

that it shall be spared here. And—strange contrast!—this play contains an exquisite heroine, capable of rising into real heroism in a crisis of her fate. But, what is much more extraordinary and more telling, we have two young, unmarried girls, usually allotted a high place among Shakespeare's "noble" women, following in the same track. *Isabella* ("Measure for Measure," act iii., scene 1), confronted by a hideous phenomenon, leaps instantly to the conclusion that her mother must have been an adulteress.

Is't not a kind of incest to take life  
From thine own sister's shame? What should I think?  
Heaven shield my mother play'd my father fair!  
For such a warped slip of wilderness  
Ne'er issued from his blood,

she cries out. Says *Portia* ("Merchant of Venice," act i., scene 2,) of the Neapolitan prince, one of the suitors for her hand, "Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good that he can shoe him himself. I am much afraid my lady his mother play'd false with a smith." *Portia* may have been in jest, "I know it is a sin to be a mocker" she says; but in that we know there's many a true word said, and the solution came to hand with her at once. But *Isabella* was in deadly earnest. Her fierce defence of her own chastity makes her assault upon that of her mother all the more astonishing and shocking. Whether other examples of the same kind are to be found elsewhere in Shakespeare's plays is more than can be said at the moment. That there should be these three, and such as they are, must be admitted to be extremely characteristic and curious. If the like is to be found in any other writer that ever lived, perhaps he can be named.

There is a type of feminine character not to be found throughout the whole of Shakespeare's works. It is that drawn by Sir Walter Scott in *Jeanie Deans* in his "Heart of Midlothian." *Jeanie* is lowly, without personal beauty, simple and humble, gentle and tender, but of an exalted and unalterable principle, courage, and resolution. She is tried in the furnace again and again, and never found wanting. You may test her at any point you please in that inimitable tale, and you cannot hit a single blot. There is little audacity in saying that, if such a character as this is not to be found within Shakespeare's almost unlimited range, it is because it was not in him to create it. There are points of resemblance between *Imogen* and *Jeanie*, more particularly in the adventurous journey, but with wide differences. And the great charm of *Jeanie* is that she was a real woman in the two great incidents of the story, which are founded on fact. In the flesh she was a Scottish lassie, Helen Walker. D. F.

### THOMAS CARLYLE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the heavy snowstorm which prevailed on the afternoon of Friday, the 11th inst, the large and handsome Convocation Hall of Trinity College was filled to the very doors by a select and fashionable audience who had braved the elements to attend Professor Clark's lecture upon "Thomas Carlyle."

He opened his subject by stating that six years ago, when on February 5, 1881, Carlyle was laid in his grave, he possessed an honoured place in every library, and his writings were held to rank among English classics. It was said that Mr. Froude had changed all this, that he, the trusted friend of Carlyle, had torn him down from the pedestal on which he had been placed. There was something startling in this statement, but fortunately we know Carlyle better from the thirty volumes he has given us than through Mr. Froude. No deep shadow could rest upon his memory, and only the very general public could be affected by the so-called revelations. "Pay no attention whatever to Froude," said Professor Clark. Whatever place may be assigned to Thomas Carlyle by posterity, his influence has been profound, and his sagacity deep. The former has reached, directly and indirectly, to all circles. Charles Kingsley felt it in his "Alton Locke;" Frederick Robertson, the learned divine, breathed it in his discourses, Dickens betrayed it in his "Tale of Two Cities," inspired by the "French Revolution;" John Ruskin had regarded him as a teacher sent from God; and Emerson had worshipped him with reverend veneration, and thirty years ago had prophesied of him as a Moral Force.

There were, it must be conceded, insuperable hindrances to the actual study of his writings. A distinguished historian had said he would be ready and willing to read him, if he wrote in Chinese, Arabic, or any language he could acquire for the purpose, but, unfortunately, what he used was to him an unknown tongue. His language undoubtedly was often involved, and even grotesque; it contained many mannerisms, but no affectations. Frederic Harrison describes it as the skin of his body, which he could no more put off than his actual flesh. It was largely influenced by his Scottish birth and education, combined with his German proclivities, and may be characterised as Germanised Annandale English.

This style, popularly known as Carlylese, has nevertheless exercised one of the most potent powers ever obtained by any Englishman, and is well worth learning. M. Taine, in speaking of Carlyle's works, says: "We are beaten at the start—on est routé d'abord." He cannot reason; he must paint, and what pictures he can give us! Look at the "Flight from Yvernes," in the "French Revolution," a masterpiece of brilliant description. Look at the finished sketches he has drawn of the historical figures of that eventful period. The explanation of his want of lucidity is to be found in his views of mind and matter, as a world of thought and sense, the visible shadow of the Invisible. The peculiarity of Carlyle, as of every mystic, was to see in everything a double meaning. To the eyes of the vulgar, what is man? an omnivorous biped who wears breeches—to the eye of Carlyle, a supreme being, deeply hidden though he be behind his strange garment. His thoughts were all strongly tinged with mysticism,

which was at the same time not dreamy but practicable. To the general public there was something more repellent than his phraseology, viz., his cynicism. Mr. Frederic Harrison, a personal friend of Mr. Carlyle's, and Mr. Norton of Massachusetts, the author of the latest biography published, both proved, not only that the letters bequeathed to Mr. Froude were not meant for publication, but were left with the request, nay, command that they should be destroyed; instead of which they had been given to the world, and not only given but garbled in the giving, and distorted so as to convey a totally different impression of Carlyle's character from that entertained by his most intimate acquaintances. It was quite possible he was not always the pleasantest of companions, did not suffer fools gladly, was impatient of nonsense and humbug, but there was ample compensation for these faults, and, in spite of them, Carlyle belonged to the family of the illustrious Great.

Pascal and Dante were notoriously unamiable and unsocial beings, and we often feel annoyed at much that has been said of dear Charles Lamb and Coleridge. It is shocking that the private details of Carlyle's domestic life should have been given to the public to gloat over. Was it right that these should have been handed to the world by his trusted friend only to blacken his character? The Carlyle of the present day was not the ideal patriarch, the sage of letters, but the Carlyle of Mr. Froude—the Carlyle of his nine volumes of "Reminiscences." He had actually misrepresented his conduct to his wife in a most unjustifiable manner; and, in contradiction of much that had been written, he, Professor Clark, would read portions of the last letter he wrote his wife on the eve of their marriage, and one written after her death, both testifying to the great love and tenderness he felt for her. Jane Welsh Carlyle was a clever woman, with a bitter tongue, and no doubt her very temperament may have caused transient feelings of hardness and bitterness between her and her husband, and she may have suffered from that intimate association with genius which has been the lot of other women in similar situations, especially when we remember that Carlyle was a victim of dyspepsia, and the attacks of this insidious enemy often inspired his pessimistic views. At the bottom of it all, however, and with all his faults, Carlyle was essentially the kindest and gentlest of men. Miss Harriet Martineau dwells at some length upon his enormous power of sympathy, and it is certain that depths of tenderness existed in his stern, rugged nature. Frederic Harrison, speaking of the "Reminiscences," says: "Shut up this waste basket of a great man's spleen. Thomas Carlyle is strong enough to bear much, and will bear even this." He referred also to the last years of his life, in which he found him in his old age, courteous, kindly, even patriarchal. Carlyle's spiritual existence is never apparent in his "Reminiscences," but his intense admiration for his father is very strongly developed. He began life as a stone mason, and his son calls him an example of a man of God's own making, and says: "Let me write my books as he built his houses." To him he owed his education and his college life, and he ever considered him as one of the greatest of men. He was certainly remarkable for strength of character and for tenacious veracity. Carlyle's mother was not less uncommon than his father. Her religious tendencies were very strong, and her interest in her son's spiritual welfare unceasing. Edward Irving was Carlyle's dearest friend. But I will not dwell long upon him, for his life has been admirably written by Mrs. Oliphant. He was a former lover of Mrs. Carlyle's, and their intimacy continued until his death. Irving was a man of great sociability and real good nature, and probably attracted Carlyle by the intenseness of his humanity. An excellent notice of him, from Carlyle's pen, appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* after his death.

Readers of Carlyle's early letters will find in them the same clear insight, the same grotesque humour, and the same high moral purpose that characterises his later works. His criticisms are open to grave and serious faults. Voltaire he did not understand or appreciate, from a strong John Bullish prejudice to the frog-eating Frenchman whom he condemned as an impudent blackguard. His judgment was far from subjective, and was largely influenced by his sympathies.

His favourite characters were all predestinated to Carlylese salvation. He took immense pains in his biographical researches, and the labour he bestowed upon his "Life of Frederick the Great" was herculean. Mrs. Carlyle was wont to say he lived for twelve years in the shadow of the valley of Frederick. He never perverts the facts of history, but at the same time he pooh-poohs a great deal that does not adapt itself to his purposes, and is certainly not unbiassed in his opinions.

The "Essays" were his first contributions to literature, and were continued throughout his life. The best were written upon Richter and Burns. His first big book was the "Life of Schiller," introduced to the public by a preface from the pen of Goethe. This work Carlyle never esteemed highly, and valued least of his productions. His next was "Sartor Resartus." In the study of Carlyle, I would recommend beginners to commence with the "Essays," then read "Heroes and Hero-Worship," "Past and Present" and "Oliver Cromwell," after which they will be able to make their own way. Carlyle had two fundamental articles of Faith—his Hero-Worship and his Gospel of Labour. Mahomet was one of his idols, also Dante, Luther, John Knox, Robert Burns, Rousseau, Napoleon, and Goethe, which reminds me that the Germans consider Homer, Shakespeare, and Goethe as the three geniuses of the world. Carlyle's admiration of Goethe was a worship of intellect. That cold contained nature, possessing the serenity of a god, could have had little in sympathy with the humanity of Carlyle, but he loved the harmony of his literary genius and the cultivated power of his superhuman intelligence. Carlyle had a firm belief in the existence of a God. His own genius was transcendent, and his works are those of a consummate literary artist who always wrote with a high moral purpose in the spirit of Schiller, *Ernst ist das Leben*, Life is Earnest. In conclusion, Professor Clark expressed a hope that his remarks would lead some one to the study of the works he had produced. E. S.