

braced literature as a profession, his first attempt being contributions to Brewster's Encyclopædia; he afterwards published a translation of M. Legendre's Geometry, to which he prefixed an original essay on Proportion, he having specially devoted himself to mathematical studies while at college. In 1823-4 appeared his Life of Schiller and also a translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*. German literature had a fascination for him, and he labored to introduce it to the English reading public. In 1827 he married Miss Welch, a lineal descendant of John Knox, whose devotion to him he has immortalized in the following characteristic epitaph:—

"In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common, but also a soft invincibility, a capacity for discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart which are rare. For forty years she was the true and loving helpmate of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him as none else could in all of worthy that he did or attempted. She died at London, 21st April, 1866, suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life is as if gone out."

There issued from his prolific pen quite a small library of books; but his "French Revolution," "Oliver Cromwell's letters and speeches," and his "History of Frederick II. of Prussia," rank as the principal ones. Probably his greatest work is that on Oliver Cromwell, whose memory he has saved from much of the odium formerly attaching to it. The reader of this remarkable book is struck by the rugged style of both speech-maker and author, and by the hearty sympathy Cromwell's sterling manliness excited in Carlyle. In these days, when the term "Christian Politician" is used as a reproach, it is refreshing to read a passage like the following from one of the pious Puritan Protector's parliamentary speeches, which Carlyle collected and bequeathed to the English-speaking race:—

"I did read a psalm yesterday, which truly may not unbecome both me to tell you of and you to observe. It is the eighty-fifth psalm; it is very instructive and significant. It begins: 'Lord, thou hast been very favorable to thy land, thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.' (Cromwell repeats the psalm, closing:) 'Mercy and truth are met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the Earth, and Righteousness shall look down from Heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our Land shall yield her increase, Righteousness shall go before Him, and shall set us in the way of his steps.'

Equally refreshing is Carlyle's comment: "What a vision of celestial hope is this: vista into Land of Light, God's Will done on Earth; this poor English Earth an Emblem of Heaven, where God's blessing reigns supreme; where ghastly falsity and brutal Cruelty and Baseness, and Cruelty and Cowardice, and Sin and Fear, and all the Helldogs of Gehenna shall lie chained under our feet; and Man, august in divine manhood, shall step victorious over them, heavenward, like a God! O Oliver, I could weep,—and yet it steads not. Do not I too look into 'Psalms,' into a kind of Eternal Psalm, unalterable as adamant,—which the whole world yet will look into? Courage, my brave one!"

Cromwell continues:

"The Church goes on there, in that Psalm, and makes her boast yet farther: 'His salvation is nigh them that fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.' His glory; not carnal, nor anything related thereto; this glory of a free possession of the Gospel; this is that which we may glory in."

Upon which Carlyle writes:

"Beautiful, thou noble soul!—And very strange to see such things in the Journals of the English House of Commons. O Heavens, into what oblivion of the Highest have stupid, canting, cotton-spinning, partridge-shooting mortals fallen, since that January, 1658!"

Here is another passage which brings out the yearning of even

brave Cromwell—(and how much more that of weaker men?)—for rest in the midst of difficulty and opposition:—

"I can say in the presence of God, \* \* \* I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than undertaken such a Government as this."

This seeming complaint from Cromwell gives Carlyle an opportunity for impressing the ennobling nature of works of *which he may* be said to have been the apostle:

"Nay, who would grudge a little temporary Trouble, when he can do a large spell of eternal work? Work that is true, and will last through all Eternity! Complain not, your Highness!"

Carlyle's abhorrence of all shams and superficiality finds forcible expression in a letter written to his nephew, Dr. Carlyle, of this city, in 1852, containing invaluable advice on the choice of books:—

"I calculate you will diligently, and of your own accord, devote most of your hours of relaxation, when severer pursuits are over, to reading whatever good books you can find; and I stipulate only that they be *good*,—written by men of talent and wisdom, not by men of flimsy sham talent and folly (called "amusing," etc., by fools),—in which essential particular there is nothing but your own good sense, growing better daily by the honest use of it, to which one can apply for the selection and order in which you read. Read no *fool's* book if you can help it; fly from a fool as you would from poison, in your reading and in all other pursuits of yours! \* \* \* I will assure you, on very good experience, it is far less important to a man that he read many books than that he read a few *well*, and with his whole mind awake to them. \* \* \* A man gathers wisdom only from his own sincere exertions and reflections; and in this it is really not very much that other men can do for him; but whatever help there is, he will find with the *wise* alone, whether as writers or oral counsellors and companions, and will get nothing but hindrance, confusion, and final ruin and failure, from association with the foolish."

What was Carlyle's spiritual attitude? His books must answer, for, like Cromwell, his works revealed his inmost thoughts. He has left on record a touching tribute to the power of the Lord's Prayer, in a letter written to a correspondent about eleven years ago:—

"I was agreeably surprised by the sight of your hand-writing again, so kind, so welcome! The letters are as firm and honestly distinct as ever—the mind, too, in spite of its frail environments, as clear, plumb-up, calmly expectant, as in the best days; right so. So be it with us all till we quit this din sojourn, now grown so lonely to us, and our change come! 'Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done'; what else can we say? The other night, in my sleepless tossings about, which were growing more and more miserable, these words, that brief and grand prayer, came strangely into my mind, with an altogether new emphasis; as if written and shining for me in mild, pure splendor, on the black bosom of the night there; when I, as it were, read them word by word—with a sudden check to my imperfect wanderings, with a sudden softness of composure which was much unexpected. Not for perhaps thirty or forty years had I once formally repeated that prayer; nay, I never felt before how intensely the voice of man's soul it is; the inmost aspiration of all that is high and pious in poor human nature; right worthy to be recommended with an 'after this manner pray ye?'"

He stands out in an age of shams as a true man to whom may fittingly be attributed his own words:—

"A great Light, one of our few authentic solar luminaries, going down now amid the clouds of death. Like the setting of a great victorious summer sun. So dies a hero! He died, this Hero, Oliver, in resignation to God; as the brave have all done."