

can we prove the beautiful and the sublime, the noble and the base. Nevertheless the old habits of instruction prevail, and we use in the study and teaching of literature methods that can yield only the most meagre returns in those fields, though they may yield the best returns in the fields of science. Grammar, rhetoric, philology, history, mythology, etc., etc., these are suggested in the study of literature and an understanding of the suggestions is essential to the progress of the study. But these things are all of the nature of science, and they may be mastered without much gain to culture. Moreover, these things can be put down in black and white to appease the examination demon who is going up and down in the land seeking whom he may devour, and they may be put into annotations, and expanded into books, but culture is a law written in the heart and in the mind. Let me say, further, that whilst the perceptions of the imagination and of the sentiments are not sensuous, they are nevertheless perceptions of realities, and whilst they may be for the most part incapable as yet of logical verification, they are not illogical. To illustrate: from the beginning, men have had perceptions of beauty and sublimity, and pathos in music, but it was not till thousands of years had passed away that men discovered that the sequences of melody and the combinations of harmony are in exact accord with mathematical laws. Even in our own day, the most charming music is given, and the most exquisite delight in music is sometimes felt by those who know nothing of the science of numbers that underlies this art; and with all our boasted modern science no man has ever yet discovered the link that connects the throb of nerve with the thrill of feeling that rouses men to the rage of battle, or melts them to tenderness and tears.

What is true in this particular case is true in general, and I hold that there is a pre-established and underlying harmony between the true, on the one side, and the beautiful and the good on the other, and that the intellect, the imagination, and the sentiments are in a perfect accord, though ignorance and error may sometimes darken or disturb our perception of that accord. Hence the wisdom of the following saying of Mr. Arnold: "Finely touched souls have a presentiment of a thing's natural truth, even though it be questioned, and long before the palpable proof by experience convinces all the world."

But the question is pressed again. What are the methods by which the best results of culture may be obtained from the study of literature? All I can say on this subject can be said in four words—presentation, contemplation, stimulation, inspiration.

Under presentation I include all that can be done to make sure that the conception of the writer may be clearly seen by the student. When this is done it remains to make sure that the attention is fixed on the conception so presented.

It is just here, I think, that a great mistake is often made. No sooner does the student clear away obscurities from the object than he hastens on to clear away other obscurities from other objects. It is as though instead of studying works of art a man should busy himself with unpacking them and setting them up. In legal documents we sometimes find the clause, "time is of the essence of this contract." Every tacit contract the student forms with literature must have this clause when culture is the result desired. It is only by the repeated and protracted contemplation of the masterpieces that our own forms of thought and habits of feeling are modified and assimilated to the higher type. Goethe had this in view