

The lessons, according to the *Teaching Outline* which accompanies them, are intended to be given through the four years of high school. Fortunate, however, is the high school where such a course is given in the first year. Without such training students are at a disadvantage because of wasted time, and handicapped by lack of knowledge. Written exercises to be returned for each lesson are presented in the *Teaching Outline*, together with an oral quiz on each subject.

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NEWARK, N.J.

Masters of the English Novel: A Study of Principles and Personalities.

By RICHARD BURTON. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909.

Pp. ix+357. \$1.25.

It is over three-quarters of a century since Emerson made his first visit to England and subjected the parent people to the fairest and sanest scrutiny it has ever known. One of the "English traits" he pointed out in the resultant work is the combination, in individual and nation, of the extreme of manly courage and strength and of feminine tenderness. In the years that have since elapsed literary criticism has repeatedly dwelt upon this national characteristic; perhaps no other English quality, save possibly the bias toward moralism, has been more emphasized. And yet in our studies of the novel, the literary type which has most sensitively responded to the gaining feminism in British life, little has been made of this important subject. In view of its profound bearing upon modern social and political ideals this omission is truly surprising: and it is the more surprising because English fiction from Lyly to Hardy is full of impressive evidence, both internal and external, of this significant trait. In fact, it is hardly too much to say that the history of the English novel has no meaning except as it chronicles the gradual displacement of the heroic ideal by the humanitarian, which is compounded of masculine strength and feminine tenderness.

It is gratifying, then, to find in Professor Burton's introductory chapter a plain, emphatic statement of this principle. To be sure, its significance is somewhat weakened by undue dwelling upon the growing importance of woman in fiction, and the consequent impression of a widening gap between the sexes; whereas the truth lies in the opposite direction. But there is a real service in bringing the matter to the fore; and in associating with this principle the progress of the democratic ideal, the larger conscious interest in personality, and the English novel's devotion to high serious purpose, the author shows himself very near to the heart of his subject.

With such indications of grasp and insight before him at the outset, the reader has disappointment in store for him in the following pages. Doubtless the title of the book promises merely a series of loosely connected studies rather than the logical exposition of a literary evolution. But surely the

opening essay promises greater consistency of treatment than we find. The chapter on "French Influence," too, gives a definite promise of method that is never fulfilled. Here we must confess to a feeling of relief, for when the author leaves his well-tilled field of personal appreciation to chase the *ignis fatuus* of a realism thesis, we prepare to follow with no little apprehension for our cherished prejudices. But Mr. Burton was merciful, and contented himself, in the sequel, with a few generalizations that did little damage. Despite his courageous prefatory defense of this chapter, we believe the book would have been better without it.

Professor Burton has not written the history of the novel. As he has not pretended to do so, it would be unfair to quarrel with his work on this account. But it is really a matter of regret that one who shows himself so well qualified to take a larger view of the subject should not have struck deeper; we could wish that he had begun, say, with Malory, and traced the growth of this important art form through the stages of formation which best reveal the English people's need of such a mode of expression and the essential secrets of its hold upon life. A study of fiction beginning as near the top as Richardson, omitting to analyze the negative implications of the premature Elizabethan fiction, overlooking the great works of Bunyan in which the novel had its vital start, ignoring the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, which are at least as meaningful in the history of the novel as are the *Interludes* in that of the drama, such a study cannot possibly penetrate far beneath the surface of things.

Since Lanier's brilliant, though erratic, treatment of the subject, no historian of the novel has attempted to explain its rise and growth in terms of the life which generates it and which it reflects and interprets. There are points in the reading of Professor Burton's book when we are confirmed in the fear that criticism of fiction has somehow reached its anecdotage without passing through its prime. The old changes are persistently rung—of Richardson and his serving-maid confidantes, of the moist emotionalism of the eighteenth-century reading public, etc., etc. This anecdotal habit, together with a tendency to lurch after startling stylistic effects, are the only positive blemishes in a worthy and sincere series of criticisms, which include much that is suggestive and stimulating. In particular we would commend the chapters on Jane Austen, Trollope, and Hardy.

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The Common People of Ancient Rome: Studies of Roman Life and Literature. By FRANK FROST ABBOTT. New York: Scribner, 1911. Pp. xii+290.

This volume belongs to a type of books which classical scholars should produce in increasing numbers, books which humanize and liberalize the cold facts of Roman and Greek history and civilization. Professor Abbott discusses certain social, economic, and political questions of ancient Rome and