

love, and what he most loves he will most easily and completely master, and what he most loves and most completely masters, he will write about in his best style.

"No profit grows, where is no pleasure ta'en.
In brief, sir, study what you most affect."

Moral qualities also will manifest themselves in the style, and, therefore, in order to cultivate the style, the *moral character* must be cultivated also.

The treacherous cowardice of a foe "willing to wound and yet afraid to strike"—the ambiguous verdict of sceptical indecision—the self-sufficient scorn which for a reputation substitutes a sneer: the disrespectful tone of allusion to women as of an unripe lord of creation, or of a pusillanimously malicious and rejected suitor, the depravity of imagination which rejoices in that prurient suggestiveness of detail from which uncontaminated nature with instinctive delicacy shrinks. How clearly are all these reflected in the splendid periods and prodigiously able and learned pages of the historian Gibbon.

Even one moral defect may place an immeasurable distance between two writers, whose intellects, possibly, are of an equal order.

The Ciceronian style, *e. g.*, seems to me to fall so far short of the perfection of Demosthenes.

To his irrepressible vanity are attributable the chief defects of his style. His constant effort to touch everything with so fine a point, and his palpably laborious pursuit after an artificial pomp, and a too melodious rotundity of expression, cannot escape notice; while it is difficult to say whether his prodigal expenditure of synonymes, where Demosthenes would have used only one word, and that the best, arose from mental indecision, or from a desire to display his own verbal wealth and his subtlety in discovering distinctions where others found them not.

If Cicero is to save his country, he must do it (metaphorically speaking,) *perfusus liquidis odoribus*; and with his *toga* elegantly gathered upon his arm, and an admiring senate must applaud the magnificently rounded periods with which he lashes Catiline out of the city. And, if I may trust my memory, even in his moral essays, while he is professedly pointing us with outstretched finger to the pole star of eternal truth, there seems to be at times a display, by no means unintentional, of the jewelled ornament which flashes on his fair and graceful hand.

All these things subtract just so much from his excellence and power; and the marvellous *practical effect* of some of his most celebrated orations