

often employed the pencil and the burin. I may just remark, however, that it struck me at a little distance, rising among its graceful trees, beside its quiet river, as one of the finest old English churches I had yet seen. One passes, in approaching it from the poet's birthplace, through the greater part of Stratford. We see the town-hall, a rather homely building, — the central point of the bizarre Jubilee Festival of 1769, — with a niche in front occupied by a statue of Shakspeare, presented to the town by David Garrick, the grand master of ceremonies on the occasion. We then pass a lane, which leads down to the river, and has a few things worth looking at on either hand. There is an old Gothic chapel on the one side, with so ancient a school attached to it, that it existed as such in the days of the poet's boyhood; and in this school, it is supposed, he may have acquired the little learning that served fairly to enter him on his after-course of world-wide attainment. Little, I suppose, would have served the purpose: a given knowledge of the alphabet, and of the way of compounding its letters into words, as his premises, would have enabled the little fellow to work out the rest of the problem for himself. There has been much written on the learning of Shakspeare, but not much to the purpose: one of our old Scotch proverbs is worth all the dissertations on the subject I have yet seen. "God's bairns," it says, "are *eath* to *lear*," *i. e.* easily instructed. Shakspeare must, I suppose, have read many more books than Homer (we may be sure, every good one that came in his way, and some bad ones), and yet Homer is held to have known a thing or two: the more ancient poet was unquestionably as ignorant of English as the more modern one of Greek; and as the one produced the "Iliad" without any acquaintance with "Hamlet," I do not see why the other might not have produced "Hamlet" without any acquaintance with the "Iliad." John-