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EXTRACT FROM PROF. CAPPON'S ADDRESS TO THE ALUMNI CONFERENCE.

WORDSWORTH was too real a man, I think, to set much store by posthumous fame. But what he did value was the consciousness of working in the sphere of the permanent and the eternal, in a region of thought and art where truth is really accepted as the standard of things, where reality has the noble countenance of the ideal and not the mask of cynicism and materialism which she wears in a lower sphere, and which even the great Bacon mistook for her true self.

This creed, of course, would be an easy one if man's life were pure spirit and nothing else. But man is also flesh and blood; his life has needs of a material kind which he must reconcile as he best can with higher ones; and in his attempt to do so he is led into compromises more or less great.

The peculiar virtue of our Anglo-American civilisation to-day seems to be that it has made the material side of this struggle easier. No Chatterton or Boyse, or anyone with a quarter of their literary faculty need starve in a garret to-day, or roam the streets at night supperless and without shelter. Grub Street, the terrible Grub Street which is portrayed for us in Pope's *Dunciad*, and Macaulay's essay on

Johnson, is now as prosperous as Chancery Lane and the Mall, dresses as well, and is quite as influential. John Dennis is a highly respected member of the Athenæum Club and writes for the *Spectator*; Elkanah Settle is an M.P., one of the brightest of "The Ghouls," that very exclusive social circle, and knows all the ins and outs of Lord Salisbury's policy in the Far East; Shadwell was made a knight at the late Queen's jubilee and drives in the Park daily. Let us be thankful for the improvement in our times.

It may be true that it is not all gain. It seems as if this opulent civilisation of ours with its universal prosperity, made the spiritual side of the struggle more difficult than ever. The best runners of our generation do not seem to run their very best. They are too easily tempted aside, like Atalanta by the golden balls, and are not aware how much ground they lose. Anything really great in design and execution, I mean as regards art and letters, is arising in our day, not in our magnificent Anglo-American civilisation but in that great Slav world with its Tourgenieffs, Tolstoi's, Rubinstains and Gorkys, or in that other region of Hyberboreans, Norway, with its Griegs and Ibsens. The climate is