THE RELIGION OF SHAKESPEARE.

The question of Shakespeare's religion has been much discussed. The most recent contribution to this department of Shakespearean literature is the learned and scholarly volume, entitled "The Religion of Shakespeare," which we owe to the pen of Father Sebastian Bowden, the distinguished London Oratorian. Father Bowden has made it clear that Rationalism can lay little claim to Shakespeare and Protestantism even less, and that, if Shakespeare's religion may be gathered from his writings the evidence is all in favor of his having been a Catholic.

We say, if Shakespeare's religion may be gathered from his writings, for it is on this kind of evidence that Father Bowden chiefly relies. Father Bowden does not indeed neglect what he calls "external evidence." He shows that Shakespeare's mother was a Catholic. He gives good reason for believing that Shakespeare's father was a Catholic, and, in this connection, upholds with considerable ingenuity and force the genuineness of the Catholicly worded "last will and testament" that has been ascribed to John Shakespeare. He argues, as he reasonably may, that if Shakespeare's parents were both Catholics, the inference must be, until the contrary is proved, that Shakespeare himself was a Catholic. He shows that the contrary has never been proved, that there is no evidence whatever of a satisfactory kind of the poet's acceptance of the new religion. He points out that tradition is in favor of Shakespeare's Catholicism. He quotes in testimony to this the declaration of the Rev. Richard Davies, who, writing in the latter part of the seventeenth century, asserts that Shakespeare "died a Papist."

That external evidence of this kind carries with it considerable weight is acknowledged by such critics as the Rev. Professor Shuttleworth, who, in an address delivered at St. Nicholas Cole Abbey on April 23, 1899, admitted that "a strong argument in favor of his (Shakespeare's) Catholicism was the fact that his mother belonged to one of the oldest and most famous Catholic families in England—the Ardens of Warwickshire—some of whose members had figured as martyrs for that creed." Another well-known Shakespearean critic, Mr. Halliwell Phillipps, remarking on the statement of the Rev. Richard Davies that Shakespeare "died a Papist," points out that the statement represents the local tradition of the latter half of the seventeenth century, and is "the testimony of a sober clergyman who could have had no conceivable motive for deception in what is evidently the casual note of a provincial hearsay."
But while Father Bowden gives due weight to the external evidence, he finds in Shakespeare's writings the most convincing proofs of the poet's Catholicism. It would be impossible for us in the course of a short paper to set forth Father Bowden's arguments in detail. All that we can attempt is to indicate the lines on which his arguments proceed. We limit ourselves to the inquiry whether the religion with which Shakespeare in his writings shows his sympathies is the religion of the so-called Reformers, or the religion of the Catholic Church. If it can be shown that all Shakespeare's sympathies were with the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church, it will follow that Shakespeare was no Rationalist, and thus we may omit any reference to the direct arguments by which Father Bowden has convincingly shown the futility of the attempts made by Professor Caird and other recent writers to claim Shakespeare for Rationalism.

What had the so-called Reformers abolished? The Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacraments of the Holy Eucharist, Penance and Extreme Unction, Purgatory and prayers for the dead, the homage paid to Our Lady and the saints, the intercession of saints, the veneration of relics and holy images, the sign of the cross, vestments, satisfactory works, meritorious works, celibacy, the religious state with its three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. All these had been abolished by the "Reformers," and they were all reestablished by Shakespeare, who speaks of them and of other beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church, as Father Bowden has shown, in a spirit of the profoundest reverence. Indeed we marvel at the audacity (there is no other word for it) with which Shakespeare pays open reverence to these proscribed beliefs and practices. Dr. Stubbs, the Dean of Ely, might well say, as he did when preaching the Shakespeare anniversary sermon, in the Collegiate Church of Holy Trinity, Stratford on Avon, on April 23, 1899, that there were "some things in Shakespeare for which, had he been a theologian, he might have been burned."

Compare man as viewed by the "Reformers" with man as viewed by Shakespeare, and (1) in respect to his nature. In the words of the authorized Lutheran Confession of Faith, man is characterized by the "intimate, profound, inscrutable and irreparable corruption of his entire nature, and of all his powers, especially of the superior and principal powers of his soul." (Solida Declaratio I., 31.) How does that compare with: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason; how infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a God!" (Hamlet II.; 2.) (2) In respect to free will and responsibility. According to Luther, man, in regard to the
work of his salvation, is "like the statue of salt into which Lot's wife was turned; like to a trunk or a stone, having the use neither of eyes, nor mouth, nor any of the senses, nor of the heart." (In Genes. cxix.) But with Shakespeare man is free and responsible. His conscience is as a lamp to his feet. He may follow its guiding light, but he is not constrained to do so. If he do follow, peace and blessing are his portion. If he refuse to follow, his soul is rent by remorse and fear. (3) In respect to grace. Sanctifying grace, with the "Reformers," was little more than a name. The sinner, in their teaching, was justified extrinsically only, and in consequence of his faith. Once a sinner, always intrinsically a sinner. Actual grace, in their teaching, was irresistible. In the illustration of Luther, the soul is like to a mule, and is now ridden by God, now ridden by the devil. Its rider always determines its course. When actual grace is given, God is riding the mule, and the mule must go as God is directing. With Shakespeare, on the other hand, as appears from Father Bowden's pages, sanctifying grace is no mere extrinsic denomination, but a state or habit of the soul, an inherent, supernatural quality of the soul. Actual grace has no necessitating force. It may be accepted or set aside. And, like sanctifying grace, it is not the effect of fides fiducialis, but is won by earnest prayer.

Compare Shakespeare and the "Reformers" in their respective views on philosophy. Any abuse that the "Reformers" could spare from the friars and nuns they showered upon the philosophy of the schools. Wicliffe, "the Morning Star of the Reformation," had called the schools the "camps of Cain." Luther, improving on this, had called them "the unclean houses (lupanaria) of anti-Christ." Calvin, who was never to be outdone in amenities, called the great scholastic doctors "horned asses," "two-legged beasts," etc., etc. But, with Shakespeare, Aristotle is a name to be held in high honor. And when he manifests his mind upon such important points of philosophy as, e. g., the genesis of knowledge, the nature of knowledge and its claims to objectivity, the formation of habits intellectual and moral, the claim of the will to freedom, the root of the distinction between man and brute, his views are always scholastic.

Certain critics, unable to deny the appreciative spirit in which Shakespeare writes of the beliefs and customs of the Old Religion, have endeavored to explain away the significance of this by asserting that the stage in Shakespeare's day was free from religious rancor. This explanation is at once inadequate and inaccurate. (1) It is inadequate. The mere absence of bigotry might account for a neutral attitude on the poet's part. But it could never account for the intense sympathy which Shakespeare everywhere manifests with Catholic rites and doctrines. It would account for his not describ-
ing Confession as, in the elegant words of Luther, "a most bloody torture" (cruentissima carnificina); but it would not account for his laying stress on the consolation and peace which the Sacrament of Penance affords. It would account for his refraining from ribald stories concerning monks and nuns; but it would not account for his holding up monks and nuns as models of conscientiousness and purity. (2) The explanation is not simply inadequate; it is positively false. The truth is, as Father Bowden has shown, that the stage in Shakespeare's day was the arena for fierce religious controversy. In 1589, shortly after Shakespeare's arrival in London, the Puritans and Prelatists were reviling each other, in plays written in the interests of their respective parties, with such rigor that Harte, the Mayor of London, felt obliged, in the interests of the public peace, to intervene. But there was no Mayor, or other official, to intervene in the interests of the Catholics, and, in a rapid succession of plays, they were slandered and lampooned with impunity. George Peele, in his "Farewell to the Famous and Fortunate Generals of Our English Forces" (1589), invites Norris and Drake to lead their armies "to lofty Rome, and there deface the power of anti-Christ, and pull his paper walls and popery down." Lodge and Greene, in their jointly written play, the "Looking Glass for London" (1591), call upon London to repent of its sins, lest, in punishment, it fall again under the dominion of "Romish anti-Christ." In Greene's "Maiden's Dream" (1593), Sir Christopher Hatton is held up to admiration because "He hated anti-Christ and all his trash, and was not led away by superstitions." Marlowe in his "Faus-
tus" (1593), exhibits at length the superstition, luxury and mum-
mary of the Pope, and of the "bald pate friars whose summum bonum
is belly cheer;" and in his "Massacre of Paris" (1593) the same poet
represents the Pope as ratifying whatever is done by murder and
tyranny, and the Duke of Guise as declaring that he has a "Papal
dispensation" for the murder of all Protestants, which is to be effected
by 30,000 friars and monks from the monasteries, priories, abbeys
and halls. Marston's "Scourge of Villainy" sets before us "peevish
Papists" crouching and kneeling to "dumb idols," and enlarges
upon the "monstrous filth" of Douai Seminary. Dekker, in the in-
troduction to his "Whore of Babylon" (1600), informs us that the
purpose of his play is to set forth "the inveterate malice, treasons,
machinations, underminings and continual bloody stratagems of the
purple whore of Rome." Other instances of this kind might easily
be given; but we think that proof sufficient has already been fur-
nished that in the works of Shakespeare's contemporary dramatists
the bitterness and rancor of Protestant bigotry was aggressively
manifest. In the writings of Shakespeare, on the other hand, there
is not a single word in disrespect of the ancient Church, its beliefs, its practices, or its institutions. Shakespeare does indeed use the expression which gives the title to Dekker's play; but only to place it in the mouth of the dissolute, drunken Falstaff, as he tosses on his death bed without a word of prayer, or a single token of repentance. Shakespeare, instead of assailing the Church, defended it, as we have already said. Candid Protestant critics have admitted this. "In an age," writes Mr. Knight (Biography of Shakespeare, p. 183), "when the prejudices of the multitude were flattered and stimulated by abuse and ridicule of the ancient ecclesiastical character, Shakespeare always exhibits it so as to command respect and affection."

Not only did Shakespeare carefully refrain from introducing anything anti-Catholic into his original compositions, but he further rigorously eliminated all the anti-Catholic elements from the plays which he remodeled. One of the plays remodeled by him was "The Troublesome Reign of King John." The aim of this scurrilous production was to glorify Protestantism and vilify the ancient faith. As Shakespeare was well aware, all that he needed to do in order to secure the popularity of his adaptation was to retain, or better still, to emphasize its furious attacks on the Church, and its ribald stories of monks and nuns. But Shakespeare instead of retaining or emphasizing acted as though he were a censor appointed by the Church. In the original play, when the sentence of his excommunication is made known to him, John contemptuously replies: "So, sir, the more the fox is curst, the better it fares; if God bless me and my land, let the Pope and his shavelings curse and spare not." A censor deputatus would never let that pass. So Shakespeare strikes it out. In the original play John threatens to "rouse the lazy lubbers (the monks) from their cells and send them as prisoners to the Pope." Thunders of applause must have greeted these words when spoken before an Elizabethan audience. But Shakespeare runs his pen through them, all the same. The original play gives expression to the current calumny that, according to Catholic teaching, an oath "made with a heretic" has no binding force. Shakespeare not only strikes this out, but is careful also to substitute in its stead, and place in Pandulph's mouth, a detailed and elaborate disquisition on the nature of an oath, in complete accordance with the Church's genuine teaching on the subject. In the original play John, after his victory over the French, hurls jeers and invectives at "the mischievous Priest in Italy, who calls himself God's Vicar," and is now hard at work with Dirges, Octaves and Requiems to assuage the flames of Purgatory for those who have fallen in battle, and covers with abuse those princes "who formerly bore the yoke of the servile
priest.” All this is carefully suppressed by Shakespeare. In the original play there were certain filthy cloister scenes. According to Gervinus these abominable scenes, with their vile and slanderous attacks on monks and nuns, were “certainly very amusing to the fresh Protestant feelings of the time.” No doubt they were; but Shakespeare did not permit a single line of them to remain. In the original play Pandulph, the Papal Legate, is represented as a hypocrite, a crafty, double-dealing, unscrupulous politician. But in Shakespeare’s “King John” he appears as an experienced, far-sighted, broad-minded statesman, and a true ghostly father withal, full of sympathy for the afflicted. In the original play a compliment is paid to Henry VIII. John declares that his sins have made him unworthy to fulfil the exalted task of driving “Pope and Poparic” from the realm of England, but that one day a king will be raised up great and good enough to receive so noble a commission. Shakespeare quietly put his pen through this. In the original play the prophecy of the Five Moons is given an anti-Papal interpretation. In Shakespeare’s “King John” it is stripped of this interpretation. In the original play John is defiant to the last, and dies cursing Rome and prophesying its downfall. In Shakespeare’s “King John” the King dies desolate and despairing. Was there ever a more careful censor deputatus than Shakespeare proved himself to be? But we must admit an apparent exception to the general vigilance of his censorship. When Pandulph, as Legate of Pope Innocent III., called King John to account for refusing to permit Archbishop Langton to take possession of his See of Canterbury, and for appropriating the revenues of that see, the King bade the Legate inform the Pope “that no Italian priest shall tithe or toil in our dominion; but, as we under heaven are supreme head, so, under Him, that Great Supremacy, where we do reign, we will alone uphold, without the assistance of a mortal hand: So tell the Pope, all reverence apart to him and his usurp’d authority.” (King John III., 1.) This speech, which is undoubtedly a very bitter one, has been often quoted in anti-Catholic declamations by Prime Ministers, Lord Chancellors and Archbishops in our own times. But the question is whether this bitter speech really represents the mind of Shakespeare. Many critics, as might have been expected, have asserted that it does, and, all other proofs failing, have pointed triumphantly to these lines as a convincing proof of Shakespeare’s Protestantism. But these critics, as Father Bowden has pointed out, have been somewhat overhasty in reaching their conclusion. To discover a dramatist’s mind it is not sufficient to consider the sentiments that he expresses; we must further consider the mouth through which he expresses him. We may lawfully seek the poet’s ideal in the char-
acter which he draws on heroic lines; but we surely do him an injustice if we seek for his ideal in the "villain of the piece." King John speaks the words in question. Now what manner of man is John as he appears in Shakespeare's play? Does the poet portray him as a hero, or does he portray him as a villain? He portrays him most emphatically as a villain. "John," says the Protestant critic Kreysig, quoted by Father Bowden, "begins as an ordinary and respectable man of the world, and he ends as an ordinary criminal: he is not only a villain, but a mean villain. The satanic grandeur of an Edmund or a Macbeth is wholly beyond him." (Vorlesungen I., 462.) But not only was John, in Shakespeare's delineation, "a villain, and a mean villain;" he was further an unsuccessful villain. All his curses recoiled upon himself. His bold defiance to the Pope proved to be nothing more than mere sound and fury. He ended by eating his own words. He humbled himself to the dust before the Legate, and as a penitent received again his crown from the Legate's hands, and his kingdom in fief from the Pope. The anti-Catholic speeches then which Shakespeare places in the mouth of King John no more prove that Shakespeare was a Protestant than the words "There is no God," which David represents the fool as saying "in his heart" prove that David was a skeptic.

Shakespeare does indeed manifest his scorn for one form of religion. But that religion was not the Catholic. It was the religion which strove to oust the Catholic religion; the religion which cast aside authority and scoffed at tradition; which bade every man take the Bible and interpret it for himself. Professors of this religion find their place in Shakespeare's pages. Jack Cade and his followers, Costard and Holofernes, Quince and Bottom; but, above all, Falstaff—such are the representatives of the "reformed" doctrine, as they appear in the writings of Shakespeare. Father Bowden is of opinion that, in the character of Falstaff, Shakespeare was portraying Sir John Oldcastle, otherwise known as Lord Cobham, the notorious Lollard leader whom Bale and Fox had canonized as a Protestant martyr. There is certainly a striking resemblance between Oldcastle and Falstaff. In both of them we find sanctimoniousness and the habit of quoting Scripture on the one hand, and obscenity and depravity on the other. Indeed, Shakespeare would seem to have given his audience something more than a hint that Falstaff was drawn from Oldcastle, for Prince Henry styles Falstaff in almost the first words that he addresses to him, "My old lad of the castle," and these words supplied the title under which the play was first produced. But, whether Shakespeare intended to portray Oldcastle in Falstaff or not, there can be no doubt that the public accredited him with this intention, and in November, 1599, a play,
written by Anthony Munday in collaboration with others, and entitled "The History of Sir John Oldcastle, the Good Lord Cobham," was put on the stage with the view to rehabilitating Oldcastle in popular esteem. The words of the prologue, "It is no hampered glutton we present, nor aged counsellor to youthful sin; let fair truth be graced, since forged invention former time defaced," are an evident allusion to Shakespeare's description of Falstaff: "That villainous, abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan," and the delineation that it is supposed to contain of Lord Cobham. But whether Falstaff stood for Oldcastle or not, the professors of the "reformed" religion met with scant courtesy from Shakespeare, who drew his ideal expounders of religion from the representatives of the ancient faith. This is acknowledged even by Protestant critics. Thus Mr. Thornbury, whom Father Bowden describes as "a very strong Protestant," writes: "To judge from Sir Oliver Martext and Sir Hugh Evans, the parish priests (Protestant) of Shakespeare's day were no very shining lights, and the poet seems to fall back, as in 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' on the ideal priest of an earlier age. It is indeed true that he always mentions the old faith with a certain yearning fondness." (Shakespeare's England, Vol. I., p. 211.) Shakespeare does indeed utter a reproach against Cardinal Beaufort, and his picture of Wolsey is far from a favorable one. But his reproach against Beaufort is one that any Catholic might have lawfully made, while his portrait of Wolsey is actually copied from the description given of the famous Cardinal by B. Edmund Campion, the first Jesuit martyr, in his "History of Ireland." Of Shakespeare's treat- ment of Pandulph we have already spoken. The remaining Catholic prelates whom Shakespeare put on the stage were, in the words of the Protestant critic Thummel, "recruited from the highest houses in England, and represent a stately array of political lords in priestly robes, of noble descent, true priests and Englishmen to the backbone." (Tahrbuch, 16, 361.)

Once Shakespeare does seem to be leading up to an attack on the Church. "The world is deceived by ornament," he makes Bassanio to say. Bassanio speaks first of ornament as deceiving in the law, and then turns to ornament as deceiving in religion. Surely here at least can come no attack on the "Reformers." Whoever accused the spoilers of churches, the whitewashers of mural decorations, the renderers of vestments, the melters of ecclesiastical vessels of gold and silver of excessive love of ornament in religion? Surely now will come an onslaught on vestments, incense, lights, processions and the like papist trumperies and mummeries. Yet, once again, not the gorgeous ceremonial of the Catholic Church, but the Protestant
treatment of the Bible is the object of Shakespeare's scorn. "In religion," continues Bassanio, "what damned error, but some sober brow will bless it and approve it with a test, hiding the grossness with fair ornament."

What were the themes which Shakespeare chose? Protestants might celebrate, as Bale and Spencer did, the downfall of the Papal supremacy; or, like Ben Jonson, the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot; or, like Dekker, the destruction of the Armada; or might sing, like Fletcher, the glories of Elizabeth. But Shakespeare has not a single word to say on these subjects. His muse is almost exclusively occupied with the men and women, and the spirit and temper of Catholic times.

Where does Shakespeare find his heroes. We know where the "Reformers" found theirs. They found them in King John, in "bluff King Hal," in "good Queen Bess." Shakespeare writes of John and Henry. We have seen what John was in Shakespeare's delineation—"a villain, and a mean villain," with all his curses on the Pope recoiling on his own head. How does Shakespeare write of Henry VIII.? Had Fletcher, Munday, Marlowe or any other Protestant dramatist written on such a theme, the "Reformation" would have been set before us as the heroic act of Henry's reign, and Catherine and her daughter Mary would suffer by contrast with Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth. But Shakespeare's treatment of the subject is the very opposite to this. Shakespeare exposes the Tudor tyranny in its worst features. He excites all our sympathy in behalf of the pious Catholic Queen, "whose afflictions, virtues and patience," says Mr. Spedding, "he elaborately exhibits," and arouses all our indignation at the shameless wrong that has been done her. Henry he represents as a melodramatic, pretentious, arrogant, oily hypocrite. He scoffs again and again at Henry's "conscience," that conscience which had divorced a lawful wife, married an adulteress and forced upon an unwilling nation the curse of the "Reformation." One who scoffed at the "conscience" which had divorced Queen Catherine, and celebrated with all his matchless power the virtues of that deposed Queen, was clearly not the man to sing the glories of Elizabeth. And, in truth, when Elizabeth died, Shakespeare alone of the contemporary poets and dramatists refused to compose a single line in honor of her memory. Chettle taxed him with this. "Nor doth the silver-tongued mellicent drop from his honeyed muse one subtle tear to mourn her death." But Shakespeare obstinately remained silent.

Shakespeare's ideal Prince is King Henry V. And this ideal Prince of his, this man whom he would set before the world as the great national hero of England, he draws as a devout Catholic. Of
the King's piety Shakespeare leaves us in no doubt. "We are in God's hands, brother, not in theirs," remarks Henry when the Duke of Gloster has expressed his apprehension lest the French should attack at a moment when the English were unprepared. Henry warns a private soldier whom he meets by chance, and who is unaware that he is speaking with the King, that a soldier in the wars should, like a sick man on his bed, "wash every mote from his conscience;" thus prepared "death is to him advantage." Before the fight commences Henry invokes the aid of heaven. When the victory is gained he gives the glory to God. "Praised be God, and not our strength for it," he cries, when first he hears that the field is won. And when he later learns how complete the victory has been, he prays: "O God, Thy arm was here; and not to us, but to Thy arm alone ascribe we all. . . . Take it, God, for it is only Thine." And then he proclaims as the order of the day: "Do we all holy rites; let there be sung 'Non nobis' and 'Te Deum.'" In the same spirit of humility, Henry refused the request of the lords that he should have borne before him "his bruised helmet and his bended sword," on his triumphant entry through the streets of London; for he was ever "free from vainness and self-glorious pride, giving full glory, signal and ostent, quite from himself to God." And this devoutly-minded King, this "mirror of Christian knights" is depicted by Shakespeare as an earnest and fervent Catholic.

Before the battle of Agincourt he implores God not, when deciding what shall be the issue of the contest, to think of his father's complicity in the murder of Richard II., but to think rather of the measures which he himself has taken to expiate his father's crime. He provides from year to year for five hundred aged poor who "twice a day their withered hands hold up towards heaven to pardon blood;" and he has built two chantries "where the sad and solemn priests sing still for Richard's soul." "These two foundations," writes Father Bowden, "were situated on the opposite banks of the Thames. That on the Surrey shore at Sheene was given to the Carthusians. The other, Sion House, facing it on the Middlesex shore, was bestowed on Bridgettine nuns."

On the supposition that a dramatist's views may be gathered from his writings, we may confidently say that Father Bowden has proved to demonstration that Shakespeare's sympathies were entirely with the beliefs and practices of the ancient faith. But may we make this supposition? Some of the non-Catholic reviewers of Father Bowden's work, seeing clearly that, if the supposition be admitted, Father Bowden's conclusion must remain incontestable, have denied his right to make the supposition. A dramatist, they argued, speaks only in character, and his writings are, in consequence, no
index to his personal views. The answer to this contention is manifold. (1) It is quite in accordance with custom to judge of a dramatist's views on life and religion from the manner in which he expresses himself on these all important subjects in his writings. The personal beliefs and inmost convictions of all great dramatists from Eschylus to Milton (for Milton's greater poems are, in truth, dramas) have been discussed in the past, and are still the subject of discussion, though the data of this discussion are taken, in most cases, from their dramas alone. (2) There are not a few critics at the present day, like Professor Dowden, Professor Caird and Mr. Tyler, in England, and Kreysig and Dr. Vehse, in Germany, who profess to prove from Shakespeare's dramas that Shakespeare was a Rationalist. If, then, it be lawful to argue from the writings of dramatists generally to the religious beliefs of the dramatists themselves, why are we to make an exception in the case of Shakespeare? And if it be lawful to attempt to prove from Shakespeare's writings that Shakespeare was a Rationalist, why is it not lawful from those same writings to attempt to prove that Shakespeare was a Catholic? (3) Father Bowden, in his inquiry, has been guided throughout by the canon of criticism laid down by Aristotle to the effect that we are, when endeavoring to ascertain a dramatist's views, to consider not simply what the dramatist says, but also the character by which he says it. The reasonableness of this rule is apparent. The language and action of a hero may be supposed to represent the poet's type of what is good and noble, and therefore of what he would wish his own language and action to be. The sentiments of a scoundrel, on the other hand, are intentionally drawn as false, base and treacherous, and therefore presumably not those of the poet's ideal self. Now, though Shakespeare may place anti-Catholic sentiments in the mouth of one portrayed by him as "not only a villain, but a mean villain," like King John, he is careful to draw those characters whom he evidently reveres and loves as devout and earnest Catholics. We have been able to present Father Bowden's arguments only in their broad, general lines. For the full elaboration of these arguments we refer our readers to Father Bowden's interesting and scholarly volume.

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