

“Le style, c'est l'homme.” That is probably the first and last thing that can be said about it, and of that everything else is but a paraphrase. Mr. Morley certainly tells us no more, though he gives a fine echo to the saying. Yet people are slow to recognise the corollary—that style is one of the most forcible of preachers, and will become more so as knowledge is more widely diffused. Tone, temper, habit of mind, are all conveyed by style, and a man's character will be moulded by the literary manner of what he reads as much as by any other of the mundane influences to which he is exposed. Let any one reflect how permanent and ineffaceable has been the effect of Newman's style upon Englishmen for the last half-century, far more so than Newman's ideas. Mr. Morley's own writing, again, might be used as an example. No one can lay down any book of his without feeling braced, stimulated, deepened, without being more conscious of the nobility of life. To the present writer, who probably has not one single religious or political opinion in common with him, no writing appears more calculated to inspire the reader with a sense of patient, strenuous, unflinching effort. The manner is always French in its terseness, English in its reserve, admirably suited to the needs of modern oratory, but possessing a certain stateliness of motion which reminds us that the grand manner is not yet altogether dead. The writer believes so firmly in the justice of his opinions that we are always conscious, sometimes too conscious, that he would make converts of us. Lucretius he considers the first of poets, and Dryden's estimate of Lucretius might, not unfairly, be applied to himself :

If I am not mistaken, the distinguishing character of Lucretius, I mean of his soul and genius, is a certain kind of noble pride and positive assertion of his own opinions. . . . He seems to disdain all manner of replies, and is so confident of his cause that he is beforehand with his antagonists ; urging for them whatever he imagined they could say, and leaving them, as he supposes, without an objection in the future.

So difficult is it to press beyond “the flaming ramparts of the world” and then to return and suffer the little thoughts of men. Yet, if it be true that “Lucretius has the wisdom of this world