

Her "Adam Bede" and "The Mill on the Floss" are her best productions. By her characters she teaches that the death of selfishness is the world's way to progress and to peace. The object of her writings is to excite our sympathy with the commonplace and every-day working classes of England. Thus her "Adam Bede" lays bare the heart of common England, its weaknesses and its strength. Her "Romola" is the eternal verdict of death to treachery and unfaithfulness. The day should never come when books like these will not be read and heeded.

Her characters are intensely commonplace, and are not colored in the least. They are substantial living people, filling us with an intense sense of reality. She has great penetrative power, and enters into the spirit of her characters. In the variety and power of characterization and power of analysis of motives she is perhaps unexcelled. Her "Adam Bede" possesses these characteristics to such an extent as to have given rise to the idea that it is entirely founded on fact. In this novel the simplest results of knowledge and meditation are so happily blended with instinctive insight into life and character, and are combined with such rare imagination, as to class it among the great triumphs and masterpieces in the world of fiction.

George Eliot was a scholar, but more emphatically a student of life. The material for her thought was obtained in the farmhouse and in the field; and her work, like that of Carlyle, rests on her sympathetic understanding of the daily life of man. Pancoast said of her "This contrast between the human craving for happiness regardless of consequences, between the simple desire for pleasure so pathetically inherent in the young and undisciplined, and the stern obligation to sacrifice our pleasure to the common good, is eminently characteristic of George Eliot."

Going now to the age of Addison, the great predecessor of the modern prose writers.—The age in which Addison wrote was a prose age, though he and his contemporaries first attempted to write poetry. At this period there was a universal ignorance of old English poetry, an ignorance which is particularly noticeable in Addison's "Account of the Greatest English Poets." It was also an age of profligacy, practical infidelity,