

alliance with prospects apparently so promising, it is not probable that they now, under altered conditions—so altered that not an argument which would then apply remains—will seek what they repudiated, or relinquish what their own hands have framed and their own hearts have cherished, will all at once forget their parentage, their tutelage, and their manhood for the sake of embracing institutions and a form of government for which they have never entertained any very great respect. No ; a stronger incentive than the shadowy prospect of gain only must be presented to destroy that patriotic sentiment which the active work of a century has been promoting. Our future lies with England, not Republican America.

That the Dominion of Canada will yet become the brightest jewel in the British crown may be a hackneyed prophecy, and seem like the graceful rounding of oratorical effulgence, but there is a sound of truth about it which sober reflection upon the past history of England and Canada does not disprove.

Without recourse to statistical detail in support of a probable closer union between Great Britain and her Colonies, I have mainly relied upon causes, whether sentimental or natural, which in the past have sustained a common interest between parent and offspring, as reason for venturing the opinion that in the future these causes, strengthened by the removal of difficulties and obstacles once surrounding them, will prove sufficiently potent to force the conclusion foreshadowed.

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VICTORIAN LITERATURE.

PROFESSOR DOWDEN has contributed to the *Fortnightly* an interesting critique on the work done during the last fifty-five years by prominent writers of the present century, from which we abridge the following :

AFTER sketching briefly the salient features of the literature of Queens Elizabeth and Anne, he turns to that of Queen Victoria, and claims that though her age has been named the realistic, yet it is hardly less distinguished by its ardours of hope and aspiration, by its eager and anxious search for spiritual truth, by its restlessness in the presence of spiritual anarchy, by its desire for spiritual order. If a precise date is to be chosen for separating the present period of intellectual energy from that which preceded it we shall do well to fix on that of 1832; for in that year died a great imaginative restorer of the past, and also a mental pioneer of the future. Amid his nineteenth century feudalisms, within sound of the old Border river, Scott passed away. In 1832 the floodtide of English poetry was at its ebb; eleven years before, Keats had found rest in a flowery cemetery at Rome; ten years before, Shelley, in a whirl of sea mist, had solved the great mystery which had haunted him since his boyhood; Byron's memory was still a power, but one constantly waning; Southey had forsaken poetry, and was rejoicing over the completion of his *Peninsular War*; Wordsworth was beginning to realise the loss of the glory and freshness of his earlier manhood; and Coleridge was compassed about with much infirmity. This year 1832, which we have taken as the line of division between Victorian literature and that of the first intellectual period of the nineteenth century, saw also the death of an illustrious poet in Crabbe, whose earlier verses delighted Burke and won the approval of Johnson, and whose later writings were celebrated by Byron and proved the solace of Scott's dying days.

Our own age is and has been, in a profounder sense than the term can be applied to the age of Milton, one of revolution; though the social and political forms suitable to this new epoch are as yet unorganised, and perhaps have not been truly conceived. The contributions towards an ideal reconstruction of society by Fourier, by Robert Owen, by Auguste Comte, by Lassalle and Karl Marx, testify to the profound dissatisfaction of aspiring minds with the present chaos of our social and political relations.

The sanguine temper of the period, and its somewhat shallow material conception of human welfare, are well represented in the writings of Macaulay, who is so eminently practical. Tender regrets for the past, for the age when English hands could rear the cathedral, when English hearts could lift one common hymn of faith and praise, are, if we may trust Macaulay, the follies of the sentimentalist. Brilliant and indefatigable son of an age of commerce and middle class ascendancy, Macaulay, the historian of the first Victorian period, with his company of brilliant actors and his splendid spectacle, had but one rival in popularity, and that rival, the novelist of the period, exhibits with equal force in his own province of literature the characteristics of the time, its sanguine temperament, its bourgeois ideals. To have awakened the laughter of innumerable readers during half a century is to have been no slight benefactor to the world, and 1887, the jubilee year of *Pickwick*, ought to have been celebrated with bumpers and exuberant mirth. Yet the accusations of melodrama and pseudo-pathos, and of overwrought caricature, have been brought against Dickens not unjustly. We have known in Shakespeare a nobler laughter than his, and tears more sacred. We rejoice that Dickens should have quickened the sensibility of the English middle class for the trials and sufferings and sorrows of the poor, we rejoice that he should have gladdened the world with inexhaustible comedy and farce; but it were better if he had discovered that for man and the life of man there is something needful over and above good spirits, a sufficient dinner, and overflowing good nature. Such in brief was the teaching delivered by Dickens, and he claimed to be regarded as a teacher. Let us rather choose to consider him

as a widener of our sympathies, and as a creator of comic and sentimental types. There is no sense of dissatisfaction with himself in Dickens' writings, and in his view nothing ailing with society. Thackeray, on the contrary, had a quarrel with himself and society as well. But his was not a temper to push matters to extremes. He could not acquiesce in the ways of the world, its shabbiness, its shams, its snobbery, its knavery: he could not acquiesce, and yet it is only for born prophets to break with the world, and go forth into the wilderness, crying "Repent," and he was not one of these. He must compromise with the world: whether right or wrong, this compromise with the world is only for a few days. Thackeray had not the austerity and lonely strength needful for a prophet; he would not be a pseudo-prophet; therefore he chose his part, to remain in the world, to tolerate worldlings, and yet to be their adversary and circumventor, or at least a thorn in their sides. Two men whose influence extends over the full half-century, of whom one happily remains among us still, were true nineteenth century sons of the prophets, who would make no compromise, and each in his own way lifted up his solitary voice, crying repentance and terror and judgment to come. Cardinal Newman is a great name to the imagination, but the solution adopted by him for the doubts and difficulties which beset men's minds to-day is, to speak frankly, impossible. He was a great enthusiast, and in a very real sense a Puritan of the nineteenth century as well as a religious teacher, and we heretics, for whose blasphemies the zealous champion of the faith must needs feel compassion and indignation, may win from his teaching something better even than its charm and its culture. We may win a quickened sense of the reality of the invisible world, and a more strenuous resolution to live with the loins girt and the lamp lit. Our second prophet was laid to rest six years since under the green turf of Ecclefechan. Carlyle's prime influence was also a religious one. To the last there remained in him much, too, of the Puritan; but its intellectual fetters could not bind his mental growth. How to hold a steadfast course; how to live a spiritual life, and yet be free—neither self-imprisoned in a system nor in bondage to outward form and ceremony,—this was the problem of problems with the young Carlyle, and in Goethe's life and teachings he found that problem solved. To attain serenity, as Goethe had attained it, was indeed forbidden to him by his stormy sensitiveness and intolerable sympathy with suffering. Carlyle needed a vast background: Immensities, Eternities, through which might wander the passion-winged ministers of his thought, Wonder, Awe, Admiration. In whatever else Carlyle may have failed, he did not fail in impressing on those who took his teachings to heart a sense of the momentous issues of the time; a sense that a great social revolution was in progress, and that it was attended with stupendous dangers, and called, before all else, for loyal, obedient, faithful, God-fearing men. Mr. John Morley has compared Carlyle with Mr. John Mill, and told us that the force of the latter's character and lessons lay in that combination of an ardent interest in human improvement with a reasoned attention to the law of its conditions. Carlyle, in truth, inspected society with a penetrating vision, and the observation of Mr. Mill—earnest, disinterested, admirable student as he was—too frequently is that of a one-eyed observer, or a man born colour-blind. Carlyle's doctrine has its root in God—in God, not to be revealed after death in a beatific vision, seated upon the great white throne, but here and now, in this world of sinning, toiling, suffering, striving men and women. Organisation of labour, if well understood, said Carlyle, is the problem of the whole future. The literary side of this movement is represented by Kingsley, who took with others the name of Christian Socialist. Temper had something to do with the effect produced by his words; they were uttered in a voice so ringing and hearty that they were felt to be a portion of his very life. No spiritual man at the time seemed to have in him so much of the natural man, no natural man seemed to have so much of the spiritual man, as Kingsley. He did not assuredly solve with a few hearty words the riddle of the Sphinx, but he had a vivid and kindling personality. His teaching breathed courage, purity, love. In any picture of the midmost years of the nineteenth century the figure of Kingsley must attract attention among the high lights. With justice he is described by Mill "as a man who is himself one of the good influences of the age."

What light or strength have the poets of the Victorian half-century brought to serve us in our need? One who for intellectual power may rank first, or almost first, among the singers of the period, Henry Taylor, occupied himself with dramatic history and romantic comedy. It is impossible perhaps that such work should be in any age as popular as that which appeals more directly to the tastes and feelings of the day, but it is equally impossible that such work should ever decline in worth or estimation beyond the high level it once attained. *Philip Van Artevelde* and *The Virgin Widow* will certainly interest lovers of dramatic poetry two hundred years hence no less than they do to-day, for they are wrought out of the enduring stuff of human character, out of the ever-enduring labour and sorrow and joy of the life of man.

If a vote were taken to-day on the question, "Who is the representative poet of the Victorian period?" it is possible that Mr. Browning would carry the day. Yet the fact is certain as any fact can be, that Tennyson will remain the singer of the age. It is the conception of a majestic order at one with freedom, and of human progress as resulting from these, which inspires the earlier poetry of Tennyson. *The Lady of Shalott*, *Sir Galahad*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Morte d'Arthur*, belong to the romantic school, while in *Maud* and *Locksley Hall* we feel the poet's sympathy with the struggles of science and social wrong. But to enter into the growing difficulties of faith and of increasing intellectual anarchy one must have been born later than Tennyson, and have felt the whirl of creeds and no creeds which is apparent in the poetry of Clough. There is a sanative virtue in