

discriminate between their relative and absolute values in debate. There are writers whose judgments temper their enthusiasms, and control the currents of their thoughts. There are writers whose enthusiasms colour indelibly their thoughts, and compel their judgments. Lane, amongst writers, belonged to the latter class. He had studied and delved so long in the shade of the social slums of the life of cities, that his soul, like the dyer's hand, had become subdued to what he worked in. His was the impatient temperament which hurriedly classifies humanity under two heads only, God or devil. Humanity became his god; the system under which it lived, moved, and had its social being was the devil. Capital and capitalists were the devil's agents and instrumentalities, working and forged in an Inferno. Withal, he had a strong human sympathy with both labour and capitalism, inasmuch as he regarded labour as the innocent victim, and capitalists as the unconscious high priests of the human sacrifices they were inflicting on Society. In most men, this temperament is a more or less conscious form of hypocrisy and cant; a more or less conscious personification of Satan going about clothed in an angel's garments and reproving sin. In many men it runs riot in vapourings of insensate rant. Lane's sincerity purged all his writings from any taint of the former; his literary power from all evidence of the latter. He had all a Booth's or a Manning's sympathetic observation for the miseries of a section of society, without a scintilla of discriminative power in classifying their origin or prescribing remedies or palliatives. He saw some things in clear dry light, and then wrote red on all of them.