

He has attained his end when he has put himself exactly at the point of view of the author in writing the passage under consideration. At times this is a comparatively simple matter. Euclid writes :—"Two straight lines which are parallel to the same straight line are parallel to one another"—and this is a proposition whose terms we have merely to comprehend, in order to be at the point of view at which Euclid was in writing it. But if we turn, let us say, to the works of Herodotus, we find numerous stories whose terms indeed are not less easily comprehended than those of Euclid, but which seem to us, it may be, childish and incredible. In merely understanding their purport, have we reproduced Herodotus' state of mind in writing them? Did the stories seem childish or incredible to him? The question calls for literary investigation. The student must examine the whole work of Herodotus and determine its general scope. He finds that it professes to be a serious history, and comes to the conclusion, perhaps, that Herodotus gives the narratives under consideration in all seriousness and good faith. Yet still he does not understand the author's state of mind in writing the passage. How came a man of evident intellectual power and culture to believe fables whose absurdity is manifest to a school-boy of to-day? To answer this question the student betakes himself to the study of Greek history and Greek modes of thought; and, until he has thrown himself into Greek life of the fifth century and grasped Herodotus' relation to the civilization of his time, he will not have attained the aim of literary study,—the reproduction in one's self of the state of mind of the writer. Again,