From the Editor.
THOMAS CARLYLE:

THE HERO AS POET,

Edited with Introduction and Notes

BY

MARK HUNTER, B.A., (Oxon)
Principal of the Coimbatore College.

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Madras:
V. KALYANARAM IYER.

1894.
THOMAS CARLYLE

THE HERO AS POET

with introduction and notes

by

MARK HUNTER, D.A.

PRINTED AT THE LAWRENCE ASYLUM PRESS, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS.
## CONTENTS.

I. INTRODUCTION—

| i. Thomas Carlyle | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| ii. Carlyle's Teaching | ... | ... | ... | xiii |
| iii. Carlyle's Style | ... | ... | ... | xviii |
| iv. The Hero as Poet and the Doctrine of Hero-Worship | ... | ... | ... | xxv |
| v. Analysis of the Lecture | ... | ... | ... | XLII |

II. THE HERO AS POET | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

III. NOTES | ... | ... | ... | ... | 41 |

IV. APPENDIX | ... | ... | ... | ... | 85 |
INTRODUCTION.

I.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

Thomas Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, a village in Dumfriesshire, December 4, 1795. His parents were simple Scotch peasant folk, yet both of them endowed with high intellectual and moral qualities, though of the silent sort. For his father, James Carlyle, Carlyle always entertained the deepest reverence and admiration; he looked upon him as “the last of Scotch peasants as Samuel Johnson was the last of English authors.” “May I write my books as he built his houses,” he once said. James Carlyle died in 1832. Carlyle has raised a noble memorial to his father in the Reminiscence of James Carlyle, written in January 1832, but not given to the world till after the writer’s own death, fifty years later. The relation of Carlyle to his mother was always tender and beautiful. He was the best of sons in thought and deed. Old Margaret Carlyle lived till 1854, long enough to see her son great and famous. Though no ‘scholar,’ she read and studied his writings as they appeared. Many of the moral and intellectual qualities of both father and mother were inherited by the son, though he was to find a far different scope for them. “I can trace deeply in myself,” he wrote, “the character of both parents, also the up-bringing of both.”

Carlyle received his earliest teaching in the village school of Ecclefechan, and the High School at Annan, and learned such things as could be taught there. At the age of fifteen he began to attend classes in Edinburgh University. It was no uncommon thing in those days for Scotch peasants to receive a University Education, but the life of a poor Edinburgh student was very different from that of the ordinary Oxford or Cambridge undergraduate. Many of the lads supported themselves and defrayed the cost of attending lectures, by such tutoring as they could come by, or even by manual labour in the fields during the months of the vacation. Carlyle himself trudged on foot the eighty miles between Ecclefechan and
Edinburgh. He could afford no better means of transport. Carlyle's father had determined to educate his son, against much advice, and 'chiefly, if not solely,' adds Carlyle, 'from his own noble faith.' A neighbour,—'one of our wisemen'—had dissuaded him; 'Educate a boy, and he grows up to despise his ignorant parents.' Long afterwards James Carlyle told his son of this, and added, 'Thou hast not done so; God be thanked for it.'

It was his parent's wish and purpose that Carlyle should adopt the Church as a profession; but Carlyle soon found such an end impossible for him; 'to none of the world's few incorporated guilds could he have adjusted himself without difficulty, without distortion.' First and foremost, religious scruples, doubts and denial, soon began to show themselves, and Carlyle was far too honest a man to play tricks with his understanding or his conscience. His parents respected his scruples and though they regretted, suffered him, without word of reproof, to follow his own course. Carlyle studied for five years at Edinburgh, learning what he could from professors and courses of lectures, but, like all men who have found a University education of any true value, learning much that the regular course did not attempt to supply. He was, all his life, a voracious reader; like Johnson, 'eagerly devouring what spiritual thing he could come at.'

Finding the Church an impossible career, Carlyle for a while attempted schoolmastering, first at the Annan Academy and afterwards at Kirkcaldy, in Fife. This lasted till 1818. The Kirkcaldy schoolmastership is chiefly memorable for a single fact; Carlyle was thrown much on the society of Edward Irving, then engaged in similar work. Between the two men a close friendship arose, not actually to be severed till Irving's death, although long before that, the paths of the two had led them wide apart. The life of a schoolmaster in a small Scotch town proved insupportable, and Carlyle determined to abandon it. At the age of twenty-three he is again in Edinburgh, without regular employment of any sort. But he is not idle. An article offered to the Edinburgh Review was rejected; but he did hack-work for Brewster's Edinburgh Encyclopædia, to which he contributed
on most frugal terms,' sixteen biographical articles. These he did not afterwards consider worthy to be included in his Collected Works. These Edinburgh days are very memorable for several things. Carlyle was then first afflicted with dyspepsia, a complaint to which he continued a martyr all through life. The second circumstance is far more important. The old religious belief he had learned in his childhood had now passed from his mind, had become impossible for him. He entered now into the region of religious doubt, almost of despair. The whole Universe seemed to him all purposeless, Godless, lifeless, a 'vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha and Mill of Death!' From this region of spiritual darkness and despair, he was saved by a sudden flash of inspiration. The incident is related in Sartor Resartus, in the chapter entitled 'The Everlasting No.' Much of this book is autobiographical, and we have Carlyle's own testimony for regarding the spiritual struggle through which Teufelsdröckh passed in the Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Infer (in reality Leith Walk in Edinburgh) as literally true. 'The Everlasting No had said "Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's);" to which my whole Me now made answer: "I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!" 'It is from this hour,' adds Teufelsdröckh (Carlyle) 'that I am inclined to date my spiritual new birth; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a man.' And so the spiritual Carlyle passes from the Everlasting No to a sense of the freedom of the individual soul, and thence through a 'Centre of Indifference' in which the individual 'I' can calmly and in freedom regard the Universe which is 'not I,' to a deep sense of relation to, and duty towards that Universe,—that is, to the region of 'The Everlasting Yea;' "Do the duty which lies nearest to thee, which thou knowest to be a duty! . . . Work while it is called to-day; for the night cometh, wherein no man can work."

In close relation with this spiritual and moral new birth, is the intellectual new birth which was brought about nearly at the same time. Carlyle began to study German. With the help of dictionary and grammar he taught himself the German language; he studied German literature; he read Goethe. In Goethe, as
Introduction.

Carlyle himself tells us, he discovered that in spite of Hume and Voltaire, in spite of modern Materialism, Utilitarianism, and the 'Profit and Loss Philosophies,' Reverence, Belief, Religion were still possible: it was still possible to live as becomes a Man.

These things determined Carlyle's future course; first as purveyor and exponent of German literature and thought in England; secondly as prophet of political and ethical doctrines in direct opposition to those current in England at the time.

Lastly, a little before the incident in Leith Walk, Carlyle, through Irving, became acquainted with Jane Baillie Welsh, whom he married six years afterwards.

Carlyle's first important contribution to literature was the *Life of Schiller*, which, through Irving's influence, was accepted by the *London Magazine*, the same journal in which the *Essays of Elia* had recently appeared. Irving was able to do his friend one other service. He obtained for him a private tutorship, which relieved him for the time from pecuniary difficulties, and enabled him to continue his literary work in comparative ease. Accordingly, Carlyle completed a Translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* which was published in book form by an Edinburgh Firm; and afterwards produced several other translations from the German,—Romances by Tieck, Musæus and Richter,—which appeared three years afterwards.

The post of private tutor in a gentleman's family was as little congenial to a man of Carlyle's disposition as the life of a schoolmaster had been five years before. He at length decided to resign his appointment. He had in the meanwhile visited London and Paris, had become acquainted with Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, Procter and other Men of Letters and, what he prized far more, had received a kind letter from the great Goethe himself in acknowledgment of a copy of the English translation of *Wilhelm Meister* which Carlyle had sent for his acceptance. The correspondence between Carlyle and Goethe continued almost until the death of the latter in 1829. The genius of Carlyle was detected by the greatest of the Germans at a time when, amongst his own countrymen, he was unnoticed and neglected. Goethe spoke of him "as a new moral force, the extent and effect of which it was impossible to predict."
In 1827 Carlyle married, after a long and, on both sides, currious and characteristic courtship. Of Carlyle's married life much has been said and written, generally by those 'who apparently had no understanding thereof.' On this question nothing can of course be added in this meagre sketch. Perhaps Carlyle's account of Johnson, so often applicable to his own life, is in this case not less applicable. "Their wedded life, as is the common lot, was made up of drizzle and dry weather; but innocence and worth dwelt in it, and when death had ended it, a certain sacredness." Between these two, the one a man of genius, the other a woman of unmistakeable talent, there were misunderstandings, sorrows, even at times petty bickering, besides the trouble occasioned by poverty, disappointment and ill-health; but there was much to redeem all this, and on Carlyle's part, when the sudden death of his wife had taken away all other means of atonement, an intense remorse, such as only the noble among men could feel, even for wrongs far greater than could ever be laid to Carlyle's charge. Jane Welsh consecrated her life to Carlyle and his work: it depends upon the estimate we have formed of the value of that work whether we judge the sacrifice a matter for regret or not.

Shortly after his marriage Carlyle was introduced to Jeffrey. This was important, for it afforded an entrance to the Edinburgh Review of which Jeffrey was then the editor. In the same year the first of the Essays now included in the Collected Works appeared in Jeffrey's review, on Jean Paul Friedrich Richter. This was followed by other articles. Other magazines now offered themselves, the Foreign Review, Fraser's Magazine, the Westminster Review. Most of these early writings deal with German literature, but from time to time Carlyle turned to subjects of more immediate and practical importance, as in the Essays on Signs of the Times and Characteristics, both of which appeared in the Edinburgh Review.

For a few months after his marriage Carlyle lived in Edinburgh; but he very shortly removed to Craiggenputtock, a cottage, the property of Mrs. Carlyle's mother, situated on the high moorlands between Dumfriesshire and Galloway. There he lived with his wife a sort of hermit-like existence, reading, thanking
and writing, until 1834 and his final departure for London. He continued to contribute articles to the Reviews; but the remuneration was scanty, and, besides supporting himself and wife, he was liberally helping his own family. He made more than one attempt to obtain regular employment as Professor, at St. Andrew’s and at London, but without success. Although Carlyle was backed by powerful testimonials, amongst them one from Goethe, his claims were regularly set aside in favour of other candidates who had less genius, less originality, more interest, and, above all, ‘safer’ opinions. In fact Carlyle’s opinions were in every way against him, so far as immediate success was concerned; and in literature no less than in his candidature for academic appointments. All who knew him,—and his circle gradually widened,—could not fail to recognise his great abilities and wide range of knowledge. Jeffrey and the Whigs would have welcomed him to their ranks, and ‘pudding and praise’ would have been liberally doled out. But Carlyle could not adapt himself to the doctrines of Whiggism, could not forego the mission which more and more he felt he had been sent into the world to fulfil; he was far too ‘terribly in earnest’ for the Whigs; and so they left him to his fate. Meanwhile the magazines did not promise to supply him with permanent employment. The public was growing tired of Germany and the Germans, and there were few who did not resent the gospel according to Carlyle. So things went on till 1830, amid struggle and disappointment, the ‘two-fold problem’ growing harder to solve; the first problem to keep his wife and himself alive and at the same time to provide his brother John Carlyle with a suitable medical training; the second problem, to do all this by speaking forth ‘the truth that was in him.’ Everyone of these magazine articles, purporting to be reviews of books mainly ephemeral, was in reality the voice of one in the wilderness (of Craigenputtock) passionately calling to his generation, Repent, Repent. But in the prophetic line the only ware that the world has ever agreed to pay heavily for has been false prophecy; and so it fared with Carlyle.

In 1830 Sartor Resartus, Carlyle’s first book, if we except the Life of Schiller, was written: in the following year he went up to London to find a publisher, and his wife soon afterwards followed him. The labour of finding a publisher proved fruitless.
'A work of genius, dear,' Mrs. Carlyle had said on reading the manuscript. But not so thought the publishers. One bookseller offered to publish if Carlyle himself paid down a sum 'not exceeding £150'; "I think you had better wait a little," said a friend; "Yes," answered Carlyle, "it is my purpose to wait until the end of eternity for it." But though Sartor could not get itself published, everything was not unfavourable to Carlyle; he made new friends, notably John Stuart Mill; his brother John obtained an appointment which relieved Carlyle's scanty resources of one strain upon them; and he got fresh work from the magazines. Amongst other things he was commissioned by Fraser to write an Essay on Boswell's Johnson. This was the last piece of work he did before returning to Craiggenputtock. While in London Carlyle received the news of his father's death. James Carlyle died on January 22, and in the same month his son wrote the Reminiscence which has been already alluded to.

Carlyle's life up to the time of the writing of the Essay on Johnson has now been briefly sketched; the rest must be narrated even more briefly. On his return to Craiggenputtock he set to work with the determination of producing something more important than review articles. He was undecided at first as to subject. He was attracted in different ways by the Scotch Reformation and its hero John Knox, and the French Revolution and its possible makeshift for a hero, Mirabeau. He had already written on Voltaire; in 1833 he wrote on Diderot and on Cagliostro, the 'supreme quack'—all indirectly dealing with the subject of the Revolution. A few years later appeared the narrative of The Diamond Necklace, the Essay on Mirabeau, and finally The History of French Revolution itself. After the publication of the French Revolution, there could be no doubt that in Carlyle a new literary force had arisen. There could be no question as to his genius, although the public he addressed was still a comparatively small one. But although he was at last recognised, his financial circumstances were far from prosperous. Even after the publication of the French Revolution he had entertained thoughts of abandoning literature, of emigrating to America, and in the backwoods trying what he could do as Man of Action on a humble scale.
He had now finally left Craiggenputtock, and had established himself in London in the house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, which he was to occupy till his death. “Through Phlegethon Fleetditch lies our way,” he wrote to Eckerman, “and, with God’s help, we will follow it as blamelessly as possible.” Sartor had appeared in Fraser in 1833 and had excited “universal disapprobation.” Magazine articles, while the French Revolution was in progress, had necessarily been few and far between. Although the wants of the Carlyles were frugal, and Mrs. Carlyle proved herself a most skilful housekeeper, the ‘first problem’ was far from solved. At this juncture friends came to the assistance. Emerson from America had discovered the new prophet, had made a pilgrimage to Craiggenputtock, had seen the sage and laid the foundations of a very memorable friendship. Through Emerson’s influence American editions of Carlyle’s works were brought out, and terms favourable to Carlyle were negotiated with American booksellers. Sartor was published in book form in America when England would have none of it; and Carlyle could refer to it in his Essay on Mirdbeau as a New England book. In London also friends were not wanting. One of these (Miss Martineau) hit upon the plan of bringing out Carlyle as a lecturer. Carlyle consented, and four courses of lectures were delivered in London before crowded audiences, mostly composed of literary friends and fashionable ladies and gentlemen. The last course,—that on Heroes and Hero-worship,—was the only one which Carlyle himself prepared for the Press. The lectures were a great success in every way. Financial difficulties were, for the time being, removed. But Carlyle did not care for such platform exhibition; “a mixture of prophecy and play-acting” he termed them. Only once again did he appear in such public fashion, on a memorable occasion which shall be mentioned in its place. Carlyle was now contemplating a book upon Oliver Cromwell; but before thoroughly setting to work he issued the first of his vehement Philippics in which the most cherished articles of modern faith, especially the doctrines of orthodox Political Economy and the various nostrums of the old Radical school were mercilessly attacked, savagely ridiculed and indignantly denied. The little book on Chartism was published in 1849. Once again, before Cromwell was completed, Carlyle turned aside
from the task in hand, and produced in seven weeks *Past and Present*, a book which contains some of his most vigorous writing. Again in 1850 the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* were issued. These three works, *Chartism, Past and Present*, and *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, together with the Essay on *The Nigger Question*, and the Essay, written long afterwards, on *'Shooting Niagara and After,*' are purely polemical, and contain, if we except some of Ruskin's writings, the most damaging criticism which Political Economy, Laissez-Faire Radicalism, Constitutionalism and other, as they appeared to Carlyle, modern delusions have ever met with.

The death of Mrs. Carlyle's mother, Mrs. Welsh, in 1842, brought to the Carlyles a small but sufficient income, and relieved them permanently from their pecuniary troubles.

*The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* appeared in 1845. This book, besides the ethical value which is inseparable from any of Carlyle's writings, is also from a purely historical point of view of the highest importance. In it a great man is permanently rescued from the confused mists of misunderstanding which had enveloped his memory, and new light is thrown upon one of the strangest and most interesting periods of English History.

The *Latter-Day Pamphlets* were issued, as has been said, in 1850. In the next year Carlyle produced a book in an altogether different and quieter key; the *Life of his friend John Sterling*, probably one of the most beautiful pieces of Biography in the language.

During the next fifteen years of his life Carlyle was chiefly occupied in preparing and writing the book which is the longest, the most laborious and, as some think, the greatest of all his works, *The History of Friedrich II of Prussia*. It cost him more toil than any of his other books. He twice visited Germany and carefully inspected Frederick's battle fields; and this was the least of his troubles. *Frederick the Great* was completed in 1865. It is much more than a life of Frederick; it is a history of the House of Hohenzollern, as well as a history of European life, politics and thought during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century. It is
full of wit, humour and pathos; its descriptive passages are unsurpassed even by Carlyle himself; the battle pieces excel anything of the kind in the English language; and the prophet's own special teaching peals through every page of it. It is probably the most extraordinary, and at the same time most wonderful 'history' ever written. Emerson wrote publicly of it that it was "a book that one would think the English people would rise up in mass and thank the author for by cordial acclamation, and signify, by crowning him with oak leaves, their joy that such a head existed among them." The English people have never been in the habit of paying especial honour to writers of books; but the students of Edinburgh University did what they could to show their admiration and reverence for the greatest living Scotchman. They elected Carlyle Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh. The story of the inaugural address at Edinburgh, of the enthusiasm of the students for the old man who addressed them, of the 'perfect triumph' achieved there, is perhaps the most interesting and touching episode in Carlyle's life, not only for its own sake, but for the dark tragedy that followed immediately in the wake of it. Carlyle's speech at Edinburgh should be read by every student. Mr. Masson, who was present, tells us how "the old man stood up in the Music Hall before the assembled crowd, and threw off his Rectorial robes, and proceeded to speak, slowly, connectedly, and nobly . . . the crowd listening as they had never listened before and reverent even in those parts of the hall where he was least audible;—who," he adds, "that was present will ever forget that sight?" When it was all over, hundreds of students followed him to his lodgings 'crowding and hurrahing.'

"I waved my hand," wrote Carlyle, some time afterwards, when the thought of any earthly triumph was a mockery to him, when he was 'solitary and could not impart it,'—"I waved my hand prohibitively at the door, perhaps lifted my hat, and they gave but one cheer more—something in the tone of it which did for the first time go into my heart. Poor young men, so well affected to the poor old brother or grandfather here, and in such a whirlpool of a world, all of us."  

He had written to his wife, immediately afterwards, "You

---

1 Carlyle Personally and in his Writings.
2 Reminiscence of Jane Welsh Carlyle.
never saw such a tempest of enthusiastic excitation as that among the student people. "Never in the world was I in such a scene."

Mrs. Carlyle had been too unwell to accompany her husband to Edinburgh; and she was in a state of nervous anxiety as to his success. Carlyle, rather unaccountably, had feared he might break down. Professor Tyndall, immediately after the lecture, sent a telegram to her; "I tore it open," she wrote, "and read, "From John Tyndall" (Oh, God bless John Tyndall in this world and the next) "to Mrs. Carlyle. A perfect triumph." I read it to myself, and then read it aloud to the gaping chorus. And chorus began to dance and clap their hands."

Carlyle never saw his wife again. On April 21, 1866, she died suddenly whilst driving in her carriage. She had long been ailing, but such an ending had never been anticipated. Carlyle had never dreamt but that she would survive him. Her death was a terrible blow to him; and one from which he never recovered. Much has been written of Mrs. Carlyle, and of her relation to her husband, but perhaps nothing that can add to, or take away from the truth contained in the words which he himself ordered to be inscribed on her tombstone:—"In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common; but also a soft invincibility, a clearness of discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart, which are rare. For forty years she was the true and ever-loving helpmate of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him, as none else could, in all of worthy that he did or attempt. She died at London, 21st April 1866; suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life, as if gone out."

Carlyle was now more than seventy years of age, and his work in the world was practically done. But he had still fifteen years of life before him. The first sad years after his wife's death he spent in writing those Reminiscences of Jane Welsh Carlyle, of Lord Jeffery and of Edward Irving, which were edited by Froude and published after his death. He wrote indeed the article called Shooting Niagara and After for Macmillan's Magazine, he contributed one or two letters on public questions to the Times, and he wrote a little history of the Early Kings of Norway, and an Essay upon the Portraits of John Knox. But he had lost the use of his right

1 Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle.
hand, and he found he could not express himself freely by means of dictation. Honours continued to pour in upon him. From Germany in 1874 he received the Prussian Order of Merit, which he accepted. The same year Mr. Disraeli offered him the Grand Cross of the Bath and a pension. He declined the first as unsuitable; the second he no longer needed.

The story of Carlyle's last years may be read in Froude's 'Life.' Most of his old friends had gone before him, but there were still a few left, Browning, Masson, Tyndall, Froude and Ruskin. In the writings of the last he could still take a keen delight, rejoicing to see the 'valiant Ruskin,' 'plunging his rapier up to the very hilt in the belly of the blatant beast,' that is, of popular shams, delusions and 'unveracities.' There are deeds too of 'undying mercy' which the biographer has to record; many an act of kindness, generosity, consideration and tenderness. He gave help to all who needed it and asked it of him, often to those who little deserved it. Enough to show us, if such testimony were necessary, that in the stern censor of his times, in the fierce denunciator of quackery, insincerity and popular delusion, dwell perhaps the softest and most pitiful heart in all England. He was a well known figure about Chelsea, and was looked up to with reverence by many who had no means of knowing of the work he had actually done for his generation. "Fine old gentleman that," said an omnibus conductor to Froude; "we thinks a deal on him down in Chelsea, we does;" and then alluding to the offer of the Grand Cross, "'Tisn't that as can do honour to the likes of he."

In the winter of 1880-81, Carlyle's life was ebbing away slowly and peacefully. On the morning of the 5th February he died. His last words were 'goodbye.' "He had been gone an hour," writes Froude, "when I reached the house. He lay calm and still, an expression of exquisite tenderness subduing his rugged features into feminine beauty. I have seen something like it in Catholic pictures of dead saints, but never, before or since, on any human countenance."

Dean Stanley offered Westminster Abbey; but Carlyle had expressed a wish to be buried at Ecclefechan, since he might not lie beside his wife. And so in the bleak Scotch Kirkyard, amid the graves 'soiled with half thawed sleet,' without spoken word of prayer or chanted lamentation,—perhaps as befitted
him who had taught men the divineness of silence, and of silent worship,—they left him in silence to his rest.

[For anything approaching a thorough knowledge of Carlyle's life and work, Froude's four volumes are indispensable. Among short 'Lives,' however, the student will find Dr. Garnett's Life of Carlyle, (published as one of the Great Writers' series), extremely useful. A biography of Carlyle has been recently (1892) added to the 'English Men of Letters' by Professor Nichol. This book cannot be recommended to any one who has not previously learned of Carlyle from other sources.]

II. CARLYLE'S TEACHING.

To estimate Carlyle's place in literature, to judge the importance of his contribution to historic, philosophical or religious thought, to summarise his teaching in politics, economics, religion or ethics, cannot be attempted here. About no modern author, about few authors of any time, has so much been spoken and written; about none are the critics so hopelessly at variance. To some few well known writers, perhaps also to very many whose thoughts and feelings never find their way into print, Carlyle still is, as he seemed once to his immediate disciples, by far the greatest voice that England has heard for the last two centuries. To others, and perhaps these are at the present moment the majority in the world of letters, Carlyle is at best a great literary artist, and a highly 'stimulating influence,' but prejudiced on this matter and the other, entirely in the wrong on more than one subject of the utmost importance, no true teacher at all in the highest sense. To others, his influence was exhausted, his teaching out of date, even before his death; he served but as the 'transition between the past and the present,' but 'he never tried to understand his own times.' Lastly, to some his prophecy is a false prophecy, his religious gospel mere 'moonshine,' and his vehement preachments little more than the idiot's tale,

'Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.'

The fact is, no judgment which may in the least degree claim to be final, can as yet be passed upon Carlyle's teaching. Not until a century, perhaps even a longer period, has elapsed; until history in the course of events has brought about results

1 M. Edmond Scherer, Essays on English Literature.
which we may as yet but dimly guess at, can it be known, once for all, whether Carlyle's gospel was of God or of another source. Carlyle wrote and spoke on almost all matters which to his contemporaries were of more than the most ephemeral interest, the most trifling importance. "He touched," as Tennyson sings of him,

"He touched on the whole sad planet of man,  
The kings and the rich and the poor."

Upon all subjects from the Christian religion down to tradesmen's advertisements and modern London house-building, he spoke and wrote with an earnestness that is almost terrible, and an authority that had its root in strong and passionate belief. Whether his teaching is true or false, time only can decide; when it has been indisputably, or even approximately ascertained whether or no, Constitutionalism based upon universal suffrage is the last and best form of human polity; whether or no Free Competition and Governmental non-interference is ever likely, even under the most favourable circumstances, to lead to satisfactory social or economic conditions; whether or no 'Happiness,' either of the individual or of 'the greatest number' is the true aim of human thought or action; whether or no the old forms of Religion are still adequate to answer the needs of new times, new knowledge and new aspirations; lastly, whether or no Physical Science can ever take the place of Religion, or whether a Religion or a sufficing code of Morality can ever be founded exclusively upon it.

All these questions Carlyle and his disciples answer unhesitatingly in the negative; and in each case the number of those who hold as he held seems to be steadily increasing. But their belief must still be of faith, not of sight. Logical demonstration is impossible until there exist actual facts upon which it can operate. For such facts the world is still waiting. Belief is possible to some. Proof, as yet, is impossible; perhaps, with regard to the last two questions, is forever impossible.

Meantime the various critics approach Carlyle, each from the point of view of the school or system to which he himself belongs or inclines towards. One critic regards Carlyle from the point of view of a Comtist, and naturally finds him altogether in the dark as to the true nature and eternal efficacy of the 'Religion
of Humanity.' But the Comtist Philosophy is far from having been established beyond all question. Another critic refuses to regard Carlyle as a great teacher, because he denied that Happiness is the true end of human action. But has philosophy spoken the last word on this matter? Another finds Carlyle insufficient, because his general attitude, both in his life and in his writings, was never that of cheerfulness and calm; because, to use Carlyle's own illustration, he was not 'much at ease in Zion.' But it is a matter of grave question whether the greatest of men have ever been 'at ease in Zion,' and whether an atmosphere of philosophic calm and serenity either is or can ever be right or possible, at least until the Millennium. These are but a few instances out of many. Indeed, it will almost invariably be found that hostile criticisms of Carlyle generally rest upon a silent assumption of many things by no means self-evident, and which, if openly expressed, would arouse as much distrust as the doctrines they are summoned to oppose. There are so many individual teachers, schools and systems which must be wrong, or only partially right, if Carlyle's teaching be true.

It is, however, an undoubted fact that many of Carlyle's doctrines have gained, and are still gaining, increased acceptance. Utilitarianism, the old laissez-faire school of politics, the old 'orthodox' political economy are now practically things of the past. But it is often forgotten that for these results Carlyle once fought almost single-handed. On the other hand many problems are still unsolved, and are still clamouring for solution;—the whole relation of capital and labour, and the organization of industry; the yet higher question of religion and the whole spiritual life. The times are still times of transition: still "the minds of all nations call for change," there is still a "boundless grinding collision of the new with the old." No theory or system has been established so entirely beyond all dispute, that it can serve as a court of appeal before which Carlyle may be summoned and found wanting. Criticism as yet lacks material for any judgment that shall be decisive. Yet so much may perhaps be said without presumption. Carlyle spoke of many matters which are still of pressing, and every day of more pressing importance; he spoke with greater force and originality that it was given to any other man of his time to speak;
his influence may be clearly traced in the writings, and writers that have most profoundly influenced modern thought, even in writers who are in general opposed to his teaching; and it is therefore vain, in any attempt to understand the 'Signs of the Times,' to put Carlyle and his teaching out of court, as one whose influence is exhausted, and to whose gospel we may with impunity turn a deaf ear.

But in addition to the fact that it as yet too early to subject Carlyle's work to any final judgment, another difficulty lies in the nature of the work itself. Carlyle's creed, religious, ethical, or political, is not definitely bodied forth in any system that claims to be logically complete. One of his main doctrines, is that the logical understanding is, and must ever be, incapable of dealing with the highest matters. Another doctrine is, that all systems are, from the very facts of the case, ephemeral, mere symbols that 'have their day and cease to be,' 'half-facts,' even 'more fatal at times than whole falsehoods.' He himself had no words sufficiently contemptuous with which to characterise 'system-mongers;' and he, of course, strove to build up no system for himself. Hence any attempt to criticise his teaching as if in any way a systematised whole necessarily fails. The following passage from the late Principal Shairp's lecture on 'Carlyle as a Prose-Poet,' admirably illustrates this fact, which, in any consideration of Carlyle, should never be forgotten.

But the critics, I observe, have been repeating, one after another, that Carlyle was not great as a thinker, but only as a word-painter. If by a thinker, they mean one who can table a well-adjusted theory of the universe, in which he can locate every given fact or phenomenon, such a formula as Mr. Herbert Spencer has favoured the world with, Carlyle was not such a thinker; no one would have more scornfully rejected the claim to be so. But if he is a thinker, who has seen some great truths more penetratingly, and has felt them more profoundly, than other men have done, then in this sense a thinker Carlyle certainly was. Isolated truths these may have been, but isolated truths were all he cared or hoped to see: he felt too keenly the mystery of things ever to fancy that he or any other man could see them all in well-rounded harmony. It was just because he saw and felt some truths so keenly, that he was enabled to paint them in words so vividly.¹

Hence all tentative definitions of Carlyle's religion, such as that it was Calvinism minus the creed, or that it was Puritanism plus Goethism, or of his political philosophy, that his

¹ J. C. Sharp, Aspects of Poetry.
theory of the hero-king 'means in practice an accidental able man in a line of indifferent or bad despots,' though sometimes ingenious and even suggestive, are none the less very far from sufficient: so much in Carlyle's teaching rises up in loud protest against such definitions.

Again, Carlyle is a poet; he teaches after the manner of a poet, and as a poet he must be regarded. The poet does not expound truth by slow and careful progress from point to point, but by intuitive insight. He does not say to us, "From such and such given premises does it not follow—?" but, with a sudden flash of inspiration, "Behold! can you not see?" If, however, it be true, as some modern schools hold, that "it is not given to poets or to prophets, to teach us philosophy, nor duty, nor truth,"\(^1\) then we need not seek such lessons in Carlyle, but be content if we find in him some of those things, whatever they may be, which poets are qualified to impart. But if on the contrary, as others hold, and as Carlyle himself held, poets and prophets are the only teachers in the world that can catch and have caught glimpses of truths that are whole and eternal, and that all others can at best teach but half-truths, conditional duties, ephemeral philosophies, then it is possible that duty and truth and philosophy may be learned from Carlyle; for, prose-writer as he is, it is as a poet that he looked upon life, and as poet that he uttered forth what he saw there, or thought he saw.

Lastly, because he is a poet, we must expect to find in him many apparent inconsistencies. He sees some truth which he judges of the highest importance; he proclaims it aloud, with all his might, and with unwearied iteration. He is not at pains to modify, to qualify, to point out possible limitations; for, as poet, he knows that such qualifications must generally rob the truth of much of its force and effect. Elsewhere we shall find him proclaiming with great emphasis the whole of the possible qualifications, bodied forth as a distinct and separate truth. One instance shall suffice; but it is typical of many. The virtue and absolute necessity of obedience, loyalty, discipline, subordination, Carlyle seemed never tired of urging with such stress and insisting reiteration that one would almost think that,

\(^1\) Frederic Harrison, *The Choice of Books, etc.*
with him, the whole duty of man was summed up in the doctrine of non-resistance. And yet, suddenly, we come upon a passage such as this:

Obedience is good, and indispensable: but if it be obedience to what is wrong and false,—good Heavens, there is no name for such a depth of human cowardice and calamity; spurned everlastingly by the gods. Loyalty? Will you be loyal to Beelzebub? will you "make a covenant with Death and Hell"? I will not be loyal to Beelzebub; I will become a Nomadic Chactaw rather, a barricading Sansculotte, a Conciliation-Hall repealer; anything and everything is venial to that.

What more can be said on that side of the question?

For these various reasons no attempt is made here to summarise Carlyle’s creed and opinions. As occasion offered I have tried to indicate in my notes to the text what was the general tendency of his teaching on isolated points. It is true with regard to every great writer, truer perhaps of Carlyle than of most, that in any attempt to understand him, we must rely mainly upon what he himself has written, rather than on what has been written about him.

N.B.—The references in the Notes to Carlyle’s other works are in all cases to the ‘Shilling’ or ‘People’s’ edition.

III.—CARLYLE’S STYLE.

Carlyle’s literary manner is, as his matter, unique, original, striking in a very high degree. His style is totally unlike that of any other English writer. Professor Minto, in his Manual of English Prose Literature, has carefully analysed and, with abundant and happy illustrations, set forth the various characteristics and qualities of Carlyle’s manner of composition. To Professor Minto’s book the student must be referred; but perhaps a short summary of the general results at which he has arrived may not be out of place here. His analysis of style follows the principle of division with which the Indian student is, no doubt, familiar through Bain’s Rhetoric and Composition.

Vocabulary.—In his command of words, Professor Minto declares that Carlyle “occupies a very high place among the few that stand next to Shakespeare;” that he uses words of Latin and of Saxon origin indifferently, without any marked preference.
for either kind; that he makes large use of technical terms; that he allows himself great freedom in the coinage of new words; and that he does not hesitate to break through the ordinary laws of grammar in giving plurals to abstract nouns, such as the Immensities, the Silences, the Veracities, and the like.

Sentences.—Carlyle’s sentences are peculiarly irregular, seemingly unformed, loose to a degree, lengthened out for the purpose of explanation or exemplification, by appositional clauses, to the number of which there is no limit. He avoids all rhetorical tricks and artifices; periodic and balanced structure, antithesis, climax, anti-climax, and the like.

Paragraphs.—His paragraphs again are irregular and chaotic, in his ‘prophetic’ works (i.e., Sartor, Past and Present, Chartism, Latter-Day Pamphlets, etc.); but in his historical writings, notably in Frederick, arranged with the utmost regard to clearness.

Figures of Speech.—Similarity.—He revels in figures of similarity, especially in Metaphor (cf. his ‘mud-elements,’ ‘Phlegthon Fleetditch,’ ‘Popinjays,’ ‘Mumbo-Jumbo,’ ‘Sea Krakens,’ etc.); and Personification, (Silences, Immensities, Destinies).

Contiguity.—Metonomy, i.e., indicating a thing not by its literal name, but by use of expressive facts, expressive collaterals; this figure Carlyle uses abundantly.

Contrast.—The two figures of contrast, Antithesis and Epigram, Carlyle uses very sparingly. On the other hand, the more poetical figures of Hyperbole, Vision, Apostrophe, Exclamation, Interrogation, he resorts to probably more than any other English prose-writer. [Many instances in the course of this lecture will occur to the student.]

Qualities of Style.

Simplicity.—As Carlyle employs homely words, there is not much difficulty about his vocabulary, save with regard to word-coinage. He generally prefers the concrete (always simpler) to the abstract. His subjects are never abstruse. [Here Professor Minto seems rather to overstate the matter. He is plainly thinking of Carlyle’s later works whose subjects

1 On this point Principal Shairp remarks, “He was weary of glib words and fluent periods, which impose on reader and writer alike, which film over the chasms of their ignorance, and make them think they know what they do not know.”
are necessarily not abstruse; but even with them, and much more with regard to his earlier writings, his Essays, his *Sartor Resartus*, even his lectures on *Heroes*, the ever-present Mysticism of the thought makes his writings far from easy reading. The present lecture is, on the whole, easier than many of Carlyle's other works, but even here there are numerous passages which cannot be called simple, in any ordinary sense of the term.]

**Clearness.**—Here again Frederick, a model of clearness in every way, is opposed to the 'Prophetic Utterances,' which at first sight seem confused enough. Carlyle never cares to be logically exact. [This point has been already dealt with. Carlyle is primarily a Poet, an Emotionalist, a stimulating influence; logical exactness, niceness of definition can never stimulate.]

**Strength.**—Carlyle has all the elements of strength.

**Pathos.**—His writings are 'not without gleams of pathos, all the more touching from the surrounding ruggedness' . . . . [Professor Minto seems to under-rate Carlyle's pathos; and more telling illustrations than he has given might easily be found.]

**The Ludicrous.**—Carlyle's sense of the ludicrous is particularly strong. He excels both in cynicism and in derision; very seldom however at the expense of individuals. But there is always present in him an element of kindliness, through which his sense of the ludicrous rises into true humour.

**Melody, Taste, Harmony.**—He has a peculiar rythm of his own, but he is too rugged to be melodious. There is however a perfect harmony in his writings: sense and sound are in total agreement. He sometimes sins against 'Taste;' he is inclined to 'rant' at times; and is even 'coarse.' [It may be a question whether in thus violating 'taste,' he is not generally loyal to the laws of harmony.]¹

**Kinds of Composition.**

**Description.**—Carlyle is one of the very greatest descriptive artists, whether his subject be external nature, men and women, their personal appearance, and even more their feelings and character.

¹ For the remarks in brackets Professor Minto is in no way responsible.
Introduction.

Narrative.—The history of Frederick the Great is a masterpiece of narrative. In his earlier works the narrative is frequently interrupted by preachings and moralising.

In Exposition Professor Minto finds Carlyle defective.

In Persuasion he appeals almost entirely to the emotions. He declaims, but does not argue. He makes no attempt to conciliate opponents; rather offends them. Hence he gains no ground with those who are at first not disposed to agree with him. On the other hand, with others he is the most persuasive of writers. In the same way his peculiar style is a rock of offence to many, but is extremely fascinating to others.

It was once generally said that Carlyle's peculiar style was founded on that of the German writers, and especially of Jean Paul. Macaulay once speaks of the 'half-German jargon of the present day,' no doubt in allusion to Carlyle. But this idea is a mistaken one. Carlyle's style became peculiarly marked at a period considerably later in date than his study of Jean Paul. As with all original writers, his matter and manner are inextricably united. It would have been impossible for Carlyle to have changed his style without at the same time changing his whole way of thinking and feeling. When we speak of a writer having formed or modelled his style upon that of some other writer, we use language very likely to mislead. The real truth is somewhat in this way. The continued study of certain writers or schools of writers frequently results, if admiration and sympathy are in some degree present, in an assimilation of the ways of thinking and feeling on the part of the reader to the ways of thinking and feeling in the author he is studying. Thus, since the manner of outward expression is entirely dependent upon the manner of thinking and feeling, the spiritual affinity between master and disciple is manifested in a similarity in the manner of expression;—that is, in the literary style. Thus Charles Lamb's style at times recalls the Elizabethans, at times the prose-writers of the seventeenth century, at times
the Annian humorists, because there was in Lamb's way of thinking and feeling something in common with all these. In this way Carlyle may have been unconsciously influenced by Jean Paul; though to what extent it is for those to point out who are equally familiar with the work of Jean Paul and of Carlyle.

With regard to the real origin of Carlyle's style we have his own explicit utterance:

As to my poor style, Edward Irving and his admiration of the old Puritans and Elizabethans—whom at heart I never could entirely adore, though trying hard—his and everybody's doctrine on that head played a much more important part than Jean Paul upon it. And the most important by far was that of nature, you would perhaps say, if you had ever heard my father speak, or my mother, and her inward melodies of heart and voice.

Carlyle's exuberance of metaphor has been already noticed. It is significant that he dwells upon the same trait in his father's manner of speaking: "None of us will ever forget that bold glowing style of his, flowing free from the untutored soul, full of metaphor, though he knew not what metaphor was." 1

But Carlyle was quite aware of the eccentricity of his style, and at times tried to alter it. He writes in his private Journal, (1833): "My mode of writing for the last two days quite the old one, and very far from the right. How alter it? It must be altered. Could I not write more as I do here? My style is like no other man's. The first sentence betrays me. How wrong is that? Mannerism at least!"

But Carlyle made no real attempt to change his mode of expression; feeling, no doubt, that such attempt would be a mere fighting against nature. Very significant is the following utterance of his,—"The poor people seem to think a style can be put off or put on, not like a skin, but like a coat. Is not a skin, verily a product and close kinsfellow of all that lies under it; exact type of the nature of the beast, not to be plucked off without flaying and death?" 2 This metaphorical criticism contains probably the whole truth of the matter. Macaulay says that if Addison had "clothed his thoughts in the half-German jargon of the present day . . . his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner." But it is evident that the thought and

1 Reminiscence of James Carlyle.
2 Private Journal, quoted by Froude.
feeling of the *Spectator* essays could not by any possibility have been clothed in the language of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, nor the thought and feeling of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* in the language of the *Spectator* essays; that is, if Carlyle is right in holding that style is rather to be compared with a skin than a coat.

It has often been objected that Carlyle's style is not literary English; again, that he does not try to say 'things worth saying in the best way possible.' To such criticism the only answer can be, what is literary English? What is the best way possible? The manner of expressing thought and feeling in English has changed as repeatedly as have the ways of thinking and feeling among English people; nor has any final standard of style either in prose or poetry been attained, or is it attainable.

"Know thy thought," writes Carlyle to John Sterling, in answer to some stricture of his friend's upon the style of *Sartor Resartus*,—"Know thy thought—believe it—front heaven and earth with it, in whatsoever words Nature and Art have made readiest for thee. If one has thoughts not hitherto uttered in English books, I see nothing for it but you must use words not found there, must make words, with moderation and discretion of course. That I have not always done it so proves only that I was not strong enough, an accusation to which I, for one, will never plead not-guilty. For the rest pray that I may have more and more strength!"

Here, then, seems a sound rule towards good writing,—*Know your thought; express it in whatsoever words Nature and Art have made readiest for you; if you cannot express it as you wish without departing from the ordinary rules and methods of writing followed by your contemporaries, you may depart from them,—only with moderation and discretion. Whether you have used moderation and discretion can only be determined by a careful examination of the thoughts and feelings you have given expression to; whether they are such as to justify your departure from the ordinary modes, or whether you only believed them to be so; if the latter, then you are plainly convicted of affectation, egotism, and imposture, and the whole value of your work, your style included, is found wanting, and will all in time be swept away, never to trouble purists or others any more.

1 M. Edmond Scherer, *Essays on English Literature.*
Carlyle's style can only be justified along with the thoughts and feelings which it expressed. Matter and manner must stand or fall together. If it is as yet too early to pass final judgment on his teaching, it is also too early to pass final judgment on his style. It is vain to throw Carlyle's style in the teeth of any of his declared admirers. Such will answer, “The style that is to you a stumbling block I would not on any account have changed. It is to me an instrument of immense power and compass, of infinite variety of tone and modulation, capable of expressing thoughts and moods of feeling which could not find complete expression in any other way than this. Useless that you quote mannerisms. These mannerisms to me constitute a part of the charm, for they are natural to the man, are indeed the man himself. If you object that he frequently sets the ordinary rules of rhetoric and grammar at defiance, I reply that he is justified in so doing by the effect at which he aimed, and which he also achieved; and submit, moreover, that grammar was made for man and not man for grammar. If you add that Carlyle's often repeated personifications, his Destinies, Necessities, Dumb Veracities, Eternal Voices, Fact, Nature, are so many synonyms for the homely phrase, 'circumstances beyond our control,' I answer that they are not synonyms, unless a school-boy's paraphrase of a Shakesperian lyric be the same thing as the lyric itself. To logical analysis they may be the same thing, but then, as a disciple of Carlyle, I hold that logical analysis is powerless to deal with poetry; and Carlyle is pre-eminently a poet.”

Perhaps the best criticism of Carlyle's style is (rather in defiance of his own theory of unconsciousness) from his own pen. In Sartor Resartus, describing the style of his imaginary hero, Teufelsdröckh, he has characteristically enumerated most of the merits and most of the faults which later critics have discovered in his own manner of composition. The whole passage may be quoted, and with it our remarks on this subject fittingly concluded.

In respect of style our author manifests the same genial capability, marred too often by the same rudeness, inequality, and apparent want of intercourse with the higher classes. Occasionally, as above hinted we find consummate vigour, a true inspiration; his burning thoughts step

1 Add to this, want of sympathy with the best literature of his time.
forth in fit burning words, like so many full-formed Minervas, issuing amid flame and splendour from Jove's head; a rich idiomatic diction, picturesque allusions, fiery poetic emphasis, or quaint tricksy turns; all the graces and terrors of a wild imagination, wedded to the clearest intellect, alternate in beautiful vicissitude. Were it not that sheer sleeping and soporific passages; circumlocutions, repetitions, touches even of pure doting jargon, so often intervene! On the whole, Professor Teufelsdröckh is not a cultivated writer. Of his sentences perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes, buttressed up by props (of parentheses and dashes), and ever with this or the other tagrag hanging from them; a few even sprawl out helplessly on all sides, quite broken-backed and dismembered. Nevertheless, in almost his very worst moods, there lies in him a singular attraction. A wild tone pervades the whole utterance of the man, like its keynote and regulator; now screwing itself aloft as into the Song of Spirits, or else the shrill mockery of Fiends; now sinking in cadences, not without melodious heartiness though sometimes abrupt enough, into the common pitch, when we hear it only as a monotonous hum; of which hum the true character is extremely difficult to fix. Up to this hour we have never fully satisfied ourselves whether it is a tone and hum of real Humour, which we reckon among the very highest qualities of genius, or some echo of mere Insanity and Inanity, which doubtless rank below the very lowest.\(^1\)

**IV.—THE HERO AS POET AND THE DOCTRINE OF HERO-WORSHIP.**

The circumstances which led to the appearance of Carlyle as a public lecturer have already been briefly related in the preliminary sketch of Carlyle's life. Carlyle's genius had already been recognised by those qualified to judge; he had already given to the public work destined to be immortal. But he was far from being a 'popular' writer, and the trade of literature was, in his case, scarcely sufficient to 'make provision for the day that was passing over him,' and to enable him to continue his work untrammelled by anxiety. It was then that Miss Martineau and 'various honourable women' hit on the idea that Carlyle should deliver a certain number of lectures, for which tickets should be issued to such friends, admirers, or generally curious persons, as were willing to pay some trifling fee for the privilege of seeing and hearing the new prophet. Carlyle, with some reluctance, consented. The

\(^1\) Sartor Resartus, I., iv.
first course was to consist of six lectures on German Literature, and Willis's Rooms in London were hired for the purpose. 'The grand news of all,' wrote Carlyle to his brother, John Carlyle, 'I am to lecture on German literature in May next. Ach Gott! It makes my heart tremble when I think of it; but it is to be done.'

In spite of Carlyle's fears, the lectures were a magnificent success in every way. It became at once manifest that, although Carlyle's method of speaking was entirely different from that of the ordinary platform orator, although what he had to say was largely new, strange, and (in part) unacceptable to the majority of his hearers, he was none the less a powerful and impressive speaker, one whom it was worth while paying a little to hear, one whom, as his wife said, it would be worth the public's while 'to keep alive at some moderate cost.'

This was in the spring of 1837, when the History of the French Revolution was just coming out. Next year another course of lectures, twelve in all, on the History of European Literature and Culture, was delivered in a public hall in Edward Street, Portman Square. Again, in 1839, six lectures on the Revolutions of Modern Europe, and in 1840, on Tuesdays and Fridays from the 5th to 22nd of May, the six lectures which were to be the final course, on Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History. 'Consider my frightful outlook,' wrote Carlyle to Emerson in April, 'with a course of lectures to give on "Heroes and Hero-worship,"—from Odin to Burns!' On another occasion he said, 'When I had to give my lectures on Hero-worship, I felt as if I were going to be hanged.'

The realization turned out, as usual, to be not quite so 'frightful' as the outlook had been. In July Carlyle again wrote to Emerson:—

My lectures, were in May, about Great Men. The misery of it was hardly equal to that of former years, yet still was very hateful. I had got to a certain feeling of superiority over my audience; as if I had something to tell them, and would tell it them. At times I felt as if I could, in the end, learn to speak. The beautiful people listened with boundless toler-ance, eager attention. I meant to tell them, among other things, that man was still alive, Nature not dead or like to die; that all true men continued true to this hour. The lecture on Mahomet ('the Hero as Prophet') astonished my worthy friends beyond measure. It seems then that this

1 Froude, Carlyle's Life in London, I., iv.
Mahomet was not a quack? Not a bit of him! That he is a better Christian, with his 'bastard Christianity,' than the most of us shovel-hatted? I guess than almost any of you! Not so much as Oliver Cromwell ("the Hero as King") would I allow to have been a quack. All quacks I asserted to be and to have been Nothing, chaff that would not grow; my poor Mahomet "was wheat with barn sweepings;" Nature had tolerantly hidden the barn sweepings; and as to the wheat, behold she had said Yes to it, and it was growing!—On the whole, I fear I did little but confuse my esteemed audience. I was amazed, after all their reading of me, to be understood so ill:—gratified nevertheless to see how the rudest speech of a man's heart goes into men's hearts, and is the welcome thing there. Withal I regretted that I had not six months of preaching, whereby to learn to preach, and explain things fully! In the fire of the moment I had all but decided on setting out for America this autumn, and preaching far and wide like a very lion there. Quit your paper formulas, my brethren,—equivalent to old wooden idols, un-divine as they: in the name of God, understand that you are alive, and that God is alive! Did the Upholsterer make this Universe? Were you created by the Tailor? I tell you, and conjure you to believe me literally, No, a thousand times No! Thus did I mean to preach, on "Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic," in America too. Alas! the fire of determination died away again: all that I did resolve upon was to write these lectures down, and in some way promulgate them further. Two of them accordingly are actually written; the third to be begun on Monday: it is my chief work here, ever since the end of May. 1

From the foregoing extract we are enabled to date with some exactness the time when 'Hero-worship' was actually prepared for the press. But the book did not appear at once. In December Carlyle again writes to Emerson:—'My Hero-lectures lie still in manuscript. Fraser offers no amount of 'cash adequate to be an outward motive; and inwardly there is 'as yet none altogether clear, though I rather feel of late as if it 'were clearing.' Ultimately, satisfactory terms were arranged 'and the book appeared in due course. A copy was sent, as usual, 'to Emerson. 'The book is a good book,' wrote the American 'philosopher, in terms of praise surely not excessive, 'and goes to 'make men brave and happy. I bear glad witness to its cheering 'and arming quality.' 'Hero-worship' was the only course of 'lectures which Carlyle himself prepared for the press. Recently, 'however, the lectures on European Literature have been published from notes taken down by one who was present.

From a financial point of view Carlyle's short career as lecturer proved eminently satisfactory. Each course brought

1 Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson, I., 293, 294.
him in, he says, 'on the average, perhaps, 200. for a month's
work.' His audience was attentive and sympathetic, 'the
accomplished and distinguished, the beautiful, the wise, some-
thing of what is best in England': Leigh Hunt was there, to
make reports for his Examiner, John Stuart Mill was present;
so was Robert Browning; Macready, the great Tragedian,
listened to the lecture on The Hero as Prophet, and pronounced
himself 'charmed, carried away': it was delivered, he said,
'with a fervour and eloquence which only complete conviction
of truth could give.'

The Biographers of Carlyle have collected from various
sources records of the impression created in the minds of
several of his audience by the phenomenon of Carlyle as lecturer.
To one he was 'a rather small, spare, ugly Scotchman, with
a strong accent'; whereon Dr. Garnett pertinently remarks,
'Carlyle's beauty is a matter of opinion, but his height was
five feet eleven'; to another 'he seemed like an inspired boy:
thruths and thoughts that made one move on the benches came
from his apparently unconscious mind, couched in the most
grotesque style, and yet condensed to a degree of intensity.'
Another reports, 'His manner is very quiet, but he speaks like
one tremendously convinced of what he utters, and who has
much in him that is unutterable.' Leigh Hunt in the Ex-
aminer tells us 'how he touched in his usual masterly way,
what may he called the mountain-tops of his subject'; how the
effect of his teaching was 'as if some Puritan had come to life
again, liberalized by German philosophy, and his own intense
reflections and experience,' and Bunsen spoke of the 'striking
and rugged thoughts thrown at people's heads.'

Unfortunately in Mrs. Carlyle's Letters and Memorials'
there is no allusion to the Hero-lectures. There is however
an interesting letter addressed to her husband's mother in
which Jane Carlyle speaks of one of the lectures in the third
course. The following extract is worth quoting:—

My dear Mother,—The last lecture was indeed the most splendid he
ever delivered, and the people were all in a heart-fever over it; on all
sides of me people who did not know me, and might therefore be believed,
were expressing their raptures audibly. One man (a person of originally
large fortune, which he got through in an uncommon way, namely, in acts
of benevolence) was saying, 'He's a glorious fellow; I love the fellow's
very faults,' &c., &c., while another answered, 'Aye, faith, is he; a fine,
Introduction.

wild chaotic, noble chap,' and so on over the whole room. In short, we left the concern in a sort of whirlwind of 'glory' not without 'bread.'

Carlyle's own references to his lectures are, characteristically, generally self-depreciatory, and in reading the following extract from his Reminiscences, we must not forget, that at the time the words were penned, the great tragedy that had fallen on his life, added to that bitter sense of disappointment, when he saw, or fancied he saw, that his life had been a failure, that his passionate gospel had fallen on deaf ears, and the nation he had tried to save, seemed to be rushing ever more recklessly down the steep, broad path which, he believed, leads only to destruction—this sorrow, and this sense of failure cast its dark shadow over all his past life, lending a falsely sombre hue to much that had not in truth lacked sunny gleams of joy and honest satisfaction. Nevertheless the extract is too interesting to be omitted:

Our main revenue three or four (?) years now was lectures; in Edward Street, Portman Square, the only free room there was; earnestly forwarded by Miss and Thomas Wilson, of Eccleston Street, (who still live and are good), by Miss Martineau, by Henry Taylor, Frederick Elliott, etc., etc. Brought in, on the average, perhaps 200£., for a month's labour; first of them must have been in 1838, I think; Willis's Rooms, 'detestable mixture of prophecy and play-actorism,' as I sorrowfully defined it; nothing could well be hatefuller to me; but I was obliged. And she, oh she was my angel, and unwearied helper and comforter in all that; how we drove together, we poor two, to our place of execution; she with a little drop of brandy to give me at the very last, and shone around me like a bright aureola, when all else was black and chaos! God reward thee, dear one, now when I cannot even own my debt.

The lectures were spoken without the aid of manuscript notes. 'One evening,' writes Mr. Moncure Conway, 'Carlyle brought a manuscript, and found it much in his way. On the next evening he brought some notes, but these also tripped him up, till he left them. The rest of his lectures were given without note, simply like conversation, and they required very little alteration when they came to be printed.'

2 Reminiscence of Jane Welsh Carlyle (186, 187(.
3 Moncure D. Conway—Thomas Carlyle, 24.
Although, indeed, Carlyle’s spoken style bears an unmistakable resemblance to his written style; is, indeed, in the main, necessarily identical with it, there is none the less a certain difference, which also deserves to be noted. This difference is as plainly noticeable in the Rectorial Address as in the Hero-lectures, delivered twenty-five years before. Carlyle’s platform utterances are of the manner of talk, not of oratory. Eloquence there is, in plenty, and of the highest kind; humour too, and pathos, but these are not rhetorical. There are no attempts at ‘exordiums’ or ‘perorations.’ “We must here end what we had to say of the Hero-Poet.”—Nothing could be simpler, less ambitious, nothing more unlike the long drawn-out period which closes some oration by a celebrated ‘parliamentary hand,’ sitting down flushed and triumphant amid ‘loud and continued applause.’ The general tone, too, of Carlyle’s utterances is softer, more conciliatory, less arrogant, when he is speaking face to face with his fellow-men, than it is when, in the privacy of his own study, he pours out streams of burning scorn on the ‘shams’ and ‘unveracities’ of his age, or passionately calls upon his deluded generation to ‘awake, arise, or be forever fallen.’ To the students at Edinburgh, to the literary and fashionable celebrities in London, his language and bearing is considerate, gentle, quietly impressive; never angry, or scornful; indignation, passionate enough, lights up on occasion, as in the noble passage on Cromwell in the The Hero as King, ‘What had this man gained; what had he gained?’ but it never rises into a shriek as it is sometimes apt to do in Past and Present, Latter-Day Pamphlets, and the other ‘prophetic utterances,’ and it speedily sinks down into quiet again.

Nothing, surely, could be more gracefully delicate, more sincerely courteous than the words in which Carlyle in the last lecture of the Hero series, takes leave of his audience. Courteous in truth, for the son of the Annandale peasant was a true gentleman in every fibre of him, as, indeed, he could not have helped being:—‘Often enough, with these abrupt utterances thrown out isolated, unexplained, has your tolerance been put to the trial. Tolerance, patient candour, all-hoping favour and kindness, which I will not speak of at present. The accomplished and distinguished, the beautiful, the wise, something of what is best in England, have listened patiently
Introduction.

‘to my rude words. With many feelings, I heartily thank you all; and say, Good be with you all!’

It is now time to consider Carlyle’s famous doctrine of Hero-worship, his insistence on the vital necessity of admiring, following and obeying Great Men. This doctrine, like almost every other preached by the great moralist, has been frequently misstated and misrepresented by hostile critics; and even amongst Carlyle’s professed admirers there has been a difference of opinion as to the real significance which Carlyle attached to it. The phrase, ‘Hero-worship’ was originally Hume’s, but it is now inseparably connected with Carlyle. I have written on this point elsewhere: ‘In the stress which he always laid on the importance of recognizing and reverencing human greatness, Carlyle once more ran counter to some of the tendencies of his age. As the world drifted towards Democracy and began to dream of Equality, the feeling of reverence for the great declined. It was asserted more and more that the Great Man is but the product of his age, a creature of circumstances, as much as the meanest of his fellow-creatures. Inequalities result from conditions purely artificial. Take away these conditions, and all men will be found more or less alike. Democracy seems to declare that the vote of A is of equal value with the vote of B, C, D, and the other letters of the alphabet. There is, of course, an element of truth in this way of thinking, fully recognised by Carlyle on occasion; for instance, in the essay on Johnson, where he declares that the Great Man is the “synopsis and epitome of his age,” or again, when he speaks of Dante as being the “spokesman of the middle ages.” Nor has any Radical ever attacked “tailor-made” distinctions as the author of Sartor Resartus attacked them. But, on the other hand, Carlyle felt that a belief in the real equality of men, apart from temporal and artificial inequalities, rests largely upon self-conceit, self-satisfaction, that is, stupidity, spiritual blindness, incapacity for reverence, wonder, religion: “Living wisdom” is “the symbol of the godlike” to man. Without reverence for the God as revealed in Great Men, there can be no real living religion; without religion the world is dead. This religiosity, this reverence, the world seemed to be fast losing; Carlyle, with the vehemence of a prophet, continued to insist upon its importance ever more strongly.’
Carlyle believed that true liberty consists in finding one’s true superior and loyally obeying him. He held that the great free ages in the world’s history were those in which men had power to discern human greatness and joyfully to follow it. Is this position true? Modern schools of philosophic history seem to deny it. So far as they notice the Great Man at all, it is to ‘account for him’ to show how he ‘represented the spirit of the age,’ how the times called him forth. They lay more stress upon the growth of ‘free institutions,’ ‘development of popular liberties’ and the like. Carlyle, on the other hand, asserted that the Great Man, the Hero, could not be ‘accounted for’ in this way, that he was the ‘free gift of Nature;’ that ‘institutions,’ ‘constitutions’ were but so many tools, useless, unless in the hands of an able workman. For long Carlyle made small headway against the prevailing opinion, but signs are not wanting now that the tide is beginning to turn. An Oxford scholar declares that Plutarch is likely to outlive Buckle. More and more history tends to become biography of great men, and the foremost living English historian is a professed disciple of Carlyle.

‘I am well aware,’ says Carlyle in the lecture on The Hero as Divinity, ‘that in these days the thing I call Hero-worship, professes to have gone out, and finally ceased. This, for reasons which it will be worth while some time to inquire into, is an age that as it were denies the existence of great men, denies the desirableness of great men. Show our critics a great man, a Luther for example, they begin to what they call ‘account’ for him, not to worship him, but take the dimensions of him—and bring him out to be a little kind of man! He was the “creature of the Time,” they say; the Time called him forth, the Time did everything, he nothing—but what we the little critic could have done too! This seems to me but melancholy work. The Time call forth? Alas, we have known Times call loudly enough for their great man; but not find him when they called! He was not there; Providence had not sent him; the Time, calling its loudest, had to go to confusion and wreck because he would not come when called.’

This, in brief, is Carlyle’s position, and it seems to some abundantly clear that human history is on his side, that nations have been great and prosperous, have done good and lasting work, only when they found their great men, their heroes, and when they had in themselves sufficient wisdom, sufficient heroism, to recognize and follow them.

2 Hero-Worship, 11, 12.
But does it follow from this, that Carlyle, as some critics have said, cared everything for Heroes, Great Men, and nothing for the general mass of mankind? Not at all, we may venture to think, if we look more closely. The Hero requires a Heroic nation. The nation that can recognize its hero, can loyally obey him, in so far partakes of his Heroic nature, just as Carlyle says,—'the imagination that shudders at the Hell of Dante, is not that the same faculty, weaker in degree, as Dante's own.' And again he tells men, they can all be heroes. 'If Hero means a sincere man, why may not every one of us be a hero? A world all sincere, a believing world: the like has been; the like will again be,—cannot help being. That was the right sort of worshippers for Heroes: never could the truly Better be so reverenced as when all were True and Good!'

—and again: 'There needs not a great soul to make a Hero; there needs a God-created soul which will be true to its origin; that will be a great soul! The like has been seen, we find. The like will be again seen, under wider forms than the Presbyterian: there can be no lasting good done till then.'

I have ventured to put the last words in italics, because they show clearly that Carlyle thought, that even more indispensable than the appearance of a great hero-soul, was the existence of a wide-spread feeling of Heroism, a 'nation of Heroes,' he calls it, to welcome the great hero-soul and to follow him. Consider too how often he declares that his one consolation, his one hope for the world, 'the living rock amid all rushings-down whatsoever' is—not that Nature would continue to send Hero-souls as she has done in the past—but that there exists in the human mind an indestructible reverence for heroes, a capacity for Hero-worship, that is, a share of Heroism, which 'no sceptical logic or general triviality' can ever take away. Carlyle seems less severe on human nature than he is generally supposed to be; and, once more, does it not become manifest that he is much wider than his critics, that he includes his critics?

But there is another side to the doctrine of Hero-worship equally important, and insisted on with equal fervour and earnestness. And this side Carlyle has himself pointed out in the letter to Emerson already quoted: 'I meant to tell them, among other things, that man was still alive. Nature not dead or

1 Hero-Worship, 118. 2 Ibid, 134.
like to die; that all true men continued true to this hour.' Mahomet was not a Quack; Cromwell was not a Quack; all quacks were nothing, chaff that will not grow. Mahomet was wheat and barn-sweepings; Nature had hidden the barn-sweepings, but she had said Yes to the wheat, and behold, it was growing. All great men, all Heroes, urges Carlyle, (and it is the very keystone of his ethical teaching), have been sincere men, have seen into the heart of things, have pierced beneath the 'outer hulls and wrappings,' have brushed away appearances and hearsays, and beneath the transient symbol have had clear vision of the Eternal which does not change. It matters not under what symbol the Hero has had knowledge of Truth, it matters not what work circumstances may have given him to do; Odin with his Norse Paganism, Mahomet and Islam, Dante with his Mediæval Catholicism, Cromwell with his Protestantism; Prophet, Poet, Priest, Man of Letters, King, they were all identical in this respect, that they were sincere, that they saw clearly, and lived in the light of that vision. It is by virtue of their sincerity, their goodness, the Truth that was in them, that their work still lives, and must live forever. 'Bad is negative' and can do nothing; good is eternal. 'Let every one of us,' he writes elsewhere, 'cling to this last article of faith, and know it as the beginning of all knowledge worth the name: that no good thing, in any time or in any place, was, is or can be performed by any man in virtue of his badness, but always and solely in spite thereof.'

Closely connected with, indeed inseparable from, this doctrine of the real Heroism of all human greatness is that other doctrine of Carlyle's, which has perhaps raised more opposition than any other of his sayings, the doctrine which affirms the identity in the long-run of might and right. 'Mights . . . do in the long-run, and forever will in the long-run, mean Rights.' This has been a stumbling-block to many, not to hostile critics alone. These have imagined that Carlyle believed in nothing 'but the divine right of strength,' the 'divine right of kings to govern wrong,' because, at the moment, they happened to have the means to enforce their will. This is, of course, not Carlyle's meaning. He himself emphatically denied it:—

With respect to that poor heresy of [might being the symbol of right

---

1 Miscell. iv, 80.  
2 Past and Present, 164.
to a certain great and venerable author: I shall have to tell Lecky one day that quite the converse or reverse is the great and venerable author's real opinion—namely, that right is the eternal symbol of might: ... that, in fact, he probably never met with a son of Adam more contemptuous of might except where it rests on the above origin.  

But we need not have recourse to private utterances to disprove the charge that Carlyle worshipped mere strength. We can find in his public utterances sufficient evidence as to the real meaning of the apparently paradoxical dictum. 'Might and Right,' he tells us in Chartism, 'do differ frightfully from hour to hour; but give them centuries to try it in, they are found to be identical.' And again in the lecture before us, with regard to the might of the Arabian Caliph,—

If the great Cause of Man and Man's work on God's earth, get no furtherance from the Arabian Caliph, them no matter how many scimitars he drew, how many gold piasters pocketed, and what uproar and blazing he made in the world—he was but a loud-sounding inanity and futility; at bottom, he was not at all.

Or once again, more unmistakeably, of Luther. Luther standing on Truth fronts the whole world; defies Popes, Emperors, Electors, all the seemingly strong powers of the earth:—

I stand on this, since you drive me to it. Standing on this, I a poor German Monk am stronger than you all. I stand solitary, friendless, but on God's Truth; you with your tiaras, triple-hats, with your treasuries and armouries, thunders spiritual and temporal, stand on the Devil's Lie, and are not so strong!—

And Luther had might on his side, in spite of appearances. The armies of the Emperor and other Catholic kings, terrors of the Inquisition, Invincible Armadas, crafty Jesuitisms, availed nothing. Protestantism, with the 'poor German Monk' for prophet, has proved itself the strong thing, and is the strong thing in Europe and the world to this hour,—because it was the right thing, founded on sincerity and 'heart-hatred,' of shams. There are real Mights, and seeming Mights, the latter often very loud-sounding, making a great display, in widespread territories, huge standing armies, overflowing treasuries, nay, even in Parliamentary majorities and 'force of public opinion'; but the real Might, founded on Truth and Right, works silently all the while, in a manner not easily calculable, nor to

1 Froude, Carlyle's Life in London, II, xxxiii.
2 Miscell. vi, 158.
3 Hero-Worship, 124.
be logically 'accounted for,' and in the long-run makes manifest its true character in a very unmistakeable way. 'Let us honour the Great Empire of Silence once more.'

This, then, roughly, may give some clue to Carlyle's doctrine of Might and Right, of Heroism and Hero-worship, of the inherent rightness of all true greatness, of the identity of Intellect and Morality, of the divineness of Silence; doctrines which have been and still are stumbling-blocks to many, but which, we may perhaps begin to see, must be true notwithstanding; that is to say, if we believe with Carlyle that the power that rules and guides this Universe is a just power and not an unjust.

We have next to notice the boundless tolerance, comprehensiveness, involved in this conception of Carlyle's of the sincerity and inherent truth of all Heroes and Heroisms. Under whatever symbol Heroism (which is also sincere belief) manifested itself, the thing was true, it could not have lasted had it not been so, and it will in its essence be true for ever. Norse Paganism was true in the essence of it; true so far as it went, and it lasts to-day, 'unconsciously, and combined with higher things, it is in us yet, that old Faith withal! ... For the whole Past, as I keep repeating, is the possession of the Present, the Past had always something true, and is a priceless possession.' Again Dante's Catholicism was true. 'The old was true, if it no longer is. In Dante's day it needed no sophistry, self-blinding or other dishonesty, to get itself reckoned true. It was good then: nay there is in the soul of it a deathless good.' There is some good in it, he admits, even yet, 'The poor old Popehood will not die away entirely, as Thor has done, for some time yet; nor ought it. We may say, the old never dies till this happen, till all the soul of good that was in it have got itself transfused into the practical New.' Protestantism is also true and good, although the old formulas that were sufficient for Luther and Cromwell are no longer sufficient. 'Protestantism, if we look, has in these days produced its Goethe, its Napoleon; German Literature and the French Revolution.' For indeed, 'Various enough have been such religious symbols, what we call Religions: as men stood in this stage of culture, or the other, or could worse or better body-forth the God-like.'

1 Hero-Worship, 37. 2 Ibid, 127. 3 Ibid, 126. 4 Sartor Resartus, 155.
Carlyle has been accused of a lack of 'Modernism,' of standing apart from his age, of living entirely in the past; but this religious comprehensiveness is wholly modern, is perhaps the one great spiritual discovery of modern times, and it pervades all Carlyle's writings from first to last. Without it his intellectual and spiritual standpoint is unintelligible. Without sharing in it, the reader cannot to the full enter into the spirit of the lectures on Heroes, 'these wide roamings of ours through so many times and places in search of Heroes': we cannot sympathise with all these men and ages, their outer diversities blinding us to their inward identity. But, according to Carlyle, 'the actual True is the sum of all these; not any one of them by itself constitutes what of Human Nature is hitherto developed. Better to know them all than misknow them. "To which of these Three Religions do you specially adhere?" inquires Meister of his teacher. "To all the Three!" answers the other: "To all the Three; for they by their union first constitute the true Religion."'

In the old days such comprehensiveness was impossible. To Dante it was impossible; to Luther, to Cromwell it was impossible. Dante can find nothing for the Prophet of Islam but everlasting torture in Hell. 'Dante does not come before us as a large Catholic mind; rather as a narrow and even sectarian mind.' To Shakespeare such width of vision was, in his unconscious way, possible; for while we called Dante the melodious Priest of Middle-Age Catholicism, may we not call Shakespeare the still more melodious Priest of a true Catholicism, the "Universal Church" of the Future and all times?'

Again, this comprehensiveness of Carlyle's differs entirely from the tolerance of 18th century scepticism. The one is born of indifference and contempt, the other of love and sympathetic insight. Religions, said the old sceptics, are delusions, invented for selfish purposes by cunning priests, enforced for selfish purposes by tyrannical kings. Why torture and burn poor creatures for clinging to such and such absurd delusions. Leave the delusions alone, they will die of themselves, if left alone, and men will begin to live in the light of 'Reason' and be the happier for it. 'All religions are true,' answers Carlyle; 'Religion is

1 Hero-Worship, 37.
the soul of life.' 'I believe you will find in all histories,' Carlyle tells the Edinburgh students, 'that no nation that did not con-template this wonderful universe with an awe-stricken and rever-
' ential feeling that there was a great unknown, omnipotent, and ' all-wise, and all-victorious Being, superintending all men in it, 'and all interests in it—no nation ever came to very much, nor did 'any man either, who forgot that.' Do not persecute poor people who cling to the old religion, because to you that religion is superstitious; it may be indeed largely superstitions, but 'it lasts 'here for a purpose.' 'While a good work remains capable of 'being done by it, or what is inclusive of all, while a pious life re-' mains capable of being led by it, just so long, if we consider, will 'this or the other human soul adopt it, go about as a living 'witness of it. So long it will obtrude itself on the eye of us who 'reject it, till we in our practice too have appropriated whatso-'ever of truth was in it. Then, but also not till then, it will have 'no charm more for any man. It lasts here for a purpose. Let it 'last as long as it can.'

Such comprehensiveness, the spirit of the age, whose influence is clearly traceable in all that is best in modern literature, is very notable. It is philosophic in its breadth of view, deeply religious in its piercing intensity and unfettered sympathy.

Of the lecture on the Hero as Poet it is not necessary to say much. The doctrines peculiarly Carlylean contained in it I have touched upon both in the earlier part of this essay and in the notes. The lecture as a whole has always been a favourite with students and admirers of Carlyle, and is in truth, one of the most beautiful, if also one of the quietest pieces of writing to be found in the whole field of his works. 'The 'chapter on the Hero as Poet,' says an Oxford scholar who is an authority on the subject, 'contains the noblest words ever 'penned in English on Dante.' The passage which describes the face of Dante has been selected by the late Professor Shairp for special commendation. It is indeed in every sense genuine prose-poetry. There are also scattered throughout the lecture phrases and sentences which come upon us like flashes,—flashes of inspired criticisms—things that the world will not willingly 'let die.' A few at once occur;—that saying on the effect of

1 Miscell. vii, 176. 2 Hero-Worship, 127.
music:—'Who is there that, in logical language, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that!'—and of Dante's miseries;—'A nobler destiny was appointed for this Dante; and he, struggling like a man led towards death and crucifixion, could not help fulfilling it. Give him the choice of his happiness! He knew not, more than we do, what was really happy, what was really miserable.'—Or that description of the Francesca episode in the Inferno:—'A thing woven as out of rainbows, on a ground of eternal black. A small flute voice of infinite wail speaks there, into our very heart of hearts ................ I know not in the world an affection equal to that of Dante. It is a tenderness, a trembling, longing, pitying love: like the wail of Æolian harps, soft, soft, like a child's young heart;—and then that stern, sore-saddened heart! These longings of his towards his Beatrice; their meeting together in the Paradiso; his gazing on her pure transfigured eyes, her that had been purified by death so long, separated from him so far:—one likens it to the song of angels; it is among the purest utterances of affection, perhaps the very purest, that ever came out of a human soul.' And then, the comparison drawn between Dante and Shakespeare; the inner spirit of either made luminous in two brief sentences:—'Two fit men: Dante, deep, fierce as the central fire of the world; Shakespeare, wide, placid, far-seeing, as the Sun, the upper light of the world.' And of Shakespeare's 'laughter,' the sympathy of it:—'Such laughter, like sunshine on the deep sea, is very beautiful to me.' Notable too is that passage on Shakespeare's patriotism as displayed in his description of the Battle of Agincourt:—'There is a noble Patriotism in it,—far other than the "indifference" you sometimes hear ascribed to Shakespeare. A true English heart breathes, calm and strong, through the whole business; not boisterous, provocative; all the better for that. There is a sound in it like the ring of steel. This man too had a right stroke in him, had it come to that!'

Not less patriotic is Carlyle's own admiration for Shakespeare, that 'world-voice' which 'we English had the honour of producing':—'But call it worship, call it what you will, is it not a right glorious thing, and set of things, this that Shakespeare
'has brought us? For myself, I feel there is actually a kind of sacredness in the fact of such a man being sent into the earth. Is he not an eye to us all; a blessed Heaven-sent Bringer of Light?' Lastly, consider that conception, so fantastic to some, of Shakespeare as an English king, and 'rallying cry of the whole Anglo-Saxon race':—'We can fancy him as radiant aloft over all the nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence. From Paramatta, from New York, wheresoever, under what sort of Parish constable soever, English men and women are, they will say to one another: "Yes, this Shakespeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and kind with him."

And then, with a twinkle of humour, and touch of harmless sarcasm that cannot sting—never absent for very long with Carlyle:—'the most common-sense politician, too, if he pleases, may think of that.'

But leaving to the intelligent and sympathetic reader all further work in gem-collecting, for which, even in this brief lecture, there is an abundant field, it may be well, in conclusion, to examine a little Carlyle's method of criticism, here and elsewhere. It is, like everything else about him, unique. He differs equally widely from the old school of criticism and from the new. The old critics, furnished with certain standards of artistic excellence, gathered from Aristotle and elsewhere, approached their subject with the said apparatus, and began to take its measurement, and to dole out measured praise or blame according as the subject under review coincided or did not coincide with the orthodox standards; and amazing work they made of it when they had to deal with some Shakespeare, who could not by any means fit himself into their standards.—The new schools differ considerably. They try to discover their subject's own standard and methods, and thereby expound him; or else, borrowing the methods of modern scientific speculation, they deal with him on 'Evolutionary' principles and discover how he came to be at all, what influences produced him, how Trouvères and Troubadours culminated in Dante, how rude Miracle plays and dull Moralities in Hamlet and The Tempest.

Neither of these is Carlyle's method. He makes no attempt to 'evolve' or account for his heroes, for Dante or for Shake-
Introduction.

Speare. He tells us they are the free gift of Nature, so far as we can see; Shakespeare came to us, he says, 'as it were by mere accident.' None the less, however, he is careful to remind us, it was not really by accident. It was all by Law, but by law 'too deep for our scanning.' 'The Tree Igdrasil buds and withers by its own laws........yet it does bud and wither, and every bough and leaf of it, by fixed eternal laws; not a Sir Thomas Lucy but comes at the hour fit for him;........not a leaf rotting on the highway, but is indissoluble portion of solar and stellar systems; no thought, word or act of man 'but has sprung withal out of all men.' He admits that the schools of 'Scientific' Criticism, are based upon a true perception of truth, but he does not think their methods likely to make clear the workings of those laws which he and they both recognize to exist. The Empire of Silence will not be revealed in articulate, logical words.

Far less does Carlyle attempt to dole out to his subjects the due measure of praise and blame. He is not at pains to analyse men's characters or work, to split them up into their component parts, to classify and label each—so much good, so much evil, so much principle, so much prejudice. This is an ordinary enough feat; but to reveal by the power of sympathetic insight, the essential nature of a man, and the work of a man, which is in truth a part of the man, and is no mechanism to be taken to pieces and refitted, but something far more subtle and complex, is a far higher task, is the work of a poet and a humorist. This, however, is what Carlyle understands by criticism. You must first get to see your subject, he tells us, to sympathise with him and love him, then you will be able to portray him. 'Without love is no knowledge'; sympathy, combined with humour, he himself tells us is the 'finest perfection of poetic genius.' Carlyle is admittedly one of the first of humorists; and equally is it admitted that he always shows the intensest sympathy for the men and women of whom he wrote, not only for the heroes, Cromwell, Frederick, Shakespeare, Dante, Johnson, Abbot Samson, but also for the lesser and even unedifying or plainly vicious people, Boswell, Friederich Wilhelm, and Willelmus Sacrista. And it is for this reason that he has given the world so marvellous a series of historic portraits. Since Shakespeare no great English writer has possessed this gift in
anything like the same degree. He pushes aside non-essentials, trivialities, mere accidental coverings, and pierces deep down to the very soul of the matter, till the man and his work, as God made him, not as man lightly imagined him, stand revealed to us in life-like portraiture. 'Macaulay's Boswell,' says a critic, 'is the 'Boswell of his neighbours; Carlyle's, at least in some degree, 'the Boswell of his maker.' Abbot Samson, whose very name was forgotten for so many centuries, lives again for us, through Carlyle, a figure known, loved, and not easily forgotten:1 Cromwell has been reclaimed from oceans of the most confused misunderstanding; Johnson is known as men never knew him before, as Boswell scarcely knew him. No one now calls Mahomet an Impostor, or Burns a drunken libertine with a talent for singing; and as for Dante, it will not be too much to say, that the student of Dante who really desires to understand the great mediaeval poet and his work, will derive more help and guidance from Carlyle's few inspired pages than from whole volumes of commentaries—though these too are essential.

Unfortunately Carlyle's method is not likely to be adopted by any School of Criticism, for it demands an indispensable element not readily acquired by the schools—genius, and of the highest kind.

V.—ANALYSIS OF THE LECTURE, 'THE HERO AS POET.'

The Hero or Truly Great Man.

The Hero as divinity or Prophet is a production of long past ages, and cannot recur in ages possessing wider scientific knowledge. We cannot now regard any human being as a god or speaking with the voice of a god. We shall now view the Hero in the less ambitious, but also less questionable character of Poet. This character cannot pass. Let Nature only send a Hero, it is quite possible, in any age, that he be shaped into a Poet. [Page 1.]

We call our Great Men Heroes, Prophets, Poets, according to the varieties we note in them, also according to their sphere of action. But the different sphere of action is at the bottom of the distinction. According to 1 See Past and Present.
Introduction.

his sphere the Hero might be Prophet, King, Poet, Priest or anything else. The truly great man could be all sorts of men. The poet who could merely compose stanzas, could never do even that well. The true poet could have been Politician, Thinker, Legislator, Philosopher. So too a Mirabeau could have written tragedies. So Napoleon, so Louis XIV.'s Marshalls, e.g., Turenne. Petrarch and Boccaccio did diplomatic work. Burns might have made a better Mirabeau. [1]

Of course there are various aptitudes of Nature, but infinitely more of circumstance; and the latter have far oftener the greater influence. As with little men in the learning of trades, so also is it with the great man. Addison quoted in reference to the puny street-porter and the Herculean tailor. The great man too has to serve his apprenticeship—to Kingship, Philosophy, Poetry. He is what the world permits and bids him to be. That is the most important fact about the world. [2]

Poet and Prophet.

Poet and Prophet differ in our loose modern notions of them: but in some old languages they are the same; Vates means both, and fundamentally they are the same. Both have penetrated into the 'open secret' of the Universe 'the Divine idea of the World' lying at 'the bottom of Appearance,' especially the appearance of man. This divine mystery of the world in most times and places is greatly overlooked; and the world is regarded not as the realised Thought of God, but as a trivial, inert, commonplace thing. No use to speak of this, but a most mournful pity if we do not know it and live in the knowledge of it. [3]

The Vates (Poet or Prophet) has penetrated into this divine mystery. It is his message to reveal it to us. He knows it; cannot help knowing it. It is no Hearsay with him, but direct Insight and Belief. He cannot help being a sincere man. He is in earnest with the Universe. He is Vates first of all in being sincere. [4]

There is however a distinction between Prophet and Poet. The first seizes the sacred mystery on the moral side; he tells us what we are to do: the second seizes it on the aesthetic side; he tells us what we are to love. Yet these provinces run into one another; they cannot be disjoined. We cannot know what we are to do unless we know what we are to love. The highest voice ever heard in this earth said 'Consider the lilies of the field... Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' That was a glance into the deepest beauty. The rude Earth could not make these if her inward essence were not Beauty. So too Goethe said that the Beautiful was higher than the Good, for it included the Good. But the true Beautiful differs from the false as Heaven from Vauxhall. [4]

A few poets, ancient and modern, are accounted perfect. This is noteworthy and right, but it is an illusion. There can be no perfect poet. All men have some vein of poetry in them, no man is all poetry. We are all poets when we read a poem well, e.g., Dante's Inferno. We cannot make a Hamlet out of Saxo-Grammaticus, but we can make some kind of story. As the distinction is not specific, all definition must be arbitrary. The man
who has so much of the poetic element as to be noticeable is called poet; the man who has so much as to be far above the rest is called Universal. All men have something of the Universal in them, none, not Homer or Shakespeare, is wholly made of it. [5.]

But what is the difference between true Poetry and true Speech not poetical? According to late German critics the poet has an infinitude in him. There is some meaning in this if well meditated. But the old vulgar distinction of poetry being metrical is perhaps the best definition. Poetry has music in it, is a song. How much in the word musical! A musical thought is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the harmony, the melody of things. The meaning of song is deep. No one can express in logical words the effect music has on us. [5.]

Even the commonest speech is musical: every parish, every man has his own accent. Accent is a kind of chanting. All passionate language becomes of itself musical. All deep things are song. The central essence, the primal element of us seems to be song. So the Greeks fabled of Sphere-Harmonies. Poetry therefore is musical thought. The true poet thinks in that manner. But at bottom it turns on power of intellect: sincerity and depth of vision make a man a poet. See deep enough and you see musically, for the heart of nature is musical. [6.]

The Vates Poet seems to hold a poor rank compared with the Vates Prophet. Our first Hero was a divinity, a god, our second a Prophet, god-inspired, our third only a Poet, beautiful verse-maker, man-of-genius and so on. Is the estimate of great men gradually diminishing? Not so, there is the same peculiar admiration for the heroic gift though we give it different names. [7.]

We no longer reckon a great man literally divine, because our notions of God are ever rising higher. Yet our reverence for divine qualities manifested in men is not decreasing. This is true despite Sceptical Dilettantism, that worships either the shows of men, or disbelieves in the reality of any great men fit to be worshipped. Yet look at Napoleon, a Corsican Lieutenant, how he is worshipped and obeyed: and round a Scottish rustic Burns gather Duchesses and ostlers, it being dimly revealed in their hearts that the rustic has a dignity incommeasurable with all others. We all feel it so, were Dilettantism, Scepticism, Triviality and the rest of the sorrowful brood only cast out of us, and faith in the shows of things replaced by faith in the things themselves. [7.]

Nay, even in these ages, we have two poets, if not deified yet beatified. Dante and Shakespeare are canonised; far above all other poets, none equal to them, none second. Even in these unheroic ages our reverence for heroism is indestructible. Let us look a little at these two. [8.]

Dante.

Many volumes of commentary have been written about Dante, but with no great result. His Biography, as it were, is irrecoverably lost. Not much note taken of him while he lived, and the most of that vanished since. He ceased writing and living five centuries ago. We mainly know him by his
book, and the Portrait attributed to Giotto. The portrait is significant of Dante's whole history;—lonely, the most mournful face ever painted from reality; softness, tenderness, childlike affection, congealed into isolation and proud hopeless pain. A silent, scornful pain; the face of one in protest, an implacable indignation, slow, equable, silent, like that of a god. Yet a kind of surprise in the eye. So looks Dante, the 'voice of ten silent centuries' and sings us 'his mystic, unfathomable song.' [9.]

What we know of Dante's life corresponds with the Portrait and the Book. Born in Florence in 1265, learnt all there was to be learnt then: had a clear understanding and much subtlety. Knew well and accurately what was near, could not well know what was distant. Had twice served in war: had gone on an embassy. In his 35th year became one of the chief magistrates in Florence. His early love for Beatrice Portinari; her marriage and death: Beatrice makes a great figure in his writings, and in his life; the only being he ever entirely loved. Dante wedded, but it seems not happily. Perhaps not altogether an easy man to live with. [10.]

Dante's miseries not to be complained of. Had it not been for them, Florence might have had another prosperous Lord Mayor, and the ten silent centuries continued voiceless, and the ten listening centuries lacked a Divina Commedia. A nobler destiny was appointed for Dante. Happiness! Neither he nor we know what is really happy, what miserable. [11.]

In Dante's priorship internal faction rose to such a height that Dante and his party were banished. His property was confiscated. His righteous indignation: tries to get reinstated, even takes up arms. But useless. The Florentines condemn him to be burned. Later, they offer him return on disgraceful conditions. His stern proud answer. [11.]

Dante a homeless exile, wandering from patron to patron; Come e duro calle. Dante at Verona: Petrarch's story of him: 'Like to Like' Dante not like to succeed at courts. He recognises at last that there is no home for him on earth, no one to love him, no solace for his miseries here. [12.]

So the more deeply does the Eternal world impress itself on him. Florence and all else worldly became an unreal shadow. Florence he could never see, but Hell and Purgatory and Heaven he should see. Eternity, bodied or bodiless, is the one fact important for men. In Dante's time it was bodied in fixed scientific certainty. The Mulebolge pool was as real to him as Constantinople to us. And so, brooding on these things in speechless thought and awe, Dante bursts forth into 'mystic unfathomable song' the Divine Comedy, the most remarkable of all modern books. [12.]

Dante's book was a great solace to him, and at times a proud thought for him. He knew in part that it was great. 'Se tu segui tua stella.' But the labour was great and painful. 'It made him lean for many years.' His book, like most good books, was written in his heart's blood. He died soon after finishing it, at Ravenna. A century later the Florentines begged his body; the people of Ravenna would not give it. 'Hic claudor Dantes patriis extorris ab oris.' [13.]
Dante's poem is a song, 'a mystic unfathomable song' as Tieck calls it. Coleridge remarks that where there is true rhythm and melody in the words of a sentence, there is also something deep and good in the meaning. For body and soul, word and idea go strangely together. All old poems are songs, all right poems are. Whatever is not sung is not a poem, but a piece of prose cramped into jingling rhymes. All men who can speak their thought advised not to sing it. Just as we love the true song, we hate the false song. [13.]

Dante's Divine Comedy is genuinely a song. A canto fermo in the very sound of it; one reads the simple terza rima with a kind of lilt. It could not be otherwise, for the essence of it is rhythmical. A true inward symmetry in it, architectural as well as musical. The Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso are like compartments of a great supernatural world-cathedral. It is the sincerest of all poems. 'Eccovi l'uom ch'è stato all' Inferno.' Dante had been in Hell. Not otherwise are Divine comedies produced. In all ways we are 'to become perfect through suffering.' No work so elaborated as Dante's is. It is the soul of Dante, and in this, the soul of the middle ages. [14.]

Intensity the prevailing character of Dante's genius. Dante is not a Catholic mind; it is partly the result of his age and position, partly of his own nature. He is great not because he is world-wide, but because he is world-deep. His picture of the Hall of Dite is an emblem of his whole genius. His abrupt precision, his condensation, compared to Tacitus. His silence more eloquent than words. Various illustrations from the Divina Commedia. [15.]

This gift, though one of the most outward developments of a man, comes from the essential faculty of him. A man whose words can paint you a likeness is a man worth something. He could not see the object had he not sympathised with it. Also he must have been sincere about it. A man without worth dwells on vague outwardness, triviality, hearsays; and indeed intellect altogether expresses itself in power of discerning what an object is. The gifted man is one who sees the essential point. How much of morality is in this! To the mean eye all things are trivial. Raphael was the best of portrait painters, yet not the most gifted can exhaust the significance of any object. [17.]

But Dante's painting not only brief, true and vivid, it is every way noble. The incident of Francesca da Rimini taken as illustration. And Dante was the friend of Francesca's father. The infinite pity of it, with infinite rigour of law. A paltry notion to regard Dante's poem as a mere libel on his enemies. No heart ever so pitiful as Dante's. But the man who does not know rigour cannot know pity either. No affection equal to that of Dante: his yearnings towards his Beatrice; their meeting in the Paradiso, among the purest utterances of affection that ever came out of a human soul, perhaps the very purest. [17.]

Dante intense in all things, in intellectual insight, in reasoning. Morally great above all. His scorn and grief as transcendent as his love; they are the inverse or converse of his love. An illustration from the
**Introduction.**

**Inferno.** For vigour, earnestness and depth, we can find no parallel in the modern world. We must go to the Hebrew prophets. [18.]

Much modern criticism prefers the Inferno to the two other parts of the Divine Commedia. This preference due to our general Byronism of taste and is like to be transient. The Purgatorio and the Paradiso are even more excellent than the Inferno, especially the Purgatorio. Repentance is the grand Christian act. Beautiful how Dante has worked it out. The *temolar dell' onda*: other illustrations from the Purgatorio. All a noble embodiment of a true noble thought. [19.]

But the three compartments mutually support one another. The Paradiso a kind of inarticulate music: is the redeeming side of the Inferno, which would be untrue without it. All three make up the true unseen world as figured by Medieval Christianity. Dante was the man sent to sing this. Notable how briefly he passes out of the Visible into the Invisible world. To Dante one was as real as the other, the one was as preternatural as the other. Dante believes this, sees this. Sincerity, now as always, the saving merit. [20.]

Dante's Poem a symbol of his belief about the Universe. Perhaps some future critic who has ceased to think as Dante thought will find it all an Allegory, perhaps an idle one. It is a sublime embodiment of the soul of Christianity. It expresses not the *preferability* of Good to Evil, but their absolute incompatibility. Everlasting Justice, yet with Penitence and everlasting Pity. But how unconscious the embleming! To the modern European mind they were indubitable awful facts. Men do not believe an Allegory. The future critic will commit a sore mistake. Difference between Paganism and Christianity. Paganism emblemed chiefly the operations of nature, was for the sensuous nature. The chief recognised virtue was Courage. Christianism emblemed the Law of Human Duty, was for the moral nature. What a difference here! [20.]

**Mahomet, Dante, and Dante's 'uses.'**

The *Divina Commedia* is of Dante's writing, but in truth it belongs to the Christian centuries, only the finishing of it is Dante's. So is it always. How little of the craftsman's work is properly his. Dante is the spokesman of the middle ages. His sublime ideas the fruit of the Christian meditation of all the good men who had gone before him. Precious they; but he is also precious. Had he not spoken much would have remained, not dead, yet living voiceless. [21.]

Dante's mystic song the highest thing that Europe had hitherto realised for itself. Dante's Christianism other than Paganism, other than the 'Bastard Christianism' of Mahomet. Dante's song may last for long thousands of years. The thing that is uttered from the inmost parts of a man's soul differs altogether from what is uttered by the outer part. The outer is of a day, the inner the same yesterday, to-day and forever. True souls will always find a brotherhood in Dante. Napoleon is charmed with Homer's genial veracity. The oldest Hebrew prophet, despite all external
Introduction.

difference, still speaks to all men's hearts. Dante in depth of sincerity is like an antique Hebrew prophet. Dante's song may be the most enduring thing Europe has yet made. Europe has made much, but little of the class of Dante's thought. So Homer still is, but Greece is gone,—nothing left but the words it spoke. [22.]

We will not calculate Dante's 'Uses': the 'utilities' will not succeed in measuring him. We will not estimate the Sun by the quantity of gas-light it saves us. But we may note the difference between Dante and Mahomet. Mahomet seems to have achieved much more than Dante; but Dante's effect on the world was not really smaller. His arena was more restricted, but also far nobler, clearer. Mahomet spoke to large masses in the coarse dialect adapted to such, on them he acts, with good and evil strangely blended. Dante speaks to the noble, the pure and great in all times and in all places. Nor does he grow obsolete as Mahomet does. Dante may long survive Mahomet. In this way the balance may be made straight again. [23.]

But we cannot measure a man and his work by what we can judge of their effect on the world. Let a man do his work: the fruit of it is the care of Another than he. The real fruit is not the outward appearance in which the work is embodied. If by a man's work the great cause of man, and man's work on God's earth, get no furtherance, no matter what noise the man makes, he is but a loud-sounding inanity and futility—at bottom he is not at all. Let us honour the great empire of Silence once more. [24.]

Shakspeare.

Dante embodies musically the religion of the middle ages, of modern Europe,—its inner life; Shakspeare embodies the outer life, the world of practice. As we can read old Greece in Homer, so in Dante and Shakspeare, the faith and practice of modern Europe will still be legible thousands of years hence. Just as that chivalry way of life was breaking up, Shakspeare was sent to give long enduring record of it. Two fit men: Dante, deep, fierce as the central fire of the world: Shakspeare wide, placid, far-seeing as the sun. Italy produced the one world-voice: we English had the honour of producing the other. [24.]

Curious that Shakspeare came to us as if by accident. Perhaps had he not been prosecuted for deer-stealing we should never have heard of him as poet. But also that strange outbudding of our whole English existence, which we call the Elizabethan Era, came also of its own accord. The 'Tree Igdrasil' buds and withers by its own laws, too deep for our scanning. None the less there are fixed and eternal laws; the least thing has its appointed hour; all things co-operate. Curious and not sufficiently considered. [25.]

In some sense the glorious Elizabethan Era with its Shakspeare was the outcome and flowerage of the Catholicism of the middle ages. Religion, then, now and always, is the soul of practice. Curious that Catholicism had been abolished, so far as Acts of Parliament could abolish it,
before Shakspeare appeared. Nature sent him, taking small heed of Acts of Parliament. Acts of Parliament, on the whole, are small, despite the noise they make. The Elizabethan Era came without proclamation, preparation of ours. Shakspeare a free gift of Nature, given altogether silently, received altogether silently as if it had been a thing of very little account. Yet literally a very precious thing. [26.]

The best judgment, not only of England, but of Europe, is slowly pointing to the conclusion that Shakspeare is the chief of all poets hitherto, the greatest intellect who has left record of himself in literature. No such power of vision, such faculty of thought, in any other man. In Shakspeare's Dramas, there is, apart from all other faculties, an understanding manifested, equal to that in Bacon's Novum Organum. This is true, but it does not strike everyone. The very perfection of the work hides the maker's merit. Shakspeare knows as by instinct the conditions he works under. Not a transitory glance of insight, but a deliberate illumination of the whole matter: a great intellect in short. The best test of a man's intellect is to see what narrative, what picture, what delineation he will give of some wide thing he has witnessed. The power of enlightenment he possesses will be in strict proportion to the light within himself. [27.]

In portrait-painting, delineation of things and men, especially men, Shakspeare is great. His calm creative perspicacity is unequalled. He sees not this or that face of a thing but its inmost heart. Poetic creation is nothing but seeing the thing sufficiently. And Shakspeare's morality is visible here too. He is a man justly related to all things and men, a good man. He takes-in all kinds of men, loving them, the equal brother of all. Bacon's intellect of a quite secondary order to this. Goethe the only modern in anything like the same rank. He also saw the object. Goethe's criticism of Shakspeare true also of himself. [28.]

It is the seeing eye that discerns the inner harmony of things, that understands what Nature means. To all things it can genially relate itself. This is the poet's first gift, that he have intellect enough. If he have intellect enough, he will be a poet in word, or perhaps still better in act. Whether he write or not, or whether in prose or verse, will depend on accidents, trivial enough perhaps, but the faculty is not the result of habits or accidents, but a gift of nature. To the poet the first command is 'see.' If you cannot see, there is no use stringing rhymes and sensibilities together. The crabbèd old schoolmaster's question is perhaps always the one inquiry needful. The 'dunce' the only entirely fatal person. [29.]

To define Shakspeare's faculty as superiority of intellect is to include everything. It is a capital error to speak of men's faculties as if they were divisible and existed apart. Necessities of language perhaps prescribe such forms of utterance, but we should not allow words to harden into things. What we call a man's moral quality is but another side of the one vital force by which he lives and works. You can see how a man would fight by the way in which he sings. He is one. [30.]
Without morality intellect were impossible. To know a thing, a man must first love it. Nature to the bad, the selfish, the pusillanimous remains a sealed book. Even the very fox knows something of nature, where the geese lie. Without a certain *vulpine* morality he could not even know where the geese were or get at them. He requires courage, promptitude, practically and other suitable vulpine gifts and graces. So with him, too, his morality and insight are of the same dimensions. These things worth stating in these times. [31.]

Shakspeare's intellect an unconscious intellect; there is more virtue in it than he himself is aware of. Great truth in Novalis' remark that his Dramas are products of nature, deep as nature itself. Shakspeare's art not artifice. The latest generation of men will find new meanings in Shakspeare. Nature's highest reward to a true, simple, great soul that he get to be *part of herself*. How much in Shakspeare lies hid. Speech is great; but silence is greater. [32.]

The joyful tranquility of Shakspeare is notable. Dante not to be blamed for his misery. It was true battle, though without victory. But Shakspeare greater than Dante in that he fought truly and did conquer. The *Sonnets* show that he had had his own sorrows. The common notion is a heedless one, that he sat like a bird on the bough and sang forth free and off-hand. No man could have delineated so many suffering heroic hearts if his own heroic heart had not suffered. But observe also his mirthfulness, his love of laughter. In this point only does he seem to exaggerate. His laughter always genial. Never at mere weakness, or misery or poverty. No man who *can* laugh will laugh at these things. Even at stupidity and pretension his laughter is still genial. Such laughter, like sunshine on the deep sea, is very beautiful. [32.]

It would be well if we had all Shakspeare's plays reviewed as *Hamlet* is reviewed in *Wilhelm Meister*. Schlegel has a remark on the historical plays worth remembering. He calls them a national Epic. They are memorable histories, a true epic, as all delineation by a great thinker will be. Beautiful passages in them, and beautiful as a whole. The battle of Agincourt. A noble Patriotism in it; a sound in it like the ring of steel. This man had a stroke in him, had it come to that. [33.]

But no full impress of Shakspeare in his works. They are so many windows wherethrough we may catch glimpses of him. Passages there are of everlasting truth, but the surrounding matter is often temporary, conventional. Alas Shakspeare had to work under conditions, had to write for the Globe Playhouse. So it is with all men. *Disjecta membra* are all we have of any poet or of any man. [34.]

*Shakspeare also a prophet.*

Shakspeare was also a prophet. Nature to him too seemed divine, unspeakable. 'We are such stuff as dreams are made of.' Dante the melodious prophet of Middle-age Catholicism; Shakspeare the still more melodious prophet of a *true* Catholicism, the Universal Church of all times. A kind of universal Psalm rises out of Shakspeare, fit to make
Introduction.

itself heard among the still more sacred Psalms. Shakspeare neither a sceptic nor unpatriotic, though he says little about his patriotism or his faith. His 'indifference' the fruit of his greatness. In his own grand sphere of worship the controversies, so vital to other men, were not vital to him. [35.]

A kind of sacredness in the fact of such a man being sent into the Earth. Better, too, that Shakspeare, unlike Mahomet, was conscious of no Heavenly message. He did not feel himself specially the 'Prophet of God.' In this he is greater than Mahomet; and also, as Dante, more successful. Mahomet's notion of his Prophetship was an error and has been the cause of so much evil, that it is almost questionable to speak of Mahomet as a true speaker at all. Even in Arabia, Mahomet will become obsolete while Shakspeare and Dante are still young, while Shakspeare will be a Priest of mankind in Arabia and elsewhere, for unlimited periods to come. [35.]

No reason why Shakspeare should not last like Aeschylus or Homer. He was sincere as they; as deep as they. But it had been better for Mahomet not to be so conscious. All that he was conscious of was an error. The truly great in him was unconscious. His Koran has become a stupid piece of prolixity. We do not believe that God wrote that. The great man a force of nature. [36.]

The 'uses' of Shakspeare.

We did not account Shakspeare a god when he dwelt among us. Much might be said on that point. Still, despite the present low state of hero-worship, consider what Shakspeare has become for us. What and whom would we not give up rather than Shakspeare! Indian Empire or Shakspeare? Indian Empire will go some day: not Shakspeare. We cannot give up our Shakspeare. [37.]

Apart from spiritualities, consider Shakspeare as a marketable, tangibly useful possession. Before long there will be a Saxondom covering great spaces of the Globe. What is to keep it together. Acts of Parliament cannot. But Shakspeare is an English king whom nothing can dethrone. He will be a rallying-sign and bond of brother-hood for the whole Saxon peoples. The most common-place politician may think of this. [38.]

A truly great thing for a nation to get an articulate voice. Italy compared with Russia. Italy, despite its dismembered condition, is one; it can speak. But the Czar of all the Russias has merely a dumb greatness. The nation that has a Dante is bound together as no dumb Russia can be. [38.]
In conclusion, the importance and relevance of understanding the concept of social sustainability cannot be overstated. As individuals and communities strive to make our societies more sustainable and equitable, it is crucial to consider the interconnection between environmental, social, and economic factors. By adopting a holistic approach, we can ensure that our actions not only benefit the current generation but also pave the way for a sustainable future. Therefore, fostering a culture of social sustainability is essential in achieving a balanced and just society.
THE HERO AS POET.

DANTE; SHAKESPEARE.

The Hero as Divinity, the Hero as Prophet, are productions of old ages; not to be repeated in the new. They presuppose a certain rudeness of conception, which the progress of mere scientific knowledge puts an end to. There needs to be, as it were, a world vacant, or almost vacant of scientific forms, if men in their loving wonder are to fancy their fellow-man either a god or one speaking with the voice of a god. Divinity and Prophet are past. We are now to see our Hero in the less ambitious, but also less questionable, character of Poet; a character which does not pass. The Poet is a heroic figure belonging to all ages; whom all ages possess, when once he is produced, whom the newest age as the oldest may produce; and will produce, always when Nature pleases. Let Nature send a Hero-soul; in no ages is it other than possible that he may be shaped into a Poet.

Hero, Prophet, Poet,—many different names, in different times and places, do we give to Great Men; according to varieties we note in them, according to the sphere in which they have displayed themselves! We might give many more names, on this same principle. I will remark again, however, as a fact not unimportant to be understood, that the different sphere constitutes the grand origin of such distinction; that the Hero can be Poet, Prophet, King, Priest or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be all
All Heroes at bottom the same.

sorts of men. The Poet who could merely sit on a chair, and compose stanzas, would never make a stanza worth much. He could not sing the Heroic warrior, unless he himself were at least a Heroic warrior too. I fancy there is in him the Politician, the Thinker, Legislator, Philosopher;—in one or the other degree, he could have been, he is all these. So too I cannot understand how a Mirabeau, with that great glowing heart, with the fire that was in it, with the bursting tears that were in it, could not have written verses, tragedies, poems, and touched all hearts in that way, had his course of life and education led him thitherward. The grand fundamental character is that of Great Man; that the man be great. Napoleon has words in him which are like Austerlitz Battles. Louis Fourteenth's Marshals are a kind of poetical men withal; the things Turenne says are full of sagacity and geniality, like sayings of Samuel Johnson. The great heart, the clear deep-seeing eye: there it lies; no man whatever, in what province soever, can prosper at all without these. Petrarch and Boccaccio did diplomatic messages, it seems, quite well: one can easily believe it; they had done things a little harder than these! Burns, a gifted song-writer, might have made a still better Mirabeau. Shakspeare,—one knows not what he could not have made, in the supreme degree.

True, there are aptitudes of Nature too. Nature does not make all great men, more than all other men, in the self-same mould. Varieties of aptitude doubtless; but infinitely more of circumstance; and far oftener it is the latter only that are looked to. But it is as with common men in the learning of trades. You take any man, as yet a vague capability of a man, who could be any kind of craftsman; and make him into a smith, a carpenter, a mason: he is then and thenceforth that and nothing else. And if, as Addison complains, you sometimes see a streetporter staggering under his load on spindle-shanks, and near at hand a tailor with the frame of a Samson
Varieties of Aptitude.

handling a bit of cloth and small Whitechapel needle,—it cannot be considered that aptitude of Nature alone has been consulted here either!—The Great Man also, to what shall he be bound apprentice? Given your Hero, is he to become Conqueror, King, Philosopher, Poet? It is an inexplicably complex controversial-calculation between the world and him! He will read the world and its laws; the world with its laws will be there to be read. What the world, on this matter, shall permit and bid is, as we said, the most important fact about the world.—

Poet and Prophet differ greatly in our loose modern notions of them. In some old languages again, the titles are synonymous; Vates means both Prophet and Poet: and indeed at all times, Prophet and Poet, well understood, have much kindred of meaning. Fundamentally indeed they are still the same; in this most important respect especially, That they have penetrated both of them into the sacred mystery of the Universe; what Goethe calls 'the open secret.' "Which is the great secret?" asks one.—"The open secret,"—open to all, seen by almost none! That divine mystery, which lies everywhere in all Beings, 'the Divine Idea of the World, that which lies at the bottom of Appearance,' as Fichte styles it; of which all Appearance, from the starry sky to the grass of the field, but especially the Appearance of Man and his work, is but the vesture, the embodiment that renders it visible. This divine mystery is in all times and in all places; veritably is. In most times and places it is greatly overlooked; and the Universe, definable always in one or the other dialect, as the realised Thought of God, is considered a trivial, inert, commonplace matter,—as if, says the Satirist, it were a dead thing, which some upholsterer had put together! It could do no good, at present, to speak much about this; but it is a pity for every one of us if we do not know it, live ever in the knowledge of it.
Poet and Prophet.

Really a most mournful pity;—a failure to live at all, if we live otherwise!

But now, I say, whoever may forget this divine mystery, the Vates, whether Prophet or Poet, has penetrated into it; is a man sent hither to make it more impressively known to us. That always is his message; he is to reveal that to us,—that sacred mystery which he more than others lives ever present with. While others forget it, he knows it;—I might say, he has been driven to know it; without consent asked of him, he finds himself living in it, bound to live in it. Once more, here is no Hearsay, but a direct Insight and Belief; this man too could not help being a sincere man! Whosoever may live in the shows of things, it is for him a necessity of nature to live in the very fact of things. A man once more, in earnest with the Universe, though all others were but toying with it. He is a Vates, first of all, in virtue of being sincere. So far Poet and Prophet, participators in the 'open secret,' are one.

With respect to their distinction again: The Vates Prophet, we might say, has seized that sacred mystery rather on the moral side, as Good and Evil, Duty and Prohibition; the Vates Poet on what the Germans call the aesthetic side, as Beautiful, and the like. The one we may call a revealer of what we are to do, the other of what we are to love. But indeed these two provinces run into one another, and cannot be disjoined. The Prophet too has his eye on what we are to love: how else shall he know what it is we are to do? The highest Voice ever heard on this earth said withal, "Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." A glance, that, into the deepest deep of Beauty. 'The lilies of the field,'—dressed finer than earthly princes, springing-up there in the humble furrow-field; a beautiful eye looking-out on you, from the great inner Sea of Beauty! How could the rude Earth make these, if her Essence, rugged as she looks and is, were not
inwardly Beauty? In this point of view, too, a saying of Goethe's, which has staggered several, may have meaning: 'The Beautiful,' he intimates, 'is higher than the Good; the Beautiful includes in it the Good.' The true Beautiful; which however, I have said somewhere, 'differs from the false as Heaven does from Vauxhall!' So much for the distinction and identity of Poet and Prophet.—

In ancient and also in modern periods we find a few Poets who are accounted perfect; whom it were a kind of treason to find fault with. This is noteworthy; this is right: yet in strictness it is only an illusion. At bottom, clearly enough, there is no perfect Poet! A vein of Poetry exists in the hearts of all men; no man is made altogether of Poetry. We are all poets when we read a poem well. The 'imagination that shudders at the Hell of Dante,' is not that the same faculty, weaker in degree, as Dante's own? No one but Shakspeare can embody, out of Saxo Grammaticus, the story of Hamlet as Shakspeare did: but every one models some kind of story out of it; every one embodies it better or worse. We need not spend time in defining. Where there is no specific difference, as between round and square, all definition must be more or less arbitrary. A man that has so much more of the poetic element developed in him as to have become noticeable, will be called Poet by his neighbours. World-Poets too, those whom we are to take for perfect Poets, are settled by critics in the same way. One who rises so far above the general level of Poets will, to such and such critics, seem a Universal Poet; as he ought to do. And yet it is, and must be, an arbitrary distinction. All Poets, all men, have some touches of the Universal; no man is wholly made of that. Most Poets are very soon forgotten; but not the noblest Shakspeare or Homer of them can be remembered forever;—a day comes when he too is not!

Nevertheless, you will say, there must be a difference between true Poetry and true Speech not poetical: what is the
Poetry is Musical Thought.

difference? On this point many things have been written, especially by late German Critics, some of which are not very intelligible at first. They say, for example, that the Poet has an infinitude in him; communicates an Unendlichkeit, a certain character of 'infinitude,' to whatsoever he delineates. This, though not very precise, yet on so vague a matter is worth remembering: if well meditated, some meaning will gradually be found in it. For my own part, I find considerable meaning in the old vulgar distinction of Poetry being metrical, having music in it, being a Song. Truly, if pressed to give a definition, one might say this as soon as anything else: If your delineation be authentically musical, musical not in word only, but in heart and substance, in all the thoughts and utterances of it, in the whole conception of it, then it will be poetical; if not, not.—Musical: how much lies in that! A musical thought is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the inmost heart of the thing; detected the inmost mystery of it, namely the melody that lies hidden in it; the inward harmony of coherence which is its soul, whereby it exists, and has a right to be, here in this world. All inmost things, we may say, are melodious; naturally utter themselves in Song. The meaning of Song goes deep. Who is there that, in logical words, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that!

Nay all speech, even the commonest speech, has something of song in it: not a parish in the world but has its parish-accent;—the rhythm or tune to which the people there sing what they have to say! Accent is a kind of chanting; all men have accent of their own,—though they only notice that of others. Observe too how all passionate language does of itself become musical,—with a finer music than the mere accent; the speech of a man even in zealous anger becomes a chant, a song. All deep things are Song. It seems somehow the very
central essence of us, Song; as if all the rest were but wrappings and hulls! The primal element of us; of us, and of all things. The Greeks fabled of Sphere-Harmonies: it was the feeling they had of the inner structure of Nature; that the soul of all her voices and utterances was perfect music. Poetry, therefore, we will call *musical Thought*. The Poet is he who thinks in that manner. At bottom, it turns still on power of intellect; it is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that makes him a Poet. See deep enough, and you see musically; the heart of Nature being everywhere music, if you can only reach it.

The Vates Poet, with his melodious Apocalypse of Nature, seems to hold a poor rank among us, in comparison with the Vates Prophet; his function, and our esteem of him for his function, alike slight. The Hero taken as Divinity; the Hero taken as Prophet; then next the Hero taken only as Poet: does it not look as if our estimate of the Great Man, epoch after epoch, were continually diminishing? We take him first for a god, then for one god-inspired; and now in the next stage of it, his most miraculous word gains from us only the recognition that he is a Poet, beautiful verse-maker, man of genius, or suchlike!—It looks so; but I persuade myself that intrinsically it is not so. If we consider well, it will perhaps appear that in man still there is the same altogether peculiar admiration for the Heroic Gift, by what name soever called, that there at any time was.

I should say, if we do not now reckon a Great Man literally divine, it is that our notions of God, of the supreme unattainable Fountain of Splendour, Wisdom and Heroism, are ever rising higher; not altogether that our reverence for these qualities, as manifested in our like, is getting lower. This is worth taking thought of. Sceptical Dilettantism, the curse of these ages, a curse which will not last forever, does indeed in this the highest province of human things, as in all provinces, make sad work; and our reverence for great men, all crippled, blinded,
The Worship of Great Men.

paralytic as it is, comes out in poor plight, hardly recognisable. Men worship the shows of great men; the most disbelieve that there is any reality of great men to worship. The dreariest, fatalest faith; believing which, one would literally despair of human things. Nevertheless look, for example, at Napoleon! A Corsican lieutenant of artillery; that is the show of him: yet is he not obeyed, worshipped after his sort, as all the Tiaraed and Diademed of the world put together could not be? High Duchesses, and ostlers of inns, gather round the Scottish rustic, Burns;—a strange feeling dwelling in each that they never heard a man like this; that, on the whole, this is the man! In the secret heart of these people it still dimly reveals itself, though there is no accredited way of uttering it at present, that this rustic, with his black brows and flashing sun-eyes, and strange words moving laughter and tears, is of a dignity far beyond all others, incommensurable with all others. Do not we feel it so? But now, were Dilettantism, Scepticism, Triviality, and all that sorrowful brood, cast-out of us,—as, by God's blessing, they shall one day be; were faith in the shows of things entirely swept-out, replaced by clear faith in the things, so that a man acted on the impulse of that only, and counted the other non-extant; what a new livelier feeling towards this Burns were it!

Nay here in these ages, such as they are, have we not two mere Poets, if not deified, yet we may say beatified? Shakspeare and Dante are Saints of Poetry; really, if we will think of it, canonised, so that it is impiety to meddle with them. The unguided instinct of the world, working across all these perverse impediments, has arrived at such result. Dante and Shakspeare are a peculiar Two. They dwell apart, in a kind of royal solitude; none equal, none second to them: in the general feeling of the world, a certain transcendentalism, a glory as of complete perfection, invests these two. They are canonised, though no Pope or Cardinals took hand in doing it! Such, in
spite of every perverting influence, in the most unheroic times, is still our indestructible reverence for heroism.—We will look a little at these Two, the Poet Dante and the Poet Shakspere: what little it is permitted us to say here of the Hero as Poet will most fitly arrange itself in that fashion.

Many volumes have been written by way of commentary on Dante and his Book; yet, on the whole, with no great result. His Biography is, as it were, irrecoverably lost for us. An unimportant, wandering, sorrowstricken man, not much note was taken of him while he lived; and the most of that has vanished, in the long space that now intervenes. It is five centuries since he ceased writing and living here. After all commentaries, the Book itself is mainly what we know of him. The Book;—and one might add that Portrait commonly attributed to Giotto, which, looking on it, you cannot help inclining to think genuine, whoever did it. To me it is a most touching face; perhaps of all faces that I know, the most so. Lonely there, painted as on vacancy, with the simple laurel wound round it; the deathless sorrow and pain, the known victory which is also deathless;—significant of the whole history of Dante! I think it is the mournfullest face that ever was painted from reality; an altogether tragic, heart-affecting face. There is in it, as foundation of it, the softness, tenderness, gentle affection as of a child; but all this is as if congealed into sharp contradiction, into abnegation, isolation, proud hopeless pain. A soft ethereal soul looking-out so stern, implacable, grim-trenchant, as from imprisonment of thick-ribbed ice! Withal it is a silent pain too, a silent scornful one: the lip is curled in a kind of godlike disdain of the thing that is eating-out his heart,—as if it were withal a mean insignificant thing, as if he whom it had power to torture and strangle were greater than it. The face of one wholly in protest, and life-
long unsurrendering battle, against the world. Affection all converted into indignation: an implacable indignation; slow, equable, silent, like that of a God! The eye too, it looks-out of in a kind of surprise, a kind of inquiry, Why the world was of such a sort? This is Dante: so he looks, this 'voice of ten silent centuries,' and sings us 'his mystic unfathomable song.'

The little that we know of Dante's Life corresponds well enough with this Portrait and this Book. He was born at Florence, in the upper class of society, in the year 1265. His education was the best then going; much school-divinity, Aristotelean logic, some Latin classics,—no inconsiderable insight into certain provinces of things: and Dante, with his earnest intelligent nature, we need not doubt, learned better than most all that was learnable. He has a clear cultivated understanding, and of great subtlety; the best fruit of education he had contrived to realise from these scholastics. He knows accurately and well what lies close to him; but, in such a time, without printed books or free intercourse, he could not know well what was distant: the small clear light, most luminous for what is near, breaks itself into singular chiaroscuro striking on what is far off. This was Dante's learning from the schools. In life, he had gone through the usual destinies; been twice out campaigning as a soldier for the Florentine State, been on embassy; had in his thirty-fifth year, by natural gradation of talent and service, become one of the Chief Magistrates of Florence. He had met in boyhood a certain Beatrice Portinari, a beautiful little girl of his own age and rank, and grown-up thenceforth in partial sight of her, in some distant intercourse with her. All readers know his graceful affecting account of this; and then of their being parted; of her being wedded to another, and of her death soon after. She makes a great figure in Dante's Poem; seems to have made a great figure in his life. Of all beings it might seem as if she, held apart from him, far apart at last in the dim Eternity, were the
The 'Miseries' of Dante. 11

only one he had ever with his whole strength of affection loved. She died: Dante himself was wedded; but it seems not happily, far from happily. I fancy, the rigorous earnest man, with his keen excitabilities, was not altogether easy to make happy.

We will not complain of Dante's miseries: had all gone right, with him as he wished it, he might have been Prior, Podesta, or whatsoever they call it, of Florence, well accepted among neighbours,—and the world had wanted one of the most notable words ever spoken or sung. Florence would have had another prosperous Lord Mayor; and the ten dumb centuries continued voiceless, and the ten other listening centuries (for there will be ten of them and more) had no Divina Commedia to hear! We will complain of nothing. A nobler destiny was appointed for this Dante; and he, struggling like a man led towards death and crucifixion, could not help fulfilling it. Give him the choice of his happiness! He knew not, more than we do, what was really happy, what was really miserable.

In Dante's Priorship, the Guelf-Ghibelline, Bianchi-Neri, or some other confused disturbances rose to such a height, that Dante, whose party had seemed the stronger, was with his friends cast unexpectedly forth into banishment; doomed thenceforth to a life of woe and wandering. His property was all confiscated and more; he had the fiercest feeling that it was entirely unjust, nefarious in the sight of God and man. He tried what was in him to get reinstated; tried even by warlike surprisal, with arms in his hand: but it would not do; bad only had become worse. There is a record, I believe, still extant in the Florence Archives, dooming this Dante, wheresoever caught, to be burnt alive. Burnt alive; so it stands, they say: a very curious civic document. Another curious document, some considerable number of years later, is a Letter of Dante's to the Florentine Magistrates, written in answer to a milder proposal of theirs, that he should return on condition of apologising and paying a fine. He answers, with fixed stern
pride: "If I cannot return without calling myself guilty, I will never return, nunquam revertar."

For Dante there was now no home in this world. He wandered from patron to patron, from place to place; proving, in his own bitter words, 'How hard is the path, Come è duro calle.' The wretched are not cheerful company. Dante, poor and banished, with his proud earnest nature, with his moody humours, was not a man to conciliate men. Petrarch reports of him that being at Can della Scala's court, and blamed one day for his gloom and taciturnity, he answered in no courtier-like way. Della Scala stood among his courtiers, with-mimes and buffoons (nebulones ac histriones) making him heartily merry; when turning to Dante, he said: "Is it not strange, now, that this poor fool should make himself so entertaining; while you, a wise man, sit there day after day, and have nothing to amuse us with at all?" Dante answered bitterly: "No, not strange; your Highness is to recollect the Proverb, Like to Like;"—given the amuser, the amusee must also be given! Such a man, with his proud silent ways, with his sarcasms and sorrows, was not made to succeed at court. By degrees, it came to be evident to him that he had no longer any resting-place, or hope of benefit, in this earth. The earthly world had cast him forth, to wander, wander; no living heart to love him now; for his sore miseries there was no solace here.

The deeper naturally would the Eternal World impress itself on him; that awful reality over which, after all, this Time-world, with its Florences and banishments, only flutters as an unreal shadow. Florence thou shalt never see; but Hell and Purgatory and Heaven thou shalt surely see! What is Florence, Can della Scala, and the World and Life altogether? Eternity: thither, of a truth, not elsewhither, art thou and all things bound! The great soul of Dante, homeless on earth, made its home more and more in that awful other world. Naturally his thoughts brooded on that, as on the one fact
important for him. Bodied or bodiless, it is the one fact important for all men:—but to Dante, in that age, it was bodied in fixed certainty of scientific shape; he no more doubted of that Malebolge Pool, that it all lay there with its gloomy circles, with its *alti guai*, and that he himself should see it, than we doubt that we should see Constantinople if we went thither. Dante's heart, long filled with this, brooding over it in speechless thought and awe, bursts forth at length into 'mystic unfathomable song'; and this his *Divine Comedy*, the most remarkable of all modern Books, is the result.

It must have been a great solacement to Dante, and was, as we can see, a proud thought for him at times, That he, here in exile, could do this work; that no Florence, nor no man or men, could hinder him from doing it, or even much help him in doing it. He knew too, partly, that it was great; the greatest a man could do. 'If thou follow thy star, *Se tu segui tua stella*,—so could the Hero, in his forsakenness, in his extreme need, still say to himself: "Follow thou thy star, thou shalt not fail of a glorious haven!" The labour of writing, we find, and indeed could know otherwise, was great and painful for him; he says, This Book, 'which has made me lean for many years.' Ah yes, it was won, all of it, with pain and sore toil,—not in sport, but in grim earnest. His Book, as indeed most good Books are, has been written, in many senses, with his heart's blood. It is his whole history, this Book. He died after finishing it; not yet very old, at the age of fifty-six;—broken-hearted rather, as is said. He lies buried in his death-city Ravenna: *Hic claudor Dantes patriis extorris ab oris*. The Florentines begged back his body, in a century after; the Ravenna people would not give it. "Here am I Dante laid, shut-out from my native shores."

I said, Dante's Poem was a Song: it is Tieck who calls it 'a mystic unfathomable Song;' and such is literally the character of it. Coleridge remarks very pertinently somewhere, that
wherever you find a sentence musically worded, of true rhythm and melody in the words, there is something deep and good in the meaning too. For body and soul, word and idea, go strangely together here as everywhere. Song: we said before, it was the Heroic of Speech! All old Poems, Homer's and the rest, are authentically Songs. I would say, in strictness, that all right Poems are; that whatsoever is not sung is properly no Poem, but a piece of Prose cramped into jingling lines,—to the great injury of the grammar, to the great grief of the reader, for most part! What we want to get at is the thought the man had, if he had any: why should he twist it into jingle, if he could speak it out plainly? It is only when the heart of him is rapt into true passion of melody, and the very tones of him, according to Coleridge's remark, become musical by the greatness, depth and music of his thoughts, that we can give him right to rhyme and sing; that we call him a Poet, and listen to him as the Heroic of Speakers,—whose speech is Song. Pretenders to this are many; and to an earnest reader, I doubt, it is for most part a very melancholy, not to say an insupportable business, that of reading rhyme! Rhyme that had no inward necessity to be rhymed;—it ought to have told us plainly, without any jingle, what it was aiming at. I would advise all men who can speak their thought, not to sing it; to understand that, in a serious time, among serious men, there is no vocation in them for singing it. Precisely as we love the true song, and are charmed by it as by something divine, so shall we hate the false song, and account it a mere wooden noise, a thing hollow, superfluous, altogether an insincere and offensive thing.

I give Dante my highest praise when I say of his Divine Comedy that it is, in all senses, genuinely a Song. In the very sound of it there is a canto fermo; it proceeds as by a chant. The language, his simple terza rima, doubtless helped him in this. One reads along naturally with a sort of lilt. But I add, that it could not be otherwise; for the essence and material of the
The Divina Commedia the Sincerest of Poems.

work are themselves rhythmic. Its depth, and rapt passion and sincerity, makes its musical;—go deep enough, there is music everywhere. A true inward symmetry, what one calls an architectural harmony, reigns in it, proportionates it all: architectural; which also partakes of the character of music. The three kingdoms, *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*, look-out on one another like compartments of a great edifice; a great supernatural world-cathedral, piled-up there, stern, solemn, awful; Dante's World of Souls! It is, at bottom, the *sincerest* of all Poems; sincerity, here too, we find to be the measure of worth. It came deep out of the author's heart of hearts; and it goes deep, and through long generations, into ours. The people of Verona, when they saw him on the streets, used to say, "Eccovi l' uom ch' è stato all' Inferno, see, there is the man that was in Hell!" Ah yes, he had been in Hell;—in Hell enough, in long severe sorrow and struggle; as the like of him is pretty sure to have been. Commedias that come out *divine* are not accomplished otherwise. Thought, true labour of any kind, highest virtue itself, is it not the daughter of Pain? Born as out of the black whirlwind;—true *effort*, in fact, as of a captive struggling to free himself: that is Thought. In all ways we are 'to become perfect through suffering.'—But, as I say, no work known to me is so elaborated as this of Dante's. It has all been as if molten, in the hottest furnace of his soul. It had made him 'lean' for many years. Not the general whole only; every compartment of it is worked out, with intense earnestness, into truth, into clear visuality. Each answers to the other; each fits in its place, like a marble stone accurately hewn and polished. It is the soul of Dante, and in this the soul of the middle ages, rendered forever rhythmically visible there. No light task; a right intense one: but a task which is *done*.

Perhaps one would say, *intensity*, with the much that depends on it, is the prevailing character of Dante's genius. Dante does not come before us as a large catholic mind; rather as a
narrow and even sectarian mind: it is partly the fruit of his age and position, but partly too of his own nature. His greatness has, in all senses, concentrated itself into fiery emphasis and depth. He is world-great not because he is world-wide, but because he is world-deep. Through all objects he pierces as it were down into the heart of Being. I know nothing so intense as Dante. Consider, for example, to begin with the outermost development of his intensity, consider how he paints. He has a great power of vision; seizes the very type of a thing; presents that and nothing more. You remember that first view he gets of the Hall of Dite: red pinnacle, redhot cone of iron glowing through the dim immensity of gloom;—so vivid, so distinct, visible at once and forever! It is as an emblem of the whole genius of Dante. There is a brevity, an abrupt precision in him: Tacitus is not briefer, more condensed; and then in Dante it seems a natural condensation, spontaneous to the man. One smiting word; and then there is silence, nothing more said. His silence is more eloquent than words. It is strange with what a sharp decisive grace he snatches the true likeness of a matter: cuts into the matter as with a pen of fire. Plutus, the blustering giant, collapses at Virgil’s rebuke; it is ‘as the sails sink, the mast being suddenly broken.’ Or that poor Brunetto Latini, with the cottu aspetto, ‘face baked,’ parched brown and lean; and the ‘fiery snow,’ that falls on them there, a ‘fiery snow without wind,’ slow, deliberate, never ending! Or the lids of those Tombs; square sarcophaguses, in that silent dim-burning Hall, each with its Soul in torment; the lids laid open there; they are to be shut at the Day of Judgment, through Eternity. And how Farinata rises; and how Cavalcante falls—at hearing of his Son, and the past tense ‘fue’! The very movements in Dante have something brief; swift, decisive, almost military. It is of the inmost essence of his genius this sort of painting. The fiery, swift Italian nature of the man, so silent, passionate,
with its quick abrupt movements, its silent 'pale rages,' speaks itself in these things.

For though this of painting is one of the outermost developments of a man, it comes like all else from the essential faculty of him; it is physiognomical of the whole man. Find a man whose words paint you a likeness, you have found a man worth something; mark this manner of doing it, as very characteristic of him. In the first place, he could not have discerned the object at all, or seen the vital type of it, unless he had, what we may call, sympathised with it,—had sympathy in him to bestow on objects. He must have been sincere about it too; sincere and sympathetic: a man without worth cannot give you the likeness of any object; he dwells in vague outwardness, fallacy and trivial hearsay, about all objects. And indeed may we not say that intellect altogether expresses itself in this power of discerning what an object is? Whatsoever of faculty a man's mind may have will come out here. Is it even of business a matter to be done? The gifted man is he who sees the essential point, and leaves all the rest aside as surplusage: it is his faculty too, the man of business's faculty, that he discern the true likeness, not the false superficial one, of the thing he has, got to work in. And how much of morality is in the kind of insight we get of anything; 'the eye seeing in all things what it brought with it the faculty of seeing'? To the mean eye all things are trivial, as certainly as to the jaundiced they are yellow. Raphael, the painters tell us, is the best of all Portrait-painters withal. No most gifted eye can exhaust the significance of any object. In the commonest human face there lies more than Raphael will take away with him.

Dante's painting is not graphic only, brief, true, and of a vividnesss as of fire in dark night; taken on the wider scale, it is everyway noble, and the outcome of a great soul. Francesca and her Lover, what qualities in that! A thing woven as out of rainbows, on a ground of eternal black. A small flute-voice of
infinite wail speaks there, into our very heart of hearts. A touch of womanhood in it too: *della bella persona, che mi fu tolta*; and how, even in the Pit of woe, it is a solace that he will never part from her! Saddest tragedy in these *alti guai*. And the racking winds, in that *aer bruno*, whirl them away again to wail forever!—Strange to think: Dante was the friend of this poor Francesca's father; Francesca herself may have sat upon the Poet's knee, as a bright innocent little child. Infinite pity, yet also infinite rigour of law: it is so Nature is made; it is so Dante discerned that she was made. What a paltry notion is that of his *Divine Comedy*’s being a poor splenetic impotent terrestrial libel; putting those into Hell whom he could not be avenged-upon on earth! I suppose if ever pity, tender as a mother's, was in the heart of any man, it was in Dante's. But a man who does not know rigour cannot pity either. His very pity will be cowardly, egoistic,—sentimentality, or little better. I know not in the world an affection equal to that of Dante. It is a tenderness, a trembling, longing, pitying love: like the wail of Æolean harps, soft, soft; like a child's young heart;—and then that stern, sore-saddened heart! These longings of his towards his Beatrice; their meeting together in the *Paradiso*; his gazing in her pure transfigured eyes, her that had been purified by death so long, separated from him so far:—one likens it to the song of angels; it is among the purest utterances of affection, perhaps the very purest, that ever came out of a human soul.

For the *intense* Dante is intense in all things; he has got into the essence of all. His intellectual insight as painter, on occasion too as reasoner, is but the result of all other sorts of intensity. Morally great, above all, we must call him; it is the beginning of all. His scorn, his grief are as transcendent as his love;—as indeed, what are they but the *inverse* or *converse* of his love? *A Dio spiacenti ed a' nemici sui*, Hateful to God and to the enemies of God:’ lofty scorn, unappeasable silent
The Purgatorio.

reprobation and aversion; 'Non ragionam di lor, we will not speak of them, look only and pass.' Or think of this; 'They have not the hope to die, Non han speranza di morte.' One day, it had risen sternly benign on the scathed heart of Dante, that he, wretched, never-resting, worn as he was, would full surely die; 'that Destiny itself could not doom him not to die.' Such words are in this man. For rigour, earnestness and depth, he is not to be paralleled in the modern world; to seek his parallel we must go into the Hebrew Bible, and live with the antique Prophets there.

I do not agree with much modern criticism, in greatly preferring the Inferno to the two other parts of the Divine Commedia. Such preference belongs, I imagine, to our general Byronism of taste, and is like to be a transient feeling. The Purgatorio and Paradiso, especially the former, one would almost say, is even more excellent than it. It is a noble thing that Purgatorio, 'Mountain of Purification;' an emblem of the noblest conception of that age. If Sin is so fatal, and Hell is and must be so rigorous, awful, yet in Repentance too is man purified; Repentance is the grand Christian act. It is beautiful how Dante works it out. The tremolar dell' onde, that 'trembling' of the ocean-waves, under the first pure gleam of morning, dawning afar on the wandering Two, is as the type of an altered mood. Hope has now dawned; never-dying Hope, if in company still with heavy sorrow. The obscure sojourn of daemons and reprobate is underfoot; a soft breathing of penitence mounts higher and higher, to the Throne of Mercy itself. "Pray for me," the denizens of that Mount of Pain all say to him. "Tell my Giovanna to pray for me," my daughter Giovanna; "I think her mother loves me no more!" They toil painfully up by that winding steep, 'bent-down like corbels of a building,' some of them,—crushed-together so 'for the sin of pride;' yet nevertheless in years, in ages and æons, they shall have reached the top, which is Heaven's gate, and by
Mercy shall have been admitted in. The joy too of all, when one has prevailed; the whole Mountain shakes with joy, and a psalm of praise rises, when one soul has perfected repentance and got its sin and misery left behind! I call all this a noble embodiment of a true noble thought.

But indeed the Three compartments mutually support one another, are indispensable to one another. The Paradiso, a kind of inarticulate music to me, is the redeeming side of the Inferno; the Inferno without it were untrue. All three make up the true Unseen World, as figured in the Christianity of the Middle Ages; a thing forever memorable, forever true in the essence of it, to all men. It was perhaps delineated in no human soul with such depth of veracity as in this of Dante's; a man sent to sing it, to keep it long memorable. Very notable with what brief simplicity he passes out of the every-day reality, into the Invisible one; and in the second or third stanza, we find ourselves in the World of Spirits; and dwell there, as among things palpable, indubitable! To Dante they were so; the real world, as it is called, and its facts, was but the threshold to an infinitely higher Fact of a world. At bottom, the one was as preternatural as the other. Has not each man a soul? He will not only be a spirit, but is one. To the earnest Dante it is all one visible Fact; he believes it, sees it; is the Poet of it in virtue of that. Sincerity, I say again, is the saving merit, now as always.

Dante's Hell, Purgatory, Paradise, are a symbol withal, an emblematic representation of his Belief about this Universe:—some Critic in a future age, like those Scandinavian ones the other day, who has ceased altogether to think as Dante did, may find this too all an 'Allegory,' perhaps an idle Allegory! It is a sublime embodiment, or sublimest, of the soul of Christianity. It expresses, as in huge worldwide architectural emblems, how the Christian Dante felt Good and Evil to be the two polar elements of this Creation, on which it all turns;
that these two differ not by *preferability* of one to the other; but by incompatibility absolute and infinite; that the one is excellent and high as light and Heaven, the other hideous, black as Gehenna and the Pit of Hell! Everlasting Justice, yet with Penitence, with everlasting Pity,—all Christianism, as Dante and the Middle Ages had it, is emblemed here, Emblemed: and yet, as I urged the other day, with what entire truth of purpose; how unconscious of any embleming! Hell, Purgatory, Paradise: these things were not fashioned as emblems; was there, in our Modern European Mind, any thought at all of their being emblems! Were they not indubitable awful facts; the whole heart of man taking them for practically true, all Nature everywhere confirming them? So is it always in these things. Men do not believe an Allegory. The future Critic, whatever his new thought may be, who considers this of Dante to have been all got-up as an Allegory, will commit one sore mistake!—Paganism we recognised as a veracious expression of the earnest awe-struck feeling of man towards the Universe; veracious, true once, and still not without worth for us. But mark here the difference of Paganism and Christianism; one great difference. Paganism emblemed chiefly the Operations of Nature; the destinies, efforts, combinations, vicissitudes of things and men in this world; Christianism emblemed the Law of Human Duty, the Moral Law of Man. One was for the sensuous nature: a rude helpless utterance of the *first* Thought of men,—the chief recognised virtue, Courage, Superiority to Fear. The other was not for the sensuous nature, but for the moral. What a progress is here, if in that one respect only!—

And so in this Dante, as we said, had ten silent centuries, in a very strange way, found a voice. The *Divina Commedia* is of Dante's writing; yet in truth it belongs to ten Christian centuries, only the finishing of it is Dante's. So always. The craftsman there, the smith with that metal of his, with these
tools, with these cunning methods,—how little of all he does is properly his work! All past inventive men work there with him;—as indeed with all of us, in all things. Dante is the spokesman of the Middle Ages; the Thought they lived by stands here, in everlasting music. These sublime ideas of his, terrible and beautiful, are the fruit of the Christian Meditation of all the good men who had gone before him. Precious they; but also is not he precious? Much, had not he spoken, would have been dumb; not dead, yet living voiceless.

On the whole, is it not an utterance, this mystic Song, at once of one of the greatest human souls, and of the highest thing that Europe had hitherto realised for itself? Christianism, as Dante sings it, is another than Paganism in the rude Norse mind; another than 'Bastard Christianism' half-articulately spoken in the Arab Desert seven-hundred years before! —the noblest idea made real hitherto among men, is sung, and emblemed-forth abidingly, by one of the noblest men. In the one sense and in the other, are we not right glad to possess it? As I calculate, it may last yet for long thousands of years. For the thing that is uttered from the inmost parts of a man's soul, differs altogether from what is uttered by the outer part. The outer is of the day, under the empire of mode; the outer passes away, in swift endless changes; the inmost is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. True souls, in all generations of the world, who look on this Dante, will find a brotherhood in him; the deep sincerity of his thoughts, his woes and hopes, will speak likewise to their sincerity; they will feel that this Dante too was a brother. Napoleon in Saint-Helena is charmed with the genial veracity of old Homer. The oldest Hebrew Prophet, under a vesture the most diverse from ours, does yet, because he speaks from the heart of man, speak to all men's hearts. It is the one sole secret of continuing long memorable. Dante, for depth of sincerity, is like an antique Prophet too; his words, like theirs, come from his very heart. One need not
wonder if it were predicted that his Poem might be the most enduring thing our Europe has yet made; for nothing so endures as a truly spoken word. All cathedrals, pontificalties, brass and stone, and outer arrangement never so lasting are brief in comparison to an unfathomable heart-song like this: one feels as if it might survive, still of importance to men, when these had all sunk into new irrecognisable combinations, and had ceased individually to be. Europe has made much; great cities, great empires, encyclopaedias, creeds, bodies of opinion and practice: but it has made little of the class of Dante’s Thought. Homer yet is, veritably present face to face with every open soul of us; and Greece, where is it? Desolate for thousands of years; away, vanished: a bewildered heap of stones and rubbish, the life and existence of it all gone. Like a dream; like the dust of King Agamemnon! Greece was; Greece, except in the words it spoke, is not.

The uses of this Dante? We will not say much about his ‘uses.’ A human soul who has once got into that primal element of Song, and sung-forth fitly somewhat therefrom, has worked in the depths of our existence; feeding through long times the life-roots of all excellent human things whatsoever,—in a way that ‘utilities’ will not succeed well in calculating! We will not estimate the Sun by the quantity of gas-light it saves us! Dante shall be invaluable, or of no value. One remark I may make: the contrast in this respect between the Hero-Poet and the Hero-Prophet. In a hundred years, Mahomet, as we saw, had his Arabians at Grenada and at Delhi; Dante’s Italians seem to be yet very much where they were. Shall we say, then, Dante’s effect on the world was small in comparison? Not so: his arena is far more restricted; but also it is far nobler, clearer;—perhaps not less but more important. Mahomet speaks to great masses of men, in the coarse dialect adapted to such; a dialect filled with inconsistencies, crudities, follies: on the great masses alone can he act,
The Great Empire of Silence.

and there with good and with evil strangely blended. Dante speaks to the noble, the pure and great, in all times and places. Neither does he grow obsolete, as the other does. Dante burns as a pure star, fixed there in the firmament, at which the great and the high of all ages kindle themselves: he is the possession of all the chosen of the world for uncounted time. Dante, one calculates, may long survive Mahomet. In this way the balance may be made straight again.

But, at any rate, it is not by what is called their effect on the world by what we can judge of their effect there, that a man and his work are measured. Effect? Influence? Utility? Let a man do his work; the fruit of it is the care of Another than he. It will grow its own fruit; and whether embodied in Caliph Thrones and Arabian Conquests, so that it 'fills all Morning and Evening Newspapers,' and all Histories, which are a kind of distilled Newspapers; or not embodied so at all;—what matters that? That is not the real fruit of it! The Arabian Caliph, in so far only as he did something, was something. If the great Cause of Man, and Man's work in God's Earth, got no furtherance from the Arabian Caliph, then no matter how many scimitars he drew, how many gold piasters pocketed, and what uproar and blaring he made in this world—he was but a loud-sounding inanity and futility; at bottom, he was not at all. Let us honour the great empire of Silence, once more! The boundless treasury which we do not jingle in our pockets, or count up and present before men! It is perhaps, of all things, the usefulest for each of us to do, in these loud times.—

As Dante, the Italian man, was sent into our world to embody musically the Religion of the Middle Ages, the Religion of our Modern Europe, its Inner Life; so Shakspeare, we may say, embodies for us the Outer Life of our Europe as deve-
loped then, its chivalries, courtesies, humours, ambitions, what practical way of thinking, acting, looking at the world, men then had. As in Homer we may still construe Old Greece; so in Shakspere and Dante, after thousands of years, what our modern Europe was, in Faith and in Practice, will still be legible. Dante has given us the Faith or soul; Shakspere, in a not less noble way, has given us the Practice or body. This latter also we were to have; a man was sent for it, the man Shakspere. Just when that chivalry way of life had reached its last finish, and was on the point of breaking down into slow or swift dissolution, as we now see it every-where, this other sovereign Poet, with his seeing eye, with his perennial singing voice, was sent to take note of it, to give long-enduring record of it. Two fit men: Dante, deep, fierce as the central fire of the world; Shakspere, wide, placid, far-seeing, as the Sun, the upper light of the world. Italy produced the one world-voice; we English had the honour of producing the other.

Curious enough how, as it were by mere accident, this man came to us. I think always, so great, quiet, complete and self-sufficing is this Shakspere, had the Warwickshire Squire not prosecuted him for deer-stealing, we had perhaps never heard of him as a Poet! The woods and skies, the rustic Life of Man in Stratford there, had been enough for this man! But indeed that strange outbudding of our whole English Existence, which we call the Elizabethan Era, did not it too come as of its own accord? The 'Tree Igdrasil' buds and withers by its own laws,—too deep for our scanning. Yet it does bud and wither, and every bough and leaf of it is there, by fixed eternal laws; not a Sir Thomas Lucy but comes at the hour fit for him. Curious, I say, and not sufficiently considered: how everything does cooperate with all; not a leaf rotting on the highway but is indissoluble portion of solar and stellar systems; no thought, word or act of man but has sprung withal out of all men, and
works sooner or later, recognisably or irrecognisably, on all men! It is all a Tree: circulation of sap and influences, mutual communication of every minutest leaf with the lowest talon of a root, with every other greatest and minutest portion of the whole. The Tree Igdrasil, that has its roots down in the Kingdoms of Hela and Death, and whose boughs overspread the highest Heaven!—

In some sense it may be said that this glorious Elizabethan Era with its Shakspeare, as the outcome and flowerage of all which had preceded it, is itself attributable to the Catholicism of the Middle Ages. The Christian Faith, which was the theme of Dante's Song, had produced this Practical Life which Shakspeare was to sing. For Religion then, as it now and always is, was the soul of Practice; the primary vital fact in men's life. And remark here, as rather curious, that Middle-Age Catholicism was abolished, so far as Acts of Parliament could abolish it, before Shakspeare, the noblest product of it, made his appearance. He did make his appearance nevertheless. Nature at her own time, with Catholicism or what else might be necessary, sent him forth; taking small thought of Acts of Parliament. King-Henrys, Queen-Elizabeths go their way; and Nature too goes hers. Acts of Parliament, on the whole, are small, notwithstanding the noise they make. What Act of Parliament, debate at St. Stephen's, on the hustings or elsewhere, was it that brought this Shakspeare into being? No dining at Freemasons' Tavern, opening subscription-lists, selling of shares, and infinite other jangling and true or false endeavouring! This Elizabethan Era, and all its nobleness and blessedness, came without proclamation, preparation of ours. Priceless Shakspeare was the free gift of Nature; given altogether silently;—received altogether silently, as if it had been a thing of little account. And yet, very literally, it is a priceless thing. One should look at that side of matters too.
Of this Shakspeare of ours, perhaps the opinion one sometimes hears a little idolatrously expressed is, in fact, the right one; I think the best judgment not of this country only, but of Europe at large, is slowly pointing to the conclusion, That Shakspeare is the chief of all Poets hitherto; the greatest intellect who, in our recorded world, has left record of himself in the way of Literature. On the whole, I know not such a power of vision, such a faculty of thought, if we take all the characters of it, in any other man. Such a calmness of depth; placid joyous strength; all things imaged in that great soul of his so true and clear, as in a tranquil unfathomable sea! It has been said, that in the constructing of Shakspeare's Dramas there is, apart from all other 'faculties' as they are called, an understanding manifested, equal to that in Bacon's Novum Organum. That is true; and it is not a truth that strikes every one. It would become more apparent if we tried, any of us for himself, how, out of Shakspeare's dramatic materials, we could fashion such a result! The built house seems all so fit,—everyway as it should be, as if it came there by its own law and the nature of things,—we forget the rude disorderly quarry it was shaped from. The very perfection of the house, as if Nature herself had made it, hides the builder's merit. Perfect, more perfect than any other man, we may call Shakspeare in this: he discerns, knows as by instinct, what condition he works under, what his materials are, what his own force and its relation to them is. It is not a transitory glance of insight that will suffice; it is deliberate illumination of the whole matter; it is a calmly seeing eye; a great intellect, in short. How a man, of some wide thing that he has witnessed, will construct a narrative, what kind of picture and delineation he will give of it,—is the best measure you could get of what intellect is in the man. Which circumstance is vital and shall stand prominent; which unessential, fit to be suppressed; where is the true beginning, the true sequence and ending? To find out this, you task the
whole force of insight that is in the man. He must understand the thing; according to the depth of his understanding, will the fitness of his answer be. You will try him so. Does like join itself to like; does the spirit of method stir in that confusion, so that its embroilment becomes order? Can the man say, Fiat lux, Let there be light; and out of chaos make a world? Precisely as there is light in himself, will he accomplish this.

Or indeed we may say again, it is in what I called Portrait-painting, delineating of men and things, especially of men, that Shakspeare is great. All the greatness of the man comes out decisively here. It is unexampled, I think, that calm creative perspicacity of Shakspeare. The think he looks at reveals not this or that face of it, but its inmost heart, and generic secret: it dissolves itself as in light before him, so that he discerns the perfect structure of it. Creative, we said: poetic creation, what is this too but seeing the thing sufficiently? The word that will describe the thing, follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing. And is not Shakspeare's morality, his valour, candour, tolerance, truthfulness; his whole victorious strength and greatness, which can triumph over such obstructions, visible there too? Great as the world! No twisted, poor convex-concave mirror, reflecting all objects with its own convexities and concavities; a perfectly level mirror;—that is to say withal, if we will understand it, a man justly related to all things and men, a good man. It is truly a lordly spectacle how this great soul takes-in all kinds of men and objects, a Falstaff, an Othello, a Juliet, a Coriolanus; sets them all forth to us in their round completeness; loving, just, the equal brother of all. Novum Organum, and all the intellect you will find in Bacon, is of a quite secondary order; earthy, material, poor in comparison with this. Among modern men, one finds, in strictness, almost nothing of the same rank. Goethe alone, since the days of Shakspeare, reminds me of it. Of him too you say that he saw the object; you may say what
To the Poet we say first of all, 'See.'

He himself says of Shakspeare: 'His characters are like watches with dial-plates of transparent crystal; they show you the hour like others, and the inward mechanism also is all visible.'

The seeing eye! It is this that discloses the inner harmony of things; what Nature meant, what musical idea Nature has wrapped-up in these often rough embodiments. Something she did mean. To the seeing eye that something were discernible. Are they base, miserable things? You can laugh over them, you can weep over them; you can in some way or other genially relate yourself to them;—you can, at lowest, hold your peace about them, turn away your own and others' face from them, till the hour come for practically exterminating and extinguishing them! At bottom, it is the Poet's first gift, as it is all men's, that he have intellect enough. He will be a Poet if he have: a Poet in word; or failing that, perhaps still better, a Poet in Act. Whether he write at all; and if so, whether in prose or in verse, will depend on accidents: who knows on what extremely trivial accidents,—perhaps on his having had a singing-master, on his being taught to sing in his boyhood! But the faculty which enables him to discern the inner heart of things, and the harmony that dwells there (for whatsoever exists has a harmony in the heart of it, or it would not hold together and exist), is not the result of habits or accidents, but the gift of Nature herself; the primary outfit for a Heroic Man in what sort soever. To the Poet, as to every other, we say first of all, See. If you cannot do that, it is of no use to keep stringing rhymes together, jingling sensibilities against each other, and name yourself a Poet; there is no hope for you. If you can, there is in prose or verse, in action or speculation, all manner of hope. The crabbed old Schoolmaster used to ask, when they brought him a new pupil, "But are ye sure he's not a dunce?" Why, really one might ask the same thing, in regard to every man proposed for whatsoever function; and consider it as the one inquiry needful: Are ye sure he's
not a dunce? There is, in this world, no other entirely fatal person.

For, in fact, I say the degree of vision that "dwells in a man is a correct measure of the man. If called to define Shakspeare's faculty, I should say superiority of Intellect, and think I had included all under that. What indeed are faculties? We talk of faculties as if they were distinct, things separable; as if a man had intellect, imagination, fancy, &c., as he has hands, feet and arms. That is a capital error. Then again, we hear of a man's 'intellectual nature,' and of his 'moral nature,' as if these again were divisible, and existed apart. Necessities of language do perhaps prescribe such forms of utterance; we must speak, I am aware, in that way, if we are to speak at all. But words ought not to harden into things for us. It seems to me, our apprehension of this matter is, for the most part, radically falsified thereby. We ought to know withal, and to keep forever in mind, that these divisions are at bottom but names; that man's spiritual nature, the vital Force which dwells in him, is essentially one and indivisible; that what we call imagination, fancy, understanding, and so forth, are but different figures of the same Power of Insight, all indissolubly connected with each other, physiognomically related; that if we knew one of them, we might know all of them. Morality itself, what we call the moral quality of a man, what is this but another side of the one vital Force whereby he is and works? All that a man does is physiognomical of him. You may see how a man would fight, by the way in which he sings; his courage, or want of courage, is visible in the word he utters, in the opinion he has formed, no less than in the stroke he strikes. He is one; and preaches the same Self abroad in all these ways.

Without hands a man might have feet, and could still walk: but, consider it,—without morality, intellect were impossible for him: a thoroughly immoral man could not know anything
at all! To know a thing, what we can call knowing, a man must first *love* the thing, sympathise with it: that is, be *virtuously* related to it. If he have not the justice to put down his own selfishness at every turn, the courage to stand by the dangerous-true at every turn, how shall he know? His virtues all of them, will lie recorded in his knowledge. Nature, with her truth, remains to the bad, to the selfish and the pusillanimous forever a sealed book: what such can know of Nature is mean, superficial, small; for the uses of the day merely.—But does not the very Fox know something of Nature? Exactly so: it knows where the geese lodge! The human Reynard, very frequent everywhere in the world, what more does he know but this and the like of this? Nay, it should be considered, too, that if the Fox had not a certain vulpine *morality*, he could not even know where the geese were, or get at the geese! If he spent his time in splenetic atrribiliar reflections on his own misery, his ill usage by Nature, Fortune and other Foxes, and so forth; and had not courage, promptitude, practicality, and other suitable vulpine gifts and graces, he would catch no geese. We may say of the Fox too, that his morality and insight are of the same dimensions; different faces of the same internal unity of vulpine life!—These things are worth stating; for the contrary of them acts with manifold very baleful perversion, in this time: what limitations, modifications they require, your own candour will supply.

If I say, therefore, that Shakspeare is the greatest of intellects, I have said all concerning him. But there is more in Shakspeare's intellect than we have yet seen. It is what I call an unconscious intellect; there is more virtue in it than he himself is aware of. Novalis beautifully remarks of him, that those Dramas of his are Products of Nature too, deep as Nature herself. I find a great truth in this saying. Shakspeare's Art is not Artifice; the noblest worth of it is not there by plan or precontrivance. It grows-up from the deeps of Nature,
through this noble sincere soul, who is a voice of Nature. The latest generations of men will find new meanings in Shakespeare, new elucidations of their own human being; 'new harmonies with the infinite structure of the Universe; concurrences with later ideas, affinities with the higher powers and senses of man.' This well deserves meditating. It is Nature's highest reward to a true simple great soul, that he get thus to be a part of herself. Such a man's works, whatsoever he with utmost conscious exertion and forethought shall accomplish, grow up withal unconsciously, from the unknown deeps in him;—as the oak-tree grows from the Earth's bosom, as the mountains and waters shape themselves; with a symmetry grounded of Nature's own laws, conformable to all Truth whatsoever. How much in Shakespeare lies hid; his sorrows, his silent struggles known to himself; much that was not known at all, not speakable at all; like roots, like sap and forces working underground! Speech is great; but Silence is greater.

Withal the joyful tranquility of this man is notable. I will not blame Dante for his misery: it is as battle without victory; but true battle,—the first, indispensable thing. Yet I call Shakespeare greater than Dante, in that he fought truly, and did conquer. Doubt it not, he had his own sorrows: those Sonnets of his will even testify expressly in what deep waters he had waded, and swum struggling for his life;—as what man like him ever failed to have to do? It seems to me a heedless notion, our common one, that he sat like a bird on the bough; and sang forth, free and off hand, never knowing the troubles of other men. Not so; with no man is it so. How could a man travel forward from rustic deer-poaching to such tragedy-writing, and not fall-in with sorrows by the way? Or, still better, how could a man delineate a Hamlet, a Coriolanus, a Macbeth, so many suffering heroic hearts, if his own heroic heart had never suffered?—And now, in contrast with all this, observe his mirthfulness, his genuine overflowing love.
of laughter! You would say, in no point does he exaggerate but only in laughter. Fiery objurgations, words that pierce and burn, are to be found in Shakspeare; yet he is always in measure here; never what Johnson would remark as a specially 'good hater.' But his laughter seems to pour from him in floods; he heaps all manner of ridiculous nicknames on the butt he is bantering, tumbles and tosses him in all sorts of horse-play; you would say, with his whole heart laughs. And then, if not always the finest, it is always a genial laughter. Not at mere weakness, at misery or poverty; never. No man who can laugh, what we call laughing, will laugh at these things. It is some poor character only desiring to laugh, and have the credit of wit, that does so. Laughter means sympathy; good laughter is not 'the crackling of thorns under the pot.' Even at stupidity and pretension this Shakspeare does not laugh otherwise than genially. Dogberry and Verges tickle our very hearts; and we dismiss them covered with explosions of laughter: but we like the poor fellows only the better for our laughing; and hope they will get on well there, and continue Presidents of the City-watch. Such laughter, like sunshine on the deep sea, is very beautiful to me.

We have no room to speak of Shakspeare's individual works; though perhaps there is much still waiting to be said on that head. Had we, for instance, all his plays reviewed as Hamlet, in Wilhelm Meister, is! A thing which might, one day, be done. August Wilhelm Schlegel has a remark on his Historical Plays, Henry Fifth and the others, which is worth remembering. He calls them a kind of National Epic. Marlborough, you recollect, said, he knew no English History but what he had learned from Shakspeare. There are really, if we look to it, few as memorable Histories. The great salient points are
Shakspeare's Patriotism.

admirably seized; all rounds itself off, into a kind of rhythmic coherence; it is, as Schlegel says, epic;—as indeed all delineation by a great thinker will be. There are right beautiful things in those Pieces, which indeed together form one beautiful thing. That battle of Agincourt strikes me as one of the most perfect things, in its sort, we anywhere have of Shakspeare's. The description of the two hosts: the worn-out, jaded English; the dread hour, big with destiny, when the battle shall begin; and then that deathless valour: "Ye good yeomen, whose limbs were made in England!" There is a noble Patriotism in it,—far other than the 'indifference' you sometimes hear ascribed to Shakspeare. A true English heart breathes, calm and strong, through the whole business; not boisterous, protrusive; all the better for that. There is a sound in it like the ring of steel. This man too had a right stroke in him, had it come to that!

But I will say, of Shakspeare's works generally, that we have no full impress of him there; even as full as we have of many men. His works are so many windows, through which we see a glimpse of the world that was in him. All his works seem, comparatively speaking, cursory, imperfect, written under cramping circumstances; giving only here and there a note of the full utterance of the man. Passages there are that come upon you like splendour out of Heaven; bursts of radiance, illuminating the very heart of the thing: you say, "That is true, spoken once and forever; wheresover and whatsoever there is an open human soul, that will be recognised as true!" Such bursts, however, make us feel that the surrounding matter is not radiant; that it is, in part, temporary, conventional. Alas, Shakspeare had to write for the Globe Playhouse: his great soul had to crush itself, as it could, into that and no other mould. It was with him, then, as it is with us all. No man works save under conditions. The sculptor cannot set his own free Thought before us; but his Thought as he could translate
Shakspeare as Prophet.

it into the stone that was given, with the tools that were given. *Disjecta membra* are all that we find of any Poet, or of any man.

Whoever looks intelligently at this Shakspeare may recognise that he too was a *Prophet*, in his way; of an insight analogous to the Prophetic, though he took it up in another strain. Nature seemed to this man also divine; *unspeakable*, deep as Tophet, high as Heaven: 'We are such stuff as Dreams are made of!' That scroll in Westminster Abbey, which few read with understanding, is of the depth of any seer. But the man sang; did not preach, except musically. We called Dante the melodious Priest of Middle-Age Catholicism. May we not call Shakspeare the still more melodious Priest of a *true* Catholicism, the 'Universal Church' of the Future and of all times? No narrow superstition, harsh asceticism, intolerance, fanatical fierceness or perversion: a Revelation, so far as it goes, that such a thousandfold hidden beauty and divineness dwells in all Nature; which let all men worship as they can! We may say without offence, that there rises a kind of universal Psalm out of this Shakspeare too; not unfit to make itself heard among the still more sacred Psalms. Not in disharmony with these, if we understood them, but in harmony!—I cannot call this Shakspeare a 'Sceptic,' as some do; his indifference to the creeds and theological quarrels of his time misleading them. No: neither unpatriotic, though he says little about his Patriotism; nor sceptic, though he says little about his Faith. Such 'indifference' was the fruit of his greatness withal: his whole heart was in his own grand sphere of worship (we may call it such): these other controversies, vitally important to other men, were not vital to him.

But call it worship, call it what you will, is it not a right glorious thing, and set of things, this that Shakspeare has brought us? For myself, I feel that there is actually a kind of sacredness in the fact of such a man being sent into this Earth. Is
he not an eye to us all; a blessed heaven-sent Bringer of Light?—And, at bottom, was it not perhaps far better that this Shakspeare, everyway an unconscious man, was conscious of no Heavenly message? He did not feel, like Mahomet, because he saw into those internal Splendours, that he specially was the 'Prophet of God:' and was he not greater than Mahomet in that? Greater; and also, if we compute strictly, as we did in Dante's case, more successful. It was intrinsically an error that notion of Mahomet's, of his supreme Prophethood: and has come down to us inextricably involved in error to this day; dragging along with it such a coil of fables, impurities, intolerances, as makes it a questionable step for me here and now to say, as I have done, that Mahomet was a true Speaker at all, and not rather an ambitious charlatan, perversity and simulacrum; no Speaker, but a Babbler! Even in Arabia, as I compute, Mahomet will have exhausted himself and become obsolete, while this Shakspeare, this Dante may still be young;—while this Shakspeare may still pretend to be a Priest of Mankind, of Arabia as of other places, for unlimited periods to come!

Compared with any speaker or singer one knows, even with Æschylus or Homer, why should he not, for veracity and universality, last like them? He is sincere as they; reaches deep down like them, to the universal and perennial. But as for Mahomet, I think it had been better for him not to be so conscious! Alas, poor Mahomet; all that he was conscious of was a mere error; a futility and triviality,—as indeed such ever is. The truly great in him too was the unconscious: that he was a wild Arab lion of the desert, and did speak-out with that great thunder-voice of his, not by words which he thought to be great, but by actions, by feelings, by a history which were great! His Koran has become a stupid piece of prolix absurdity; we do not believe, like him, that God wrote that! The Great
Indian Empire or Shakspeare?

Man here too, as always, is a Force of Nature: whatsoever is truly great in him springs-up from the inarticulate deeps.

Well: this is our poor Warwickshire Peasant, who rose to be Manager of a Playhouse, so that he could live without begging: whom the Earl of Southampton cost some kind glances on; whom Sir Thomas Lucy, many thanks to him, was for sending to the Treadmill! We did not account him a god, like Odin, while he dwelt with us;—on which point there were much to be said. But I will say rather, or repeat: In spite of the sad state Hero-worship now lies in, consider what this Shakspeare has actually become among us. Which Englishman we ever made in this land of ours, which million of Englishmen, would we not give-up rather than the Stratford Peasant? There is no regiment of highest Dignitaries that we would sell him for. He is the grandest thing we have yet done. For our honour among foreign nations, as an ornament to our English Household, what item is there that we would not surrender rather than him? Consider now, if they asked us, Will you give-up your Indian Empire, or your Shakspeare, you English; never have had any Indian Empire, or never have had any Shakspeare? Really it were a grave question. Official persons would answer doubtless in official language; but we, for our part too, should not we be forced to answer: Indian Empire, or no Indian Empire; we cannot do without Shakspeare! Indian Empire will go, at any rate, some day; but this Shakspeare does not go, he lasts forever with us; we cannot give-up our Shakspeare!

Nay, apart from spiritualities; and considering him merely as a real, marketable, tangibly-useful possession. England, before long, this Island of ours, will hold but a small fraction of the English: in America, in New Holland, east and west to he very Antipodes, there will be a Saxondom covering great
spaces of the Globe. And now, what is it that can keep all these together into virtually one Nation, so that they do not fall-out and fight, but live at peace, in brotherlike intercourse helping one another? This is justly regarded as the greatest practical problem, the thing all manner of sovereignties and governments are here to accomplish: what is it that will accomplish this? Acts of Parliament, administrative prime-ministers cannot. America is parted from us, so far as Parliament could part it. Call it not fantastic, for there is much reality in it: Here, I say, is an English King, whom no time or chance, Parliament or combination of Parliaments, can dethrone! This King Shakspeare, does not he shine, in crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying-signs; indestructible; really more valuable in that point of view than any other means or appliance whatsoever? We can fancy him as radiant aloft over all the Nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence. From Paramatta, from New York, wheresoever, under what sort of Parish-Constable soever, English men and women are, they will say to one another: "Yes, this Shakspeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and kind with him." The most common-sense politician, too, if he pleases, may think of that.

Yes, truly, it is a great thing for a Nation that it get an articulate voice; that it produce a man who will speak-forth melodiously what the heart of it means! Italy, for example, poor Italy lies dismembered, scattered asunder, not appearing in any protocol or treaty as a unity at all; yet the noble Italy is actually one: Italy produced its Dante; Italy can speak! The Czar of all the Russias, he is strong, with so many bayonets, Cossacks and cannons; and does a great feat in keeping such a tract of Earth politically together; but he cannot yet speak. Something great in him, but it is a dumb greatness. He has had no voice of genius, to be heard of all
men and times. He must learn to speak. He is a great dumb monster hitherto. His cannons and Cossacks will all have rusted into nonentity, while that Dante's voice is still audible. The Nation that has a Dante is bound together as no dumb Russia can be.—We must here end what we had to say of the Hero-Poet.
NOTES.

PAGE 1.—The Hero as Divinity, the Hero as Prophet—These formed the subjects of the foregoing lectures. Odin was taken as the type of Hero as Divinity; ‘Odin, and not Another,’ as Froude says, ‘for obvious reasons; but in this; as in everything, Carlyle was Norse to the heart,’ Mahomet was the type of the Prophet-Hero.

less ambitious, but also less questionable—for reasons hinted at above: there is a certain falsity in such conceptions; the man who fancies himself either God ‘or speaking with the voice of a God,’ deceives himself; those who believe that he is so, also deceive themselves. There is evil mingled with the good in such cases.

Always when Nature pleases—Observe, Carlyle does not think of accounting for his ‘heroic figure,’ as is the way with some modern ‘philosophical histories,’ by counting up influences from without, environment, education, hereditary principles, and the like. The highest things were to Carlyle ununderstandable by the intellectual faculty. His ‘Let Nature send a Hero Soul,’ is much the same as the old Biblical way of looking at it;—‘There was a man sent from God.’ Perhaps it was the truest way of looking at the matter, though the dialect be old.

I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man, &c.—This is a very bold position to take up, and perhaps a very questionable one. Experience seems to contradict it in many ways, and Carlyle himself qualifies the statement in the next paragraph. Carlyle himself has been instanced by one biographer (Dr. Garnett) as a refutation of it, in that he was weak in science and art; one might add, in poetry. He had certainly no gift for ‘polishing stanzas.’ But perhaps this criticism is only superficial. Carlyle’s accuracy and unwearied research in historical work shows some aptitude for science, and, though he knew not very much of, and cared considerably less for, painting, sculpture, and the fine arts, he possessed the great artistic faculty of seeing things and of reproducing them, after his own fashion. He is amongst the greatest of word-painters. In poetry too, though his rhymes are poor enough, his thought and feeling are, as I have endeavoured to show in the introduction, essentially poetical. For the particular work he had in hand, neither physical science, nor rhyming, nor the fine arts would serve the purpose, and one can pretty well see that his occasional departures into these provinces were only half-hearted. Certainly Carlyle was never educated in the fine arts, and never could educate himself, but, when we consider his intense appreciation of natural beauty, and his occasional flashes of ‘inspired’ criticism in purely artistic matters, it would perhaps not be entirely unwarrantable to maintain, that, had circumstances been other, his sphere other, his work
other, he might have cultivated a knowledge and appreciation of the fine arts approximate to that of his great disciple, Ruskin. But one ought not in Carlyle to lay too much stress on the logical accuracy of this and other truths. The doctrine here is, in a way quite Carlylean, qualified by the admission of another ‘truth,’ apparently contradictory. ‘Nature does not make all great men, more than all other men, in the self-same mould.’ One ought rather to look for what eternal ethical truth underlies the proposition; and one may find it here. If there are different greatnesses and goodesses, one of the king, another of the poet, another of the legislator, and so on, then there is no one absolute greatness and goodness; accordingly there can be no absolute virtue; there will be only the virtue of the cobbler in making shoes, and, then, why not also a virtue of the thief in stealing them? This, however, is obviously not so, in Carlyle’s opinion at least. Let us reason somewhat as follows. We have a work of art before us, a great picture may be; and we proceed to criticise it. We first of all dispose of all technicalities, correct drawing, right perspective, skilful colouring and the rest, knowledge of this or that rule, discovered in the gradual development of art and as such, taught in the Schools. We do not find the greatness of the work here, for in that case many a trifling modern picture must be held superior to works of acknowledged masters, painted before the said rules were discovered. We find ultimately that the greatness of the work consists in various spiritual qualities possessed by the artist and manifest in his works; and we find that those ultimate qualities are identical with the ultimate qualities underlying all work which we call great. Having made this discovery we shall then be able to follow the more subtle teaching, such as that of Ruskin, which traces even in technical skill, boldness and accuracy of drawing, brightness and purity of colour, certain evidences of spiritual qualities in the artist; so that we shall find greatness manifesting itself in so seemingly small a thing as the curve of a line.

This of course cannot be traced save by those who possess a large amount of special and general knowledge; but that it can be traced seems indubitable, if we are to believe that a man’s character manifests itself unconsciously in his smallest actions; and this now-a-days appears even scientifically true.

Thus we gather that Shakespeare is not a great poet because he was a supreme dramatic artist, and Milton was not a great poet because he knew how to use blank verse as no poet before or since has used it, but for far different reasons. They were, we get to learn, great poets, because they were essentially great men, they possessed in a surpassing degree the qualities which all great men possess. In some such way we may begin to discover the real truth which underlies Carlyle’s apparently questionable dictum about the identity of the Heroic-nature.
NOTES.

PAGE 2.—Mirabeau—Honore Gabriel Riquetti, 1749—1791. In Mirabeau Carlyle perceived by far the ablest, and thus according to him, the noblest actor in French Revolutionary History. He is, if any man is, the hero of Carlyle's 'French Revolution.' Carlyle also wrote for the London and Westminster Review, 1837, an essay on Mirabeau. It is now to be found in the fifth volume of the Miscellaneous Essays.

Austerlitz battles—Bonaparte defeated the allies at Austerlitz in December 1805. Carlyle's estimate of Napoleon will be found in the lecture on the Hero as King, a resume of which, together with the other lectures is given by way of Appendix to this volume. Of Napoleon's 'words' Carlyle was especially fond of two: first, La Carriere ouverte aux talens. Compare Sartor Resartus 123. 'The man was a Divine Missionary, though unconscious of it; and preached, through the cannon's throat, that great doctrine. La carriere ouverte aux talens (The tools to him that can handle them), which is our ultimate Political Evangel, wherein alone can liberty lie.' The other, instanced in the lecture on the 'Hero as King' and elsewhere, is the question put by Napoleon to the savans who had just happily convinced themselves of the non-existence of God.—'Very ingenious, Messieurs, but—pointing to the stars—who made all that?'

Turenne—Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne (1611—1675), the greatest of the generals of Louis XIV.

Samuel Johnson—Carlyle is perpetually referring to Johnson, for whom he had the strongest sympathy and admiration. Johnson figures as one of the 'Heroes as Men of Letters'; and one of the very best of Carlyle's Essays is that on 'Boswell's Life of Johnson.'

Petrarch and Boccacio—Francesco Petrarca 1304—1374; one of the greatest of Italian poets: most of his poems are written in honour of a lady named Laura de Noves. Giovanni Boccaccio 1313—1375: another great Italian writer, both in prose and verse. He is best known for his Decamerone, a collection of 100 tales; but he wrote much besides this.

Burns—Carlyle had a very high, and probably exaggerated opinion of the abilities of Burns. He calls him in the Essay on Johnson 'the noblest and ablest man of his age in all the British land.' Burns also figures as a Hero as Man of Letters, and has also a separate Essay devoted to him.

PAGE 3.—Some Whitechapel needle—Whitechapel is a district in the east of London.

What the world, on this matter, shall permit, &c.—The chief concern for the world, according to Carlyle, is the appreciation it has for great men, men of genius; whether it has the power to recognise them at all, how it chooses to honour them, to make use of them? If well, as in some old ages, it will be well with the world, if ill, as (Carlyle thought) in modern times, it will be ill with the world. There is no doctrine of Carlyle which he insists upon more strongly than this, of the essential precious-
NOTES.

ness of 'Hero-worship.' The present set of lectures deals with it and with it alone. Perhaps the earliest work in which the doctrine was in-calculated was the Essay on Johnson, and from that time (1832) to the publication of 'Early Kings of Norway' (1875) we have the same teaching reiterated with countless illustrations. 'Find your best man; reverence him, obey him, loyally follow him: therein lies your true freedom: not in ballot boxes, universal suffrage, elective principle and the like.' That is Carlyle's teaching on this point: strangely different from much modern Liberalism. Ruskin and Fronde, Carlyle's disciples have preached much the same doctrines. Carlyle in 'Early Kings of Norway' (page 97) has quoted with approval a passage from the former, 'one of those strange, piercing, winged words of Ruskin, which has in it a terrible truth for us in these epochs now come'.

'Your main problem is that ancient trite one, "who is best man?" and the fates forgive much,—forgive the wildest, fiercest, cruellest experiments,—if fairly made for the determination of that... But, if you refuse such inquiry, and maintain every man for his neighbour's match,—if you give vote to the simple and liberty to the vile, the powers of those spiritual and material worlds in due time present you inevitably with the same problem, soluble now only wrong side upwards; and your robbing and slaying must be done then to find out, "who is worst man?"'

**Vates** means both Prophet and Poet—'Vates,' a Latin word signifying in the first place, a prophet. The Romans had no word for poet, because they had no poetry proper, until they came under the influence of the Greeks, when they borrowed the Greek word 'Poeta,' which signifies a 'maker.' The old English word for a Poet is also 'Maker.'

**Goethe**—For some remarks on Carlyle's admiration for Goethe and Goethe's influence on him, see the Introduction passim.

**Fichte**—John Theophilus Fichte (1762-1814) a great German transcendentalist Philosopher. The rest of the paragraph is purely transcendental thought, which Carlyle learnt from the Germans, Fichte, Kant, Novalis, Goethe and others. It is constantly reappearing in his writings, but more in his earlier than in his later ones, for he felt more and more, that it could 'do no good at present, to speak much about this.' We are told now-a-days, (with what degree of accuracy the present editor will not venture to calculate,) that the German thinkers found it all in the old Indian Scriptures—(they might have found it in the Bible for the matter of that). It is of course thoroughly opposed to any kind of 'Materialism' or 'Utilitarianism'; and when we remember what influence the German Schools have exercised on European thought, what the influence of Carlyle himself has been and is, it will be well for us to be on our guard against the wholesale declamations against the 'Materialism of Western Thought' of which we hear so much now-a-days. See note, pages 69, 70.

As if, says the Satirist—No doubt the 'Satirist' is Carlyle himself. Carlyle is here alluding to the various Materialistic and Utilitarian philosophies, for which the French were in the first instance responsible; philosophies which account for every thing, spiritual, social, political, by
NOTES.

supposing the counteraction of certain mechanical checks and balances,—motives tending towards this and that, which can all be satisfactorily enumerated and expounded: as if, said Carlyle, ‘Man had no soul, but only a stomach.’ This subject is fully worked out in the Essay ‘Signs of the Times.’ (Miscellanies II.)

PAGE 4.—He is a Vates, first of all, in virtue of being sincere—This, of sincerity being at the root of all true greatness is another of Carlyle’s fundamental doctrines, and is emphasised, again and again, throughout the lectures on Heroes;—Mahomet was a great man; he could not have been an imposter: Cromwell was a great man, he could not have been anambitious hypocrite. ‘I should say sincerity, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic.’ (The Hero as Prophet, page 42.)

“Consider the lilies of the field”—see Matthew, vi. 28, 29.

PAGE 5.—Vauxhall—an old place of amusement in London. It was finally closed in 1859. We are told that it was so called ‘from its site in the manor of “La Sale Fawkes.”’ An account of an evening spent at Vauxhall will be found towards the beginning of Thackeray’s ‘Vanity Fair.’

Saxo Grammaticus—A Danish historian who lived in the twelfth century. His history is certainly the source of Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet,’ but it is a doubtful question whether Shakespeare derived the story directly or indirectly from that source.

PAGE 6.—The poet has an Infinitude in him—Compare the Essay on Johnson (Miscellanies IV, 81). ‘Critics insist much on the Poet that he should communicate an “Infinitude” to his delineation; that by intensity of conception, by that gift of “transcendental thought,” which is fitly named “genius” and inspiration, he should inform the Finite with a certain Infinitude of significance; or as they sometimes say, ennoble the Actual with Idealness. They are right in their precept; they mean rightly.’ Compare also Jean Paul Richter, quoted by Carlyle (Miscellanies III, 48). ‘The rare union between cutting force of intellectual utterance, and infinitude of sentiment, (in Jacobi) gives us the intense metallic chord with its soft tones.’

If pressed to give a definition—this obviously is not a ‘definition’ in the logical sense; but in such definitions Carlyle, as a poet, and not a logician, is not strong. He rather suggests, gives some thought, poetically true, with some ‘infinitude’ of meaning, upon which we are invited to meditate. This admirable saying on the spiritual effect of music (‘A kind of inarticulate speech,’ &c.) may be compared with some of Browning’s poems on Music and Musicians.
Carlyle's views on poetry are distinctly 'transcendental.' Following the Germans he held, that there was a higher mental faculty than the logical understanding; that logical understanding could give no account of religion, virtue, poetry. Above understanding is reason 'the pure ultimate light of our nature,' wherein 'lies the foundation of poetry, virtue, religion.' (Essay on Novalis.) Elsewhere he writes, 'Consult understanding about the Beauty of Poetry, and it asks: Where is this Beauty? or 'discovers it at length in rhythms and fitnesses, and male and female 'rhymes......Nevertheless......Shakespeare is a Poet, and Boileau is none, 'think of it as you may, &c.'

PAGE 7—Hulls—This is a thoroughly Carlylean word. It is amongst various mannerisms quoted against his friend by John Sterling in a letter to Carlyle on Sartor Resartus:—"Hulls" perpetually for coverings, it being 'a word hardly used, and then only for the husk of a nut?' See the 'Life of John Sterling,' page 97.

The Greeks fabled of Sphere Harmonies—The Pythagorean doctrine of the music of the nine spheres. Compare Milton, Arcades,—

The heavenly tune, which none can hear,
Of human mould with gross unpurged ear.

and Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, Act V. 1,

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

The subtle, not very intelligible doctrine that 'the very central essence of us is song....all else but wrappings and hulls,' appears in Tennyson's Idylls of the King in that passage where Merlin tells Gareth that the city of Camelot is built,

To music, therefore, never built at all,
And therefore built for ever.

To attempt to expound such transcendentalisms in logical language would be a futile enough task.

It turns still on power of intellect—Notice carefully that by 'intelllect' Carlyle does not mean the logical faculty, generally called reason, but much higher mental qualities, which surpass and include the reasoning powers.

Apocalypse—Gk. 'Revelation.'

Admiration for the Heroic gift—Cf. Tennyson's 'We needs must love the highest when we see it.' This belief in the indestructibility of Hero-worship was Carlyle's great consolatory reflection amid the many things
wrong and evil which he saw in modern life. Democracy, denying that one man was better than another, 'Dilettantisms' explaining away greatness, sneeringly denying its existence altogether. Cf. Sartor Resartus III, vii. 'Know that there is in man a quite indestructible reverence for ' whatsoever holds of Heaven, or even plausibly counterfeits such holding. 'Show the dullest clodpole, show the haughtiest featherhead, that a soul higher than himself is actually here; were his knees stiffened into brass, 'he must down and worship.'

Sceptical Dilettantism—This is one of Carlyle's especial bugbears, against which he is perpetually declaiming,—the shallow cleverness, superficial intellectuality, for ever doubting, explaining away, confounding good and evil, finding low motives for high acts. 'The healthy understanding, we should say, is not the logical, argumentative, but the intuitive; for the end of understanding is not to prove and find reasons, 'but to know and believe.' (Essay on Characteristics.) To know and believe—what? Not theologies, Church Systems, thaumaturgy and the like, but, according to Carlyle, 'the transcendental immeasurable character of Duty: 'the basis of all Gospels, the essence of all Religion' (Essay on Johnson), the absolute difference between and incompatibility of Good and Evil. By philosophies which prescribe attainment of Happiness as the aim of man, or those that account for all human action by presupposing a few natural motives, such as preservation of life, propagation of species, and so on, the true character of good and evil becomes confounded; reverence for Heroes, the heroic,—that is the godlike—in man, becomes impossible. But such ways of thinking, says Carlyle, are but passing phases, and will not live forever.

PAGE 8. —High Duchesses and ostlers of inns—This incident of Hero-worship in the case of Burns, is a great favourite with Carlyle: he quotes it several times, for instance, in the Essay on Goethe (Miscellanies IV, page 139,) where the 'Corsican Lieutenant of Artillery' is also mentioned. 'While, again, let but some riding gauger arrive under cloud of night at a Scottish inn, and word be whispered that it is Robert Burns; 'in few instants all beds and truckle beds, from garret to cellar, are left vacant, and gentle and simple, with open eyes and erect ears, are gathered together.' See also the Lecture on 'The Hero as Man of Letters.'

Beatified—i.e., made saints of.

PAGE 9. —Many volumes have been written by way of commentary—In Scartazzini's 'Dante Manual,' a list of these commentaries is given, some twenty or thirty, the first being that of Jacopo della Lana, written in 1328. Scartazzini's list includes only Italian commentaries. There are, however, many others, and new commentaries still continue to be issued. No poets are studied in Europe so minutely and exhaustively as Dante and Shakespeare.
The Book—The book is, of course, the *Divina Commedia*, Dante's greatest work, but he wrote several others; all of them notable in their way, one, the *Vita Nuova*, (exquisitely translated into English by Rossetti), supremely beautiful. The following is a list:—The *Vita Nuova*, the *Canzoniere*, *Volgare Eloquenza* (in Latin), *De Monarchia* (in Latin), *La Questione dell' Acqua e della Terra* (in Latin) *Il convito*. The *Divina Commedia* (Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso), *Letters*, *Eclogues*, &c.

The portrait commonly attributed to Giotto.—Whether the portrait Carlyle speaks of as 'commonly attributed to Giotto,' be really his or no, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the subject to say. A little more than two months after the delivery of this lecture, that is on the 21st of July 1840, a portrait of Dante, most certainly by Giotto, was discovered by the research of three gentlemen, an Italian, Signor Bezzi, an Englishman, Mr. Seymour Kirkup, and an American, Mr. Henry Wild. This portrait was painted, probably, in 1301 when Giotto was 25 years of age and his friend Dante 36. It had been covered with whitewash for three centuries. The portrait is in the Palazzo dell Podesta, i.e., the Council Chamber of Florence, and forms part of a fresco in which, besides Dante, his master Brunetto Latini and other of their contemporaries figure. This portrait has no laurel round the head, and the expression does not show the sorrow, 'silent pain' and 'God-like disdain' that Carlyle speaks of as to be found in the other picture. Mrs. Jameson in her 'Memoirs of the early Italian Painters,' speaking of this portrait, says 'On comparing the head of Dante, painted when he was about 30, prosperous and distinguished in his native city, with the later portrait of him when he was an exile, worn, wasted, embittered by misfortune and disappointments and wounded pride, the difference of expression is as touching as the ideality in feature is indubitable.' (Page 32.)

It is however a fact that Giotto painted another portrait of Dante in Padua in 1317, Dante being at that time the guest of the great artist. (See Fraticelli, *Vita di Dante*, 268.) Reproductions of the early Giotto portrait are very common and may be had in photograph or otherwise. As frontispiece to Miss M. F. Rossetti's *A Shadow of Dante*, a book which the student of this lecture should most certainly consult, will be found a reproduction of the Giotto portrait, side by side with the equally well known death mask.

Giotto (1276—1336) may be said to have been the father of modern painting. He was the son of a poor herdsman and lived some fourteen miles from Florence. His genius for drawing was discovered by the Florentine painter Cimabue, in whose studio Giotto afterwards studied. Baldinucci in his *Vita d' Oderigo da Gubbio,* says that Dante also studied design along with Giotto in the studio of Cimabue. Certainly poet and painter were on terms of the most intimate friendship.

In the *Purgatorio* XI, 34—96. Dante thus speaks of Giotto:

*Credette Cimabue nella pintura Tene lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido, Si che la fama di colui oscura.*
Once Cimabue among them that limn
Was counted lord, now Giotto hath the cry
So that the other's fame is waxen dim.

Boccaccio in his Decameron VI, v. says of Giotto that 'his genius was so great excellence that there was nothing in all the operations of nature that his pencil could not delineate so deftly that it appeared to be not only similar, but the same'......And he adds that, Giotto having restored to light the art that had been buried for so many centuries, 'Meritamente una delle luci della Florentina gloria dir si puote,—may justly be called one of the lights of the glory of Florence.'

As Dante is known to have practised the art of design (he speaks of himself in the 'Vita Nuova' as having been, on one occasion, engaged in drawing the figure of an angel), so Giotto at times wrote verses. There is still extant a humorous canzone of his 'On the doctrine of voluntary poverty.' A fine translation of it will be found in D. G. Rossetti's Collected Works, Vol II, 212-214. Rossetti also speaks of the Giotto portrait as follows:—

'The reader will not need to be reminded of Giotto's portrait of the youth-ful Dante painted in the Bargello at Florence, then chapel of the Podesta. This is the author of the Vita Nuova. That other portrait shown us in the posthumous mask,—a face dead in exile after the death of hope,—should front the first page of the sacred poem to which heaven and earth had set their hands, but which might never bring him back to Florence, though it had made him haggard for many years.' (Collected Works II, 20, 21.)

The passage in this lecture describing the face of Dante has been, singled out and quoted by Professor Shairp in his Aspects of Poetry, as a specimen of Carlyle at his best.

PAGE 10.—His mystic unfathomable song—Later on in this Lecture, Carlyle tells us that he is here quoting the German writer Tieck.

The little that we know of Dante's life—As has been said before, the student may profitably consult Miss Rossetti's 'A shadow of Dante' for some account of Dante's life and work. Two admirable Dante Manuals, one on the life, the other on the works of Dante, are those written by Professor G. A. Scartazzini, recently, I believe, translated into English by A. J. Butler, himself a well known Dante scholar. For those who read Italian, Fraticelli's Storia della Vita di Dante Alighieri may be recommended. All, or almost all Dante's works, have been translated into English; the Divina Commedia many times; perhaps Carey's blank verse translation is still as good as any. Carlyle's brother, Dr. John Carlyle, was a Dante scholar, and translated into prose, with text and notes, the Inferno. The Vita Nuova, as has been said, was translated by Rossetti, and is perhaps the finest piece of translating work in the English language.

Some Latin classics—Boccaccio mentions especially, Virgil, Horace Ovid, Statius. Leonardo Bruni speaks of his studies in philosophy,
theology, astrology, arithmetic, geometry, his reading of history, his turning over many and various books. There is also reason to believe that he studied, and to some extent practised, the fine arts.

_Chiaroscuro—a technical word in Painting; it means 'light and shade,' derived from the Italian words chiaro, clear, and oscuro, dark._

_One of the chief Magistrates of Florence—In 1300 Dante 'not by lot, but by election, was made one of the Priors._

_His graceful affecting account of this—In the Vita Nuova, which is the story of his love for Beatrice, her death, and his own great sorrow on account of it. Scartazzini, arguing from some phrases in the Vita Nuova, is of opinion that Beatrice loved Dante, that she was wedded against her will to her husband, Messer Simone de'Bardi, and that 'Dante sapeva o almeno credeva che fosse morta di dolore—Dante knew, or at least believed that she died of grief._

_PAGE 11.—Dante himself was wedded, but it seems not happily—On this point, as on many others, the commentators are much at variance. Dante married in 1292. Boccaccio says that Dante married to please his parents and that they chose his wife for him. Giomnazzo Manetti, one of the early biographers of Dante, says, 'Uxorem habnit e clarissima 'Donatorum familia, nomine Gemma, morosan admodum, ut de Xantippe 'Socrates philosophi coniunx, scriptum esse legitum.' 'He took a wife from the renowned house of the Donati, by name Gemma, shrewish, as we read that it was written of Xantippe, the wife of the philosopher Socrates.' Fraticelli, Scartazzini and others hold that Dante was sufficiently happy in his marriage. Gemma bore him seven children. After his banishment he never saw his wife again. She survived him several years. Dante never alludes to her in any of his works, unless she also be included amongst those 'things most dearly loved by him' which Cacciaquida in the Paradiso foretells that Dante must abandon (see note on page 55), or unless, as some have conjectured by the 'gentil donna consolatrice,' the gentle lady of consolation, of whom Dante speaks in the 'Vita Nuova' none other be intended than Gemma di Manetto Donati. Whether Gemma was 'morosa' or not, there can be little doubt that Beatrice was 'the only one whom Dante ever with his whole strength of affection loved.'

_We will not complain of Dante's Miseries—Happiness, according to Carlyle, is not, 'our being's end and aim.' Nay rather, the best of mankind have ever been 'men of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' 'Men become perfect through suffering.' Happiness—attainment of greatest sums of pleasure, cannot be made the basis of systems of ethics; in spite of Utilitarianism, and other 'Pig-philosophies' as Carlyle contemptuously termed them. See note, page 66._

_And the world had wanted—an echo from Dryden's line in Absalom and Achitophel:_

_And Heaven had wanted one immortal song._
The Guelf-Ghibelline, Bianchi-Neri—The parties of Guelf and Ghibelline date from the twelfth century. They supported respectively the interest of the Papacy (the Guelfs) and that of the ‘Holy Roman Empire’ (the Ghibellines); but in Italy the struggle also became complicated with the strivings for municipal liberties which the Popes protected and which the Imperial rule assailed. See Hallam’s *Middle Ages*, Vol. I, 382 and following; and Bryce’s *Holy Roman Empire*, 306. Dante was at first a moderate Guelf. Circumstances and conviction afterwards made him a stalwart adherent of Imperialism; witness his book *De Monarchia*, which had the honour to be condemned by the Papal authorities as heretical: a curious and significant way of recognizing the greatest of Catholic teachers. Of the Bianchi-Neri, the Whites and Blacks and of Dante’s connection with them the following passage, which I translate from Fraticelli’s *Storia della Vita di Dante*, will give sufficient information. I abridge considerably:—

‘When Dante had reached the age of 35 years, he was made one of the Priors, who together with the Gonfaloniere, composed the supreme magistracy of the city. The office of Prior lasted two months, and began in the middle of the month; hence he remained in office from the 15th of June to the 15th of August 1300. The Ghibelline party was now almost altogether crushed. “Never,” says Ammirato, “had the city been quieter and more prosperous, both in the matter of population, of wealth, and of reputation, than it was in the beginning of 1300.” But as, through the Buondelmonte and the Uberti had been introduced into Florence in 1215, the parties of Guelf and Ghibelline; so now by the Donati and Cherchi were introduced in 1300 the Neri and Bianchi. There were in Pistoia two families of Cancellieri, related to one another by blood, but on terms of hostility. They were descended from one Messer Cancellieri, a notary, who had had two wives. And since one of them was called Bianca (white) her descendants were called the Cancellieri Bianchi (the white Cancellieri), and the sons of the other lady were called the black Cancellieri. Amongst some of these a brawl arose one day, and Gori, the son of Bertaccio Bertucca, was lightly struck by Lore the son of Guglielmo. Guglielmo, wishing by some act of courtesy to atone for the wrong his son had done, bade him go to the house of the wronged man’s father and there ask pardon for what had happened. Lore obeyed, but his humble act did not appease the anger of the injured man, who had the youth seized by his servants, carried to a stable, and there, over a manger, had his hand cut off, bidding him go home and tell his father that injuries should be washed out not by words, but in blood.’ The result of this atrocious deed was a determination on the part of Guglielmo and his friends to be avenged on the Bianchi. The feud spread, and the result was a general civil war in Pistoia and its neighbourhood. Florence thereupon interfered seized the leaders of the two parties, and carried them to Florence. ‘But this time the Florentines acted with little foresight for they merely quenched the fire from a neighbour’s house to kindle it in their own.’
'There were in Florence two powerful families, rivals of one another, the Donati, old nobility, valiant in arms, but poor; the Cerchi, of recent nobility, but very rich; and either had, as adherents and partisans, many other families. The head of the first was Corso, of the second Vieri. Corso Donati adopted the cause of the Cancellieri Neri, Vieri that of the Cancellieri Bianchi, and in a few days, the city was divided into two parties of the whites and of the blacks. The Chiefs of the Guelf party, fearing, and with reason, that these divisions would replace the parties of the Guelf and Ghibelline, and that the party of the Church might thus come into some danger, sent to Pope Boniface to ask him to devise some remedy. He accordingly sent to Florence his legate Father Matteo d'Acquasparta who arrived about the middle of June. When he came to demand full authority to reform the city, it was refused. At this time Dante entered on office; and as there had already been fighting between the two parties, which threatened shortly an actual war, the Priors, although they did not think it fitting to yield to the Cardinal's demand, none the less saw the necessity of taking some steps. Accordingly they imprisoned the chiefs of the two factions, Corso and Sinibaldo Donati, Rosso and Rosselino delle Torra, Giachinotto and Pazzino de' Pazzi, and Geri Spini with many others, in the Castello della Pieve: and Gentile, Torrigiano and Carbone de' Cerchi, Baschiera Tosinghi, Baldinaccio Adimari, Naldo Gherardini, Guido Cavalcante and Giacotto Nalisini with many others at Serrezzano. But Corso Donati intrigued with the Cardinal and with the people of Lucca, and at first refused to obey. He was afterwards, however, compelled to submit. The Cardinal himself withdrew shortly afterwards; and it became manifest that to have given him the supreme authority demanded by him would only have resulted in the crushing of the Whites and the exaltation of the Blacks. Wisely, then, had Dante and his colleagues acted in not consenting to his request, since Government ought not to act as a partisan, but as the moderator and conciliator of parties. But to have been an excellent citizen and a wise magistrate was the very cause of Dante's disgrace.'

Dante had acted with thorough impartiality; he had, amongst others, imprisoned his dearest friend, the poet Guido Cavalcante; none the less the Blacks declared he had sided with the Whites. Some time afterwards Guido was released; he had fallen sick to death in his confinement. This release was laid to Dante's charge, although when Guido was liberated, Dante was no longer in office. But the Blacks pursued him ever afterwards with the bitterest hatred. They did more; they called into Florence in 1501 Charles of Valois, brother of Philip the Fair of France; they intrigued with the Pope; they declared that the Whites were nothing better than Ghibellines, enemies of the Church. The Pope readily interfered; the Priors sent ambassadors to him, one of whom was Dante. There was more miserable intriguing and chicanery on the part of Pope, Prince and Neri. Dante never returned. Charles entered Florence; the Blacks at once came to power, and began immediately to take vengeance on their enemies. Dante was condemned, in his absence, unheard, because
he had striven to do some kind of justice when he served as a Magistrate. This was what threw the great religious poet on the Ghibelline Imperial party. It was seen clearly enough what 'cause of the church's right' meant,—miserable strivings of Popes and Cardinals for temporal power, intrigues with unscrupulous foreign adventurers, with seditious nobles. The true value of Municipal liberty was equally recognisable,—more miserable party quarrels, brawlings, street-fightings, banishings, murderings; Italy torn in pieces through its Popes, adventurers, and 'free' Republics. To Dante, loving justice, order, good government, liberty became a less admirable thing; he saw that the strong just hand was wanted more than charted rights, the strong hand of the Emperor, the heir, as he believed, of the Caesars, to whom, as mediæval thought fancied, God had given the temporal rule of the world, as He had given supreme spiritual power to the Bishop of Rome.

There is a record, I believe,—The record is given in full in Fraticelli's 'Storia della Vita di Dante Alighieri, &c.,' 151 and 152. It is dated 10th March 1302 and is in Latin. After the usual preamble to the effect that the decree is issued by the authority of the noble and potent knight, lord Cante de Gabriellibus de Engubio, the honorable Podesta of the city of Florence, &c., &c., it goes on 'We Cante, the aforesaid Podesta give and issue the under-written sentence of condemnation in the following manner':—Then follows a list of 13 names, 11th of which is 'Dantem Alagherii'. After this the document goes on to state that the above-mentioned persons, not having at first obeyed the former citation, and not having discharged the fine, thereby have confessed themselves guilty; therefore 'according to the laws, statutes and ordinances of the Commune and People of Florence, &c., &c., in these writings we solemnly decree that if any of the aforesaid at any time shall come within the jurisdiction of the aforesaid commune, such an one so coming shall be burned with fire so that he die.'

On this outrageous edict Scartazzini in his 'Vita di Dante' 81, has the following pertinent remark:—"That Dante was innocent of the charges brought against him, not only he himself, declaring that he had been unjustly banished, and openly asserting that his innocence was known to every one; but all his biographers unanimously bear witness, amongst them the Guelf, Giovanni Villani.'

Another curious document—This was a letter written by Dante to a Florentine monk, a friend of his, who had written to him acquainting him with the decree of the Florentines. It is to be found in the 2nd volume of Fraticelli's 3rd volume of the 'Opere Minori di Dante,' p. 500—502. The original Latin of the concluding part of the letter runs as follows:—'Non est hæc via redeundi ad patriam, Pater mi; sed si alia per vos aut deinde per alios invenietur, quæ famæ Dantis atque honoris non deroget, illam non lentis passibus acceptabo. Quodsi per nullam talam Florentia introitur, nuncquam Florentiam introibo. Quidni? nonne solis astrarumque specula ubique conspicuis? Nonne dulcissimas veritates potero speculare ubique sub celo, ni prius incolorum, imho ignominiosum, populo Florentiaque civitati me reddam?—Quippe nec panis deficiet.'

'This is no way to return to my native land, my Father: but if another be found by you, or hereafter by others, whereby the fame and
honour of Dante shall not suffer, with no tardy steps shall I accept. But if Florence may be entered in no other way than this, Florence will I never enter. Behold! shall I not, from every corner of the earth have sight of the sun and of the stars? May I not everywhere beneath the sky meditate the sweetest truths, unless first I render myself up to the people and city of Florence, a man inglorious, nay rather disgraced? And, I trust too, that bread shall not be lacking."

It will be noticed that Carlyle seems to quote from memory. The words 'nunquam revertar' do not occur but 'nunquam, Florentiam introibo'. It may also be remarked that the exiles were required to do something more than merely pay a fine and apologize. They were obliged to go through a ceremony of public penance. "These were the conditions," says Fraticelli, "to pay a certain sum, and afterwards, humble and dejected, with paper caps on their heads (a sign of infamy) and holding candles in their hands, to walk in procession behind the chariot of the Mint to the Church of St. John; and there to make offering to the Saint in expiation of their misdeeds." It was usual in Florence, he adds, at times to extend mercy to thieves and murderers who in this way were permitted to put themselves under the protection of the Saint. Dante was a political exile, and unjustly banished: he disdained to class himself with common criminals. None the less some of the exiles accepted the conditions—

'Tosinghi passed, Manelli passed,
Rinucci passed, each in his place;
But not an Alighieri face
Went by that day from first to last
In the Republic's triumph; nor
A foot came home to Dante's door.

These lines are from D. G. Rossetti's noble poem, 'Dante at Verona,' which should be carefully studied. I cannot refrain from quoting also the lines which serve as comment on Dante's refusal—'nunquam introibo.'

Such were his words. It is indeed
For ever well our singers should
Utter good words and know them good
Not through song only; with close heed
Lest, having spent for the work's sake
Six days, the man be left to make.

PAGE 12.—Come è duro calle—

Tu proverai si come sa di sale
Lo' pane altrui e com' è duro calle
Lo scendere e'l salir per l' altrui scale

Paradiso XVII, 58—60.

Translated thus by D. G. Rossetti:

Yea, thou shalt learn, how salt his food who fares
Upon another's bread,—how steep his path
Who treadeth up and down another's stairs.
In the fifth heaven, the sphere of Mars; Dante meets his ancestor Cacciaguida who prophesies to him of the evils that shall befall Florence, and how he must leave Florence, as Hippolytus left Athens, by the wiles of his cruel and false stepmother...how he shall abandon everything most dearly loved by him (i.e., his wife and children), and how 'Tu proverai come sa di sale', &c.

Petrarch reports of him—Dante was received at Cane della Scala's Court of Verona at the end of 1316 or the beginning of 1317 (Fraticelli—Vita di Dante, 234). Dante's answer is given somewhat differently in Fraticelli, 'Thou wouldst not marvel if thou knewest that the cause of friendship lies in equality of manners and likeness of minds'. See also Rossetti, 'Dante at Verona':—

Then, facing on his guest he cried,—
'Say, Messer Dante, how it is I get out of a clown like this
More than your wisdom can provide'
And Dante: 'Tis man's ancient whim That still his like seems good to him'.

The genuineness of these and other anecdotes has been doubted by modern Dante scholars, including Fraticelli and Scartazzini, the latter pronouncing that 'the anecdotes about the sojourn of Alighieri in the Court of Can Grande, and his displeasure at it all, must be regarded as fables.' But the story is not on the face of it improbable, and is curiously in keeping with all we know of Dante.

Cane Grande was at this time about 25 years of age, and was renowned for his riches and liberality. He was the youngest son of Alberto della Scala; his two brothers Bartolomeo and Alboino succeeded to the prince- dom one after the other, and on the death of the latter in 1311 Cane Grande was left in sole possession of the state of Verona. He was a zealous Ghibelline and defeated the Guelphs in a decisive battle, September 7th, 1314. A short account of Cane Grande della Scala will be found in Sismondi's history of the Italian Republics in one volume, pp. 123, 139, 140. Sismondi says that he was 'the most able Ghibelline Captain in Italy, the best soldier, the best politician, and the person whose services and attachment the Emperor most valued...Among the Lombard princes, he was the first protector of literature and the arts'. He died at Treviso, July 22nd, 1329.

Florence thou shalt never see, &c.—Of. D. G. Rossetti, Dante at Verona,
To Heaven and Hell thy feet may win,
But thine own house they come not in.

For long Dante cherished the hope that his great poem would prove the means of his return to Florence, that his fellow citizens would in pride and gratitude recall him in honour of that. The twenty-fifth Canto of the Paradiso opens thus:—

Se mai continga che'l poema sacro,
Al quale ha posto mano e cielo e' terra,
Si che m'ha fatto per piu anni macro,
Vinca la crudelita che fuor mi serra
Del bello ovile, o' io dormii agnello, etc.

which may roughly be translated as follows:—

Should it chance ever that the sacred song
Where to the Heaven and Earth have set their hand,
That made me haggard through so many years,
Conquer the cruelty that bars me out
From the fair fold wherein I slept a lamb,
Hateful to wolves that fashioned war for me,
O then, with other voice, with other weeds
Poet shall I return and at the font,
Of mine own baptism take up the crown.

But after the decree that held out to Dante, not the poet’s laurel, but the felon’s penance-candle, he must have given up all hope, and found his only consolation in the thought expressed in his letter quoted above,

‘Quidni? Nonne solis astrorumque specula ubique conspiciam? Nonne dulcissimas veritates-potero speculari ubique sub caclo?’

PAGE 13.—Bodied or bodiless, it is the one fact, &c.—That is, bodied in some symbol, system of religion, outer vesture of Truth, or not so bodied. See for further working out of this thought, Sartor Resartus, III. ii and iii, on ‘Church clothes’ and ‘Symbols.’

It was bodied in fixed certainty of scientific shape:—In the doctrines, that is to say, of Mediaeval Catholicism, the transient symbol under which Dante and other devout Catholics had cognizance of the Truths that were Eternal. Compare the Essay on Johnson (Miscellanies IV. 109):—

‘Thus happily for him, Johnson was one of those that knew: under a certain authentic symbol it stood forever present to his eyes: a symbol, indeed, waxing old as doth a garment; yet which had guided forward, as their Banner and celestial Pillar of Fire, innumerable saints and witnesses, the fathers of our modern world; and for him also had still a sacred significance.’

It must be remembered that Carlyle consistently taught that all Religious systems, theologies, creeds, and the like were symbols, true only so far as they bodied forth to men’s souls, actually and truly, the eternal truths of which they were but as outer vestures; they had all been true once, or they could not have lasted; but the time came when men ceased to realise the eternal truths, and to believe or think they believed merely the outer symbols. Then the symbol became useless, and even worse. It was because of this belief that Carlyle could so sympathise with past systems and past heroes, that he saw in them, not superstitions, delusions, impostures; that the heroic men were to him not fools or hypocrites; that it was possible for him to illustrate in the present lectures his great doctrine of Heroism, from so many diverse times, countries, and modes of thought. Consider them: Odin and Norse Paganism; Mahomet and
Islam, Dante and Mediæval Catholicism; Shakespeare and the wide Renaissance spirit: Luther, Knox, Cromwell, with their valorous, earnest Protestantism; Johnson with his Anglicanism and Gospel of Prudence; Burns with his little Gospel of sincere singing, Napoleon with his mission of 'the tools to him that can use them,' Rousseau even, with his purely negative denial of shams and lies. 'Johnson's way of thinking about this world is not mine, any more than Mahomet's was: but I recognise the everlasting element of heart-sincerity in both; and see with pleasure how neither of them remains ineffectual. Neither of them is as chaff sown; in both of them is something which the seed field will grow.' It is a grand tolerant ('in the deepest sense) gospel this, which can comprehend Dante and Luther, Johnson and Rousseau. Does it lose or gain by its necessary vagueness, the impossibility to express it satisfactorily in any words or logical propositions? That is the main question about it.

Take the following extracts from Sartor Resartus, III., iii.

'In a symbol there is concealment and yet revelation: here therefore, by Silence and by Speech acting together, comes a double significance. And if both the speech be itself high, and the silence fit and noble, how expressive will their union be! Thus in many a painted device, a simple seal-emblem, the commonest Truth, stands out to us proclaimed with quite new emphasis. Highest of all symbols are those wherein the Artist or Poet has risen into Prophet, and all men can recognise a present God, and worship the same: I mean religious symbols. Various enough have been such religious Symbols, what we call Religious; as men stood in this stage of culture or the other, and could worse or better body-forth the God-like.'

But again, on the other side:

'But, on the whole, as Time adds much to the sacredness of Symbols, so likewise in his progress he at length defaces, or even desecrates them; and Symbols, like all terrestrial garments, wax old. Meanwhile, as the average of matters goes, we account him Legislator and wise, who can so much as tell when a Symbol has grown old and gently remove it.'

With all this, compare the oft-quoted lines of Tennyson, on whose work, as on that of most great intellectual forces of the present day, Carlyle's influence is clearly traceable:

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

That Malebolge pool—Malebolge, i.e., literally evil-pits, the eighth circle of Hell, described in the Inferno, Cantos XVIII—XXX. It was divided into ten lesser concentric circles, in which various classes of the Frodolenti (cheats) were punished with various tortures suitable to their crimes; pandars and seducers were scourged by horned demons, flatterers and harlots wallowed in human dung; simonists were buried in holes head downwards with fiery flames licking the souls of their feet; diviners
moved about with their heads twisted the wrong way; swindlers were plunged in boiling pitch, hypocrites were weighed down beneath the burden of caps of lead; thieves were preyed upon by serpents; the souls of the guileful were wrapped in wandering flames; sedition-mongers and heresiarchs were horribly lacerated; while falsifiers of metals, alchemists, and various kinds of deceivers lay wallowing in all manner of evil stenches, and stricken with all foul diseases.

Luogo è in Inferno detto Malebolge—Inf. xviii. 1.
There is in Hell a place called evil-pits.

Alti guai—deep wails. Inf. iii., 22
Quivi sospiri, pianti, ed alti guai,
Risonovan per l’aer senza stelle,
Per ch’io al cominciarmi ne lacrimai.

And in this place sighs, plaints and wailings high
Echoed again through all the starless air,
That at the outset fall to weep must I.

The poet is describing the sounds he heard when first he passed through the gates of Hell. The words are not used of the Pit of Malebolge, of which, however, the poet says:

Quando noi fummo in su l’ultima chiostr.
Di Malebolge, si che i suoi conversi
Potian purere alla veduta nostra;
Lamenti saettaron me diversi,
Che di pieta ferrati avean gli strali;
Ond’io gli orecchi con le man copersi—Inf. xxix., 40—45.

‘When we came to the last cloister of Malebolge, so that all the other rings were visible to our eyes, diverse lamentations shot upon me, whose arrows were barbed with iron whence I covered mine ears with my hands.

If thou follow thy star—
Ed Egli a me: Setu segui tua stella
Non puoi fallire a glorioso porto, etc.—Inf. xv., 55, 56.

In the seventh circle of Hell Dante meets his Master, Ser Brunetto Latini, who thus encourages him.

And he to me, If thou thy star but follow,
Thou canst not fail to reach a glorious haven.
If well I understood in thy fair life.
And if death had not taken me so soon,
Seeing the heavens so benign to thee,
I would have given thee solace in thy work.

According to the commentators, ‘thy star’ here alludes to the constellation of the Twins, under which Dante was born, and ‘is the sign,’ says one, ‘of literature and science.’ (Fraticelli, note in loco). According to Fraticelli (Vita di Dante 54), ‘It must be believed that Brunetto observing the state of the heavens at the moment of Dante’s birth, drew his horoscope and foretold that he would be a man of great genius and learn-
ing and would obtain immortal renown.' With regard to Brunetto Latini, see below.

*This Book ' which has made me lean? ' See note, pages 55, 56.

'Si che m'ha fatto per piu anni macro.' Paradiso xxv.

This doctrine that work is no mere sport, but ever a toil and sorrow, is one upon which Carlyle is often fond of insisting. He says of himself in his Rectorial Address in Edinburgh (Miscellanies vii, 196) 'You cannot, if you are going to do any decisive intellectual operation—if you are going to write a book—at least, I never could—without getting decided-ly made ill by it, and really you must if it is your business—and you must follow out what you are at—and it sometimes is at the expense of health.' But there is another side to the question, one on which Carlyle's great disciple, Ruskin, has dwelt with much force, the necessity of healthy joy, and a real love of your work. This, too, Carlyle has not forgotten, and has, after his custom, stated it elsewhere, for instance in the address from which the above lines have been quoted. The advice is so balanced and excellent, that, although the passage is rather long, it well deserves to be quoted.

He begins by telling the Edinburgh students that 'they must keep healthy': then he points out that 'healthy' is, by etymology, the same word as 'holy':—'I find you could not get any better definition of what "holy" really is than "healthy—completely healthy." Mens sana in corpore sano.

'A man with his intellect a clear, plain, geometric mirror, brilliantly sensitive of all objects and impressions around it, and imagining all things in their correct proportions—not twisted up into convex or concave and distorting everything, so that he cannot see the truth of the matter without endless groping and manipulation—healthy, clear, free, and all round about him. We never can attain that at all. In fact, the operations we have got into are destructive of it.' (Then follows the passage already quoted,) 'Only remember at times to get back as fast as possible out of it into health, and regard the real equilibrium as the centre of things. You should always look at the heilig, which means holy, and holy means healthy.

'Well, that old etymology—what a lesson it is against certain gloomy, austere, ascetic people that have gone about, as if this world were all a dismal prison house! It has indeed got all the ugly things in it which I have been alluding to; but there is an eternal sky over it; and the blessed sunshine, the green of prophetic spring, and rich har. vests coming—all this is in it too. Piety does not mean that a man should make a sour face about things, and refuse to enjoy wisely what his Maker has given. Neither do you find it to have been so with the best sort.

Hic claudor Dantes patriis extorris ab oris—This is the fifth line of a Latin inscription on the tomb of Dante at Ravenna. The whole is as follows:
NOTES.

S. V. F.

Jura Monarchiae superos Flegetonta Lacusque,
Lustro, cessi, voluerunt fata quousque:
Sed quia pars cessit melioribus hospita castris
Auctorem suum petiit felicior astris,
Hic claudor Dantes, patriis extorris ab oris
Quem genuit Florentia mater amoris.

A great controversy has raged round this epitaph. It was once generally believed that Dante had written it himself, and one commentator, G. Rossetti, the father of the English poet and painter, has built much on the first lines, which say that Dante 'traversed through Heaven and Hell, to sing the rights of the Monarchy,' to support his strange theory that the Divine Comedy is largely a political tract. But now it is generally accepted that the above epitaph was not written by Dante, but by another. Fraticelli in the tenth chapter of his Storia della Vita di Dante has gone thoroughly into the whole question. A very interesting article on the subject will be found in the English Historical Review, October, 1885, from the pen of the Rev. E. Moore, Principal of S. Edmund Hall, Oxford,—interesting in a double degree, for it gives an account of the strange discovery of Dante's bones in Ravenna, in the year 1865.

Tieck—Ludwig Tieck, German man of Letters, one of the 'Romantic School;' born in Berlin, 1773, died 1853. Carlyle has translated three of his Romances, in his ' Tales by Musæus, Tieck and Richter.'
to 'Dilettantism,' 'Art for Art's sake'—not for Life's sake, prating about artistic form, with little thought of artistic substance, very common in modern times. He is thinking of the poets who 'sit in an arm-chair making stanzas'—with no other thought than 'making stanzas,' with whom the thought is subordinate to the stanza, not the stanza to the thought.

_Cantofermo_—church music, a chant.

_Terza Rima_—the metre in which the _Commedia_ is written: Iambic hendecasyllables, arranged A, B, A—B, C, B—C, D, C—D, E, D, etc.

_PAGE 15._—"Eccovi Vuom ch'e stato all Inferno"—This story is told by Boccaccio: I quote once more from Rosetti's _Dante at Verona._

_For a tale tells that on his track,_
_A through Verona's streets he went,_
_This saying certain women sentːː—_
_'Lo, he that strolls to Hell and back_  
At will! Behold him, how Hell's reek  
Has crisped his beard and singed his cheek.'

_'Whereat' (Boccaccio's words) 'he smiled,'  
_For pride in fame,' It might be so:  
Nevertheless we cannot know_  
If haply he were not beguiled_  
To bitterer mirth, who scarce could tell_  
If he indeed were back from Hell._

' _to become perfect through suffering'—'For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.'

(Epistle to the Hebrews, ii. 10.)

_Compare the Essay on Johnson_ (Miscell. iv. 95), 'He is probably the ' wretchedest man in England. In all ways he too must become perfect ' through suffering.'

_PAGE 16._—Rather as a narrow, and even sectarian mind—e.g. his treatment of 'heresiarchs,' Mahomet and others, whom he condemns to everlasting torture, not understanding that there could be good beyond the pale of the Catholic Church. Even the heroes and poets of the ancient world, who had no chance of knowing Christ, are in Hell, though a painless Hell,—and Dante himself admired and loved them. Compare what is said of Shakespeare (page 35).

_Consider how he paints—Ruskin, a judge on this point, if any man is, has frequently dwelt with force upon this characteristic of Dante.

_RED pinnacle, red hot cone of iron—see Inferno VIII., 70—74._

_Edio, Maestro, gia le sue meschite_  
_La entro certo nella valle cerno_
NOTES.

Verniglie, come se di fuoco uscite.

Fossero—

And I: O master, even now his mosques
I see within there, in the valley plain
Red, as if forth from out the fire they came.

In the fifth circle or muddy pool, Virgil and Dante first catch sight of
the hall of Dite (Dis).

Tacitus—the great Roman historian of the early empire.

Plutus, the blustering giant—Inferno vii. 1—18.

The two poets are in the fourth circle of Hell, where, under Plutus, the
wealth-Daemon, suffer the souls of spend-thrifts and avaricious.—

Poi si rivolse a quella enfiata labbia
E disse: Taci maladetto lupo:
Consuma dentro te con la tua rabbia.

Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele
Caggiano avvolti, poiche l'alba piuca
Tal cadde a terra la fiera crudele

Therewith he turned him to that swollen face,
And said: Be still, most execrable wolf,
With thy fierce rage, consume thyself within.
Just as the sails outpuffed by the wind,
Whenas the mast breaks, fall entangled down,
So fell the cruel monster to the ground.

Or that poor Brunetto Latini—Inferno xv. 'Ser Brunetto Latini, a
Florentine, was a man of great learning, and was Dante's master for
some time. He was a notary of the Republic and of the Guelph party;'
whence after the defeat of Montaperti he was exiled to Paris, where
he composed, in the French language, a book called il Tesoro; in Flor-
ence he had composed another in the Tuscan tongue, entitled il Tes-
oretto . . Born about 1220, he died in 1294 in Florence, where he had
returned as soon as the Guelfs regained power.' (Fraticelli—note in loco.)

Dante meets Brunetto Latini in the seventh circle of Hell, where he
was receiving punishment for 'sins against nature.' What was the exact
nature of his sin is not clear to understand; some sort of 'worldliness'
apparently.

Cotto aspetto—

Ficcai gli occhi per lo cotto aspetto.
'I fixed my eyes upon that baken face.'—Inferno, xv. 26.

The fiery snow that falls—Inferno xiv. 28—30.

Sovra tutto il sabbian d'un cader lento
Piovean di fuoco dilatate falde,
Come di neve in alpe senza vento.

And slowly falling o'er the stretch of sand
There rained adown dilated flakes of fire,
As in the Alps the snow without a wini.
Or the lids of the Tombs; square sarcophaguses—Inferno ix. 112—131.

'As at Arles, where the Rhone stagnates, as at Pola near the Quarnato Gulf, which shuts up Italy and bathes its confines, the sepulchres make all the places uneven; so did they here on every side; only the manner here was bitterer. For amongst the tombs were scattered flames, whereby they were made all over so glowing-hot, that iron more hot no craft requires. Their covers were all raised up; and out of them proceeded moans so grievous, that they seemed indeed the moans of spirits sad and wounded.

'And I: "Master, what are these people who, buried within these chests, make themselves heard by their painful sighs?"

'And he to me: "These are the Arch-heretics with their followers of every sect; and much more than thou thinkest, the tombs are laden. Like with like is buried here; and the monuments are more and less hot."'—J. A. Carlyle's translation.

This was in the sixth circle, beside the walls of the city of Dis. Virgil goes on to tell Dante (Inferno x.) that the lids of the tombs will remain open until the day of judgment.

And how Farinata rises; how Cavalcante falls—Farinata and Cavalcante are punished in the tombs for heresy. (Inferno x.)

'Farinata was of the noble family of the Uberti, a man of great valour, head of the Ghibellines in Florence.' Fraticelli (note in loco.) He rises, hearing Dante's Tuscan voice. Afterwards Cavalcante, father of Guido Cavalcante, the poet, and Dante's friend, rises and asks Dante:—

Se per questo cieco
Carcere vai per altezza d' ingegno,
Mio figlio ov'e ? e perche non e teco?

'If through this blind prison-house thou goest by height of genius, where is my son? And wherefore is he not with thee? ' And Dante answers: 'Of myself I come not: he that waits yonder (Virgil), leads me through this place, whom perchance thy Guido had in disdain. (Forse cui Guido vostro ebbe a disdegno)'. Raising suddenly upright, he cried: How sayest thou? He had? Lives he no more? Doth not the sweet light strike his eyes? When he was aware of some delay I made in answering, he fell supine, and appeared not again.'

It will be noticed that Carlyle is slightly inaccurate. The past tense uttered by Dante is not fue, 'he was,' but ebbe, 'he had.' But Dante had not intended to intimate that Guido was dead; for Guido was, in the supposed year of the vision, 1300, still alive. Guido Cavalcante, circa 1250—1304, was, next to Dante, the chief poet of his age. He was a Ghibelline. Dante mentions him many times. In D. G. Rossetti's Collected Works, Vol. II., will be found a full account of Cavalcante, together with translations of several of his poems.
NOTES.

PAGE 17.—Raphael—Raphael Sanzio (1483—1520) one of the very greatest (some consider the greatest) of the Italian masters.

Francesca and her lover, &c.—The episode of Francesca da Polenta, commonly called Francesca da Rimini, and her lover Paolo Malatesta, forms the best known and most admired passage in the Divina Commedia, and perhaps one might say, in the whole realm of Poetry, Landor, whose admiration of Dante was strictly limited, speaks of it as 'Perfection of Poetry!' and remarks that 'such a depth of instinctive judgment, such a delicacy of perception, exists not in any other work of human genius. (Pentameron.) It occurs in the Inferno, Canto V., lines 73—142. Dante and Virgil have entered the Second Circle of Hell where i lussuriosi, the lascivious, are punished. Here he saw Semiramis, Dido, Cleopatra, Helen of Troy, Achilles, Paris, Tristram, and many others. At last he asks his guide to be permitted to hold converse with 'two that go together and seem so light upon the wind.' These are Paolo and Francesca. Virgil grants Dante's request; the two souls come at the poet's cry, and Francesca tells him the story of their sin and how it was punished. In Dante the details of the story are merely touched upon, hinted at, as of a thing well known and familiar; we learn the tale in full from the various commentators. I translate Fraticelli's note on the passage: 'She (Francesca) was the daughter of Guido da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, and was against her will wedded to Gianciotto Malatesta, lord of Rimini, a brave man, but deformed and lame, as indeed his name, Gian, Giovanni, Ciotto, defective, lame, signifies. Francesca loved her brother-in-law Paolo, a valiant and handsome knight, and whilst she was alone with him, was surprised by her husband and slain together with her lover. This tragedy took place in 1284 or 1285, not in the city of Rimini, as many have believed, but in that of Pesaro.' We are told elsewhere that Francesca had loved Paolo from the first, and had been deceived by her father, who led her to believe that she was to be wedded to Paolo, whereas in truth Paolo was but proxy for his brother. The last part of the Francesca episode has been translated by D. G. Rossetti (Collected Works II, 405).

'When I made answer, I began, "Alas! How many sweet thoughts and how much desire Led these two onward to the dolorous pass!" Then turned to them, as who would fain inquire, And said: "Francesca, these thine agonies Wring tears for pity and grief that they inspire: But tell me,—in the season of sweet sighs, When and what way did Love instruct you so That he in your vague longings made you wise?" Then she to me: "There is no greater woe Than the remembrance brings of happy days In misery; and this thy guide doth know. But if the first beginnings to retrace Of our sad love can yield thee solace here, So will I be as one that weeps and says One day we read, for pastime and sweet cheer,
Of Lancelot how he found Love tyrannous:
We were alone and without any fear.

Our eyes were drawn together, reading thus
Full oft, and still our cheeks would pale and glow:
But one sole point it was that conquered us.

For when we read of that great lover, how
He kissed the smile which he had longed to win,
Then he whom nought can sever from me now
For ever kissed my mouth all quivering.

A Galahalt was the book, and he that writ:
Upon that day we read no more therein."

At the tale told, while one soul uttered it,
The other wept: a pang so pitiable
That I was seized, like death, in swooning fit
And even as a dead body falls, I fell.'

This translation is in Terza Rima, the metre of the original, and is as literal as a verse rendering can be. Petrarch in his Trionfo d'Amore, Cap. III, refers to Dante's episode of Francesca.

Vedi Ginevra, Isotto, e l'altre amanti,
E la coppia d'Arimino, che' nseme
Vanno facendo dolorosi pianti.

'I saw Ginevra, Isuelt and other lovers, and those twain of Rimini, that go together making piteous wail.'

PAGE 18.—della bella persona, che mi fu tolta—'Love,' says Francesca, 'that falls swiftly on the gentle heart, drew him by that fair body of which I was bereft.' The 'touch of womanhood,' pride and pleasure at the thought of her own beauty, still remains with Francesca in the agonies of Hell.

Alti guai—deep wailings. See note, page 58.

Aer bruno—Again Carlyle misquotes by trusting to his memory. The phrase l'aer bruno, the brown air, occurs in the first line of the second Canto of the Inferno. Lo giorno se n'andava, e l'aer bruno, etc., where it does not refer to the atmosphere of Hell. In this canto the poet speaks of l'aer maligno, and l'aer perso the 'malignant air,' and the 'black air.'

Dante was the friend of this poor Francesca's father—This appears to be a mistake. Dante spent the last two years of his life, 1320, 1321, at Ravenna in the house of Guido Novello da Polenta. This, however, was not the father of Francesca, but her nephew, and the grandson of the elder Guido da Polenta. Dante was born in 1265, Francesca was married to Giacchietto Malatesta in 1275, she was therefore probably some years older than Dante, and could not possibly have 'sat upon the poet's knee, as a bright innocent child.' But Dante may have known Francesca; he was
about twenty years of age when the tragedy occurred; and it doubtless created at the time a deep impression on his mind. (See Fraticelli, ‘Storia della Vita di Dante Alighieri,’ 237.) It is painful to be obliged to mar so nobly pathetic a passage by the intrusion of notes so pedantic.

Infinite pity, yet also infinite rigour of law, &c.—Carlyle, the stern moralist, hated ‘sentimentality’; he saw, that, with all its pathetic complainings and excusing, ‘it did not make for righteousness.’ He insisted upon law, upon the necessity of being ‘loyal to fact;’ and for thus insisting he has often been pronounced harsh and cruel. Compare his account of the execution of Lieutenant Katte in Frederick the Great, II., 245; and his comment thereupon:—“Never was such a transaction before or since, in Modern History,” cries the angry reader: “cruel, like the grinding of human hearts under millstones, like—” or indeed like the doings of the gods, which are cruel, though not that alone?” What right, he asks, has any man to expect to be happy, to complain if he is not happy? ‘Do you wonder,’ he asks, ‘that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See here, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used! I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou fanciest those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot.” (Sartor Resartus, 132.) Finally, he teaches, it is not man’s mission on earth to be happy, but to do his duty; and he knew, too, how the greatest of men have become ‘perfect through suffering’ (see Essay on Johnson, Miscellanies IV.) None the less Carlyle dwells on the other side too; and the deep pathos scattered throughout his work shows the truth of what he says here, that ‘a man who does not know rigour, cannot pity either.’ In practice Carlyle was much more inclined to the pitiful than to the rigorous. See Introduction (page xii.) Froude tells a story of the excuse he once made for a beggar to whom he had given an alms, and whom he himself saw immediately go off to a neighbouring gin-shop to dispose of his alms there: ‘“Poor, fellow,” was all that Carlyle said; “he perhaps needs warmth and shelter.”’ (Life in London, II., xxvi.)

What a paltry notice is that—No sane critic ever brings such a charge against Dante now, though it was once common enough. Landor was perhaps the last writer of credit who judged so, when in the Pentameron, he makes Petrarch declare the Inferno to be ‘the most immoral and impious book that ever was written.’ The best argument against the accusation that Dante’s book was a libel on his enemies, is to point to the deep undercurrent of pity running through all the Inferno. I can remember only one instance in which Dante’s personal resentment and indignation against an individual is manifest in the whole course of the Inferno (xxxiii. 125—150); and in this case the sinner was a Guelf who had treacherously murdered another Guelf. Besides, we notice many times that Dante is quite regardless of whether the condemned have belonged to his own party or not. We find in the Inferno Guelfs and Ghibellines, Blacks and Whites. For some of the damned he expresses personal sympathy, even love and admiration, as in the case of Brunetto Latini; and, as we have seen in the case of Francesca, infinite pity. Their
piteous story makes him swoon away,—‘and even, as a dead body falls, I fell.’

Like the wail of Æolian harps—soft, soft—Æolus, the god of the winds in classical mythology. An Æolian harp, is a stringed instrument so delicately constructed that a breath of air stirs the chords and they utter notes of music. The ‘soft, soft’ is a very Carlylean characteristic in his gentlest and tenderest moods. It is also common in Dante.

their meeting together in the Paradiso.—Again a slight inaccuracy; it is in the thirtieth canto of the Purgatorio that Dante first meets the transfigured Beatrice, and she bids him

Guardami ben; ben son, ben son Beatrice,
'Behold! even I, even I am Beatrice'.

But it is in the Paradiso that the pure and gracious influence of Beatrice’s eyes are most dwelt upon. Carlyle, characteristically, does not allude to separate passages but to the general impression produced by the whole.

It is amongst the purest utterances of affection, &c.—This might also be said of Dante’s first book, his Vita Nuova, written when he was quite a young man. It treats of the birth and growth of his love for Beatrice, and his sorrow when she was taken from him. It has been exquisitely translated by D. G. Rossetti.

On occasion too as reasoner—as in the Paradiso where S. Thomas Aquinas, S. Peter, S. John, S. Bernard of Clairvaux, Beatrice, and others discourse on the subtlest points in Philosophy and Theology; also in such books as the Convivio and the De Monarchia.

‘A Dio spiacenti ed a’ nemici sui’.—The denizens of the Ante-Hell; whom Dante sees immediately after he passes the dread gate which leads to the first circle (Inferno III). They are the indifferent, the entirely negative, who have done neither good nor evil. There is a profound ethical truth here; that great faults are but perverted virtues; and that dull, selfish neutrality and inactivity is the most deadly thing. Non ragionam di lor, ma guarda e passa, Let us not speak of these, look and pass by.

PAGE 19.—Non han speranza di morte.—This refers to the same ‘indifferent.’ Dante goes on to say, ‘their blind life is so abject, that they are envious of every other fate,’ that is to say, explains Fraticelli, ‘Not only do they envy the blessed in Heaven, but even all the damned in Hell.’

Our general Byronism of taste.—Carlyle alludes to the popularity which Byron’s poetry enjoyed during the first half of this century. He speaks contemptuously in his Essay on Boswell’s Johnson (Miscellanies IV) of ‘whole circulating-libraries of Giaours and Harolds.’ For Byronic morbid melancholy and romantic misanthropy Carlyle had little respect. He once calls Byron ‘a dandy of sorrows and acquainted with grief’; and in Sartor Resartus, he gives this general exhortation, ‘Close thy Byron, open thy Goethe.’
'Mountain of Purification'—As Hell, in Dante, is represented as a huge conical pit descending in narrowing circles to the centre of the earth, so Purgatory is represented as a mountain, rising up in ascending terraces from the earth to the gate of Heaven. Painfully do the repentant souls climb upwards from the level of the earth's surface to full forgiveness and beatitude at last.

_The tremolar dell' onde._—Purgatorio I. 117.

_L'alba vinceva l' ora mattutina_
Che fuggia innanzi, si che di lontano
Conobbi il tremolar della marina.

The dawn prevailed against the morning mist *
That fled before it so that from afar
Mine eyes beheld the trembling of the sea.

The wide sea out of which arose the mountain of Purgatory.

_On the wandering Two._—Dante and his guide, Virgil, symbolising, the commentators say, earthly wisdom, as Beatrice symbolises, divine wisdom. Virgil guides Dante through Hell and Purgatory, Beatrice, through Paradise.

_Tell my Giovanna to pray for me._—Purgatorio, VIII, 71—73.

_Di' a Giovanna mia, che per me chiami_
La, dove agli innocenti si risponde:
Non credo che la sua madre più m'ami.

_Bid my Giovanni that she pray for me._
There where the prayers of innocents are heard:
I think her mother cares not for me more.

_In the Ante-Purgatory._ Dante meets Nino de' Visconti of Pisa, Judge of Galurra in Sardinia; he it is who asks Dante to tell his daughter Giovanna (who was afterwards wife of Riccardo da Camino of Trevisci) to pray for him. Her mother, Beatrice, Marchioness of Este, had married a second time, Galeazzo Visconti of Milan. Hence Nino says, 'I think her mother cares not for me more.'

_‘Bent down like corbels of a building’._—Purgatorio X, 130—132.

_Comme, per sostentar solaio o tetto,
Per mensola talvolta una figura_
_Si vedi giunger le ginocchia al petto.

_As, to support incumbent floor or roof_
_For corbel is a figure sometimes seen_
_That crumples up its knees unto its breast. (Carey.)_

_In the first terrace of Purgatory, where the sin of pride is expiated, Dante meets many penitents bent down beneath the weight of huge stones. A corbel is a common feature in Gothic architecture. The corbel, a kind of little stone-bracket, is frequently carved grotesquely into the shape of_

*So Fraticelli interprets. In Carey's and Longfellow's translations _ora_ is not translated _air, mist, but hour._
a man with back stooping beneath the weight of the mass which rests on it, and with knees gathered up under his chin.

PAGE 20.—The whole Mountain shakes with joy.—Purgatorio XX, 127—137.

Quand' io senti come cosa che coda
Tremar lo monte . . . . .
Poi comincio da tutte parte un grido
Tal, che'l maestro in ver di me si feo
Dicendo : non dubbiano, mentr' io ti guido,
Gloria in excelsis, tutti, Deo.

When, even as a thing that falls, I felt
The mountain tremble . . . .
Thereon arose from every side a cry
So mighty that the Master drew anear me
And said. Fear not at all while I conduct thee.
'To God be glory in the highest,' all
Shouted.

Dante afterwards discovers that the mountain shook and the souls of the penitents shouted with joy because the poet Statius had passed from the fifth terrace, where for many ages he had been expiating the sin of prodigality, to the sixth. (Purgatorio XXII.)

All three make up the true Unseen World.—The great truths that underlie all phenomena,—unseen, because neither the mere senses, nor the mere intellectual capacity can attain to them; only the poetic, spiritual faculties in man can obtain sight of them. And the three aspects of truth, are first Law, the inevitable consequences of evil action; and this is emphasised in the Inferno; secondly, Repentance, the power inherent in the human soul to pass from evil to good; and this is emphasised in the Purgatorio; thirdly, Law again, from another aspect, the inevitable consequences of good, and the perfectibility of the human soul; and this is emphasised in the Paradiso.—These eternal truths were made manifest to man in the middle ages through the medium of Medieval Catholicism, and of that Catholicism. Dante was the highest interpreter; the man sent (bidden in token of the genius he possessed) to proclaim these eternal truths to men under such forms, clothed in such garments as were suited to his age, and under which his age could recognise the truth to be an actual living Truth.

Very notable with what brief simplicity, &c.—Notable, because it proves that Dante was a real seer, a true poet; he saw clearly and swiftly the real that underlay the seeming, the unseen essence, apparent only to the Soul, of which phenomena, cognizable by the senses and understanding, are but the outer garment. This is the central thought in Carlyle’s teaching; this is the meaning which underlies his first great work, Sartor Resartus, in which the truth of the clothes philosophy is set forth. Take the following quotations:—
Think well, thou wilt find that Space is but a mode of our human sense, so likewise Time; there is no space and no Time: We are—we know, not what;—light-sparkles floating in the æther of Deity!

So that this so solid-seeming World, after all, were but an air image, our ME the only reality: and Nature, with its thousand-fold production and destruction, but the reflex of our inward Force, the "phantasy of our Dream;" or what the Earth-Spirit in Faust names it, "the living visible Garment of God;"

"In Being's floods, in Action's storm,
I walk and work above, beneath,
Work and weave in endless motion!
Birth and Death,
An infinite ocean;
A seizing and giving
The fire of Living:
'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,
And weave for God the Garment thou seest Him by."

(Sartor Resartus 37).

This transcendentalism Carlyle himself acquired from his study of the German poets and philosophers, Kant, Goethe, Novalis, and others. We are told now-a-days that the Germans got it from the ancient Hindu writings. That may be so, but it is not a point of great importance; for Carlyle asserts that all true poets and teachers have recognised this truth, in one or other embodiment; and, what is more, all noble, all right action, has been grounded on an acceptance (not necessarily an intellectual acceptance) of it. A sense of duty for duty's sake, "a knowledge of the transcendental, immeasurable character of duty," he calls, "the basis of all gospels, the essence of all Religions: he who with his whole soul knows not this, as yet knows nothing, as yet is properly nothing." (Essay on Boswell's Johnson, Miscellanies IV. 109.) The men who have known this most vividly, and have proclaimed it most undoubtedly in word and in deed, these men are to Carlyle the only heroes. These live by belief, not by opinion. Compare the Essay on Johnson, (Miscell. IV., 90, 91). "These 'are properly our Men, our Great Men; the guides of the dull host,—which follows them as by an irrevocable decree. They are the chosen of the world: they had this rare faculty not only of 'supposing' and "inclining to think," but of knowing and believing; the nature of their 'being was, that they lived not by Hearsay, but by clear Vision; while 'others hovered and swam along, in the grand Vanity-Fair of the world, 'blinded by mere shows of things, these saw into the Things themselves, 'and could walk as men having an eternal load-star, and with their feet on 'sure paths.' But the same passionate insistence on this one grand truth, peals through all Carlyle's writings.

At bottom the one was as preternatural as the other—Preternatural, i.e., beyond nature, and including it, not supernatural, above nature and excluding it. The essence of the humblest phenomenon apparent to the senses is as mysterious as the highest thing which the senses cannot even see. So Tennyson writes:—
NOTES.

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;—
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

See also the chapter entitled ‘Natural Supernaturalism’ in Sartor Resartus, III., viii.

Has not each man a soul?—Compare Past and Present, 198. ‘Revelations, Inspirations? Yes; and thy own God-created soul; dost thou not call that a “revelation?”’

He will not only be a spirit but is one—Compare Sartor Resartus III., viii. ‘Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

‘O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only ‘carry each a future ghost within him, but are, in very deed, ghosts.’

Sincerity, I say again—The efficacy of sincerity, the power to believe, and to speak and act according to belief, is another of Carlyle’s great fundamental doctrines. In the lecture on The Hero as Prophet (page 42) he declares that sincerity is the ‘first characteristic of heroism and originality;’ and the opposite of sincerity he calls Cant.

Like those Scandinavian ones—See the lecture on the Hero as Divinity (passim).

PAGE 21.—Not by preferability of one to the other—Carlyle is here thrusting at certain more or less materialistic philosophies, which seek to find an ethical system by the Happiness test. The actions, these say, which tend to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number are good, those which do not so tend are evil. Thus the good action is merely preferable to the evil action; both seek happiness but, as the good action results in greater and more extended happiness, it is to be preferred. Such philosophies Carlyle considered worse than inadequate; and he was always warring against them. Compare in Sartor Resartus, the chapter entitled ‘The Everlasting Yea’ II., ix. and in Latter-Day Pamphlets the fiercely humorous articles of the ‘Pig-Philosophy,’ pp. 268—270, of which the following is a sample: ‘Article 2. Moral Evil is unattainability of Pig’s-wash; moral good, attainability of ditto.………..“What is justice?”’ Your own ‘share of the general swine’s-trough, not any portion of my share,’—and the following less questionable passage from the Essay on Johnson:—

‘That Wrong is not only different from Right, but that it is in strict scientific terms infinitely different; even as the gaining of the whole world against the losing of one’s soul, or (as Johnson had it) a Heaven against a Hell.’ (Miscell. iv., 109).

Gehenna—the Hebrew word for Hell. Gehenna, however, was in the
first place merely the valley of Hinnom, where human sacrifice was offered to Moloch. Compare Milton:—

And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.

*Paradise Lost,* I. 405.

Yet, as I urged the other day—See the lecture on the *Hero as Divinity* (page 24, and elsewhere), where Carlyle declares that the old Norse myths were not got up as 'allegories':—'And quite unconsciously, too,—with no notice of building up "allegories."' But the first clear glance would be prompt in discerning the secret relation of things, and wholly open to obey these...Cannot we conceive that Odin was a reality? Error indeed, error enough: but sheer falsehood, idle fables, allegory aforethought, we will not believe that our Fathers believed in these.'

*Paganism we recognised*—In the lecture on the *Hero as Divinity,* page 14) 'So much of truth, only under an ancient, obsolete vesture, but the spirit of it still true, do I find in the Paganism of old nations. Nature is 'still divine, the revelation of the workings of God; the Hero is still worshipable, this, under poor cramped incipient forms, is what all Pagan 'religions have struggled as they could, to set forth.'

Yet in truth it belongs to ten Christian centuries—Carlyle's critics have frequently charged him with over-valuing great men and overlooking the silent work performed by the great mass of mankind; of shutting his eyes to the truth, dear to modern democrats, that the greatest man is but the product of his time. But Carlyle, in this and other respects, is far wider than his critics. One may regard Truth from many sides, unless indeed one is bent upon erecting a Philosophic system of life, logically exact and flawless (see *Introduction*). In the Essay on Johnson Carlyle declared that the Great Man belonged to his own times, epitomised his own times, in one sense, although in virtue of his greatness he belonged to all times; in the Essay on *History* (Miscell. II., 256) he declares that the 'daily habits that regulate and support our existence, are the work not of Dracos and Hampdens, but of Phoenician mariners, of Italian masons and Saxon metallurgists, of philosophers, alchymists, prophets, and all the long-forgotten train of artists and artisans; who from the first have been teaching us how to think and how to act; how to rule our spiritual and our physical nature:' and he says that History must 'look with reverence into the dark untenanted places of the past, where, in formless oblivion, our chief benefactors, with all their sedulous endeavours, but not with the fruit of these, lie entombed.' And here, where he is speaking in praise of Heroes,—of the greatest of men,—he tells us that Dante's great work belonged 'to ten silent centuries, only the finishing of it' was Dante's. There is no inconsistency here, merely the truth regarded from different points of view. In his later writings Carlyle insisted chiefly on one side of it, the difference of great men from the mass of little men; for he felt that the age was fast forgetting that side of the truth,—with fatal effects: but he saw the other side and announced the same when opportunity and necessity seemed to demand. On Carlyle's 'Hero-worship,' see Froude's Carlyle's *Life in London,* Vol. II. the note in my addition of Carlyle's 'Boswell's Life on Johnson,' page 83, and the critical *Introduction* to this lecture.
NOTES.

PAGE 22.—'Bastard Christianism'—Carlyle here alludes to Islam, on which he lectured in the address 'on the Hero as Prophet.' For the convenience of students an epitome of all the lectures on Heroes is placed as an appendix to this volume, but the student who knows his business, will not content himself with an epitome, but will read the whole of the book on Heroes in his leisure hours.

The outer is of the day, under the empire of mode—Once again a truth in which the great moralist unweariedly insists; the oneness and permanence of the Real, the diverseness and transitoriness of the Seeming, which is the resture of the real, and, as a vesture 'waxeth old and decayeth.' Compare in this connection the following passages from the Essay on Johnson:—"Watch thy tongue; out of it are the issues of Life................. , Were eyes put into our head, that we might see; or only that we might fancy, and plausibly pretend we had seen? Was the tongue suspended, that it might tell truly what we had seen, and make man the soul's brother of man; or only that it might utter vain sounds, jargon, soul confusing, and so divide man, as by enchanted walls of darkness, from union with man. And again, of great men, who saw and whose works are therefore abiding:—'There was a reality in their existence; something of a perennial character; in virtue of which indeed it is that the memory of them is perennial. Whose belongs only to his own age, and reverences only its gilt Popinjays or soot-smeared Mumbojumbos, must needs die with it. ... .......There was nothing universal, nothing eternal in him.' Thus the Great Man, the great poet, is he who pierces beneath the symbol to the thing itself, and in virtue of that, his words are true for all time. Thus Homer and Isaiah and Dante are true to-day, even to the schoolboy who has learnt a little physical science from a primer.

The same yesterday, to-day and forever—A Biblical echo. 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' (Hebrews xii. 8.)

PAGE 23. King Agamemnon—Agamemnon, the chief of the Greeks in the Trojan expedition.

Greece, except in the words it spoke, is not—The critics of Carlyle, in their passion for logical consistency, have urged this passage against Carlyle; because in his later works he seemed to declare deeds to be everything, words to be nothing; great men of action to be heroes; singers, poets to be rather contemptible than otherwise. The truth is, once more, that Carlyle at different times regards truth from different sides. Both are true, though it be difficult to strike the balance between them, for the reason mentioned below, the impossibility of measuring intellectually the utility, the effect, of a great deed or a great word; but both, Carlyle thought, had their root in the same deep sincerity, the same power to see. Thus he tells us that Shakespeare might have fought heroically had he been called upon so
Notes.

to do; that there was 'a stroke in him;' and he finds somewhat of the poet in such a man as Mirabeau, and even in Friedrich Wilhelm, the father of Frederick the Great. Friedrich Wilhelm's anxiety about the outward perfection of his regiments, he humorously likens to a poet's anxiety to 'polish his stanzas.'

The uses of this Dante—This is another of Carlyle's covert attacks upon the materialistic philosophies of the day, Utilitarianism and the like, which would value everything by such direct effects as might be arithmetically calculated; the great test being how far such and such things increase the sum of human 'happiness.' Such systems Carlyle called 'Profit and Loss Philosophies.' Here are a few other passages bearing on the same subject:—'Art is to be loved, not because of its effects, but because of itself; not because it is useful for spiritual pleasure or even for moral culture, but because it is Art, and the highest in man and the soul of Beauty. To inquire after its utility, would be like inquiring after the utility of God, or, what to the Germans would sound stranger than it does to us, the utility of virtue and Religion!' (State of German Literature, Miscell. I, 48.)

In his later days, Carlyle ceased to speak much about 'Art' and its significance, for he regarded the 'Art-for-Art-sake' people in England as mere dilettanti, by no means to be encouraged. But his attitude towards Utilitarians continued the same.

The following, written a year later, is more characteristic:—

'Following Locke's footsteps, the French had discovered that "as the stomach secretes Chyle, so does the brain secrete Thought." And what then was Religion, what was Poetry, what was all high and heroic feeling? Chiefly a delusion: often a false and pernicious one. Poetry indeed was still to be preserved; because Poetry was a useful thing: men needed amusement, and loved to amuse themselves with Poetry; the play-house was a pretty lounge of an evening; then there were so many precepts, satirical, didactic, so much more impressive for the rhyme; to say nothing of your occasional verses, birthday odes, epithalamiums, epicediums, by which "the dream of existence may be so considerably sweetened." Nay—does not Poetry, acting on the imaginations of men, excite them to daring purposes; sometimes, as in the case of Tyrtaeus, to fight better; in which wise may it not rank as a stimulant to man, along with Opium and Scotch Whisky, the manufacture of which is allowed by law? In Heaven's name, then, let Poetry be preserved.' (Essay on Goethe, Miscell. I, 186, 187.)

Once more:—'This is not a Religious age. Only the material, the immediately practical, not the divine and spiritual, is important to us. The infinite, absolute character of Virtue has passed into a finite conditional one: it is no longer a worship of the Beautiful and Good; but a calculation of the Profitable. Our Deity is Mechanism.' (Signs of the Times, Miscell. II, 245.)

It must be remembered that to Carlyle, as to the Germans, Poetry, Virtue, Religion, were things which could be understood and valued only
by the Higher Reason, (vernunft), and therefore to seek to calculate their value by the lower understanding, the logical faculties (verstand), is futile.

In a hundred years, Mahomet, as we saw—In the lecture on the Hero as Prophet.

PAGE 24.—So that it 'fills all morning and evening newspapers'—Carlyle always regarded 'Fame,' 'popularity, etc.,' as amongst the most wretched motives for action, the poorest tests of good action. Compare the following:—"Most authors speak of their "Fame," as if it were a quite priceless matter; the grand ultimatum, and heavenly Constantine's-Banner they had to follow, and conquer under:—"Thy Fame!" unhappy mortal, where will it and thou both be in some fifty years? Shakespeare himself has lasted but two hundred; Homer (partly by accident) three thousand."—and much more to the same effect. (Essay on Johnson, Miscell. IV.)

Readers of 'Past and Present' will remember the chapter on 'Sir Jabesh Windbag,' and his 'Paragraphs':—'O my right honourable friend, when the Paragraphs flowed in, who was like Sir Jabesh? On the swelling tide he mounted, higher triumphant, heaven-high. But the paragraphs again ebbed out, as unwise paragraphs needs must. Sir Jabesh lies stranded, sunk and forever sinking in ignominious ooze; the Mud-nymphs, and ever deepening bottomless oblivion, his portion to eternal time. "Posterity?" Thou appealest to Posterity, thou! . . Posterity which has made of Norse Odin a similitude, and of Norman William a brute monster, what will, can it make of English Jabesh? Heavens, "Posterity!"—Man's business he tells us repeatedly, is not to work for profit or fame (solid pudding and empty praise, he calls it; echoing Pope;) but for Duty's sake; neither looking to 'results' and 'effects,' for Nature and God work silently, in a manner not to be computed and arithmetically estimated. Hence the necessity of Silence:—only in silent wonder can a man rightly put himself in relation to God and his mysterious workings.

Gold piasters—an Italian coin, allied to the word 'plate' and derived, says Skeat, from the Greek word πλατής, 'flat.'

At bottom, he was not at all—Carlyle repeatedly affirms that Evil has 'no real existence':—'Bad is by its nature negative and can do nothing; whatsoever enables us to do anything is by its nature good.' (Essay on Johnson.) Again in Sartor, in the famous passage, beginning, 'Two men I honour, and no third'; he concludes, 'These two, in all their degrees, I honour; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.' And the two men honoured, are—both workers, both doers.

Let us honour the great Empire of Silence—This and many similar passages were made the ground for the well-known witty objection that Carlyle preached the virtue of silence in forty volumes. The doctrine was, even to so true a friend and sincere admirer of Carlyle as John Sterling, a stumbling-block. Nevertheless the objection is witty only. The speech
NOTES.

Carlyle bade men refrain from was insincere, futile speech, speech that prates about what the eye had not seen, speech that babbles about matters beyond the domain of utterance. Whatever else there is in Carlyle's forty volumes, there is no insincerity; and assuredly much silence and silent contemplation went to the making of these same forty volumes. Neither is there any real inconsistency between this eulogy of silence and the praise of 'words' on the previous page. 'Speech too is great,' he tells us, 'but not the greatest, as the Swiss Inscription says: sprechen ist silbern, schweigen ist golden (speech is silvern, silence is golden); or as I might express it: speech is of time, silence of Eternity. Bees will not work except in darkness; Thought will not work except in silence: neither will Virtue work except in secrecy.' (Sartor Resartus 151.) Once more in his private Journal (November 17th, 1531) we read this entry; 'The nobleness of Silence The highest melody dwells only in silence (the sphere melody, the melody of health).

For though speech may endure longer than 'cathedrals, pontificalties, brass and stone', speech, too, belongs to the outer veil of reality, cognizable by the senses, and in time will 'wax old as a garment' and vanish away. The words of Shakespeare and Homer and Dante will not last forever, but the good that was in them, working secretly and silently, not to be estimated in words, that is eternal.

In these loud times.—Carlyle is never sparing in his denunciation of the evils of his own time, and has often been reproached with steady refusal to recognize what good was in it, and with being unfair to his contemporaries. But much the same strictures will be found in all the greatest writers of the century, including Wordsworth and Tennyson; indeed the greatest minds may be said to have been always severe on their own age and to have scourged the 'evils of the time' as if no such evils had ever been seen in the world before; Plato, Tacitus, Dante, Milton,—even a higher name might be mentioned in this connection. Again, in his spirit of vehement discontent with things modern, Carlyle stands inimically aloof from liberal optimism, which sees in our own days, with their 'unexampled prosperities,' the perfection of all that has gone before, and finds proof of higher civilization and refinement in many phenomena that, to others, are the standing witness of degradation and vulgarity, at least in some departments of life.

PAGE 25.—Just when that chivalry way of life, &c.—Medievalism culminated, one may say, in the Renaissance, of which Elizabethan Literature was perhaps the most splendid fruit. The Renaissance (New Birth), say some, has been wrongly named; for the movement itself was rather the close of an old period than the beginning of a new. Protestantism on the other hand was the revolt of the world against middle-age Catholicism, and the proclamation of a new era. But the student of sixteenth century history can find in all departments of life signs of dissolution and change, visible on the surface, or not so visible,—in things.
NOTES.

political, social, economic, artistic, no less than in things intellectual and
spiritual.

We English had the honour of producing the other—Compare Chartism
(Miscell. III, 262) ‘Ideas of innumerable kinds were circulating
among these men (the early Saxon invaders of England): witness one
Shakspeare, a woolcomber, poacher, or whatever else, at Stratford in
Warwickshire, who happened to write books! The finest human figure,
as I apprehend, that Nature has hitherto seen fit to make of our widely
diffused Teutonic clay. Saxon, Norman, Celt or Sarmat, I find no human
soul so beautiful, these fifteen hundred known years;—Our supreme
modern European man. Him England had contrived to realise: were
there not ideas?'

Had the Warwickshire Squire not prosecuted him—This story of Shake-
spere’s deer-stealing in Sir Thomas Lucy’s park, of Sir Thomas prosecut-
ing him, and Shakespeare replying with a lampoon, and of whippings and
the rest of it, belongs to the region of extremely dubious things,—is prob-
ably a mere myth. What brought Shakespeare to London, to play-acting
and play-writing, we shall probably never know. There have been guesses,
conjectures innumerable, and the conclusion remains still—a guess.

Did it not too come as of its own accord—Notice ‘as of its own accord,’
that is, so far as we can account for it: though, as Carlyle goes on, it veri-
tably was all law, not chance; only the law is too deep for our understand-
ing. This position, however, is in flat contradiction to all that we are
taught nowadays. Modern ‘Scientific’ criticism, with its doctrines of
‘Evolution,’ etc., gives as many volumes tracing ‘growth of the English
drama,’ accounting for Elizabethan literature, and Shakespeare himself, in
a way satisfactory to some—to others not so satisfactory.

The ‘Tree Igdrasil’.—See Heroes and Hero-Worship, p. 91. ‘I like, too,
that representation they (the old Norse myths) have of the Tree Igdrasil.
All life is figured by them as a Tree. Igdrasil, the ash-tree of Existence,
has its roots deep-down in the kingdoms of Hela or Death; its trunk
reaches up heaven-high, spreads its boughs over the whole Universe: it
is the Tree of Existence. At the foot of it, in the Death-kingdom, sit
Three Nornas, Fates,—the Past, Present, Future; watering its roots from
the Sacred Well. Its ‘boughs’ with their buddings and disleafings,—
events, things suffered, things done, catastrophes,—stretch through all
lands and times. Is not every leaf of it a biography, every fibre there
an act or word? Its boughs are Histories of Nations. The rustle of it
is the noise of Human Existence, onwards from of old. It grows there,
the breath of Human Passion rustling through it;—or stormtost, the
stormwind howling through it like the voice of all the gods. It is
Igdrasill, the Tree of Existence. It is the past, the present, and the future:
what was done, what was doing, what will be done; “the infinite con-
jugation of the verb To do”, Considering how human things circulate,
each inextricably in communion with all,—how the word I speak to you
today is borrowed, not from Ulfila the Moesogoth only, but from all men
since the first man began to speak,—I find no similitude so true as this
NOTES.

of a Tree. Beautiful; altogether beautiful and great. The "Machine of the Universe."—alas, do but think of that in contrast!

Sir Thomas Lucy—the Squire of Charlcote, near Stratford-on-Avon.

PAGE 26.—For Religion then, as it now and always is, was the soul of Practice.—This definition of Carlyle's deserves to be carefully considered; it is more full of meaning than Matthew Arnold's 'Morality touched with Emotion.' By Religion Carlyle did not, of course, mean Theologies, Creeds, Rituals; these were but the outer shows of Religion,—'Church clothes', as he calls them in Sartor;—but an ever present Belief in the Divine power behind matter; of which matter is but the manifestation; a 'Law, the great soul of the world', 'silent, eternal, an All-just, an All-beautiful sole Reality and ultimate controlling power of the whole... He who knows this, it will sink, silent, awful, unspeakable into his heart.

In silence, in the Eternal Temple let him worship, if there be no fit word. Such knowledge, the crown of his whole spiritual being, the life of his life, let him keep and sacredly walk by. He has a religion'. (Past and Present, 197.) The Belief, the Spirit by which men act, practice, that, not the doctrines they profess to hold intellectually, is their religion. Thus Shakespeare was the outcome of Catholicism, the Spirit of Catholicism, not its dogmas, Transubstantiation, Priestly Absolution, and others. The open profession of these, together with the open practice of image-worship and Catholic ceremonial, Acts of Parliament could abolish, not the Spirit of Catholicism; the underlying Belief in which men really lived, this Acts of Parliament could neither give nor take away.

Freemason's Tavern—'A noted tavern in London, used, among other purposes, for public meetings.'

PAGE 27. But of Europe at large—Germany is in the main responsible for this, Goethe himself not a little. French criticism, too, has long passed the Voltairean pseudo-classic stage in which Shakespeare figured as a kind of barbarous genius, full of crudities, monstrosities, sins against 'Taste' and 'Art'. The greatest of modern French writers and poets, Victor Hugo, has devoted to Shakespeare's honour a volume of eloquent rhapsody. How much the Germans have done towards a better understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare is well known. Italy seems still to lag behind. To the Italians, Dante is the chief of poets; and one comes across in modern editions of Boccaccio, as footnotes to those stories of his from which Shakespeare has borrowed plots, strange critical remarks as to the comparative merits of Shakespeare's and Boccaccio's character-portraiture,—all in Boccaccio's favour.

In the construction of Shakespeare's dramas—notice the word 'under-
standing that is, the lowest mental 'faculty'; the merely intellectual; what may be called Shakespeare's 'dramatic art.'

It is a calmly seeing eye—See ante page 41 and again page 17.

PAGE 28. And out of chaos make a world—Compare the following description of Tennyson written by Carlyle in a letter to Emerson:— 'Tennyson is now in Town, and means to come and see me—a truly interesting son of earth and son of heaven. . . . I do not meet in these late decades such company over a pipe. . . . a true human soul, or some authentic approximation thereto, to whom your soul can say 'Brother; a man solitary and sad as certain men are, dwelling in an atmosphere of gloom, carrying a bit of Chaos about him, in short, which he is manufacturing into Cosmos.' (Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson, II, 66, 67.)

It is unexampled I think, &c.—In this matter, for instance, how much does Shakespeare differ from the other Elizabethan dramatists, even from the best of them 'whose Tamburlaines and Island Princesses, themselves not destitute of merit, first show us clearly in what pure loftiness and 'loneliness the Hamlets and Tempests reign.' (The Nibelungen Lied, Miscell. III, 127).

Shakespeare's morality—it is to be noticed how strongly here, and elsewhere throughout this lecture, Carlyle emphasises this doctrine of his, of the identity of morality and intellectual power.

A man justly related to all things and men, a good man—This definition of a 'good man' is worth observing. It is again closely connected with the power of seeing, knowing what one's 'relation to the universe' really is, of being 'loyal to fact,' as Carlyle elsewhere expresses it. Again it is not opposed,—since Carlyle finds in Sartor Resartus that doing 'the duty which lies nearest' is the one rule for men—it is not opposed to the two duties of the Church Catechism, the duty to God, and the duty to one's neighbour, since these two make up the Universe. Take, as bearing on the subject, the following extract from Sartor. It is from the chapter entitled, The Everlasting Tea, which stage Teufelsdrockh reaches after the stage of the Everlasting No, and the Centre of Indifference (see the Introduction, page III). 'Divine moment, when over the tempest-tost soul, as once over the wild wetering Chaos, it is spoken, Let there be light! Even to the greatest that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing; even as, under simple figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting luminaries 'above; instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, heaven-encompassed World.'

This great soul takes in all kinds of men and objects—This sympathy is what Carlyle elsewhere calls Humour—declaring it to be, in apparent
paradox, the finest perfection of poetic genius:—' The man of Humour sees common life, even mean life, under the new light of sportfulness and love; whatever has existence has charm for him. Humour has justly been regarded as the finest perfection of poetic genius. He who wants it, be his other gift what they may, has only half a mind; an eye for what is above him, not for what is about him or below him.' (Essay on Schiller, Miscell. III, 97.) See also the next paragraph, where this sympathy, humour, appears under the name of Intellect—the name different, but the thing identical.

PAGE 29. He himself says of Shakespeare—See WilhelmMeister, Bk. III, xi., ( Carlyle's translation, Vol. I, 167) 'These, the most mysterious and complex productions of creation, here act before us as if they were watches, whose dial-plates and cases were of crystal; which pointed out, according to their use, the courses of the hours and minutes; while, at the same time, you could discover the combination of wheels and springs that turned them.'

The crabled old Schoolmaster—See Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson, I, 205:—'An old blind Schoolmaster in Annan used to ask with endless anxiety when a new scholar was offered to him, "But are ye sure he's not a Dunce?" It is really the one thing needful in a man; for indeed ( if we will candidly understand it) all else is presupposed in that. 'Dunce,' says Skeat, 'a stupid person.' ( Scotch) from the plur. " a duns man," i.e., a native of Dunse in Berwickshire. In ridicule of the disciples of John Duns Scotus, schoolman died A.D. 1308.'

PAGE 30. There is, in the world, no other entirely fatal person—This because morality and power of seeing—intellect—are identical. No man, argues Carlyle, ever does the thing he knows to be wrong; he may fancy he knows it to be so, profess that he knows it, but he does not actually realise it. We are told that all faults are defective vigour in fighting; the greatest fault is ignorance of the fact that there is any occasion to fight; " the greatest fault is to be conscious of none." Hence the denunciation of stupidity here, and again in Latter-Day Pamphlets—The one enemy we have in this Universe is stupidity, darkness of mind, of which darkness, again, there are many sources, every sin a source, and probably self-conceit the chief source; and once more, ' Human stupidity is verily the accursed parent of all mischief.'

That is a capital error—We are told by the critics that Carlyle is no Psychologist, and this passage is quoted against him. They say he has here misrepresented the professed Psychologist, who recognises, as much as he that these divisions are, ' at bottom but names.'* But Carlyle was not thinking of learned professors, but of common opinions and speech on this matter. And common speech and opinion is actually, if Carlyle

* See Minto, Manual of English Prose Literature, 176.
be right in this point, very wide of the mark. For instance, how often do we find in histories bad men assumed to be great men, and vice versa, great actions attributed to immoral motives: or, again, consider the whole controversy about Art and Morality. And if these misconceptions (if they be misconceptions) abound in the works of talented men, how much commoner are they in ordinary life and conversation! The question is carried on into the next paragraph, and illustrated, with true Carlylean humour, in the fable of the Fox and the Geese. The student may also, if he please, read Froude's Essay on 'Reynard the Fox' (Short Studies on Great Subjects, I). Froude is, with one exception, the most eminent of Carlyle's disciples, and in his writings, so different in style and method of treatment from his master's, Carlyle's doctrines are often presented in a light which is, to some, clearer and less questionable.

Notice how Carlyle at the end of the paragraph suggests that there are 'limitations, modifications.' Carlyle built up no system, ethical or otherwise; he considered the universe far too complex for that. None the less many of his critics (hostile critics) have treated his various doctrines as if they were part of some such system, and misrepresented him in consequence. See remarks in the Introduction, (Carlyle's Teaching).

PAGE 31. It is what I call an unconscious intellect—The theory of the unconsciousness of genius (a theory very subtle and perhaps even a little questionable), Carlyle has worked out in his essay Characteristics, (Miscell. IV) where he lays down that genius is ever a secret to itself, that 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick,' that 'the beginning of inquiry is disease,' that the healthy understanding is not logical or argumentative, but intuitive: 'Shakespeare takes no airs for writing 'Hamlet and the Tempest, understands not that it is anything surprising: 'Milton, again, is more conscious of his facility, which accordingly is an inferior one.' Carlyle's utterances on these matters do not always seem to be consistent. There also seems an incongruity in logically arguing for the inferiority of logical argument, or consciously establishing the efficacy of unconsciousness. But Carlyle could not fit truth into any 'system' even a system which should consist in the absence of system. Closely allied to this of 'unconsciousness' is that other Carlylean dictum, 'the Heart sees further than the Head.'

Novalis—Friederich von Hardenburg, born 1772, died 1801, a German mystic who wrote under the pseudonym of 'Novalis.' Carlyle has an Essay on him with many extracts (Miscell. II). The quotation which follows is given there, page 218. Some of his sayings Carlyle repeatedly quotes, for instance:—'Man is the Messias of Nature,' and even more often, 'There is but one temple in the Universe, and that is the body of man. 'Nothing is holier than that high form. Bending before men is a reverence done to the Revelation in the Flesh. We touch Heaven when we lay our hand on a human body!'
NOTES.

PAGE 32. Speech is great; but silence is greater—See ante page 75.

Those Sonnets of his—Here we see that Carlyle regards the Sonnets of Shakespeare as actually personal; he agrees with Wordsworth that,—

With this same key Shakespeare unlocked his heart,
not with Browning who retorts,—

Once more;

Did Shakespeare? If so, the less Shakespeare he!

A heedless notion, our common one—This notion recent criticism has more or less banished. Compare, for instance, the whole tenor of Dowden's striking work, 'Shakespeare, his Mind and Art.' Milton was in part responsible for the idea, with his 'Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child, warbles his native wood notes wild.'

PAGE 33. What Johnson would remark—See Mrs. Piozzi, Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D.—''Dear Bathurst," said he to me one day, "was a man to my very heart's content: he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he hated a whig; he was a very good hater.''

The crackling of thorns under a pot—'For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool, this also is vanity.' (Ecclesiastes, vii. 6.)

Dogberry and Verges—See Much Ado About Nothing.

Such laughter is very beautiful to me—Compare the account given of the solitary instance in which Teufelsdrockh was known to laugh (Sartor Resartus 22). Also see Miscell. VII, 128, and Past and Present, 130.

As Hamlet in Wilhelm Meister—The criticism here alluded to will be found scattered over the latter part of the first volume of Carlyle's translation of Goethe's novel. Since Carlyle spoke these words many attempts have been made, by Germans and English, to review Shakespeare's plays, with more or less success. These books are well enough known to the Indian student.

August Wilhelm Schlegel—German scholar and Man of Letters, 1767-1845. He translated Shakespeare into German; published 'Lectures on Dramatic Art;' edited the 'Nibelungen Lied,' and published a number of original poems. He was also a distinguished Sanskrit scholar.

Marlborough, you recollect, &c.—Carlyle frequently quotes this saying of Marlborough's; chiefly in connection with that other dictum of his, that History—the real—is the true poetry. In his later works, wherein even his most reverent admirers find some traces of petulance, of prejudice, he complains that the interpretation of History has been left to 'Dryas-dust,' whilst the Shakespeares and Goethes, who could have interpreted aright, merely 'fiddled' to amuse the idle.
PAGE 34. That battle of Agincourt—Here, again, Carlyle, impatient of pedantic accuracy, has taken the general impression of the whole Play. 'Ye, good yeomen, whose limbs were made in England'; occurs in Henry's well known speech, 'Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more' (Henry V, Act III, ii.) where the scene is at Harfleur, not Agincourt. The description of the 'jaded English' will be found in the Prologue to Act IV:

The poor condemned English
Like sacrifices, by their watchful fires
Sit patiently and inly ruminate
The morning's danger; and their gesture sad,
Investing lank-lean cheeks and war-worn coats,
Presenteth them unto the gazing moon
So many horrid ghosts.

See also Grandpre's speech in Act IV, 3. 'Why do ye stay so long my lords of France.' But what matters the pedantic accuracy! Carlyle, in a few pierce words, has given us the whole spirit and soul of the matter, as he has already done in the case of Dante.

Not boisterous, protrusive—It is noticeable in Henry V, how loud and arrogant the French patriotism is compared with the English. The contrast is true to-day; the English taciturnity, 'talent for silence' in strange contrast with Gallie vehemence, much talk of 'gloire' and the rest.

But I will say, &c.—This paragraph scarcely seems consistent with the earlier one, in which Carlyle has spoken of 'the very perfection of the house, as if nature herself had made it;' and yet, perhaps, there is no such inconsistence. In the first place Carlyle is speaking of Shakespeare's 'Dramatic Art,' in the second, of something much higher than that.

No man works save under conditions—Compare with this the following passage from the Essay on Johnson (Miscell. IV, 93) 'Thus was the born king likewise a born slave. The divine spirit of music must awake imprisoned amid dull-croaking universal discords; the Ariel finds himself en-cased in the coarse hulls of a Caliban. So is it more or less, we know (and thou, O Reader, knowest and feellest even now), with all men: yet with the fewest in any such degree as with Johnson.'

And yet, after all, why complain; we were bidden not to complain of Dante's miseries.'—Had Dante had no miseries Florence might have had another prosperous Lord Mayor; and the ten dumb centuries continued voiceless.' Well, had Shakespeare not 'had to write for the Globe-Playhouse,' Stratford might have had another respectable Alderman, and the world wanted several immortal songs.

PAGE 35. Disjecta membra—Latin, 'scattered limbs.'

We are such stuff as dreams are made of—The Tempest, Act IV, 1. This great speech was one which made a deep impression on Carlyle;
he quotes it more than once; with special effect in *Sartor Resartus*, III, viii.:—'But whence? O Heavens, whither? Sense knows not; only “that it is through mystery to mystery, from God and to God.”

"We are such stuff"
"As dreams are made of, and our little life"
"Is rounded with a sleep!"

Again in Chapter IX:—Does that . . . other thousand-times repeated speech of the magician Shakespeare—

*And like the baseless fabric of this vision,*
*The cloudcapt Towers the gorgeous Palaces,*
*The solemn temples, the great globe itself,*
*And all which it inherit shall dissolve,*
*And like this unsubstantial pageant faded,*
*Leave not a wrack behind*

‘begin to have some meaning for us? In a word, do we not at length ‘stand safe in the far region of Poetic Creation and Palingenesia, where ‘that Phoenix Death-Birth of Human Society, and of all Human Things, ‘appears possible, is seen to be inevitable?’

That scroll in Westminster Abbey—On a scroll affixed to the statue of Shakespeare in Westminster Abbey is inscribed a part of Prospero’s speech already quoted.

Among those still more sacred Psalms—The Psalms of David.

I cannot call this Shakespeare a ‘Sceptic’—A ‘sceptic,’ a mere doubter, unbeliever. To Carlyle, Shakespeare and all great men were believers in ‘Eternal Veracities,’ though they may have been indifferent to this or that ‘credo.’

PAGE 37. Well this is our poor Warwickshire peasant—Again, a slight inaccuracy: ‘Peasant,’ Shakespeare, so far as we can gather, certainly was not: but the thought is true enough.

Whom the Earl of Southampton—Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated his *Venus and Adonis,* his *Lucrece,* and, as some think, his Sonnets.

He is the grandest thing we have yet done—Compare note, page 77.

PAGE 38. Italy lies dismembered—Changes have come in the political world since these words were spoken: Italy has once more become a political whole; and the ‘dumb Russia’ too is developing a literature—much admired by some.
A SUMMARY OF THE OTHER HERO-LECTURERS.

LECTURE I. The Hero as Divinity. Odin. Paganism: Scandinavian Mythology.—Heroes: Universal History consists essentially of their united Biographies. Religion not a man's church-creed, but his practical belief about himself and the Universe: Both with Men and Nations it is the One fact about them which creatively determines all the rest. Heathenism: Christianity: Modern Scepticism. The Hero as Divinity. Paganism a fact; not Quackery, nor Allegory: Not to be pretentiously 'explained;' to be looked at as old Thought, and with sympathy.—Nature no more seems divine except to the Prophet or Poet, because men have ceased to think: To the Pagan Thinker, as to a child-man, all was either godlike or God. Canopus: Man. Hero-worship the basis of Religion, Loyalty, Society. A Hero not the 'creature of the time;' Hero-worship indestructible. Johnson: Voltaire.—Scandinavian Paganism the Religion of our Fathers. Iceland, the home of the Norse Poets, described. The Edda. The primary characteristic of Norse Paganism, the impersonation of the visible workings of Nature. Jötnuns and the Gods. Fire: Frost: Thunder: The Sun: Sea-Tempest. Mythus of the Creation: The Life-Tree Igrasadi. The Modern 'Machine of the Universe.'—The Norse Creed as recorded, the summation of several successive systems: Originally the shape given to the national thought by their first 'Man of Genius.' Odin: He has no history or date; yet was no mere adjective, but a man of flesh and blood. How deified. The World of Nature, to every man a Fantasy of Himself.—Odin the inventor of Runes, of Letters and Poetry. His reception as a Hero: the pattern Norse-Man; a God: His shadow over the whole History of his People.—The essence of Norse Paganism, not so much Morality, as a sincere recognition of Nature: Sincerity better than Gracefulness. The Allegories, the after-creations of the Faith. Main Practical Belief: Hall of Odin: Valkyrs: Destiny: Necessity of Valour. Its worth: Their Sea-Kings, Woodcutter Kings, our spiritual Progenitors. The growth of Odinism.—The strong simplicity of Norse lore quite unrecognised by Grey. Thor's veritable Norse rage: Balder, the white Sungod. How the old Norse heart loves the Thunder-god, and sports with him; Huge Brobdignag genius, needing only to be tamed-down, into Shakespeares, Goethes. Truth in the Norse Songs: This World a show. Thor's Invasion of Jötunheim. The Ragnarök, or Twilight of the Gods; The Old must die, that the New and Better may be born. Thor's last appearance. The Norse Creed a Consecration of Valour. It and the whole Past a possession of the Present.

LECTURE II. The Hero as a Prophet. Mahomet: Islam.—The Hero no longer regarded as a God, but as one God-inspired. All Heroes primarily of the same stuff; differing according to their reception. The welcome of its Heroes, the truest test of an epoch. Odin: Burns.—Mahomet a true Prophet; not a scheming Impostor. A Great Man, and therefore

---

1 This summary is to be found in all Editions of Carlyle's 'Hero-Worship.'
first of all a sincere man: No man to be judged merely by his faults. David the Hebrew King. Of all acts for man repentance the most divine: The deadliest sin, a supercilious consciousness of none.—Arabia described. The Arabs always a gifted people; of wild strong feelings, and of iron restraint over these. Their Religiosity: Their Star-worship; Their Prophets and inspired men; from Job downwards. Their Holy Places. Mecca, its site, history and government.—Mahomet. His youth: His fond Grandfather. Had no book-learning; Travels to the Syrian Fairs; and first comes in contact with the Christian Religion. An altogether solid, brotherly, genuine man: A good laugh, and a good flash of anger in him withal.—Marries Kadijah. Begins his Prophet-career at forty years of age. Allah Akbar; God is great: Islam: we must submit to God. Do we not all live in Islam? Mahomet, ‘the Prophet of God.’ The good Kadijah believes in him: Mahomet’s gratitude. His slow progress: Among forty of his kindred, young Ali alone joined him. His good Uncle expostulates with him: Mahomet bursting into tears, persists in his mission. The Hegira. Propagating by the sword: First get your sword: A thing will propagate itself as it can. Nature a just umpire. Mahomet’s Creed unspeakably better than the wooden idolatries and jangling Syrian Sects extirpated by it.—The Koran, the universal standard of Mahometan life: An imperfectly badly-written, but genuine book: Enthusiastic extempore preaching, amid the hot haste of wrestling with flesh-and-blood and spiritual enemies. Its direct poetic insight. The World, Man, human Compassion; all wholly miraculous to Mahomet. —His religion did not succeed by ‘being easy;’ None can. The sensual part of it not of Mahomet’s making. He himself, frugal; patched his own clothes; proved a hero in a rough actual trial of twenty-three years. Traits of his generosity and resignation. His total freedom from cant. —His moral precepts not always of the superfinest sort; yet is there always a tendency to good in them. His Heaven and Hell sensual, yet not altogether so. Infinite Nature of Duty. The evil of sensuality, in the slavery to pleasant things, not in the enjoyment of them. Mahometanism a religion heartily believed. To the Arab Nation it was as a birth from darkness into light: Arabia first became alive by means of it.

Lecture IV. The Hero as Priest. Luther; Reformation: Knox; Puritanism.—The Priest a kind of Prophet; but more familiar, as the daily enlightener of daily life. A true Reformer he who appeals to Heaven’s invisible justice against Earth’s visible force. The finished Poet often a symptom that his epoch itself has reached perfection, and finished. Alas, the battling Reformer, too, is at times a needful and inevitable phenomenon: Offences do accumulate, till they become insupportable. Forms of Belief, modes of life must perish; yet the Good of the Past survives, an everlasting possession for us all.—Idols or visible recognised Symbols, common to all Religions: Hateful only when insincere: The property of every Hero, that he come back to sincerity, to reality: Protestantism and ‘private judgment.’ No living communion possible among men who believe only in hearsays. The Hero-Teacher, who delivers men out of darkness into light. Not abolition of Hero-worship does Protestantism mean; but rather a whole World of Heroes, of sincere believing men.—Luther; his obscure,
SUMMARY.

seemingly-insignificant birth. His youth schooled in adversity and stern reality. Becomes a monk. His religious despair: Discovers a Latin Bible: No wonder he should venerate the Bible. He visits Rome. Meets the Pope's fire by fire. At the Diet of Worms: The greatest moment in the modern History of men.—The Wars that followed are not to be charged to the Reformation. The old Religion once true: The cry of 'No Popery' foolish enough in these days. Protestantism not dead: German Literature and the French Revolution rather considerable signs of life!—How Luther held the sovereignty of the Reformation and kept peace while he lived. His written works: Their rugged homely strength: His dialect became the language of all writing. No mortal heart to be called braver, ever lived in that Teutonic Kindred, whose character is valour: Yet a most gentle heart withal, full of pity and love, as the truly valiant heart ever is: Traits of character from his Table-Talk: His daughter's Death-bed: The miraculous in Nature. His love of Music. His Portrait.—Puritanism the only phasis of Protestantism that ripened into a living faith: Defective enough, but genuine. Its fruit in the world. The sailing of the Mayflower from Delft Haven the beginning of American Saxondom. In the history of Scotland properly but one epoch of world-interest—the Reformation by Knox: A 'nation of heroes,' a believing nation. The Puritanism of Scotland became that of England, of New England.—Knox 'guilty' of being the bravest of all Scotchmen: Did not seek the post of Prophet. At the siege of St. Andrew's Castle. Emphatically a sincere man. A Galley-slave on the River Loire. An Old-Hebrew Prophet, in the guise of an Edinburgh Minister of the Sixteenth Century.—Knox and Queen Mary: 'Who are you, that presume to school the nobles, and sovereign of this realm?' 'Madam, a subject born within the same.' His intolerance—of falsehoods and knaveries. Not a mean acrid man; else he had never been virtual President and Sovereign of Scotland. His unexpected vein of drollery; A cheery social man; practical, cautious, hopeful, patient. His 'devout imagination' of a Theocracy, or Government of God. Hildebrand wished a Theocracy; Cromwell wished it, fought for it: Mahomet attained it. In one form or other, it is the one thing to be struggled for.

LECTURE V. The Hero as a Man of Letters. Johnson, Rousseau, Burns.—The Hero as a man of Letters altogether a product of these new ages: A Heroic Soul in very strange guise. Literary Men; genuine and spurious. Fichte's 'Divine Idea of the World:' His notion of the true Man of Letters. Goethe the Pattern Literary Hero.—The disorganised condition of Literature, the summary of all other modern disorganizations. The Writer of a true Book our true modern Preacher: Miraculous influence of Books: The Hebrew Bible. Books are now our actual University, our Church, our Parliament. With Books, Democracy is inevitable. Thought the true thaumaturgic influence, by which man works all things whatsoever. —Organisation of the 'Literary Guild:' Needful discipline; 'priceless lessons' of poverty. The Literary Priesthood, and its importance to society. Chinese Literary Governors. Fallen into strange times; and strange things need to be speculated upon.—An age of Scepticism: The very possibility of Heroism formally abnegated. Benthamism an eyeless Heroism.
Scepticism, Spiritual Paralysis, Insincerity: Heroes gone-out; Quacks, come-in. Our brave Chatham himself lived the strangest mimetic life all along. Violent remedial revulsions: Chartisms, French Revolutions: The Age of Scepticism passing away. Let each man look to the mending of his own Life.—Johnson one of our great English Souls. His miserable youth and hypochondria: Stubborn Self-help. His loyal submission to what is really higher than himself. How he stood by the old Formulas: Not less original for that. Formulas; their Use and Abuse. Johnson's unconscious sincerity. His Twofold Gospel, a kind of Moral Prudence and clear Hatred of Cant. His writings sincere and full of substance. Architectural nobleness of his Dictionary. Boswell, with all his faults, a true hero-worshipper of a true Hero.—Rousseau, a morbid, excitable, spasmodic man; intense rather than strong. Had not the invaluable 'talent of silence.' His Face, expressive of his character. His Egoism: Hungry for the praises of men. His books: Passionate appeals, which did once more struggle towards Reality: A Prophet to his Time, as he could, and as the Time could. Rosepink, and artificial bedizenment. Fretted, exasperated, till the heart of him went mad: He could be cooped, starving into garrets; laughed at as a maniac; but he could not be hindered from setting the world on fire.—Burns a genuine Hero, in a withered, unbelieving, secondhand Century. The largest soul of the British lands, came among us in the shape of a hard-handed Scottish Peasant. His heroic Father and Mother, and their sore struggle through life. His rough untutored dialect: Affectionate joyousness. His writings a poor fragment of him. His conversational gifts: High duchesses and low ostlers alike fascinated by him.—Resemblance between Burns and Mirabeau. Official Superiors: The greatest 'thinking faculty' in this land superciliously dispensed with. Hero-worship under strange conditions. The notablist phasis of Burns's history his visit to Edinburgh. For one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity. Literary Lionism.

Lecture VI. The Hero as King. Cromwell, Napoleon: Modern Revolutionism.—The King the most important of Great Men; the summary of all the various figures of Heroism. To enthrone the Ablest Man, the true business of all Social procedure: The Ideal of Constitutions. Tolerable and intolerable approximations. Divine Rights and Diabolic Wrongs. —The world's sad predicament; that of having its Able-Man to seek, and not knowing in what manner to proceed about it. The era of Modern Revolutionism dates from Luther. The French Revolution no mere act of General Insanity: Truth clad in hell-fire; the Trump of Doom to Plausibilities and empty Routine. The cry of 'Liberty and Equality' at bottom the repudiation of sham Heroes. Hero-worship exists for ever and everywhere; from divine adoration down to the common courtesies of man and man: The soul of Order, to which all things, Revolutions included, work. Some Cromwell or Napoleon the necessary finish of a Sansculottism. The manner in which Kings were made, and Kingship itself first took rise. Puritanism a section of the universal war of Belief against Make-believe. Laud a weak ill-starred Pedant; in his spasmodic vehemence heeding no voice of prudence, no cry of pity. Universal necessity for true Forms: How to distinguish between True and False. The nakedest Reality
preferably to any empty Semblance, however dignified.—The work of
the Puritans. The Sceptical Eighteenth century, and its constitutional
description of Cromwell and his associates. No wish to disparage such
characters as Hampden, Eliot, Pym; a most constitutional, unblamable,
dignified set of men. The rugged outcast, Cromwell, the man of them all
in whom one still finds human stuff. The One thing worth revolting for.
—Cromwell’s ‘hypocrisy,’ an impossible theory. His pious Life as a
Farmer until forty years of age. His public successes honest successes of a
brave man. His participation in the King’s death no ground of condem-
nation. His eye for facts no hypocrite’s gift. His Ironsides the embodiment
of this insight of his.—Know the men that may be trusted: Alas, this
is yet, in these days, very far from us. Cromwell’s hypochondria: His
reputed confusion of speech: His habit of prayer. His speeches unpre-
meditated and full of meaning. His reticences; called ‘lying’ and ‘dissimu-
lation:’ Not one falsehood proved against him.—Foolish charge of
‘ambition.’ The great Empire of Silence: Noble silent men, scattered
here and there, each in his department; silently thinking, silently hoping,
silently working. Two kinds of ambition, one wholly blamable, the other
laudable, inevitable: How it actually was with Cromwell.—Hume’s
Fanatic-Hypocrite theory. How indispensable everywhere a King is, in all
movements of men. Cromwell, as King of Puritanism, of England. Con-
stitutional palaver: Dismissal of the Rump Parliament. Cromwell’s
Parliaments and Protectorship: Parliaments having failed, there remained
nothing for him but the way of Despotism. His closing days: His poor
old Mother. It was not to men’s judgments that he appealed; nor have
men judged him very well.—The French Revolution, the ‘third act’
of Protestantism. Napoleon, infected with the quackeries of his age: Had
a kind of sincerity,—an instinct towards the practical. His faith,—‘the
Tools to him that can handle them,’ the whole Truth of Democracy. His
heart-hatred of Anarchy. Finally, his quackeries got the upper hand: He
would found a ‘Dynasty.’ Believed wholly in the dupeability of Men.
This Napoleonism was unjust, a falsehood, and could not last.