

is the offspring of emotion, and is capable of producing emotion ; but the writer who purposes producing what is ordinarily known as a didactic poem, by placing before his view a certain lesson to be taught, thereby prevents or dissipates the emotion and leaves no recourse but to call in the dialectic. It is, however, quite possible that the moral aspect of certain things may so work upon the poet's mind as to produce the necessary feelings, which he is able to re-produce in the minds of his readers. In this case he would no more be writing a didactic poem than one who was picturing the beauty of wild-flowers. Some poems, it must be admitted, are a greater moral stimulus than others, but it is quite another thing to say they are more or less didactic on that account. All great poetry elevates our nature because it deals with the emotions that are called forth by the noblest thoughts. But the state of the mind when it tries to teach, and the state when it contemplates, for example, the grandeur of the cataract, are mutually exclusive. If virtue does not disappear when she is forced to jog along in a rhymed heroic, poetry is not likely to linger when she is not courted on her own account.

Yours, &c.,
F. H. SYKES.

March 18th.

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