet says:

"My good brother,  
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose-path of dalliance treads,  
And reckes not his own rede."

He touches the great subjects of our thought as finely. Of the grave he says:

"Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells,  
Here grow no damned grudges; here are no storms;  
No noise; but silence and eternal sleep."