The Society and the "Fad."  
[Concluded from p. 286.]  

And this, possibly, may be where the line is to be drawn between the usefulness of a poet or a dramatist to his own generation and date, and his value as an embodiment of manners to generations and dates long beyond him. Indeed, the very first piece of Shakespearian criticism extant (1) was written by John Aubrey prior to the year 1680, and it does not seem that the criticism of these two hundred or so years since has practically done anything more than indulge it) represents Shakespeare in London in his own day, doing just exactly what Mr. Harrigan in New York has done in his; Shakespeare, who wrote "Hamlet," did not scruple to take his auditors into the tavern, the inn-yard, the bagnio, the jail; into the bun-baitiff's and the watchman's court, just as Mr. Harrigan has escorted his audiences into the slums, the opium-joints, the bar-rooms, the ten-cent lodging-houses, to the polls, the picnics, the chorister-parties, and the cheap excursions of the self-respecting newsboy and boot-black. The ears of Mr. Harrigan's audiences are treated less coarse-

1 "He did gather humours of men daily, his comedies will remain with as long as the English language is spoken, for that he handles moves common. He went in the humour of the constable at Grendon-in-Bucks which is on the road from London to Stratford."
Science ns-15 (379), 281-294.

http://science.sciencemag.org/content/ns-15/379.citation

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