

deals with individual hopes, tears, joys, sorrows, loves and tastes and is therefore largely subjective in contrast to epic, which is so largely objective, that we lose sight of the author himself and see the race or nation as the poet. The lyrical poet so reveals his heart that he becomes the central figure of the poem.

A true lyric has a strange music which carries it to the heart and fixes it in the memory. The past belongs to the epic, since it preserves and transmits its histories, but, since prophecy is always lyrical, the future belongs to the lyric.

Legends of saints had amused the middle ages and the romances of chivalry had been popular up to the seventeenth century, but a new social form was now developing, in which people desired to see themselves. The world of legend and romantic grandeur had grown dim and unreal and a fiction was wanted that would be practical and treat of the stories of common life. This describes the novel as it is to-day, not a wandering maze of fancy, but a tale with more or less loftiness of style, fulness of detail and unity of action, not confining its interest so much to incident and adventure as to the study and unfolding of character.

Modern literature is a very different product from classical, but in its highest form is none the less the outgrowth of popular life. The novel as a form in literature shows the new and deepening consciousness of men of their complicated social relationships. It is the most attractive and influential form through which the literary genius of our own time expresses itself.

The idea has long since been abandoned that any particular form or set of form furnishes an unfailling list of the presence or absence of the quality which constitutes literature. It is not a fixed form but perfection of form which stamps it as such. The essential thing, so far as form is concerned, is not a reproduction of any accepted model, but the excellence which makes a form expressive of beauty or power.

The final test of all literature is not its relation to the development of race, nor the interest it creates by reason of our personal tastes and experiences, but the soundness of its substance and the perfection of its form. It must, however be remembered that when the greater emphasis is laid on form, the age is parting from the sources of power.