

It is so also with great works in prose. The idea of Gibbon's great history was suddenly revealed to him as he sat on the steps of the church of Ara Coeli, on the site of the Capitol, and listened to the friars singing vespers. Then his life's work was set for him, and the mystic power of the genius of Rome seized his soul. The pursuit of letters, as well as that of the higher science, is its own reward. The literary sections have useful work to do in other di-

"The proper study of mankind is man."

That is the highest kind of knowledge; for all social institutions are stable in proportion, as they agree with the nature of man. It is most important to be based upon it, and it is thus the most important to happiness. "Know thyself" had the place of honor among the maxims of the seven sages inscribed upon the temple of Delphi 500 years before Christ. These sages were the wisest men of the time, the law-givers, men of affairs, and, like the writers of Ecclesiastes and Proverbs, were ignorant of all we know as exact science. Manners and circumstances change, but the nature of man is unchangeable, and in the great words of Homer ages ago, "We must know ourself."

The pursuit of literature must then be one of the most important of an insensitive to action and as a means of enlarging the capacity and happiness of mankind. It is in society that man finds his fruition.

Unless this world is a training school for the formation of character, in other words, for the moulding of the soul, it is a waste of time to study the things existing. In history, and more especially in biography, we can trace the development of character and the influence of the environment on the will. History is a continuous moral judgment. For the worse, the happiness of large masses of men—the fate of empires often—hangs on the will of one man; and, finally, a genius arises, like Caesar or Napoleon, the destinies of the world are changed. But even common sense is a magnificent thing, and it is the contemplation of sequences. There are points on the tapestry of our great rivers where a change is possible. It is in the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf of St. Lawrence. So it is in the history of the world. The success of the American Revolution was primarily due to the omission of Lord George Sackville, the son of the Duke of Northumberland, from Canada. Burgoyne, unsupported, surrendered at Saratoga, and decided the intervention

It follows from this that poetry has an entirely different canon of truth than history; for, while history demands that what has happened be reported as it has happened, what may happen, Aristotle somewhat paradoxically observes that it is better to follow the impossible which is probable than the improbable which is possible. The poem must be shaped to suit the probabilities of human nature, while that which is particular or accidental is of slight account. Therefore Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* is not a historical play, the reading of a shipwreck on the coast of Bohemia, the reading of the "Idylls of the Kings" it is not the least important whether King Arthur ever lived. The poem is not a record of what has happened, but an idealized truth to universal types. So too with *Eden Arden*. How far the story is founded on fact is im-

In literature, then, we find unfolded the chequered story of the struggle of the human soul with time and circumstance. Often defeated, but never despairing, the race of man presses on its allotted course. Faint but still pursuing, it follows its ideals—the higher civilization in this world, the higher life in the next. Science tells us that force is never destroyed, but transformed, and our life here is a force struggling against its environment, and seeking something better, as the dragon fly, with out of his muddy cover, rises as the dragon fly, with

m
 m
 th
 m
 sh
 si
 is
 qu
 so
 la
 th
 ri
 on
 w
 fl
 g
 cl
 st
 en

ents
e ar
ost
rubb
imple
a re
uite
outh
ite f
he ha
ch,
n no
want
owe
rown
ose
pon
nd a