

not only the truth that exists under appearances in nature and in history, but also in the highest thing of all, a human character. And hence while, Ruskin being judge, Wordsworth is the great landscape painter of the age, Carlyle is the great biographer. He will never take hearsay. If a man have any inherent worth, no amount of former neglect or calumny is permitted to cover him up, or caricature him. Carlyle rescues him, and sets him in the true light. Who does not now accept his hero Cromwell, as the real man, instead of that dark hypocrite and bloody tyrant of our nursery days! And justice rendered even to the "sea green incorruptible" Robespierre, with his probities and pleasures of virtue! And to Friedrich Wilhelm! It was thought a paradox that Wordsworth should find virtues in Laud, and in those who executed Laud. But that is a small thing to Carlyle's commiserating both Louis XVI. and Robespierre! He has studied thoroughly the great wave lines of human character, and with an intuitive sagacity fixes on the keystone of the arch of a man's nature and life. And then he has so much sympathy with every phase of human nature, except the base, that he cannot help entering into the spirit of each life, "weeping with those that weep, and rejoicing with those that rejoice." And thus he keeps up our interest in the story, as Dickens in another walk does, by the enumeration and emphasis of particulars grouped round a central idea. His historical figures are living; not logical statuettes, cut clear and sharp by sparkling antithesis, after the manner of Macaulay. Especially when he loves or reverences a character, say a Burns or a Johnson, he conceives it so distinctly, and impresses it on us so passionately, that it steps out of the frame and walks before us, in flesh and blood. And in those two cases, it seems to me, the sympathy has sprung from actual likemindedness; for in ruggedness, hatred of cant, and reverence for the true, he is of kin with brave old Samuel; and he counts a not more distant relationship to Burns in restless stormful energy, and the "pungent passionings," of the poet's imagination and brain. For Carlyle, too, is a poet, though he has never written a stanza, except in the way of translation; and he could write, if he gave himself to it, battle hymns like Luther, and Tyrtæan odes like Burns or Beranger.

What Carlyle's exact political or religious creed may be, I shall not attempt to define. He has not set it forth himself in so many distinct propositions; and it would be somewhat difficult to do so. I take him not so much as a builder up, but as a Jeremiah, one of God's pullers down. And when we cannot plant until we destroy, the man who roots up is as true a reformer as the man who comes after him to sow. Beneficent work,