

their counterpart in the merits and defects of the man Carlyle.

Through style, then, we come in contact with that which is greatest in man—character; for the character of a man is the resultant of his whole being, moral and intellectual. Those who have been fortunate enough to encounter in life a great and noble personality, know that it is the most inspiring and marvellous of spiritual forces. As the chord in one instrument responds to the vibrations of its fellow in another, so the emotions of the human soul vibrate under the influence of a great and ardent character. But in the limitations of time and space and circumstance by which our lives are bound, such encounters must needs be rare, and fortunate it is that through literature we are able to feel the kindling spiritual presence of the mighty dead. It is true that only few can thus transmit themselves through the ages; but these few are among the greatest spirits of our race, for the power of style in a high degree is the prerogative of genius alone. Nor need this surprise us, when we reflect what a marvellous power it is. Style does not merely tell us how the writer felt, but communicates his feeling to us; not how he saw, but makes us see as he did; not what manner of man he was, but dominates us with his presence. In the sphere of studies there is nothing comparable to this. History and biography tells us about men, we see them imaged in a more or less imperfect medium; but here we feel the thrill of their emotions, the power of their presence. So that, not only does literature bring us into contact with ideas, the higher literature brings us into contact with men,