

is a system in human sentiments and ideas, this system has for its motive power certain general traits, certain characteristics of the heart common to men of one age, race and country."

We study the outer man that we may delve deeper to a study of the inner, invisible man. The thoughts and actions of the inner, invisible man find their causes in these general ways of thought and feeling. From this we see in how far a classic may serve as a national type. Environment, on the other hand, will evidence itself in a man's writings. A consideration of this fact in regard to Walter Scott and the lake poets of England will clearly show its force. Again, each epoch will leave its own imprint, as each works upon the already acquired momentum. A primitive era, for instance, has no model upon which to work. The succeeding era looks at things through the light acquired by the preceding epoch. The peculiar taste of a people over a given interval shows itself in certain dominant ideas that have held sway. It may be in an ideal type of man, as the knight and monk of the middle ages, the courtier of the classical age. This universal idea will display itself over the whole field of action and thought. Thus national genius and surrounding circumstances will impress on each creation the general bent of the public mind. This law gives a reason for the continuation of such master ideas as those of the Renaissance, the classical age, the Alexandrian era.

That a writer has left the stamp of his own age upon his works does not detract from their universality, but rather the reverse is the case. The very reason of his becoming saturated with the spirit of his own age is that that he sympathizes with humanity of all ages. His treatment will not be a surface one, he will have penetrated to the inner life of persons and things. In search for truth, this truth will appeal alike to men of all ages, of all nationalities.

Another important requisite of a

classic is individuality. When we consider the sacredness of a good man's book, the force of this is borne in upon us. It is not that a man's own personality must stand out luminously before us. His individuality will show itself rather in the special bent of his genius. His mode of treatment of life and nature will be peculiarly his own. "A good book is the precious life blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose for a life beyond life."

Every true classic must be the work of a genius. Talent alone will not suffice; practical skill and power of application fades before the superior power of invention and creative thought. Genius is one of the most vital of forces, its work of the past is the creation of the present, its work of the present is the creation of the future. It may be defined as vital energy of mind, or in other words, creative and original force of thought, capable of imprinting in words of fire its lessons of intellectual and moral life. "It leads and sways because it communicates living energy and strikes directly at the soul, searching out the very sources of our volitions, bowing our weak will before its strong arm, awakening, animating, forcing us along its path of thought or over its waves of passion."

Perhaps it is only when we consider what a true classic really embodies that we feel the depth of the inner light that a good man's book must reveal and are perhaps the more ready to appreciate Wordsworth when he says,

"Dreams, books are each a world and books we know
Are a substantial world both pure and good:
Round these with tendrils strong as flesh and blood
Our pastime and our happiness will grow."

J. M.



Teacher-in-training—Who is the Governor General of Canada?

Untutored Pupil—Mr. McKinley.