

pier circumstances, not as the creature of choice but of chance, not as the inheritor of a buoyant, healthy nature, but heir of a marred and suffering manhood, which rendered him incapable of investing the thorns of life with their accustomed roses.

The signal merit of Carlyle was his truth. True he certainly was, as he was able to read mankind, according to his light. Scorning deceit or even the semblance of it, he disdained to clothe a thought in comelier dress to attract the superficial eye, or to convey an idea by mere grace of expression which he might apprehend would not be appreciated at its mental worth in unadorned yet honest diction. Who will say that his negro-phobia was not the natural sequence of much foreign super-philanthropic cant and empty, blatant vociferation in the cause of emancipation, mere sentimental elevation of the fragrant African to the heights of nigger apotheosis? His

seemingly wayward transitions from ultra-Radical to super-Tory, from democratical vituperation to monarchic justifications, might have been but natural consequences of natural changes in a singularly original, unconservative and consequently mutable phase of intellect, and the results of a wider and more comprehensive estimate of society. "*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*" He wrote as he thought, he lived as he wrote, he died as he lived; and now that he is but a name, his memory stands out from the misty ranks of the dead past generations, endowed as with a double identity, habited in the shroud of a dual existence, man within man; radical and conservative; doubter, yet worker; dependent, yet victor; the devotee of humanity, yet its bitter mocker; the champion of mental liberty, yet the scoffer at all intellect; the oracle of individual human right, yet the vindicator of divine authority.

## COMPOSITION IN OUR SCHOOLS.\*

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"COMPOSITION is the art of expressing one's ideas, orally or in writing, concisely, elegantly, and unequivocally. Poets *may* be born, not made; but the reverse is generally true of successful prose writers—they are made, not born." This, and the following sentences in brackets, were written upon the black-board for subsequent discussion by the Association. [True grace in writing comes from art, not chance.] It is true we have many effective, and even polished, prose writers, who never learned a rule of composition as set down in the books. These are successful not be-

cause they *violate* the rules, but because, in spite of never having learned them, they follow them unerringly intuitively. These are the geniuses of the literary world, who form an exception to the rule that successful writers are made, not born.

[Composition, the most important study, is the most neglected.] The two chief methods by which mind can be brought to operate on mind—by which mental power can reach out, grasp, mould and control mind, are the tongue and the pen— oratory and written composition. Consider, then, for a moment, their importance and the little time, as a rule, we spend in teaching them, and you

\* Read before the Wentworth Teachers' Association.