

erns claim to be equal to any educational institution in America. Now this may be true, but it is contrary to the sequence that the highest education can be maintained only when its resources are in the most prosperous condition. One fact noticeable in the South is the absence of public libraries from the chief cities and towns. Within the comparatively large and wealthy city of Richmond there is no library, of any account, available to the lower classes.

But in summing up these things it must be remembered that war has had its ill effects and that the country is only recovering from the stroke received in the encounter with the North.

Although the Southerners are a very genial and sympathetic class of people, yet beneath it all there seems to be an element of what approaches fierceness. This is brought out in the frequent resort to pistols as a means of settling differences. In the recent political canvass, two popular candidates for Congress drew pistols on each other on the platform. The old custom of duelling has not yet wholly disappeared although the Northern press has ridiculed and hurled sarcasm at this barbarous custom. At the present time, any person, particularly one in a prominent position, can scarcely afford to refuse a challenge, that is he would prefer to fight rather than face the taunts of public sentiment and perhaps detract from his popularity and social standing.

This state of affairs cannot certainly exist in this age of mental and moral activity, unless there is a lack in one or both of these elements. And not until the South is willing to accept fully the principles of higher civilization and national progress, more firmly adhered to by the Northern States, can there be that tone of superiority which should characterize the American nation as a whole.

Other matters of interest regarding the South I may be able to produce at some future time.

E. A. C.

Carlyle says of his classical education: "In the classical field I am truly as nothing. Homer I learned to read in the original with difficulty, after Wolf's broad flash of light thrown into it; Æschylus and Sophocles mainly in translations. Tacitus and Virgil became really interesting to me; Homer and Æschylus above all; Horace egotistical in sad fact I never cared for; Cicero, after long and various trials, always proved a windy person and a weariness to me."

DICKENS.

The marked and potent quality of Dickens is his power to see and reproduce individual peculiarities. His personages impress us with all the vividness of reality, and this reality arises from his keen and clear conception. His characters are exhibited, not described. In reading the works of many authors, we feel that the persons introduced to our notice are mere myths, but in the case of Dickens we are compelled to regard them as actually existing. We enter into their lives. We sorrow, we laugh with them. We are fired with anger, or filled with approbation at the will of the author.

It has been objected that his personages are unphilosophic and strained, his bad characters too horrid, his queer ones too eccentric, and his good ones too tame. These objections are partly answered by the fact that many of his best personifications were taken from real life. The characters he had observed were intensified by his imagination and given to us in a well defined picture, the exaggeration only increasing our sense of their reality.

So exact and cutting at times were his representations, that had they dared the original persons would have prosecuted the author. Nearly every Yorkshire school master thought himself the veritable Squires.

The second great characteristic of Dickens is his exhaustless fund of rich and inimitable humor. He has rendered great service to English Literature by furnishing the people with an almost unlimited supply of harmless amusement. His first great work, the *Pickwick Papers*, carried the English speaking world with a storm of laughter. It became a rage. Everybody bought it, read it, laughed over it and talked it. Sam Weller is a person 'sui generis.' No one can doubt him. Everybody likes him. The jolly face of *Pickwick* beams upon us ever with genial complacency, while his comical misadventures cannot fail to provoke a smile upon a cynic's face. Sam Weller's valentine and the trial of Bardell vs. *Pickwick* are perhaps the best examples of Dickens' happiest view. To this work, however, his humor is not confined. It is seen in nearly all of them relieving their severity, and refreshing the mind by its liveliness. The detection of weak points is the very life of Dickens' humorous perception. With discriminating eye he selects his personages from the odd world around him, endows them with appropriate defects, then in that form caricatures the weaknesses