stone for breadth of experience and mingled ideality and caution.

It is curious to note to what an extent the biography of a man has sometimes changed the public estimate of his character. All the while people thought they knew the man, but when his life comes to be authoritatively written they find that they were mistaken in their notions of him or had quite inadequate conceptions of some phase of his character. No doubt there were many people who thought tney knew Charlotte Bronte personally but never discovered in her a tithe of the qualities revealed in Mrs. Gaskell's reading of her character. Perhaps the most curious reversal of judgment brought about through a written life of the man followed the publication of Trevelyan's "Life of Macaulay." Almost all of us had judged the historian solely by his style as awriter and his methods of controversy and delineation. Somehow we came to judge him as hard and formal. If you were against the cause he was advocating—and Macaulay was always an advocate—you looked upon him as a "foe in shining armour" glittering, stern, and bound to ride you down at a gallop. He was on the popular side always and yet seemed deficient in deep sympathy But Sir George Trvelyan's life disclosed to a wondering, reading public one of the most lovable men imaginable the boundlessly popular playmate of children, happier when acting the part of a bear in a corner behind the sofa even than when lacerating Laud or giving Strafford an eternal scowl. It will probably be found that the "Life of Gladstone" has considerably modified the pubilc view of the statesman, though he lived half a century in the fullest blaze of publicity. For example, he was a more religious man than he was supposed to be, and his private diary abounds with the kind of self-exhortation that one might expect in a mediæval saint. He was more pure-minded and habitually noble in reflection than even his admirers knew. "I think," says his biographer, speaking from intimate personal knowledge after a holiday spent together, "that he has a thorough dislike of anything that has a cynical or sardonic flavour about it. Am always feeling how strong is his aversion to seeing more than he can help of what is sordid, mean, ignoble. He won't linger a minute longer than he must in the dingy places of life and character." Then too, it has often been held of Gladstone that he was autocratic and ruled the men who associated with him. On the contrary, he seems to have been too compliant unless some principle was involved which he regarded as fundamental. We never seem to know some great men till they are dead, and the clamour of faction is silenced, and Justice with her unfaltering accents forces us to listen to her.

Some men may be said to have been writing their own lives in all that they ever penned, while others make no self-revelation whatsoever. One of the most interesting examples of the former class is Robert Louis Stevenson, who was scarcely ever clear from the autobiographic note, whether he was writing essay, tale or verse, and whether he was mentioning himself or not. Shakspere of course is the most conspicuous instance of the writer who scarcely ever brought his own personality into notice. Some men who have done great service to mankind by their thought or effort are yet so exceedingly plain and simple in character and rest so contentedly in the uneventful that their life's story cannot be made interesting except in so far as it has a bearing on thier work. Wordsworth is the best instance of this. It is inconceivable that the most skilful biographer would be able to make Wordsworth's life interesting except in broadest outline.