

lip and steadfast eye, the look of originality and rugged strength about the whole man, arrested and enchanted me. There breathed around him also a certain undefinable influence of gentleness and noble affection. You felt that he was honest and good. The mood of admiring indifference with which I had regarded him gave place to ardent interest. His language—clear, idiomatic, melodious—derived zest from his provincial accent; and I shall never forget the moment when he concluded a classically picturesque and beautiful passage, descriptive of an ancient Scottish forest, with the words, ‘The axe had been busy in its glads’—that is, the axe had been busy in its glades.”

The first of the two volumes treats of Miller in three books, entitled respectively, “The Boy,” “The Apprentice,” and “The Journeyman.” With the ground covered by these epochs we have already been made familiar by his own pen in “My Schools and Schoolmasters,” although its history from an altogether different point of view is not without its peculiar interest. Miller’s life as a public man, which we find described in the second volume under the titles, “The Bank Accountant,” “The Editor,” and “The Man of Science,” is not so well known to the public. All who have read his scientific works are familiar with the position which he occupied as a geologist; but the history of his literary life and editorial career will be new to most readers. With regard to this portion of his life, Mr. Bayne says: “If we wish to have a correct appreciation of Hugh Miller, and not to substitute an image of our fancy for the living man, we must clearly apprehend and perfectly admit two propositions—first, that he was in the deepest foundations of his character a religious man; secondly, that he was distinctively, and with his whole heart, a Scotchman.” Mr. Bayne carefully analyzes the religious history of Scotland during the important time that Hugh Miller occupied the editorial chair of the *Witness*, and shows the wonderful power with which he influenced the whole nation, and, in fact, led the movement which issued in the Disruption. Indeed, according to the biographer, the very name “Free Church of Scotland” owes its origin to Hugh Miller. He made use of it in articles in the *Witness* months before the Disruption, when, calmly foreseeing that event, he meditated profoundly on the position which the protesting church would occupy, and the course which she ought to pursue. Through the whole course of the movement Miller felt with a depth and solemnity of conviction,

which converted the feeling into a sentiment of duty, that the *Witness* was to be the organ of no clerical party, the sounding board of no church or court, but was to represent the movement in all the breadth and independence of its national characteristics.

Hugh Miller conducted the *Witness* for sixteen years, and he cannot have written for the paper fewer than a thousand articles. By far the larger portion of which he wrote, however, is gone forever. “Admirable disquisitions on social and ethical questions,” says his biographer, “felicities of humor and sportive though trenchant satire, delicate illustration and racy anecdote from an inexhaustible literary erudition, and crystal jets of the purest poetry, such things will repay the careful student of the *Witness* file, but will never be known to the general public.”

Mr. Bayne says, but it is difficult to believe the fact of such a successful editor, that Miller had no particle of enthusiasm for the press, no confidence in the newspaper as an education agency; that he looked with fixed distrust upon journalistic writing, both as culture for a man’s own mind and as a means of influencing his fellows, and regarded science as a counteractive to the deteriorating effects of this kind of work upon his mental powers. He says that the mechanics of his acquaintance whose culture consisted in life-long familiarity with newspapers, were uniformly shallow and frivolous, and speaks of himself “as doomed to cast off shaving after shaving from his mind to be caught by the winds and after whirling lightly for a little time to be blown into the gulf of oblivion.” Forgetting, as Mr. Bayne finely remarks, that “inasmuch as a powerful newspaper writer lodges his thoughts in the minds of men engaged in affairs, and has them thus woven into the web of events and the fabric of institutions, it might be argued that he, least of all, toils without result of his labors.”

Miller had a wonderful command of language. His style had been laboriously perfected by twenty years of study and practice, assiduous reading, and careful self-correction. Everything he wrote possessed a singular interest, of which it was not always easy to grasp the secret. He drew his inspiration from a close acquaintance with nature. “Books came to Miller at the right moment, when he had already so filled his mind with nature’s imagery that they would do no more than genially assist him to use it. To read him is like taking a walk with him; we are never far from the crags and the waters, the dewy branch and the purple heather.”

These volumes are well worthy of careful perusal. It is not a work which may be