

words cost little, and it would be hard to imagine Mrs. Carlyle a happy woman, or Carlyle senior a hero of romance. Moreover, this excess of family affection stands out in invidious contrast to his social relationship to the outer world; it is significant of the man, and through it all individual prejudice and biassed inclination whisper hero worship still, heroes the reflection of self. I, and the duplicates of I, are the oracles from which are to be drawn the inspirations of intellectuality, outside of which all is flat and insipid, a desert waste without an oasis of moral worth or a fountain head of intelligence or originality. Even Irving, the talented, the loved, the admired and honoured in youth, does not receive the full meed of appreciative homage one would choose, and not unnaturally expect to find accorded by one who, in his early days, was so intimately connected with the inner life, the occupations, friendships and affections of the bosom friend. We rise from the perusal of the biographical sketch of Edward Irving with a strange and sad feeling of disappointment, as though the earliest and fairest of the author's reminiscences, rosy and full of promise at the outset, had crumbled like dead-sea fruit into ashes by the way. So with every picture which Carlyle has left of his compeers, the impressions conveyed are at variance with all our pre-conceived estimates of the men whose mental constitutions are so mercilessly dissected, whose failings are the subject of such pitiless animadversions, and whose merits are so grudgingly acknowledged, if deemed worthy of acknowledgment at all.

But then, Carlyle was the apostle of truth, and in his hatred of shams, and earnest, manful endeavours to shear away the outside parings of superficiality and pretension, was apt, like all staunch, single-hearted reformers, to degenerate into intolerance, to

confound mediocre though absolute worth, and often sterling merit, with the meretricious trappings of an artificial and affected conventionality, or worse, the impudent and offensive assumption of an excellence which existed alone in individual and inordinate self-esteem, or had become the creed of a select but besotted few who were the self-constituted critics of the hour. Carlyle's world of intimate associates, upon his own shewing, could hardly have been an extended one, his knowledge of men, outside of a few congenial and therefore favoured acquaintances, must have been gathered chiefly from restricted personal interviews, from pre-conceived instinctive notions, from second-hand and therefore not very profound knowledge, acquaintanceship formed, so to speak, at a distance. He could never have obtained the right of entry into the confidences of the many, nor held the magic key of a universal brotherhood, wherewith to unlock the hidden treasures of the heart beating beneath the broad human bosom of the great and to him uncongenial world. No wonder then he erred so often in his estimate of others. What can be unfairer than his criticism of DeQuincey, an intellect in all respects superior to his own! What more ungenerous than the scathing lightning of contempt conveyed in the few lines referring to Thackeray! His portraiture of Coleridge is unworthy the pen which could draw for him such flattering encomiums of Southey and Wordsworth, both inferiors in fancy as they are in expression to the inimitable conceiver of the "Ancient Mariner;" and Lamb too, the charming "Elia," poor, poor, "slender fibre of actual worth," with his plebeian "proclivity for gin." Alas! what had he done, unhappy blue-coat culprit, to merit such a flagellation from the stinging birch of inimical authorship? Shelley too comes in for