

"Let me allude also to another case, one that nearly broke me down with the mental and physical strain. I had bought every printed trial I could find on that particular subject. I had a year to prepare for the actual trial of the case. There were very eminent lawyers on the other side. I will not mention names, for the parties are living. But I did not receive from all these books as much light as I did from a certain classical novel, one that characterized exactly the plaintiff's object and put that party in the lime-light. With that aid I was able to follow all the ins and outs of his maneuvers, and finally to win the case. It was a work of fiction that guided me to a right solution of that person's character, and a knowledge of his character that was essential to victory.

"Still another lesson I now recall which I learned from reading—a lesson I shall never forget. It relates to a gentleman by the name of Gil Blas. Gil had various and sundry adventures, and among others he was made secretary to the Archbishop of Toledo. The Archbishop said to him one day: 'Gil, I look upon you as a very likely young man, I like your intelligence and acumen. Now I am getting old. I have to preach once a month. Make it your duty to let me know when you see any failing signs in my mental powers. I will trust you as a friend to tell me about it.' So Gil noted the character of the sermon the next month. Then he heard the ensuing sermon; and he thought the Archbishop showed signs of age and senility. At the third sermon he was more satisfied of this, and the fourth was shockingly significant. He complimented the Archbishop on the first sermon, and spoke fairly of the second, but of the others he did not. The Archbishop asked, 'Now, Gil, what is the truth?' Gil said: 'Your Eminence, your mental powers are failing rapidly.' 'Gil,' responded the Archbishop, 'I find that I am mistaken in your acumen. The treasurer will pay you and you will leave the house.' I have never forgotten the moral of that story. Such incidents of literature add to your knowledge."

And so the best literature—drama or poetry, philosophy or fiction—must always be an arsenal for the lawyer. That is why I offer the hope that this volume may whet the zest of all devoted members of our profession to follow the example of our author, and to seek in literature its manifold message to the lawyer.