

ble strength; with the complication and the distinctness of nature herself"; and I may add that if Language be—as it surely is—one of the chief agencies by which we give an enduring "local habitation and a name" to viewless thoughts and—paradoxical as this may seem—disguise the same, never was there a means better fitted to an end than this magical Greek Tongue, whose very words are pictures.

The man who spake with this tongue as man never spake before or since was, in himself, a study. He had all the patient attention to detail that is one of the infallible signs of towering ability. His Orations, and especially this "On the Crown," are mighty edifices, built from lowest foundation to topmost pinnacle with a scrupulous attention to small things that reveals the grandeur and the grasp of the man's intellect. He had that masterful, dominant will-power, that herculean endeavour to wrestle down every obstacle, a perseverance that is conjoined only with genius; for this ungainly stutterer, whose ridiculous pronunciation of the letter "r" called out the coarse taunts of the Athenian mob, and whose shrill quavering voice could not originally be heard beyond a small circle, so far overcame Nature herself, that, when he listed, language flowed from his lips sweeter than honey, and that his voice, like the blast of a trumpet, awed and stilled and rose loud and clear above the deafening clamours of the stormy popular meetings of his day.

And closely allied to this perseverance of his he had that pride, which is only virtue carried to excess: what genius the gods above had given him, he did not hide under the empty affectation of unconsciousness, and what he had done and sacrificed and dared for Athens, he was not abashed to tell the Athenians face to face.

He had that power of concentration within himself, that philosophic folding of the mantle round him, that "love of love, that hate of hate, that scorn of scorn,"

which belong to a poet; for Demosthenes was a poet in the truest and highest sense of the word,—a *poïetes*, a *maker* and an embodiment of Thought.

And yet this great patriot and greater orator was not a type of perfection in human character. He who had spurned the gold and the flatteries of the King of Macedon; he who had poured out his own resources for love of Athens and had freely given his time to the service of her citizens; he whose whole life had been, so to speak, a sermon on patriotism and an exposure of fraud—this same Demosthenes—I know not what name to call it; God alone knoweth—in one of these fits of inconsistency that, it is said, sometimes come to the bravest and to the best, sold his honour to Harpalus, Alexander's faithless minister, and suffered himself to be bribed with a paltry golden cup! Alas! Alas! Well might Thomas à Kempis write in the later centuries, "*Let the fall of the mighty serve thee as a warning, and keep thee always humble.*"

But, all things considered, if ever a man's single work, out of many, bodied forth his true character, that single work is Demosthenes' "Oration of the Crown." Whoever would study the lines of the mental portrait of the world's greatest orator, almost unconsciously sketched by himself in honour and with truthfulness, while limning the very different picture of his rival, must take the time-honoured advice to study the man's work, if he would understand the man himself. And this slight essay will have achieved much if it turn the re-awakened attention of even one lover of Greek to the rich mine of wealth—a mine that cannot be too deeply worked—contained in this richest part of the great estate of oratory, in this very perfect exponent of human genius, and of the majesty of a tongue, "whose law was heavenly beauty, and whose breath enrapturing music."

J. F. W.

