

## II

### THE SPIRIT OF ENQUIRY

Tradition, as we have seen in the first lecture, is the conservative factor in culture. But it is made up of a multitude of individual traditions, which have often been indiscriminately accepted, and are so interwoven that an attempt to disentangle any important strand may arouse antagonism from outraged patriotism or religion. Especially must he be on his guard who is moved to strip off some of the glories with which heroes have been invested by the process of accretion. In time repeated adulation expands the hero almost into an object of worship. There is a good side to this attitude towards the great national figures. For both the quality and the inspiration of a people's ideals are derived in some measure from the words and actions of the fathers of the country. If a foreigner wishes to understand the character of the American people he must study the kind of man whom the average American admires; he will find it of greater importance to know the popular Washington, Lincoln, or Wilson, than these same leaders as the most recent scientific historian has depicted them. To reduce national heroes to their lowest terms by bringing all their frailties into undue relief is both a disservice to national welfare and a historical misjudgment.

At once, however, the question arises whether this doctrine will not lead to an ironing out of all wrinkles in the interest of a system of State education which tends to purvey uncriticized views, and results in dull uniformity and

even docility. Not so, if it is remembered that there is a middle course between denigration, or the slang "debunking", and indiscriminate eulogy. Time deflates patriotic exaggeration. Probably each generation did less or more than justice to the actual person, and gradually his true virtues, which are the valuable asset for the nation, become permanent in his figure. There are enough great men to stock our national galleries, who, in spite of an occasional wart on the countenance, manifest an essential nobility.

But there is an important function for the individualist, especially where tradition reigns supreme. When he asserts his opinion sincerely he is contributing to the common good. On propounding his radical views he may be stared at by a shocked community; for the moment he is not respectable; but time brings strange revenges, and the sensible person will not be too hasty in joining the crowd to eject him. It has often happened that an exponent of unorthodox doctrines has turned out to be a prophet, and by the next generation his body has been transferred into a stately tomb from the heap of stones under which it was first buried.

The health of the body, politic and social, demands that the conservative tendency be balanced by the liberal, and that Tradition be put to the test from time to time by Enquiry lest its arteries harden beyond recovery. But the enquiry should be conducted in a reasonable and scientific temper. It is the more necessary to insist on this because at the moment Tradition is having too hard a time. It gets little respect from up-to-date youth, and rather apologizes for intruding into their free and easy company. Mr. Lippmann has warned us that "moralists are dealing with a generation that cannot believe in authority, with men and women ridden by doubts because they do not know what they prefer or why." Young persons go out into the world

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with far fewer fixed ideas than their fathers had. But this phase will pass. Tradition or authority of some kind will assert itself more powerfully than this emancipated generation allows itself to believe, and when the excitement of revolt cools down, it may in turn abandon itself exhausted to a variety of fears which, like bats flitting among the rafters of the deserted house of its tradition, may swoop down upon its head. Another tradition, possibly less reasonable than the discarded one, will then assume authority over it. Tradition is not to be finally bundled out bag and baggage by emotional youth acting on mass impulse. It has a rightful place in the constitution of society, but it must not be allowed to tyrannize over it. Scientific Enquiry will come in like a good physician, and possibly prescribe for it a new and better diet, in order that it may cease to be lazily corpulent and a burden on the human family.

Both the face and the soul of western civilization have undergone an extraordinary change in one's own lifetime; in fact the contrast between the world of sixty years ago and the present is almost incredible. This has been due partly to "the stealing years that loosen the ancient hold," partly to the incisive activity of the critical spirit, partly to the convulsions of the past two decades. The last quarter of the nineteenth century was inspired by great self-confidence, whether in Victorian England, in the United States recovering from the Civil War and full of pioneering enthusiasm, or in Imperial and Bismarckian Germany.

England surveyed the rest of the world with deep and unruffled complacency, though she was moved now and then to surprise when nations charged her with selfishness and hypocrisy. Convinced that her success was for the good of the world, she could not understand why she was called "perfidious Albion." And she had much reason for her

self-satisfaction. Probably England was never mightier, possibly never sounder at heart than then. In moments of reverie some who are now passing off the scene cast wistful glances at themselves, depicted by sketch or pen, with humor but also with real respect, "as we were." A decade and more ago in middle-aged circles a powerful reaction had set in against those "eminent Victorians"; by the young set of today they are not criticized but forgotten. A reason for the reaction is given by Mr. A. C. Bradley: "The ideas and literature of times immediately preceding its own are apt to be the least interesting of all to every generation, because they have less novelty for it than those of periods more distant, and may even be felt, as those more distant ideas are not, to be a prison from which it is necessary to escape."<sup>1</sup> The Victorian was in fact a great period, and the time has come to see both its strength and its weakness with clear eyes. Its tradition has been found to be in a state not unlike that of some of the old English cathedrals, of which not only had the walls and pinnacles been eaten away by a corrosive atmosphere, but the towers were settling dangerously on very insecure foundations. The "friends" of these cathedrals have bestirred themselves to get them reconditioned, employing the skill of the engineer to grout and underpin them both within and without. So impressive antiquity is given a new lease of life by modernism. If, as has been said, "the greatest triumph that any tradition can accomplish is to rear noble and worthy rebels," the Victorian tradition has given proof of its healthy parenthood. On both sides of the Atlantic there appeared at that time an unusually aggressive mood. Darwin was the most modest of men, but Huxley never eschewed controversy, and Herbert Spencer proclaimed that in evolu-

<sup>1</sup>*A Miscellany*, 8.

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tion he had found the secret of the process of nature; all were posing inconvenient questions. The conflict between science and religion, or as it proved between science and traditional creeds, was far more intense than it is today. In the United States two books had great vogue in educated circles: John William Draper's *History of the Conflict between Science and Religion*, published in 1874, and Andrew Dickson White's *History of the Warfare of Science and Theology in Christendom*, which appeared nearly twenty years later. The words used in the titles are very significant—Conflict and Warfare. It was felt that a real battle was on, and tradition was calling up its reserves, for there was serious alarm lest more than the outer earthworks might be carried by the assault.

Half a century ago America was at the beginning of a period of boundless optimism. The discovery of new processes of making steel made possible transportation between the rapidly growing cities and the filling prairies, and supplied a new material for the architects to use in devising vast structures for industry and commerce. The economic future was the constant theme of none too modest patriots; and to outsiders the nation did not display a pleasing temper.

But nowhere was the exhilaration of the scientific spirit felt more powerfully than in Germany. In the universities the application of its method had given fresh life to the study of history, literature, theology, and law, as well as to that of the pure and applied sciences. In my old catalogue of lectures offered in Berlin in 1891, I find the names of Virchow, von Helmholtz, Du Bois Reymond, of Zeller and Curtius, of von Gneist and von Treitschke, and of von Harnack. Mommsen was still secretary of the Berlin Academy of Sciences. Before and after that I saw Wundt

in Leipzig, and Wellhausen in Marburg. Even then, though the average student was not aware of it, some of the historians were misusing the scientific method in a propaganda of nationalism based on force. Against them the learned Lord Acton had warned the world in 1886 as being "a garrison of distinguished historians that prepared the Prussian supremacy together with their own, and now hold Berlin like a fortress." Few realized that such "Wissenschaft" divorced from humanism would in another generation bring civilization to the verge of ruin. Here, however, I must pay my profound homage to the professors with whom I came into contact. With them humanism and the scientific spirit went hand in hand, and they led me into ampler fields than I had known.

To the outsider the Germany of that day seemed to be the most vital nation in the world, and under the impulse of applied science she was making immense industrial strides. But more than others she seemed to be intent on the application of science to a nationalistic purpose; though everywhere a rejuvenation was driving all in a wild scramble for the enormous wealth which science had created or made possible. Immense steamships were displacing smaller craft which for a generation had been sufficient for the world's traffic; immigration was pouring into America as into a land of promise; cities in every country were extending under the urge of industrial activity; all the great nations were hunting for new markets, most of them for new possessions, chiefly as sources from which to draw supplies of raw material. Strange to say, though there was an alarming competition for armaments, and sometimes the sword was rattled in the scabbard, an optimistic assumption prevailed that civilization would be allowed to penetrate the wide world in peace. In that confident period it was a

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commonplace that this was the best of all possible worlds. By the aid of science the mind of man was subduing nature so successfully that few realized that within man himself there are demonic forces which if unrestrained turn science into a terrible servant. Glutted by its own prosperity that generation was preparing disaster for its successor. Here and there a man of vision saw through the misty future the faint outline of the rocks on which the mighty billowing society would dash itself in war. But such warnings were as unheeded as the prophecies of Cassandra. Before the attack of buoyant materialism the predominant conventions, morals, ideals could not stand. The old order was in fact obsolescent and collapsed, because there was not in it sufficient moral stiffening to resist the will to war as it grew apace in the jostling of acquisitive peoples.

There was, however, another side to that Victorian world in which my student days were spent. From 1885 for several years I had the good fortune to be an undergraduate in the University of Edinburgh—an old academic center with great scientific and humanistic traditions. National though it was, indeed strongly so, and rather off the highway of the modern economic and industrial world, it fostered in its calmer environment a vigorous spirit of enquiry which searched into our inherited traditions, but without either arrogance or cynicism. Humanism had mellowed its great physicians, surgeons, and pure scientists; physics was called “natural philosophy,” and no study was held in higher honor than philosophy itself. To mention only one of a group of remarkable men, Professor S. H. Butcher, a master of classical literature, introduced us to the Greek thinkers as the source of the enquiring spirit which was the needed corrective for the world in which we had been brought up. “Athens”, he declared, “unites a reverend

conservatism with her forward and enquiring temper. Art, science, religion have balanced their several claims. Science stays her encroachments, and is not wise overmuch."<sup>1</sup> Again, what we owe to Greece was "the application of a clear and fearless intellect to every domain of life."<sup>2</sup> . . . "Among the ideas common to Thucydides and Demosthenes this is one—that reason is a formative and conquering power; that a strong and clear intelligence can prevail over outward circumstances, and can shape events; that victory is assured to those who see things as they are and shun illusion, and who at the same time summon to the aid of thought a sustained and courageous energy."<sup>3</sup> Those sentences bring back the memory of a healthy optimism from the hills of my young world; one lives in thought again in breezy uplands. Had those ideals been more faithfully followed in the nineteenth century we should not be where we are today. Our age did not "see things as they are and shun illusion." The science that we so often applied, was not the "application of a clear and fearless intellect to every domain of life": rather the nations exercised "a sustained and courageous energy" in the promotion of very exclusive and selfish aims, forgetting that old question: "since things are what they are, and will be what they will be, wherefore then should we deceive ourselves?"

That was the spirit and the ideal which, under genial teaching nearly half a century ago, like the sun-warmed spring wind, dissolved some of the rigid traditions which, had they been allowed to keep their hold, might have prevented the healthy growth of one's thought. The result was in the main a change of temper: one did not become sceptical of all tradition, but rather ready to investigate

<sup>1</sup> *Aspects of the Greek Genius*, 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 12f.



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the trustworthiness of those things which had been most firmly held in our circle. Such a change was not effected as by a sudden conversion. The spring did not come in with a rush. The first signs were often chilled by a bleak March-like day; soon more sunlight and balmier airs were interspersed with April greyness; May brought its tender leaves and blossoms; even then there was an occasional lingering of winter in the lap of spring, when once again criticism challenged ruthlessly old beliefs that had been accepted as fundamental, and one had to inspect carefully one's garden to discover whether the late frost had done damage to any of the most treasured plants.

It is not irrelevant to our general subject to emphasize the Greek spirit as a factor in the education of the modern citizen; for among the many elements in our environment of which we may be unconscious, though they are actively beneficial to our physical, mental or moral health, one is a sane spirit of enquiry which historically can be traced back to the impulse of Greek thinkers. "Greek civilization to an extraordinary degree starts clean from nature, with almost no entanglements of elaborate creeds and customs and traditions. . . . It springs swift and straight. It is never jaded. Its wonder and interest about the world are fresh."<sup>1</sup> And it was the recovery of some of the spirit of the Greek world at the Renaissance that aided in the birth of a new era in philosophy and science in the seventeenth century. Thinkers began to form clear-cut ideas stripped as far as possible of presuppositions, and to try to look at the world as it really was. This, however, is one of the most difficult tasks to which men can address themselves. It is a mark of a highly educated person to be able calmly

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Murray, *Legacy of Greece*, 16.

and reasonably to stand before generally accepted and entrenched views, and to put to himself and others the question: Are these really so? But the country which has not a good proportion of such thinkers, or which will not pay heed to what they have to say, is bound to suffer, and that too unnecessarily. This truth may be illustrated by many examples, but especially in the recent past by the contrast between the instigations of the popular press and the warnings of economists. These latter have been scorned as mere theorists, but the supposedly practical men have not yet got us out of the mess in which we have been floundering. It is essential for the public welfare that we shall have experts, but equally so that we shall have intelligent average citizens who will listen to them, and support what they find to be reasonable in their analyses and proposals.

This being so, a vital element in our education is the inculcation of the spirit of enquiry. And in this we are immensely helped by the diffusion of the influence of modern science; for science is itself the process of observing and sifting. It is the endeavor to discover how the universe about us is actually working, what are the impelling forces in human life as it is lived on the earth, and what really happened in history. By the use of discursive reason, that regal endowment, man is able to arrive at a more or less consistent view as to how the world is going on; he provides himself with the explanation which satisfies him as leaving unsolved the fewest of the extremely baffling and multifarious problems which from time to time are thrust upon him. The person who possesses a scientific mind keeps putting questions to himself, and to any one else who he thinks may be able to enlighten him, about things that really matter in the world; and he continues to do so unweariedly

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to the very end, because in the infinity of riddles about him he feels himself to be a mere child picking up pebbles on the shores of time.

But you reply that this is very like what a philosopher does: so it is, for the philosopher and the essential scientist are not far apart. Both base their questions and answers on knowledge, but the scientist is primarily an observer of external nature, while the philosopher includes in his observation man both within and without. The average scientist has to spend most of his life in the careful observation and testing of objective facts. He is a workman on a vast edifice. It is made up of many parts, and new wings are always being added to it. The foundations have to be dug down to the solid rock, and on it the rising tiers are built of tested facts. Unfortunately the supposed facts often crumble away under the testing, so that the process of replacing crumbled stones by more solid facts is ever going on. It is the duty of the scientist never to grow indifferent in the testing of each stone, and in the replacing of the faulty by the strong. He must also fit the stones together, that is to say, he must classify his facts. In his own corner of the building he tries to place the reliable stones in such positions that they will come into line with those laid down by himself or others, and sometimes he must begin all over again and build anew, because he finds that an essential stone will not fit into what has been built. If the classification is not good it will throw the building out of line.

Often at conferences—the dinner hour as it were—the workmen on different parts of the building of Science talk over their work; and in their publications they tell one another what they have found and how they are classifying; they inform workmen in other sciences how the corners may

be made to dovetail into one another. The structure of the atom, for example, has brought physics and chemistry close together; a fossilized bird or mammal offers questions for consultation between the palaeontologist and the biologist; and now and then the palaeontologist meets the anatomist and talks to him about remnants of prehistoric man which have been dug up. Elsewhere the excavations of old civilizations are laid bare before the historian, to whom also uncovered manuscripts and inscriptions are brought for consultation. Another busy group, arguing about their facts and classifications, consists of physiologists, pathologists, and psychologists; of whom the last are digging up material which crumbles so often that the reliable facts are hard to get at. Not quite so fragile are the facts of economics, but the border field of the social sciences seems to contain a smaller proportion of hard building-stones for a theoretical structure.

This multitudinous hive of scientific workers, engaged all over the world in the work of observation and of coordinating its discoveries, seeks to reduce them into intelligible systems. But those who possess the genuine scientific spirit, are on their guard not to make too many assumptions in order to fortify their hypotheses. Their method is illegitimate if they attempt to bridge too wide gaps, or to lay out the plan of the House of Life on their own preconceived scale. To work up the parts into a unity is the function of the philosopher. To him the facts are brought from all spheres—from the natural sciences, and from the working of man's mind and conduct observed in society, literature, and history; and on it all he reflects in order to deduce the most comprehensive theory of life, to create, in fact, the philosophy which accounts most satisfactorily for all the data. Science is reliable within its sphere, dealing as it does.

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with subject matter which is verifiable by observation of objective facts; but it loses its authority when it goes beyond its sphere. Philosophy is an interpreter of the constitution and character of the mind, and of the principles of human activity. It examines the instrument itself which observes and reasons about the external facts. In a recent book by Bertrand Russell there is a remarkable passage on the greatness of man as a thinker: "The man who holds concentrated and sparkling within his own mind, as within a *camera obscura*, the depths of space, the evolution of the sun and planets, the geological ages of the earth, and the brief history of humanity appears to me to be doing what is distinctively human and what adds most to the diversified spectacle of Nature. I would not abate this view even if it should prove, as much of modern physics seems to suggest, that the depths of space and the 'dark backward and abysm of time' were only coefficients in the mathematician's equations. For in that case man becomes even more remarkable as the inventor of the starry heavens and the ages of cosmic antiquity: what he loses in knowledge he gains in imagination." In a part of this we might almost think we heard Pascal speaking, another great mathematician, who would have had the strongest aversion for Russell the sceptic: "It is not from space that I must seek my dignity, but from the government of my thought. I shall have no more if I possess worlds. By space the universe encompasses and swallows me up like an atom; by thought I comprehend the world."

To possess a reflective mind is to be equipped with an instrument of the highest value for the performance of the duties of a citizen. There is a prejudice that thought prevents action. But to act reasonably is to think before we act, or in the old adage: to look before we leap.

Not the least of the gifts of the spirit of enquiry to our modern culture has been the revived interest in history. This is making for, even if it comes slowly, a better understanding of the causes which have divided communities and nations, and, as these are seen to have been so often avoidable or outworn, the result may be that a friendlier frame of mind will gradually displace old prejudices. Younger scholars have been trained in a more scientific method and in wider fields of knowledge than their predecessors. Within one's lifetime vast areas of human activity have been brought to light from the darkness in which they had been buried for centuries or millennia. Though this is most strikingly seen in the case of the civilizations of Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt, it may be illustrated also in later times. The Hellenistic Age, in which the transition to Christendom was being prepared for, or being made from an earlier world, has been, it is hardly too much to say, discovered in the last half century. Manuscripts have been ferreted out of their hiding-places, papyri have been dug out of the rubbish-heaps of Egypt, monuments have been deciphered, remains of forgotten cities have been unearthed. New authors have been given publicity; the history of the Greek language itself has been rewritten. We know, as was not possible in the past, the political and economic condition of the world into which imperial Rome brought order; and, quite as important, we know the intellectual, moral, and religious character of that world when Christianity began to spread in it. The varieties of Jewish thought, the widespread influence of the later Stoic philosophy, the intensive appeal made by all sorts of mystery religions, have had minute and exhaustive study given them by some of the greatest scholars from western lands. In fact this new historic method has been applied with such rigor that soaring tradition seems by some to have

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been disabled by the shafts of criticism beyond recovery, and they assume either in alarm or exultation that religion itself has been grievously wounded. But, as we shall see in a later lecture, this is an unjustifiable assumption.

In no field has better progress been made than that of American history. Both in universities and in private life there has been and is a line of eminent historians, who write with full control of their facts, and delineate impressively and convincingly both the inner forces and the outward movements of the periods they describe. By their dispassionate investigations both of the past and the present they have earned the respect of the learned world. Nor has their undertaking been easy, because even in a young nation tradition soon distorts facts; and born and bred too often in political controversy its begotten children are ill-favored. The sensitive patriot does not like to be told that among the causes of trouble within and without his nation are the habits engendered by these disagreeable prejudices. Not the least useful citizen, however, is just this truthful historian. He is a health-giving, if to some a painful, surgeon.

While there is now a far more widespread use than heretofore of the historic method based on scientific enquiry, it is not correct to say that we must look to the nineteenth century for the birth of genuine history. What we now have is merely a more universal application of accurate observation of and exact enquiry into facts and traditions. If we have many reliable chroniclers past ages had not a few. There is a great succession of those who have sought faithfully to tell the story of what they themselves saw, or what they heard from authentic witnesses. But more than that, in the twilight of civilization the bard and the historian were one person. Today the function of the bard has been

taken partially by the historian who presents his tested facts as a well told tale.

In far off days Clio, the Muse of History, was represented as one of the divine sisters, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, the personification of Memory. These goddesses were nymphs who haunted as the sources of their inspiration the springs of Hippocrene, Aganippe, and Castalia, the very names recalling association of beauty. But their dwellings were among the Gods on Helicon and Olympus, in whose company they sang the origin of the world and the glorious deeds of Zeus and the heroes, both gods and men. To shed glory upon the noblest accomplishments of mortals they inspired those who celebrated them in music, poetry, letters, and the other arts. "Happy is the man whom the Muses love" says Hesiod; "sweet is the voice that flows from his lips; for when one who carries grief deep in his heart hears of heroic exploits, as sung by a minister of the Muses, straightway he forgets his disturbing cares."

Clio was usually seen with a roll of papyri in her hand, the sign of her authority like the sceptre for a king, but sometimes she held the trumpet of fame, a case of scrolls being at her side. This daughter of memory proclaimed noble deeds in song. From her as from a spring gushing forth in music, came the poet's retelling of the heroic past to gladden those who would listen; rhythmic memories of the strife and successful exploits of men who were of like passions with themselves; the story of a world as they believed that it was, or wished that it might have been. Even of such a severe historian as Thucydides Clio might have been imagined to be the inspirer or patroness, for in the mythology woven about her is hidden the Greek belief that the exploits of heroes, their struggle to right the wrong, their noble



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thoughts and high emprise were the only remnants of their past that were worth preserving in biography, and that they should be set forth in such measured cadence as would move men like poetry.

“The Greeks were the first who in history combined science and art, reason and imagination. . . Greece discovered another kind of history [than the careful, encyclopaedic and unreadable] in which reason and beauty were reconciled—one which the Romans borrowed, and which has served as a pattern to modern times.”<sup>1</sup> But in discovering for the modern world this kind of history Greece laid upon the historian a very hard task. If the essence of history were merely the recital of verified facts it would be little more than an old curiosity shop. We must have interpreters who will make those facts live. On the other hand, the Muse of History is not merely another designation for Romance. We will not substitute Scott’s novels for Macaulay or Motley. For though Scott wrote out of fullness of knowledge, and reproduced with fidelity the spirit of earlier days, he used his imagination to arrange his facts as he would, creating his own heroes, whereas the historian is bound to follow rigorously the march of events. The value of history is distinct from that of tradition in that it reveals “the authentic fabric of reality woven patiently on the loom of time.”

But the most scientific historian cannot arrive at such absolute precision as to facts as does the physicist in his observation of natural law. Human beings have made history; the historian deals with men. If we cannot fathom our neighbors’ hearts, the historian, however acute, can only approximate as to what actually happened in the conflict of policies resulting from the undisclosed motives of gov-

<sup>1</sup> Butcher, 20f.

ernments. There are varying versions of what took place in cabinet councils. Authorized biographies, based even on intimate correspondence and on conversations reliably reported, are full of surmises. What did the man actually say? What did he mean? Biographies have been coming out in recent years in a flood—those of Page and Wilson in America, of Rosebery and Asquith in Britain, to mention only four. These deal with some of the most eventful years of modern history, yet in these well authenticated “Lives” some things are not clear. The certainty, if there was one, lies sunk in the depths of personality.

Cardinal Newman, in discussing the range of what he calls the “Illative Sense,” refers to the differences of opinion among five great contemporary historians on a period to which they had devoted their studies: “They are too learned and logical not to know and to use to the utmost the testimonies by which the facts which they investigate are to be ascertained. Why then do they differ so much from each other, whether in their estimate of those testimonies or of those facts? because that estimate is simply their own, coming of their own judgment; and that judgment coming of assumptions of their own, explicit or implicit; and those assumptions spontaneously issuing out of the state of thought respectively belonging to each of them; and all these successive processes of minute reasoning superintended and directed by an intellectual instrument far too subtle and spiritual to be scientific.”<sup>1</sup> Though a historian has been unable to arrive at certitude as to all events in the past we do not discard his work. We know that many of his judgments are based upon probability; but Bishop Butler said that probability is the guide of life. We accord to the historian the same respect as to a reliable judge; his reliability is deter-

<sup>1</sup> *Grammar of Assent*, 364.

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mined by the degree at which his decisions are upheld by those competent to express an opinion, in fact by the court of appeal consisting of his peers.

As we have said, in every field of history the testing of tradition by the recovery of facts has in the last half century gone on apace, and the tireless industry of investigators has provided almost unlimited material for the rewriting of history: but the mere power of research does not constitute the historian; a commonplace mind endowed with accuracy and combined with a persistent will can discover new facts. It requires a mind of a higher order to know when a new fact is really the discovery which it seems to be, to be able to discern when the probable passes into the certain. The experience of one man will justify him in accepting certain reported events as historical evidence, while by another they will be ruled out as untenable or irrelevant. Like a statesman, with whom a historian has some affinities, he has the gift for interpreting the actions of his fellows, discovering by suggestions, to which other men are blind, the train of personal causes and effects which lies in the background, and by following it he lights upon matters of historical importance. These intimations, the almost obliterated lettering, as it were, on an old signpost, may guide the competent historian, while the casual reader is like an average wayfarer, who, unable to decipher it, stands bewildered as to the path to take.

We estimate historians according to their ability to fill in the puzzle with fitting facts new or old. Great historians lay bare the purposes and ideals of peoples; they show us how persons who led them were controlled by or deflected the influences that impinged upon them—their failures or successes; and thereby they enable us to understand a little better the movement of humanity, of which we in our three-

score years and ten form an infinitesimal part. At times we turn to the historian to escape from our present world which is too much with us. Then for a while we forget the burden of our own day as we sit as onlookers at the arena, where before our age great men and the multitude of the unknown contended not without dust and heat. Or as realists we may seek to discover in the portrayal of things as they were the underlying causes which may be supposed not yet to have lost their potency. The genuine historian, a trained observer, sees more than most do of what was taking place; and if also by his possession of an educated imagination he tells the story in worthy style, he will create in the minds of his readers the effect of literature, and will impart to them, it may be hoped, a measure of the spirit of Wisdom which was thought to be imbued by Clio, the daughter of Memory.