

resemblance of speeches in prose to the practice of real life, has caused contemporary dramatic writers generally to abandon the more rigid poetic forms in which the dramatic masterpieces of the poet have been mainly, though by no means exclusively, composed. Moreover, poetry (strictly so-called) has tended to become reflective rather than dramatic, and prose fiction has now become the great literary vehicle for the presentation of idealized human action. But while the poets' contribution to the drama has declined, the drama itself, regarded as a composite art, has advanced. It has advanced by virtue of an enlightened realism, manifested in the assimilation of its literary medium to the language of every-day life, in an increased "naturalism" in the actor—due to closer and more intelligent methods of study—and in a gradual approach to complete "illusion" in the *mise en scène* by virtue of a higher regard for historic accuracy and a more complete command of mechanical contrivances.

Creative Literature in Prose.—The dominant and familiar form is the "novel." It is an imagined picture of a man and woman in the spring-time of life, in which the love interest is supreme; and the traditionary plot leads the hero and heroine to the point of union in spite of the malignity of fortune, or the opposition of kinsfolk, in illustration of the line:—

"The course of true love never did run smooth."

In the "romance" the motive of "adventure" is mingled with that of love, and sometimes altogether takes its place. Often, too, the atmosphere is frankly unreal, and supernatural or supernatural incidents and characters are introduced. Where a serious meaning is conveyed by fictions which are otherwise purely imaginative in character and incident, we get the allegory, and the satire. Of this class of fictions "Don Quixote," "The Pilgrim's Progress," and "Gulliver's Travels" are familiar examples.

In addition to these, there is a third class of novels which