

been reared and which they loved to the end. What is true of nations is true of their leaders. It would be easy to show that pronounced literary tastes have flung a charm about lives to us anointed with the conflicts of contending political parties. "The best heads that ever existed," as Emerson asserts, "were quite too wise to undervalue letters. A great man should be a great reader." Few figures are more familiar in the old book shops of London than that of Mr. Gladstone, and he confesses that his whole career has been powerfully influenced by Aristotle, Augustine, Dante, and Bishop Butler. Rivals in politics, he and Earl Derby were one in their passion for Homer; and Gladstone and Earl Beaconsfield made common cause in their admiration for literary pursuits. Both of them their foes would be apt to class among the great masters of romance.

Nor is it less true that the princes of the Church have been men of similar tastes. Paul did not cram up Kleantes for the sake of quoting him on Mars' Hill. The distinctly literary flavor which belongs only to one at home among books and authors distinguishes him from his fellow-apostles. The preachers who in the first centuries of our era made Christianity welcome to the culture of Alexandria and of Constantinople were many of them in their younger days professional rhetoricians. The Reformation was incalculably strengthened by Melancthon's crystal clearness in style, and by the playful yet piercing humor of Erasmus; and Luther in his garden lets us into the sunniest corner of his heart when he calls for a song, and says: "Music is a half discipline and school-mistress that maketh people more gentle and much more modest and understanding." The weakness of the evangelical movement of the last century is indicated by Pressensé when he charges it with taking a practical direction only, and says that it was not accompanied, as in the Reformation of the sixteenth century, by a deep and powerful impetus in the domain of thought. "At any price," wrote John Wesley, in his journal, "give me the Book of God. I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*—'a man of one book.'" Yet Wesley was counted an excellent classical critic at his university, and he never ceased to delight in literature. His reading was almost as various as Macaulay's. He studied history, poetry and philosophy on horseback, which in the state of the English roads at that time argued not a little enthusiasm for his favorite pursuits, and must often have endangered the neck of the greatest religious leader since Calvin. In the saddle he had Homer for his companion; he required his young preachers to study Spencer's "Fairy Queen," and after his death one of his executors found a Shakespeare carefully annotated in his own handwriting, and with characteristic, and, I had almost said prophetic, narrowness flung the volume into the flames.* Those who knew Mr. Spurgeon at all intimately were impressed with nothing more than with the breadth and extent of his general reading, and indeed he had what he would have counted the highest human authority for

* "Contemporary Portraits," 321.