

him, are so many blemishes in his book, wholly hindrances, not helps." "But these men (*e. g.* Goldsmith) attained literary eminence in spite of their weaknesses, Boswell attained it by reason of his weaknesses. If he had not been a great fool he would never have been a great writer. Without all the qualities which made him the jest and the torment of those among whom he lived, without the officiousness, the inquisitiveness, the effrontery, the toad-eating, the insensibility to all reproof, he never could have produced so excellent a book."

## STYLE.

In style of writing, Carlyle is certainly original. No other writer, before or since, has written like him. His style is abrupt, disjointed, chaotic, turbulent as a mountain torrent. He was evidently describing his own style when he said, in *Sartor Resartus*, "Of his sentences perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes, buttressed up by props (of parentheses and dashes)." Yet in all qualities except smoothness and rhythmic order, he has a highly poetic style, excelling in vividness of imagery, in picturesqueness, in abundance and felicity of metaphor and apt, telling phrases. For felicity of phrase he stands unrivalled. With a few bold, rapid strokes, the character he is depicting stands full-length before us, or the scene is presented in ideal beauty and clearness to the imagination of the reader.

## HUMOR.

Carlyle cannot be understood, either in his life or his writings, apart from his quality of humor. His pages are saturated with it, sometimes of a genial, mirth-provoking kind, sometimes ridiculing, sometimes bitter and sardonic; not always delicate, but always apt and luminous. It is an indispensable part of the man. He does not try to be humorous, but is inevitably so, this quality being found in his most serious passages. At the conclusion of his "*Cromwell*," in his final prophetic message, England of to-day "No longer soars sunward, world-defiant, like an eagle through the storm; much liker a greedy ostrich, intent on provender and a whole skin mainly, stands with its other extremity sunward; with its ostrich head stuck into the readiest bush."