

ant scope for the highest exercise of our faculties, and leads to the profoundest investigation of human nature. At times, indeed, our task is comparatively easy. Euclid writes: "Two straight lines which are parallel to the same straight line are parallel to one another"—and this is a proposition whose terms we have merely to comprehend in order to attain Euclid's point of view in writing it. But if we turn, for example, to the works of Herodotus, we find numerous stories whose terms indeed are not less easily comprehended than those of Euclid, but which strike us as childish or incredible. In merely understanding their purport, have we reproduced Herodotus' state of mind in writing them? Did the stories seem childish or incredible to him? The question calls for literary investigation. The student must examine the whole work of Herodotus and determine its general scope. He finds that it professes to be a serious history, and comes to the conclusion, perhaps, that Herodotus gives the narratives under consideration, in all seriousness and good faith. Still he does not understand the author's state of mind in writing the passage. How came a man of evident intellectual power and culture to believe fables whose absurdity is manifest to a school-boy of to-day? To answer this question the student betakes himself to the study of Greek history and Greek modes of thought; and until he has thrown himself into Hellenic life of the Fifth Century, and grasped Herodotus' relation to the civilization of his time, he will not have attained the aim of literary study—the reproduction in one's self of the writer's state of mind. Or, again, before we can be said to understand the Dialogues of Plato, we have numerous problems to solve. In the Socrates here represented, did Plato intend to give a picture of the historic

Socrates? In how far are the opinions put in Socrates' mouth held by the author himself? What is the explanation of the manifest fallacies which occasionally mar the reasoning of the Dialogues? In answering the last question, the student learns how the intellectual power, even of a Plato, is subject to the limitations of his time, and unable, without the assistance of a formulated logic, to escape the snare of simple fallacies, and how the study of a language, other than the native tongue, was needful to enable men to distinguish between the thing and its name. Such inquiries as these give the positive results of literary work. How necessary the preliminary determinations are in order that the works of Herodotus and Plato may be used by the historian and philosopher respectively is sufficiently apparent. So, in all departments of study, written authorities must be submitted to the crucible of higher criticism (as it is called) before they can be safely and profitably employed. We may bring this home to ourselves by recalling the fact that the most interesting and one of the most active provinces of the higher criticism in our day is the canon of the Old and New Testament. The revision of the authorized version is an attempt by literary students to determine more exactly what the various sacred authors actually said; while the recent discussion between Professors Wace and Huxley has drawn popular opinion to the unprecedented activity in determining the authenticity, dates and relations of the various books of the Bible.

With the increasing of these positive results, however, we, in our course, have but little to do. Literature is with us an instrument of culture; and culture comes not from the results of investigation, but from the process. In the process of literary investigation, as we have seen, it is