

a relic of my very impressible childhood—that there are some good, honest, upright people in the world.

C.—Well, to come down to something definite, how do you like Thackeray?

N.—Why, I am glad you mentioned him, because the French and Russian novelists take us off to another standard of taste and life. Now I don't like Thackeray. He always gives me the impression that everybody is mean. You know it is generally stated that he never depicted an admirable woman.

C.—But what authors do you like?

N.—Well, I like Scott. There is a true, manly ring about his characters. Then I like Dickens, for although he describes suffering and crime, one pities, rather than condemns his characters. Then, best of all, probably, I like "Ben-Hur."

C.—Well now, it seems to me you are all wrong. Thackeray has painted some admirable characters. I want nothing better as a man than Col. Newcome, and the mother of Beatrix Esmond, though far from an ideal, is nevertheless a noble woman. As for Dickens, a great many wide readers pity the author rather than his characters. "Ben-Hur" is indeed a wonderful thing, but from the very nature of the case it is and can be the only one of its kind. It fits right into a niche which seems to have been left for it. The demand is now supplied and it does not furnish the basis for a school of novels.

N.—Well, what is your idea of a novel?

C.—Why, it seems to me if the novel has a higher mission than to amuse it is to fit a man to live with and understand his fellow men. A novel with ideal characters leads one to expect his fellows to be better than he will find them. If he allows his life or his understanding of human nature to be regulated in any way by these ideal characters, he will be deceived by his fellows or disappointed in them. Then again, if one reads a novel representing characters worse than exist, he will impute bad motives where, in reality, there are only good ones. Aside from literature, the only way we have of judging past actions is from memory; to infer the result of our present mode of life or our future destiny in this world we must have before us the experience of others. But we all have a decided dislike to have either experience or advice administered orally. If then we are influenced more readily or more agreeably by a novel than by a friend or parent, the best adviser is that novel which gives us a true picture of life.

N.—You seem to be an ultra-realist.

C.—Yes, I am, if you place the novel upon any higher plane than a mere means of amusement. I can conceive of no actual benefit to be derived from reading such a novel as "She." It is this view of the novel as an educator it seems to me, that justifies an author in dealing with topics that are offensive to good taste. The whole question hinges upon the relative merits of innocence and virtue. Even if innocence of the knowledge of evil were a possibility, virtue is a much more admirable quality. Take "Scarlet Letter." The plot of the novel is eminently distasteful, and yet was there ever a lesson so strongly taught?

N.—And do you really think Balzac or Tolstoi will benefit American readers morally?

C.—Most assuredly if they will read them remembering the difference between French or Russian and American life. One can't shut his eyes to the evil that is in the world, and I should call that a very weak character which is unable to receive the good and reject the bad from the influence of a novel, or of a person either. Your standard of a novel

would exclude you from any knowledge of universal literature.

N.—Well, I'll read Anna Karenina and see what I think of it.

C.—Before you do so read Matthew Arnold's review of it in the December *Fortnightly*.

LIVINGSTONE.

Who was Livingstone? Nine tenths of the world in reply to such a question, will answer, "An African explorer." The answer would be correct, but not sufficient. Many other men have earned fame by explorations in Africa, but upon none of them can rest such honor as Livingstone merits. Not for recognition as an explorer were Livingstone's labors. Titles, decorations and honors for discoveries were never sought by him. To sum up the character of Livingstone as an explorer only, gives no conception of his greatness. His explorations were made for a greater work that was to follow. He found the paths by which Christianity and civilization might enter Africa.

David Livingstone was born in Scotland in 1813. The pluck and perseverance of the Scotch character were imbued in him. It was developed by the constant struggles of his early life. He soon learned the lessons of self-sacrifice. He obtained his education by fragments. Placed in a factory at the age of ten years, with no prospect of further education, it seemed as if the way to future advancement of Livingstone was barred. But he was not thwarted. The poor and struggling Scotch lad fitted himself for a work, the magnitude of which never has been fully realized. In its accomplishment Livingstone became one of the greatest servants of humanity.

For many centuries Africa seemed Anglo-Saxon proof. The ignorance and degradation of the African people blighted all the influences that fostered civilized growth. Science and philanthropy struggled long to enter the land in which were wrapped the mysteries of ages. Humanity demanded that the darkness be pierced; that the light of civilization and Christian truth, which had only flickered upon the coasts of darkness, should be carried into the gloom beyond. To do this was the mission of Livingstone.

When twenty-five years of age Livingstone sailed to Africa as a missionary. He became an explorer in order to establish footholds for coming missions, and to prepare the people for enlightenment. Though he became an explorer, his aim was still the same—the redemption of Africa.

Livingstone plunged into the wilderness of African mystery. For years he traversed the southern country. He studied it and its people, the customs and the language. He filled his note books with contributions to scientific knowledge. Though almost alone and with no armed force, he penetrated through the regions of southern Africa to the head waters of the Zambesi. Thence he travelled westward to the Atlantic. Then he started eastward again and passed over the entire breadth of Africa. The darkness was pierced, though by only a single ray. The light of knowledge was flashed across the African continent from the western to the eastern coast.

After a short stay in England Livingstone returned to Africa. Starting at the mouth of the Zambesi, he penetrated far into the interior, establishing mission schools when possible. He constantly enriched science by his observations. Lake Nyassa was discovered and the surrounding country examined. This expedition was largely in the interest of missionary work, but Livingstone observed and noted everything worth attention. A jealous government, however, checked his progress and compelled him to return.

Once more he returned to England, but soon was back