Chapter Five

Carlyle on Literature: Transcendental Faith versus Puritan Temper

The poet’s eye in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heav’n to earth,
from earth to heav’n;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
—Shakespeare

Before we immerse ourselves in literary particulars, let us briefly reexamine the determining characteristics of both creeds.

The Scottish dissenter faults the artist and his work for their express self-consciousness; the poem or play or novel reflects a private vision; it is vain because it springs, not from God, but from the corrupted fancy of the individual. Furthermore, the Puritan condemns imaginative literature as sham: it does not accord with the stern realities of God’s lower world; it frequently neglects the fact of evil in order to paint pretty, idealized “fictions.” Lastly, the Calvinist is contemptuous of art because it encourages contemplation and general passivity where action and practical morality are required. It is thus wasteful, unmanly, and frivolous. That the poet is active in delineating and arranging selectively the materials he perceives does not satisfy the Protestant dissenter: in disavowing an externally imposed system of conduct, the aesthetic writer appears to him to be “doing” nothing at all.
The transcendentalist, on the other hand, looks to literature as to the organ of a new religion: it is among the best repositories for spiritual truths in the modern age. The artist’s value consists, for him, first of all, in the ability to transcend the apparent self-sufficiency of logic, to escape the contradictions of the senses (what the Kantian calls the Understanding). In an age of popular empiricism, literature alone recognizes the infinite significance of the imagination. Second, the arts perform, for the transcendentalist, a vital function in reconciling the phenomenal with the noumenal world. Fancy, as Kant says in the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment, bridges the gap between the actual and the real, the seen and the unseen; in the apprehension of beauty, in the music of poetry, man’s Understanding and man’s Reason—his nature and his soul—are harmonized. Finally, for the transcendentalist, the “Poet” or “Literary Man” assumes the stature of a messiah: he is spoken of as “hero” or “high-priest” for it is he who sees into things themselves, reads their symbolic significance to the rest of us, and reveals the moral basis of the universe. Gifted with divine vision, he alone uncovers “mystical” meanings and amplifies, as it were, the “soul-music” within the time element.

In his advocacy of literature, Carlyle’s attitude corresponds closely to that of the transcendental idealist. He, too, considers the essential purpose of art to be a religious one and presumes its whole significance to rest upon the articulation of spiritual values. Often Carlyle points up this principle of high seriousness by saying what art is not: “It should be recollected that Literature positively has other aims than this of amusement from hour to hour; nay, perhaps that this, glorious as it may be, is not its highest or true aim.” Again, he appeals to a religious standard in excluding certain writers from the domain of “true Literature”: “We cheerfully acquitted Mr. Taylor of Religion; but must expect less gratitude when we farther deny him any feeling for true Poetry, as indeed the feelings for Religion and for Poetry of this sort are one and the same.” Even Jeffrey, although “a newspaper critic
on the great scale,” has no true sense of “Literature” or “Poetry” because he lacks the aptitudes of a “priest.” On the positive side, Carlyle accepts Schiller as a genuine poet because “there is something priest-like in that Life of his,” and Carlyle recognizes that German literature, “alone of all existing Literatures,” retains some claim to “that ancient inspired gift, which alone is Poetry.” More specifically, he believes that “a consistent philosophy of life . . . is the soul and ultimate essence of all Poetry.” In a letter to Goethe (previously quoted), he suggests that German artists in particular have adopted the unique spiritual doctrine or philosophical ground plan that will allow art its true scope. Elsewhere, he refers explicitly to Kant’s idealistic philosophy as the basis upon which the modern poet may safely build his images of reality:

Such men as Goethe and Schiller cannot exist without effect in any literature or in any century: but if one circumstance more than any other has contributed to forward their endeavors, it has been this philosophical system; to which, in wisely believing its results . . . all that was lofty and pure in the genius of poetry, or the reason of man, so readily allied itself.

Reinforced by the principles of a new faith, art assumes for Carlyle the potency of a gospel. He writes to Goethe in the fervour of his commitment: “Literature is now nearly all in all to us; not our speech only, but our Worship and Lawgiving; our best Priest must henceforth be our Poet.” Thus he shares with the transcendentalist that intense reverence for literature as the implement of a new religion; it aims, of course, to delight and instruct, but its highest purpose, as Carlyle and the German idealists understand it, is spiritual revelation.

Kant and Fichte and their advocates among the Romantic poets of Germany emphasize further that literature should be a liberating vocation. The creative imagination, rightly employed, allows man to reach beyond the relative values of his senses and his in-
tellect; it permits him to transcend the Understanding and escape the enervating contradictions of present circumstances and time. Art alone opens the window to ultimacy—neither “pure reason” nor dogmatic religion, which are trapped by their own literalism, can do so much. Carlyle, in his devotion to literature, shares the Kantian’s faith in its special properties. It cannot, he agrees, be judged as one judges of external things, by its “utility”: it is impervious to “logic-chopping,” “cause-and-effect,” “pleasure-pain principles,” and so on, for it springs from the “I,” from the absolutes of Reason: “To inquire after [Art’s] utility, would be like inquiring after the utility of a God, or, what to the Germans would sound stranger than it does to us, the utility of Virtue and Religion!” In his contempt for the standards of “utility,” “pleasure,” and “effects,” Carlyle means to indict the mechanical philosophies of Bentham and Hume; at the same time, he indicates his sympathy with the more liberal-minded “Germans.” In other passages, from the preface to Wilhelm Meister and the sketch of Edward Irving, he labels as “rude” or “philistine” men who attempt to apply quantitative measures to the innate beauties of art. Moreover, Carlyle frequently invokes the yardstick of transcendental vision in evaluating the contribution of a particular writer. On one occasion, he denies Hoffman “the name of an artist” because he “failed to discover that ‘agreeable sensations’ are not the highest good”: “It was not things, but ‘the shows of things,’ that he saw; and the world and its business, in which he had to live and move, often hovered before him like a perplexed and spectral vision.” Unlike the idealistic poets who were his contemporaries, Hoffman could not rise above “appearances”; he could not see through the phenomena of nature into the quieter realms of spiritual reality. In contrast, what Carlyle called “genuine” literature occupies a place higher than, and discrete from, material involvements:

Poetry is not dead; it will never die. Its dwelling and birthplace is in the soul of man, and it is eternal as the being of
man. In any point of Space, in any section of Time, let there be a living Man; and there is an Infinitude above him and beneath him . . . and tones of Sphere-music, and tidings from loftier worlds, will flit round him . . . and visit him with holy influences, even in the thickest press of trivialities, or the din of busiest life.\textsuperscript{13}

Thus, to the poet, "all objects are as windows through which [he] looks into Infinitude itself."\textsuperscript{14} If we fail to respond to his insights, preferring "the coarse passions and perceptions of the world," he becomes "a Martyr"—the spokesman for "universal, everlasting Beauty" in an age of "modish Elegance," "Regularity," and "Method."\textsuperscript{15} If, however, we suspend the mechanical processes of thought, the poet then lifts us free of prosaic mists and, like some Prospero, "transports us into a holier and higher world than our own; everything around us breathes of force and solemn beauty. . . . The enchantments of the poet are strong enough to silence our scepticism."\textsuperscript{16} In \textit{Reminiscences}, Carlyle recalls that his own escape into a "holier and higher" realm came about through the mediation of a poet:

[In the early days] I found that I had conquered all my scepticisms, agonizing doubtings, fearful wrestlings with the foul and vile and soul-murdering Mud-gods of my epoch . . . and was emerging free in spirit into the eternal blue of ether, where, blessed be heaven! I have for the spiritual part ever since lived, looking down upon the welterings of my poor fellow-creatures, in such multitudes and millions still stuck fast in that fatal element. . . . In a fine and veritable sense, I, poor, obscure, without outlook, almost without worldly hope, had become independent of the world. . . . I then felt, and still feel, endlessly indebted to Goethe in this business.\textsuperscript{17}

Poetry represents—for Carlyle as much as for the transcendentalist—a key to the independence of the soul, a release from the "Not I." As Fichte puts it, "in the contemplation of beauty, the
limitations of the material and the sensuous are broken through and the spirit returns to itself.”

Again and again, Carlyle sets literary values above the “limitations of the material” and argues for art as a higher calling than purely practical concerns. In his essay on Burns, he speaks of the man of war, the “conqueror,” as a species with which “the world could well dispense”: his victories are those of the “hard intellect” only. In Past and Present, the poet’s is the one “sacred voice” heard amidst “the dreary boundless element of hearsaying and cant, of twaddle and poltroonery, in which the bewildered Earth . . . has lost its way.” In Sartor, the artist’s words, rising from the immutable regions of the soul, will “outlast all marble and metal . . . in this so solid-seeming world.” In the Life of Sterling, Carlyle claims for the “Poet or Singer” a “depth of tune” missing in the mere “Speaker.” Clearly, he accepts the idealist’s notion of the poet as one who transcends the senses and touches a profundity of meaning unknown to the “earth-creeping” mind. Carlyle recalls both Fichte and Kant when he praises the artist at the expense of the politician: “Understand well . . . that to no man is his political constitution ‘a life, but only a house wherein his life is led’; and hast thou a nobler task than such house-pargeting and smoke-doctoring, and pulling down of ancient rotten rat-inhabited walls, leave such to the proper craftsman; honour the higher Artist.” The politician, in effect, reconstructs appearances, phenomena, the “Not I,” whereas the literary artist applies his genius to “things themselves,” to the essential, transcendent “I.”

The peculiar gift of the creative imagination to lift our spirits free of time-bound paradoxes and “welterings” lends literature, in Carlyle’s mind, a higher value than that even of formal religion. Christianity, he believes, unlike art, attempts to explain itself in terms of a causal reality and thus wastes its power in endless arguments with “the mind of the flesh.” The literalism of miracles and divine justice diminishes the church’s central vision for Carlyle. He sees with grief that to the dogmatic Christian as well as to the Newtonian scientist, miracles consist simply in the violation
of natural law. Both might be excited to wonder by the fact of a
man reaching out his arm to touch the sun, but neither, like the
poet, would wonder that a man reaches out his arm at all. Only
the artist has escaped the tyranny of the space-time element and
can speak for the spirit with an unmuddled voice. And literature,
in Carlyle’s estimate, is religion’s “greenest branch,” her new
“Church”: “The true Pope of Christendom is not that feeble old
man in Rome. . . . It has been said, and may be repeated, that
Literature is fast becoming all in all to us. . . . The true Autocrat and Pope is that man . . . who finds his Hierarchy of gifted
Authors . . . whose Decretals [are] written not on parchment, but
on the living souls of men.”
Carlyle conjectures that “Art is
higher than Religion” because it avoids the soul-destroying con
tradictions that arise from an accommodation with the Under
standing. Evil, for example, as a reality to the orthodox Christian,
must be met with “hostility,” but as an appearance to the transcen
dental artist, it may be comprehended with “peacefulness.”

That unique tranquility of insight—enforced by the artist’s
superiority to the mechanical world—is a crucial element in Ger
man idealism. Carlyle continually reveals his attachment to this
Kantian principle of freedom in his defense of literature. Poetry,
he says, demands “a certain Infinitude, and spiritual Freedom; that
elevation above the Fate and Clay of this Earth in which alone,
and by virtue of which . . . soul-music is possible.” Nowhere
does Carlyle argue for literature’s potentialities from a more ex
plicitly transcendental perspective than in his Unfinished History
of German Literature:

Literature . . . does not plead to us by logical demonstra-
tion and computation, yet awakens mysterious and far more
potent impulses than these: the deep tones of Imagination,
the gay melodies of Fancy. . . . We err much when we sup-
pose that Understanding, the part of our nature which can
be moved by syllogisms, is stronger than Imagination: which
last, we may rather say, is as the boundless Invisible to the
small Visible, as the infinite Universe to the little horizon
we command with our eye. It is but a small portion of any life that is determined by the perception of things seen: the dullest worldling worships not his golden or clay idols, of guineas or acres, but a divinity which lies hidden in these. . . . Our very senses, whether for pleasure or pain, are little more than implements of Imagination. . . . Is not all vision based on Mystery, all Matter Spirit? . . . Fearful, majestic, unfathomable, in these hearts of ours, is the Witness and Interpretess of that Unknown! . . . Our whole life has been shaped and moulded by [the poet]; our thought, our will still hangs on his words: his domain is all the Infinite in man.28

The concept of a supersensible reality, glimpsed through the superior aesthetic consciousness of the poet, reinforces Carlyle's favorable views of literature at every stage in his career: "Literature . . . is the eye of the world; enlightening all, and instead of the shows of things unfolding to us things themselves."29 In this, Carlyle's vocabulary as well as his convictions reveals an enormous debt to transcendental philosophy, especially to the categories and conclusions of Kant's first and second Critiques.

But art, for Fichte as well as for Kant, has a wider purpose than that of facilitating man's escape into a world of pure forms. As Kant contends in his Critique of Aesthetic Judgment and Fichte in The Nature of a Scholar, imaginative genius serves to reconcile the natural and the spiritual realm; to link, through the faculty of aesthetic awareness, the moral absolutes and the objects of sense. The world of the Understanding, what Fichte calls the "Not I," has an intrinsic symbolic value; it lies, like the "Garment of God," atop the unseen, giving it a shape to the eye. Through the heightened perceptions of the poet, argues Kant, the invisible kingdom of Reason is articulated for us in tangible forms. In the fine arts, moral ideas are rendered visible, love becomes "the preparation for virtue," for duty, and wisdom achieves a unique compatibility with knowledge. There is then no antagonism between the actual
and the ideal, no schism between body and spirit. Nature, in
Goethe's words, is an "open secret," the reflex of faith; its "thou-
sand changes / But one changeless God proclaim." In Fichte's more
academic manner, the world of objects is "the posited experiential
context in which the I conceives of itself." Art, in effect, compels
us to acknowledge the interrelation of our two natures. For Kant,
this simultaneous revelation of truth and annihilation of conflict
"alone confers happiness, [for] under its influence every being
forgets that he is limited."

Carlyle, too, embraces the concept of material ideality in his
apologies for literature. He writes in his notebook in 1831, "The
only Sovereigns in these days are the Literary Men," for in their
minds alone do "all forms, and figures of men and things . . .
become ideal." Elsewhere he reflects that "the poet's imagination
bodies forth the forms of things unseen, his pen turns them to
shape." Unquestionably, Carlyle attached special significance to
the poet as a harmonizer of disparate human faculties. Wordsworth
warrants, for him, the name of poet because he reconciles the ex-
ternal and internal, the commonplace and universal:

To our minds, in these soft, melodious imaginations of his,
there is embodied the Wisdom which is proper to this time;
the beautiful, the religious Wisdom, which may still, in
these hard, unbelieving, utilitarian days, reveal to us
glimpses of the Unseen but not unreal World, so that the
Actual and the Ideal may again meet together, and clear
Knowledge be again wedded to Religion, in the life and
business of men.

The passage displays a number of affinities with Kantian thought:
Carlyle appreciates a "Wisdom" that takes account of "these hard
. . . utilitarian days," Kant wrote, in the first *Kritik* at least, to
refute Hume; Carlyle's poet "glimpses . . . the Unseen"—Kant's
"glances" at the "supersensible"; in Carlyle's conception of the
artist the "Actual and the Ideal" meet, "Knowledge" and "Reli-
igion” are wedded—in Kant’s the gap between “the phenomenal and the noumenal” is bridged, *Verstand* and *Vernunft* unite. In “Characteristics,” Carlyle insists that this “revelation of the God-like” is literature’s true purpose; that through art, “Religion has again become possible and inevitable for the scientific mind.” The poet incorporates “Nature” into “Art” in such a way that the Understanding, those “sister Faculties” of the Imagination, “will not contradict” the validity of his perceptions. Carlyle again paraphrases Kant’s aesthetics when he writes in 1828, “Poetry... aims not at ‘furnishing a languid mind with fantastic shows and indolent emotions,’ but at incorporating the everlasting Reason of man in forms visible to his Sense, and suitable to it.” He believes, as the transcendentalists do, that literature must accommodate its intuitive world to the mechanical realm of the intellect, and appeal to the sublime through the rational: “Whatever [literature does] not in some sort address itself to all men and to the whole man, to his affections as well as to his intellect, were no longer Literature.” Poetry, properly understood, consists of “Spirit mingled... in trustful sisterhood with the forms of Sense.” He declares in his journal in July, 1832, that the task of the literary artist amounts to nothing less than the articulation of the “unaussprechlichen.” His art is thus, as Fichte would have it, “a revelation of the Infinite in the Finite,” an “imaging forth in shadowy emblems the universal tendencies and destinies of man.” Carlyle can speak of the yoking of sense and spirit without contradiction because German idealism has convinced him that they are but different aspects of a single reality. The body, nature, science, time, and space are mere appearances, the “garment of the Unseen.” Because, as he asserts in his journal, “the Natural is the Supernatural,” and the earth is “the reflex of the living spirit of man,” the harmonies of art are possible.

For Kant, of course, the world of Reason is the world of the moral law. The artist’s function is ultimately moral; his insights constitute sensible truth. Carlyle argues, too, for the poet’s fictions
as "purest truth." Novels, he cautions, "ought to be moral," and poetry should ever be "melodious human verity." In that last expression Carlyle catches the essential point of Kant’s aesthetics: through the "melodious" taste for beauty, our outward humanity and our inward "verity" are joined. His sympathy for the Artist’s aesthetic awareness—what he calls the "eye for the Beautiful"—rises directly from his concern for moral revelation. The poet’s "cestial brightness" can be justified only if his "morality, too, is of the highest and purest." Carlyle contends that "the best bit for me in Kant" is the philosopher’s simultaneous reverence for "the Starry Heavens and the Sense of Right and Wrong in the Human Soul." And like Fichte, who sees in our sensitivity to beauty "the preparation for virtue," Carlyle believes the "love of Poetry" to be "the necessary parent of good conduct." Clearly, Carlyle has no patience with "capricious sports" of the "Fancy" for their own sake: to him that poetry only is noble which leads us to contemplate and obey the dictates of the Categorical Imperative. The best impulses in literature help man toward Reason itself.

Yet despite his passion for unseen truths, even the idealist intends that literature should make its immediate study the natural world. The poet "excites," with his more acute consciousness, the elements of actuality into symbols of the ideal; he perceives significance where, to the prosaic eye, there is none. Carlyle, too, looks on nature as a storehouse of divine symbols, opaque until interpreted by the artist. In the History of German Literature, he speaks of the "loveliness and mystic significance of Nature . . . revealed [in] Poetry," and in Sartor, of the "Godlike" "rendered visible" in the "prison of the Actual." Later, in Heroes, he acknowledges the transcendental origins of this concept:

Literature, so far as it is Literature, is an "Apocalypse of Nature," a revealing of the "open secret." It may well enough be named, in Fichte’s style, "a continuous revelation" of the Godlike in the Terrestrial and Common. The Godlike does ever, in very truth, endure there; is brought
out, now in this dialect, now in that, with various degrees of clearness: all true Singers and Speakers are, consciously or unconsciously, doing so.\textsuperscript{53}

Of Goethe's poetry he says, "it is . . . no looking back into an antique Fairyland," but a successful reconstitution of the "real world itself" so that ordinary things appear "holier to our eyes." Carlyle accepts with Goethe the Fichtean view of nature as a "solemn temple" furnished with myriad "emblems" of the spirit.\textsuperscript{54} Equipped with these deepened affections, the true poet studies every element of the sensible world, "from the solemn phases of the starry heaven to the simple floweret of the meadow," for "his eye and his heart are open for nature's charms and her mystic meanings."\textsuperscript{55} In \textit{Heroes}, Carlyle himself singles out one of the more poignant hieroglyphs of the veiled truth behind appearances: "The lillies of the field—springing up there in the humble furrow-field; a beautiful eye looking out on you, from the great inner Sea of Beauty! How could the rude Earth make these, if her essence, rugged as she looks and is, were not inwardly Beauty?"\textsuperscript{56} He understands, too, that these objects are not in themselves sufficient to excite the sleeping soul of the world. "Art," he admits in his introduction to \textit{Wilhelm Meister}, must do with "Nature," what nature did "of old." Thus the very works of the literary man become divine symbols as well. When Carlyle encourages Browning, in a letter of 1856, to pursue poetry for its "symbolic help," he speaks in the language of transcendental aesthetics; and when he writes further that "melody" adds "finish" or "perfection" to the ordinary products of the mind, he echoes Kant's conviction that an acute sense of beauty harmonizes the lower and the higher spheres.\textsuperscript{57}

There is a fourth major characteristic of the transcendental attitude toward literature to which Carlyle's views conform. The idealists of the German school, convinced of the close relationship between beauty and truth, tend often to deify the artist. Kant puts the poet in the "first rank" of men; Fichte makes a hero-priest of
the "Literary man"; to Schiller the artist is "like the son of Agamemnon" descending into the world "to purify it"; to Goethe the "World-Poet" is he who "brings the gods down to us." For each, the literary man is uniquely gifted and an object of intense admiration. The nature of that gift that sets him above ordinary men is variously defined by Kant and Fichte, but in either case it amounts to the same thing: the artist sees, in the profoundest sense of the word. Inspired by "Imagination," "Reason," or a "Divine Idea of the World," the aesthetic writer looks beneath the shows of things and deciphers the moral basis of the universe. When he speaks sympathetically of the arts, Carlyle himself owns to such a messianic vision of the literary man. He, too, bases his reverence upon the conviction that the true poet manifests a depth of insight impossible for the rest of mankind. The "music" or "melody" of great art results from "Sphere-Harmonies" heard in deepest thought, from the richness of a mind able to grasp the larger unity of things. In Heroes, Carlyle argues for the primary, everlasting need to see:

Poetry, therefore, we will call musical Thought. The Poet is he who thinks in that manner. At bottom it turns still on power of intellect; it is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that makes him a Poet. See deep enough, and you see musically; the heart of Nature being everywhere music, if you can only reach it.

Clearly it is contemplation to which Carlyle refers when he speaks of "vision"—that is, internalized sight. In the foregoing passage he takes a stand immeasurably distant from the Calvinist's preference for "doing to thinking." There are, as well, distinct overtones of Platonic arrogance in such phrases as "power of intellect." Contemplative men constitute for him not only a cultural curiosity but a cultural elite. In his last essay on Goethe, Carlyle reiterates the central importance of "seeing"—that is, clarity and depth of thought—to the poet:

As the first gift of all, may be discerned here utmost Clear-
ness, all-piercing faculty of Vision; whereto, as we ever find it, all other gifts are superadded; nay, properly they are but other forms of the same gift. A nobler power of insight than this of Goethe you in vain look for, since Shakespeare passed away. . . . Shakespeare too does not look at a thing, but into it, through it . . . the thing melts, as it were, into light under his eye, and anew creates itself before him. That is to say, he is a Thinker in the highest of all senses: he is a Poet. . . . What are the Hamlets and Tempests, the Fausts and Mignons, but glimpses accorded us into this translucent, wonder-encircled world; revelations of the mystery of all mysteries, Man’s Life as it actually is?

The essence, then, of poetry is transcendent vision; the artist looks through the actual into “mysteries” and timeless truths. Carlyle insists upon this perspicuity in all his favorable comments on literature:

The poet’s eyes are opened: he sees the changes of many-coloured existence, and sees the loveliness and deep purport which lies hidden under the very meanest of them; hidden to the vulgar sight, but clear to the poet’s; because the “open secret” is no longer a secret to him, and he knows that the Universe is full of goodness; that whatsoever has being has beauty.

The artist, blessed with vision, stands apart from the mass of men—those dull “worldlings” equipped with “vulgar sight.” Carlyle, in this passage, takes an unequivocally idealistic view, believing, as Schiller and Novalis had come to believe, that “whatsoever has being has beauty.” His mood is more than optative; it is assured. There are no reservations for him—as there would be for the Calvinist—occasioned by the appearance of evil or the frailty of man. The true artist exposes the realities of the supersensible and the very existence of such men makes possible for Carlyle “a life of joy and peace.” Poetry, as he understands it, is the organ of transcendental faith: “[The poet] is a vates, a seer; a gift of vision
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has been given him. . . . For him the Ideal world is not remote from the Actual, but under it and within it: nay, he is a poet, precisely because he can discern it there." The literary man must not, of course, approach the sensible world with trepidation; he must not fear, as the Puritan does, to engage himself with "the Creature." Carlyle's archetypal artist "not only loves Nature, but he revels in her; plunges into her infinite bosom, and fills his whole heart to intoxication with her charms." Only then can he read her "mystic meanings." The poet's involvement, Carlyle carefully emphasizes, is not with the material for its own sake—that would be, in transcendental terms, as unworthy as asceticism. A "Divine Idea of the World" should stand always "in clear ethereal light before his mind"; he should apprehend "the Invisible, even under the mean forms of these days" and strive "to represent it in the Visible, and publish tidings of it to his fellowmen." Thus, as a "recogniser and delineator of the Beautiful," the literary man can not fail to further the spiritual progress of the world.

Specifically, the artist's outstanding quality for Carlyle is a power of intellect—or extraordinary fusion of sensibilities that enables him to outstrip the merely rational thinker. The poet alone transcends the prison house of "logic-utterance." Carlyle feels that such a distinction between modes of thought has been made possible in his century through the idealistic philosophy of Kant and Fichte, and he welcomes the freedom from categories that their categories have permitted:

It begins now to be everywhere surmised that the real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. The thought is parent of the Deed, nay, is living soul of it, and last and continual, as well as first mover of it; is the foundation and beginning and essence, therefore, of man's whole existence here below. . . . The true Sovereign of the world, who moulds the world like soft wax, according to his pleasure, is he who lovingly sees into the world; the "inspired Thinker," whom in these days we name Poet.
The concept of the essence of existence as sublime thought derives clearly from Carlyle’s transcendental sources and parallels his commentary in Lectures on Kant’s view of the material world as pure spirit. In such a philosophical context, the “World-Poet,” admitted “Sovereign” in the realm of transcendental vision, is, for Carlyle, “the eye and revealer of all things.” Elsewhere he speaks of the poet with the same unqualified reverence: he is “of all heavenly figures the beautifullest we know of that can visit this lower earth.” In Past and Present, Carlyle equates “genius” with poetry and names the poet, much as Schiller had, a “sacred voice,” a purifying force “usefuller,” “nobler,” and “heavenlier” than any other. He consistently deals in superlatives, even in his notebooks, when treating of the poetic intellect. But Carlyle seldom reserves his praise for the poet solely—that is, for the hero-figure as Kant, Schiller, and Goethe defined him. He widens the circle, with Fichte’s approval, to include the prose artist, the Gelehrte or “Literary Man”:

Men of Letters are a perpetual Priesthood, from age to age, teaching all men that a God is still present in their life; that all “Appearance” whatsoever we see in the world, is but a vesture for the “Divine Idea of the World,” for “That which lies at the bottom of Appearance.” In the true Literary Man there is thus ever, acknowledged or not by the world, a sacredness: he is the Light of the world; the world’s Priest; guiding it, like a sacred Pillar of Fire, in its dark pilgrimage through the waste of Time.

Such moods of “fine frenzy” notwithstanding, Carlyle seldom suspends his critical or discriminatory powers. He frequently denigrates one artist or national literature in comparison with another, but these comparative judgments depend, without exception, upon the criteria of transcendental aesthetics. The value of literature, according to disciples of German idealism, rests on its ability to articulate spiritual truths in a manner adapted to the complexities of modern thought. For Carlyle, the works of Goethe
and Schiller appear to herald such a religious awakening and to incorporate an intense consciousness of the dilemmas that confront the post-Renaissance man. When Carlyle writes, in an unpublished letter to Forster, of his disillusionment with European literature, it is disillusionment occasioned by the desertion of contemporary writers from the standards and ideals of these transcendental artists: “I have had nothing to do with foreign literature for a number of years past. . . . German Literature in these new days seems all to have run to threads and thrums. The French Literature of G. Sand and Co., which many people told me was a new-birth, I found to be a detestable putrefaction,—new life of nothing but maggots and blue bottles.”

His estimate of individual artists depends on transcendental principles as well. In *German Romance* and the early essays, he denies to Musaeus, Hoffman, and Kotzebue the name of “Poet” on the grounds of their absorption in the “shows of things.” By the same token, he excludes Voltaire from the literary elite: “His view of the world is a cool, gently scornful, altogether prosaic one: his sublimest Apocalypse of Nature lies in the microscope and telescope: the Earth is a place for producing corn; the Starry Heavens are admirable as a nautical timekeeper.”

In consequence, Carlyle finds Voltaire’s ideas fitting “in a mere Man of the World,” but “very defective, sometimes altogether out of place, in a Poet and Philosopher.” Here, clearly, Carlyle manifests the Kantian’s distaste for quantitative measurements in nature; he reveals, too, the commonplace transcendental assumption of an affinity between the artist and the metaphysician. Later in the same essay, he quotes directly from the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* in order to point up the distance between Voltaire’s “creations” and those of the genuine poet:

A Tragedy, a Poem, with him is not to be “a manifestation of man’s Reason in forms suitable to his sense”; but rather a highly complex egg-dance. . . . The deeper portion of our soul sits silent, unmoved under all this; recognizing no universal, everlasting Beauty, but only a modish Elegance,
less the work of a poetical creation than a process of the toilette.\textsuperscript{76}

Carlyle condemns Voltaire, in effect, for living purely in the domain of the Understanding, for appealing to the intellect without appealing to the affections. There is apparently no room in his world-view for the sublimities of Reason; to Carlyle, he is utterly lacking in depth of insight:

Poetic Method . . . must be the fruit of deep feeling as well as of clear vision—of genius as well as talent; and is much more likely to be found in the compositions of a . . . Shakespeare than of a Voltaire. The Method discernible in Voltaire, and this on all subjects whatever, is a purely business Method. The order that arises from it is not Beauty, but, at best, Regularity.\textsuperscript{77}

In contrast to his estimate of Voltaire, Carlyle finds a superior faculty in the character and works of Dr. Johnson. Unlike his French contemporary, "it does not appear [to Carlyle] that at any time Johnson was what we call irreligious"; he possessed, not a skeptical nature, but that "first grand requisite, an assured heart."\textsuperscript{78} In common with the transcendental artist, he valued his "choicest gift,—an open eye and heart," and perceived, with the light of Reason, the ultimate unity or "coherent Whole" that the "fragments" of the actual world "tend to form."\textsuperscript{79} Moreover, Carlyle believes that Johnson accepted, as Kant did in his second \textit{Kritik}, the innate existence and infinite value of the moral law in the individual: "Knowledge of the \textit{transcendental}, immeasurable character of Duty we call the basis of all Gospels, the essence of all Religion: he who with his whole soul knows not this, as yet knows nothing, as yet is properly nothing. . . . Happily for him, Johnson was one of these that knew . . . it stood forever present to his eyes."\textsuperscript{80}

Carlyle is uniformly hard on those imaginative writers who do not understand or seek to promote the moral instincts in man.
Walter Scott, for example, draws Carlyle’s censure because he had "no message whatever to deliver to the world: wished not the world to elevate itself, to mend itself . . . except simply to pay him for the books he kept writing." He seems from his novels, Carlyle allows, "one of the healthiest of men," but his health is of an external, shallow sort: "His life was worldly, his ambitions were worldly. There is nothing spiritual in him; all is economical, material, of the earth earthy." Scott never accepts, as the German idealists do, that the subject, not the object, of experience is the artist’s essential concern: "Your Shakespeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards; your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting to the heart of them!" He has, in fact, no acute consciousness of "the great Mystery of Existence," is not, "as the Transcendentalists speak, possessed with an idea." In the end, Carlyle refuses Scott admission to the "Priesthood" of true literary men for the same reason he denies it to Voltaire and Hoffmann: the novelist lacks any profound awareness of a noumenal reality. "He for the most part transcended but a little way the region of the commonplace." "Literature," as Carlyle concludes, "is the Thought of thinking Souls," and Scott, healthy, active, and practical as he was, appears to his critic deficient both in soulfulness and deep thought.

Diderot, too, he contends in an 1833 article, "was little better than an Encyclopedic Artisan," a man who by his mere "copying of Nature" spoke only the "half-truth" of Art. Unanimated by a "Divine Idea of the World," he was able only "to distort and dislocate . . . all things he laboured on"; at best, his works argue the insights of "no Seer, but only possibilities of a Seer, transient irradiations of a Seer, looking through the organs of a Philosopher." Carlyle disparages Diderot’s mechanistic, fragmentary Weltanschauung, especially in comparison with the intuitive, microcosmic awareness of the transcendental poet: "Your true Encyclopedical is the Homer, the Shakespeare; every genuine Poet is a living embodied, real Encyclopedia,—in more or fewer volumes . . . the whole world lies imaged as a whole within him." In this,
Carlyle echoes Fichte's definition of the "I" and deprecates, by implication, the incompleteness of Diderot's phenomenological atheism. Later in the essay, he condemns openly his subject's analytical approach to truth:

Beyond the meagre "rush-light of closet-logic," Diderot recognized no guidance. . . . He dwelt all his days in the "thin rind of the Conscious"; the deep fathomless domain of the Unconscious, whereon the other rests and has its meaning, was not, under any shape, surmised by him. Thus must the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stand perennially shut against this man; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended.

From this and other passages we may safely conclude that Carlyle's good opinion of literature depends, almost entirely, upon the degree to which that literature conforms to the principles of transcendental philosophy. No artist or work of the imagination that is out of keeping with the high seriousness of the German aesthetic appears to command Carlyle's favor: he is as incapable as Kant or Schiller or Novalis of condoning literature that does not, in some sense, encourage a spiritual "new-birth."

Yet there is, as we have long since discovered, an entirely different perspective from which Carlyle often looks at imaginative writing and its value. When he assumes such an attitude, his execrations are unmitigated: the artist and his art, however well-intentioned, are simple futile. Carlyle, at such times, does not trouble to differentiate between the philosophe and the "World-Poet," the newspaper article and the lyric poem—each and all contribute nothing to the spiritual well-being of man. Like the orthodox Calvinist, Carlyle bases his contempt, for the most part, upon one of three grounds: literature is either vain, that is, it betrays the sin of unrepentant self-consciousness; or it is false to the "facts of things"; or it displays and spreads idleness among its adherents. This is not to say that Carlyle's negative comments
necessarily reveal, as the conventional Presbyterian's would, an exact reliance upon the dogmas of Calvin: Carlyle's desertion from Christian theology is entire and genuine; his loyalty is to the temper, not the letter, of his father's religion.

Often in his attacks on the "verbal arts," he manifests more than one of these Puritan antagonisms. Passages from the 1832 review of Boswell's Life, written within months of Carlyle's father's death, echo James's warning, recorded in Reminiscences, against both the vanity and idleness of "talk":

He who . . . has clapped no bridle on his tongue, but lets it run racket, ejecting chatter and futility, is among the most indisputable malefactors omitted, or inserted, in the Criminal Calendar. To him that will well consider it, idle speaking is precisely the beginning of all Hollowness, Halfness, Infidelity. . . . Was the tongue suspended there . . . only that it might utter vain sounds, jargon, soul-confusing, and so divide man, as by enchanted Walls of Darkness, from union with man? . . . Consider the significance of Silence: it is boundless . . . unspeakably profitable to thee! Consider that chaotic hubbub, wherein thy own soul runs to waste, to confused suicidal dislocation and stupor: out of Silence comes thy strength.\textsuperscript{93}

In this instance, Carlyle condemns the "speaking-talent" both as an instrument of "Infidelity" and idleness and as a device to wrap man in "soul-confusing" devilment: the human spirit, easily misled or "enchanted" by sophistical arguments, is best employed in the "profitable" realm of "Silence."\textsuperscript{94} Much later, in a letter to his brother in 1870, Carlyle again argues that speculative literature is of an unprofitable nature—neither fitting one for action nor taking account of the potential for error and misconduct in a fallen world: it is "in general much too ideal and unpractical and impracticable—totally neglecting the frightful amount of Friction and perverse Impediment, perverse but insuperable, which attends every one of us in this world!"\textsuperscript{95} Curiously, it is of Emerson's
transcendental essays that Carlyle here specifically speaks, thus marking out sharply the differences between his inherited and his adopted beliefs. Yet the danger of literature, for the Puritan, is not so much in its naïveté as in its sinister, self-congratulatory appearance. In *Cromwell*, Carlyle reveals precisely that note of distrust: the literary man, he contends, aims at “eloquence” rather than truth, at “adroitness” and the “superfluity” of “eloquent speaking” rather than the “Heroic insights” of conviction. Oliver Cromwell, on the other hand, scorned the use of “boastful” decoration in his letters: he represents, in fact, Carlyle’s Calvinist ideal; that is, the humble man of action who “does” his poems. Carlyle had earlier attacked the arts on these twin points of inaction and self-esteem in his *Lectures on the History of Literature*. There he compares the Romans’ “genius” for practicality to the “dreaming,” “unhealthy” intellect of the Greeks and concludes that those epochs are most decadent in which the artist occupies a central position in national culture. The flowering of art signals a movement toward self-absorption, passivity, and complacency; in Carlyle’s sometime Calvinist universe of tireless battle and obligatory asceticism, the taste for literature presages damnation. Rather than the “Sovereign” or saviour of his age, the “World-Poet” dwindles for Carlyle as Puritan into a talisman of the devil. The aesthetic writer’s contribution to society is then of infinitely smaller value than the transcendentalist presumes it to be; for Carlyle in these *Lectures*, it amounts to an ultimately corrupt extension of man’s energies.

But Carlyle, while maintaining his opposition to literature on the grounds of a need for self-denial, does not always fault it as an occupation for “idle fools.” Frequently, the impetus for his attack is a Calvinist allegiance to “the facts of things”—that literal representation of the world for which the poet and novelist feel little responsibility. Knox had argued that man must recognize, in the reality of conflict, God’s judgments and his own imperfect state: to idealize the actual is to ignore the omnipresence of evil. Carlyle inherited from his Puritan father an enormous respect for these
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concrete truths and a consequent impatience with the imagined kingdoms of the artist. In his less tolerant moments, Carlyle describes literature as a more sophisticated species of “lying.” He finds, for example, in his 1875 essay on Knox, that Puritanism was of greater value than all the artistic achievements of the Renaissance, because it, in contradistinction to poetry and drama, refused “to believe what is not a Fact in God’s Universe”; it alone avoided that “mingled mass of self-delusions and mendacities” to which the heterodox individual is subject. The arts, on the other hand, condone both self-consciousness and fantasy, caring nothing, as Carlyle wrote in 1851, for “nature and her verities.” He variously describes the artist’s words as “windy gospels,” “a nebulous kind of element,” even “the temporary dilettante cloudland of our poor Century.” But in the Life of Sterling, as openly as in Cromwell, Carlyle indicts the aesthete for deeper crimes than these apparently innocent “untruths.” Imaginative literature reveals, to a man of Carlyle’s Puritan instincts, a strain of “hypocrisy” from which “earnest men . . . are admonished” to keep their distance. Surely, he warns, such hypocrisy is a function of the literary man’s unchecked self-consciousness; the result, more or less, of his “love of the love of greatness.” In his journal in 1848 Carlyle, with unguarded acerbity, writes of “the kind of hunger for pleasure of every kind, and want of all other force. . . . There is perhaps no clearer evidence of our universal immorality and cowardly untruth than even in such sympathies.” The “immorality” that Carlyle reads into the character of Keats results, it seems, both from the poet’s self-indulgence (“the hunger for pleasure”) and from his complacent “falsehoods.”

For the most part, however, Carlyle grounds his derogation of literature not so much on the Puritans’ distaste for vanity and fabrication as on their respect for hard work and accuracy of judgment. Frequently, it is true, Carlyle confuses such accuracy or “sincerity” with the degree to which an author allows historical phenomena to dominate his world-picture. Thus he moderates his praise of Shakespeare by claiming, “It is not the Fiction that I
admire, but the Fact; to say truth, what I most of all admire are the traces he shows of a talent that could have turned the History of England into a kind of . . . Bible." In this, Carlyle echoes the Calvinist concept of history as a set of moral object-lessons—a treatment of events best exemplified in the Old Testament. Again, when he asserts that "the Bible itself . . . is the truest of all Books," Carlyle seconds Calvin’s opinion in the Institutes that the "received word" is the strongest source of light for man. Earlier, in Past and Present, Carlyle confirms his complimentary belief in historical providence, in what he calls the "Bible of Universal History": "This is . . . God’s-book, [in] which every born man, till once the soul and eyesight are extinguished in him, can and must, with his own eyes, see God’s Finger writing." All other lights appear, upon closer examination, to be "walls of Darkness"; particularly that "fantastical air-Palace" known as literature. Carlyle believes it to be an unfit habitation for the "serious souls" of his generation:

"Fiction,"—my friend, you will be surprised to discover at last what alarming cousinship it has to Lying: don’t go into "Fiction," . . . nor concern yourself with "Fine Literature," or Coarse ditto, or the unspeakable glories and rewards of pleasing your generation. . . . In general, leave "Literature," the thing called "Literature" at present, to run through its rapid fermentations . . . and to stuff itself off into Nothing, in its own way,—like a poor bottle of soda-water with the cork sprung;—it won’t be long. . . . In fifty years, I should guess, all really serious souls will have quit­ted that mad province, left it to the roaring populaces; and for any Noble-man or useful person it will be a credit rather to declare, "I have not written anything";—and we of "Literature" by trade, we shall sink again, I perceive, to the rank of street-fiddling. . . . Of "Literature" keep well to windward, my serious friend!

Just as the conventional Puritan might, Carlyle despises art primarily for its dissipation of vital energies—its flippancy toward, as
well as its distortion of, the stern realities of the moment. In a world of conflict, he believes, its passivity is the measure of its wantonness. Not surprisingly, he periodically loses patience with those who "waste themselves in that inane region of Art, Poetry, and the like." In an essay of 1867, he declares his Hebraic position in much the same language he had adopted in a letter to his brother thirty-four years earlier: "Poetry? It is not pleasant singing that we want, but wise and earnest speaking:—‘Art,’ etc. are very fine and ornamental, but only to persons sitting at their ease: to persons still wrestling with deadly chaos, and still fighting for dubious existence, they are a mockery rather." Again, in the History of Frederick, Carlyle dismisses the charms of literature as idle fantasies, unfit for the ear of Prussia's most valiant, "truth-loving" prince. From such statements one clear association emerges: work and truth are often linked in Carlyle's mind. Furthermore, remembering Reminiscences, we may be sure that this equation derives from the precepts and example of his Puritan father. "The Doable," as he says in Past and Present, "reaches down to the World's centre"; "it is her Practical Material Work alone that England has to show for herself!" The converse is equally true for Carlyle; that is, the identification of speech or writing with whatever is false and shallow: "The Speakable . . . lies atop, as a superficial film"; "the spoken Word of England has not been true . . . [has been] trivial; of short endurance; not valuable. . . . A Cant; a helpless involuntary Cant, nay too often a cunning voluntary one . . . the Voice not of Nature and Fact, but of something other than these." By contrast, there is nothing "cunning," "light," or "adroit" in hard work; for Carlyle in his Calvinist temper, physical suffering and obedience seem the best measure, not only of sincerity, but of manliness. "A man that can succeed in working is to me always a man. . . . The Practical Labour of England is not a chimerical Triviality; it is a Fact . . . which no man and no demon will contradict." Carlyle was influenced in this, as in the sketch of his father, by an inherent regard for "manful well-doing"; his childhood sympathy for the "strong hand" of
the "true workman" was apparently ineradicable. Literature, he often said, unlike "Practical Labour," merely increased "contemporary confusion," for it detached itself from the exigencies of the moment and blurred the moral realities—"ofttimes making wrong right," as the Calvinist would say: "O ye Playwrights, and literary quacks of every feather, weep... over yourselves! Know... that the wind-bag, are ye mad enough to mount it, will burst, or be shot through with arrows, and your bones too shall act as scarecrows." The faults of the artist, as Carlyle depicts them in his essay on Novalis, are twofold: "a want of rapid energy; something which we might term passiveness"; and an inability to distinguish between the fantastic and the real: "He sits, we might say, among the rich, fine, thousandfold combinations, which his mind almost of itself presents him; but, perhaps, he shows too little activity in the process." The aesthetic thinker, according to Calvin and Knox, allows himself to be seduced by the "phantasms of his own brain" from a proper loyalty to the "factis of men." These facts, declared to us in the countless shocks of daily life, demand not "idle sitting," but "laborious activity." The idealist's tranquil temper, seen through Puritan eyes, proceeds not from some "depth of insight" that pierces the actual, but from straightforward moral indolence: the artist simply refuses to discriminate between the false and the true or to work manfully for the salvation of the world. Knox, as Carlyle described him in 1875, stands in the strictest and most praiseworthy opposition to the pallid "unrealities" of art: "Truly it was not with what we call 'Literature,' and its harmonies and symmetries, addressed to man's Imagination, that Knox, was ever for an hour concerned; but with practical truths alone, addressed to man's inmost Belief, with immutable Facts, accepted by him... as the daily voices of the Eternal." As testaments to Carlyle's Puritan distrust of literature and his reverence for hard work and literal truth, there are no better illustrations than his frequent letters to literary aspirants. To one hopeful, unpublished author in June 1862, he writes that "Literature" is not a "truly noble human career," but rather "a loud
clamor of Nonsense," neither useful nor "authentic"; better, he suggests, for earnest, vigorous men to ignore such "palaver" and follow "a silent course of activity." In another such letter, dated twenty years earlier, Carlyle invokes nearly every argument the Calvinist was likely to use in condemning the literary life:

My dear young friend, you must learn the indispensable significance of hard, stern, long-continued labour. Grudge not labour, grudge not pain, disappointment, sorrow or distress of any kind—all is for your good, if you can endeavor and endure. . . . You must learn the meaning of silence. . . . Pray that you may be forced to hold your tongue. . . . I would advise that you resolutely postponed, into the unexplored uncertainty of the Future, all concern with literature. . . . As a trade, I . . . describe it as the frightfullest, fatallest, and too generally despicablest of all trades now followed under the sun. . . . A steady course of professional industry has ever been held the usefulllest support for mind as well as body; I heartily agree with that. . . . My decided advice is, that you stand resolutely by medicine, determined to find an honest livelihood . . . and do a man's task in that way. Then is there a solid backbone in one's existence.

From this it would seem that the standard by which all things ought to be judged is the Puritan one of moral usefulness—a position that contrasts sharply with Carlyle's loud and frequent defenses of the "sacred" non-utility of literature. And surely, in his insistence on "a steady course of professional industry," Carlyle exhibits the fundamental Calvinist longing for "a regular and consistent system of conduct." There is, in fact, only one Puritan objection to the arts that Carlyle fails to raise in the preceding passage—that of the dangers of licentiousness and vanity—and he implies even this in advocating an enforced silence.

Frequently Carlyle's antipathetic comments on literature reveal all the major Puritan prejudices at once: he ranks Cromwell above the aesthetic writer, for example, because there is no taint of self-
flattery in his words—nothing “glib” or “eloquent”; further, the English reformer never distorts “the naked truth of things” but studies always to tell “God’s Facts” rather than some “euphemistic story”; lastly, he does not sit idly amidst the “rich harmonies” of his imagination, but “grapples like a giant, face to face” with the evils of the actual world. In the last of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, Carlyle amplifies these misgivings about the worth of literature. First of all, he takes exception to the literary man’s private, and therefore depraved, concept of divinity: “All arts . . . are tainted to the heart with foul poison; carry not in them the inspiration of God, but (frightful to think of!) that of the Devil calling and thinking himself God; and are smitten with a curse for evermore.” This is an obvious echo of Knox’s warning that “all worshiping, honoring, or service inventit by the braine of man in the religioun of God . . . is Idolatrie.” Carlyle then unwinds a sustained diatribe against the premeditated falsehoods of imaginative writing—falsehoods that waylay and confuse the unselfconscious workman:

The Fine Arts . . . are sure to be the parent of much empty talk, laborious hypocrisy, dilettantism, futility; involving huge trouble and expense and babble, which end in no result, if not in worse than none. The practical man, in his moments of sincerity, feels them to be pretentious nothingness; a confused superfluity and nuisance, purchased with cost—what he in brief language denominates a bore. It is truly so.

He recalls, a few pages later, his equation of fiction with “lying” and implies, in the process, that truth exists only in its narrowest acceptance, that is, as literal fact:

Truth, fact, is the life of all things; falsity, “fiction” or whatever it may call itself, is certain to be death. . . . [The arts] are to understand that they are sent hither not to fib and dance, but to speak and work; and, on the whole, that God
Almighty’s Facts, such as are given us, are the one pabulum which will yield them any nourishment in this world.118

Carlyle goes as far as the dogmatic Calvinist in designating the fountainhead or authority for those “facts” which are “given us”: “The Hebrew Bible, is it not, before all things, true, as no other Book ever was or will be?”119 All other written “sources,” particularly of the imaginative, artful sort, amount to “pretentious nothingness” or “confused superfluity.” It seemed to Carlyle, as he finished his pragmatic “latter-day” tracts, that the company of poets and novelists had been engaged, for “centuries long,” in the merest “wool-gathering”—“wandering literally like creatures fallen mad!”120

Yet despite his towering intolerance of “Poeties,”121 Carlyle condescends in the same pamphlet to admit the singularity of Shakespeare’s genius: “In Shakespeare, more than in another, lay that high vates talent of interpreting confused human Actualities.”122 For the moment, Carlyle dampens his Calvinist fury and dwells instead on those “divine melodious Ideals” of the transcendentalist and the poet. But almost immediately the dominant tone of contemptuousness returns, and he despairs, as Cromwell himself might have, that Shakespeare wasted his talent for discerning truth in the idle, morally purposeless realm of literature: “Alas, it was not in the Temple of Nations, with all intelligences ministering to him and co-operating with him, that his workshop was laid; it was in the Bankside Playhouse that Shakespeare was set to work, and the sovereign populace had ware for their sixpence from him there!”123 Profound indeed is the perversity of a religious temper that compels Carlyle to wish Shakespeare had been a politician.124 In one final onslaught on the legion of “wits, story-tellers” and “Ballad-singers,” Carlyle displays the fullest measure of Puritan iconoclasm:

Fiction, I think, or idle falsity of any kind, was never tolerable, except in a world which did itself abound in practical lies and solemn shams; and which had gradually impressed
on its inhabitants the inane form of character tolerant of that kind of ware. A serious soul, can it wish, even in hours of relaxation, that you should fiddle empty nonsense to it? A serious soul would desire to be entertained, either with absolute silence, or with what was truth, and had fruit in it, and was made by the Maker of us all. With the idle soul I fancy it far otherwise; but only with the idle.\textsuperscript{125}

He agrees here with his father's dicta as well as Knox's: all three tolerate nothing written except the Bible; all associate the decoration of language with the "shams" and "idolatries" of a decadent, Catholic spirit; and all exhibit an ingrained Hebraism thatbridles at the relative passivity of the artist. It is, moreover, curiously indicative of the Puritan nature of Carlyle's bias that such a sustained attack on the arts should occur in the context of a polemic against Jesuitism.

For the most part, however, Carlyle does not concentrate so much Calvinist anger in a single passage. It is seldom that he rails, in one breath, against the "idle falsity" of the "Devil...thinking himself God"; more frequently, his negative opinions of literature fall into one of three discrete categories. The first of these includes his objections to art as a violation of the principle of self-denial. Highly wrought language appears to him then as a species of corruption, undermining the need in man for submission and mute obedience. In "Characteristics" and Lectures on the History of Literature, Carlyle declares that self-consciousness is a sickness, a symptom of depravity. He has, for example, a strong temperamental aversion to the confessional novel, as a letter to Forster in 1849 demonstrates: "Froude's Book [Nemesis of Faith] is not...worth its paper and ink. What on earth is the use of a wretched mortal's vomiting up all his interior crudities, dubitations, and spiritual, agonizing bellyaches into the view of the public, and howling tragically, 'See!'"\textsuperscript{126} A strange remark from Carlyle, especially when one considers his early fondness for Rousseau and his own efforts along similar lines in Wotton Reinfred, Sartor, and Reminiscences.
Yet even in *Sartor* itself, he cannot resist a judgment against the obfuscating egotism of speech:

Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together. . . . Not William the Silent only, but all the considerable men I have known . . . forbore to babble of what they were creating and profecting. Nay, in thy own mean perplexities, do thou thyself but *hold thy tongue for one day*: on the morrow, how much clearer are thy purposes and duties.127

The silence Carlyle here advocates is not the quietism of the mystic or the transcendentalist, but that shamed, obedient silence of which the devout Presbyterian—especially James Carlyle—was so jealous. Given man’s fallen state, the mute individual is the only one who can expect to please God. And when Carlyle writes to Sterling that “on the whole *Silence* seems to me the Highest Divinity on this Earth at present. Blessed is *Silence*: the giver of all Truth, of all good,”128 he voices the same ascetic principle by which his father and most of the Puritan commonality studied always to live. Carlyle objected, as his contemporaries were often reminded, to the vanity of “phrase-making” in particular. There seemed to him something highly dishonest about the artist’s efforts to refine his utterance; it amounted, he believed, to an assertion of the possibility of human perfection. Not only was such quibbling self-congratulatory but, because its aim was illusory, it usurped time that might be spent upon practicable matters: “Learn to do it *honestly* . . . perfectly thou wilt never do it. . . . Time flies; while thou balancest a sentence, thou art nearer the *final Period*.129 Here, as in his advice to Sterling, Carlyle looks at the poetic talent not as a divine gift, but as the merely gratuitous interference of self with sense.

A larger number of Carlyle’s depreciations of literature manifest another Puritan bias; that is, a tendency to reproach the artist simply for mouthing “shams.” It should be remembered that the
Protestant apologist insists, as much as the empirical philosopher, upon the logical aspects of his system: he has an enormous, almost exclusive, respect for common sense. The roots of the Scottish dissenter's faith lie, after all, in the cogent, legalistic arguments of Calvin's *Institutes*. Believing as he does that "the facts of men aggrie with the laws of God," the devout Puritan naturally feels uneasy in the presence of "dreams and phantasms"—whether those of decadent artists or superstitious Catholics. Carlyle, like his father, often exhibits a low tolerance for fantasy. In the *Life of Schiller*, he ranks "the love of knowing things as they are" above the talent for "painting things as they should be." He sets in opposition—as the transcendentalist seldom would—the "love of truth" and the "dreamy scenes of the Imagination" and treats the former as a more "earnest," "calmer province."\(^{130}\) Again, in a letter to von Ense in 1842, Carlyle speaks pejoratively of art as "speculation" and claims there is "almost nothing of the so-called Poetry that I can bear to read at all."\(^{131}\) Earlier, in 1828, he projects something of the Puritan literalist's impatience with idealism when he writes to his brother that Goethe's ideas are "to redolent of twaddle."\(^{152}\) Certainly, Carlyle's scorn for the "hazy infinitudes" of Coleridge, in the eighth chapter of *Sterling* and an 1824 letter to John (previously cited), arises in part from his loyalty to the Calvinist instinct for fact. Another passage, from a letter to Sterling in 1842, announces unequivocally Carlyle's commitment to concrete realities:

> Of Dramatic Art, tho' I have eagerly listened to a Goethe speaking of it, and to several hundreds of other persons mumbling and trying to speak of it, I find that I, practically speaking, know yet almost as good as nothing. Indeed of *Art* generally (*Kunst* so-called) I can know almost nothing: my first and last secret of *Kunst*, is to get a thorough intelligence of the *fact* to be painted, represented, or in whatever way set forth.\(^{133}\)

Elsewhere, he speaks of the historian's craft as alone "authentic":
the act of “writing down many a thing that he with his own heart
and eyes has known.” Wordsworth’s sonnets, on the other hand,
strike him as “bewildered, benighted, ghost-ridden,” and aes-
thetic theories and poetry in general amount to a “jingle” of
“palabra” and “Nonsense.” That commonsensical impulse di-
rects Carlyle, in his lecture on the “Hero as Poet,” to qualify
Goethe’s declaration that “the beautiful is higher than the Good;
the Beautiful contains in it the Good.” As any down-to-earth Scott-
ish Calvinist, aware of the fallibility of our tastes might do, Carlyle
immediately appends a warning: “the true Beautiful; which how-
ever, I have said somewhere, ‘differs from the false as Heaven does
from Vauxhall!’” Of course, Carlyle thereby clouds his meaning,
but in doing so he displays openly the tension within him between
transcendental principles and Calvinist prejudices. His intermit-
tent exasperation with “untruths” often led him to make absurd
generalizations about literature. In two articles on Boswell’s Life
of Johnson, for example, he claims genuine literary merit for only
one work of art—the Iliad—and that solely on the basis of its
verisimilitude:

Fiction . . . has ever an, in some degree, unsatisfactory
character . . . the Epic Poems of old time, so long as they
continued epic, and had any complete impressiveness, were
Histories, and understood to be a narrative [sic] of facts. In
so far as Homer employed his gods as mere ornamental
fringes, and had not himself . . . a belief that they were
real agents in those antique doings; so far did he fail to be
genuine; so far was he a partially hollow and false
singer. . . . None but the earliest Epic Poems can claim
this distinction of entire credibility, of Reality; after an
Iliad . . . the rest seem by this rule of mine, to be alto-
gether excluded from the list. Accordingly, what are all the
rest, from Virgil’s Aeneid downwards, in comparison?
Frosty, artificial, heterogeneous things; more of gumflowers
than of roses; at the best, of the two mixed incoherently
together.
Although Carlyle has not lost entire faith in the Imagination, as the Puritan inevitably does, he has gone so far as to make individual fancy the merest gloss upon actuality. Such a shift in priorities, from subjective to objective criteria, would amount, for the Kantian idealist or the Romantic artist, to an abnegation of belief. Later, in the first of these essays, Carlyle does moderate his dissatisfaction with the arts, but he quickly returns to the need for factual truth:

Here and there, a *Tom Jones*, a *Meister*, a *Crusoe*, will yield no little solacement to the minds of men; though still immeasurably less than a *Reality* would, were the significance thereof as impressively unfolded. . . . Quitting these airy regions, let anyone bethink him how impressive the smallest *historical fact* may become, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious event*.

In the same review, Carlyle treats the high purposes of the transcendental artist in a manner that approaches outright condescension. "They are," he admits, "right in their precept, they mean rightly." What they fail to understand (unconverted as they are to Carlyle's regard for "facts") is "that History, after all, is the true Poetry. . . . that even in the right interpretation of Reality and History does genuine Poetry consist." Such a declaration of values recalls Carlyle's admiration for the "done Poem," his resolve to write as his father had built his houses, even his odd desire to "raise" Shakespeare to the stature of a politician. Only thus, by rededicating himself and his literary world to the truths of actual existence, did Carlyle believe he might be justified or forgiven by a Calvinist God.

The third Puritan influence revealed in Carlyle's antagonism toward literature—that of radical Hebraism—is the most insistent. Often, the dichotomy between art and action is clearly drawn and Carlyle's evaluation is explicit: "Homer will one day be swallowed up in time. . . . But actions will not be destroyed." At other times the work-ethic is implied by Carlyle's reliance upon "useful-
ness" or "practicability" as the measure of the worth of a man's invention. Judged by such a standard, imaginative literature naturally suffers in Carlyle's opinion: "There is a number, a frightfully increasing number, of books that are decidedly, to the readers of them, not useful." Literature, he warns, does not teach us "what is necessary to be known... [that is] faithful obedience, modesty, humility, and correct moral conduct." These last are precisely the virtues that every Scots Presbyterian, schooled in the stern disciplines of Old Testament logic, learned from an early age to revere. Out of a guarded silence, Carlyle contends, the individual acquires both humility and those principles of common sense that the orator and the artist consistently abuse. In his Edinburgh address, Carlyle longs for a "more practical and concrete way of working," doubts of "the salutary effect of vocal education altogether," and finally admonishes his audience to "keep out of literature... as a general rule." At other times, particularly in conversation, he upbraids poets and critics for their passivity and "uselessness": Novalis seems "womanish" in his idleness; Goethe would have been better employed "if he had done something"; Tennyson appears "distinctly rather wearisome; nothing coming from him that [does] not smack of utter indolence, what one might almost call torpid sleepiness and stupor"; Coleridge's writing is "vague and purposeless"; Lamb "had no practical sense in him"; Shelley was simply "a poor shrieking creature who had said or sung nothing worth a serious man being at the trouble of remembering"; and Wordsworth was "essentially a cold, hard, silent practical man, who, if he had not fallen into poetry, would have done effectual work of some sort in the world." Again, in his published histories, he argues that human wisdom ought not to be judged through this "idle element of speaking," ought not to depend upon "a thing of vocables"; rather, let us strive "to develop a man into doing something." At such times, Carlyle believes with Calvin that labor, not thought, is our prime duty in a fallen world. He does, of course, occasionally imply, in letters to his brother and a few scattered essays, that after we have rid ourselves of error and
sin there will be opportunities to “sing and paint,” to dwell in art’s imagined ideal. Literary men, it seems, have value even to Carlyle as Puritan, but it is a value much diminished by their “want of force.” They may prove, perhaps, more than a noisy crew; they may yet entertain an enlightened humanity; but “at present” it behooves the earnest soul “to be shy [of them] rather than otherwise.” After all, “To speak, to write, Nature did not peremptorily order thee; but to work she did.”

“The Speakable,” the “written Poem,” are indeed of some ornamental consequence to Carlyle, but the “Doable,” the “done work,” are of infinitely greater moment: they alone tell us “whatsoever of strength the man had in him.” Carlyle writes contemptuously in his early notebooks of “female geniuses,” men who invariably have “a taste for Poetry,” and whose minds “admire and receive, but can hardly create.”

Again he exhibits the Calvinist’s blind spot—an inability to conceive of creation in any but the physical sense. In a letter to Jane in 1845 and one to Browning a few years later, Carlyle complains that literature consists of “little other than a Newspaper,” for it is at best a reporting of deeds, a reminiscence of action. To another correspondent, he declares his open envy of the “true workman” and his personal disappointment with the fruits of a literary career:

It is a real blessing for a man that lives by tilling of the soil! Were it ugly as sin, every stroke of good labour you bestow on it, will make the place beautifuller;—what “beauty” is there in Fairyland itself compared with the aspect of order produced out of disorder by one’s own faithful toil? That is the real beauty that will make a man feel some reconcilement to his ugly lot, however ugly it look.

Gavan Duffy recalls a conversation with Carlyle in which he indulged, with complete candor, that same Hebraic vision of imaginative writing: “Modern literature was all purposeless and distracted, and led he knew not where. Its professors were on the wrong path just now, and he believed the world would soon discover that some practical work done was worth innumerable
Carlyle questioned the value of art in a world where there were yet enormous practical improvements to be made: in his journal, he considers, sympathetically, the active alternatives to his present way of life:

Meanwhile, what [is] the true duty of man? Were it to stand utterly aloof from politics . . . or is not perhaps the very want of this time an infinite want of Governors, of knowledge how to govern itself? Canst thou in any measure spread abroad reverence over the hearts of men? . . . Is it to be done by art? or are men's minds as yet shut to art, and open only at best to oratory?  

Here, even before the deaths of Goethe or his own father, Carlyle suspects the effectiveness of art; later these misgivings led him to endorse the dogmatism of the Hebrew prophets and the brutality of “drill-sargeants.” But his early sentiments, moderate as they appear, nonetheless parallel those of the orthodox Puritan, for both strip literature of contemporary relevance and tend to dismiss it as “a little Recreation” in the midst of serious, unfantastical concerns.  

Carlyle’s unhappiness with literature deepened as he aged and had obviously reached a critical stage when he divulged, in an 1835 letter to his mother, his plans to abandon writing for politics:

I have grave doubts about . . . books in general, for all is in the uttermost confusion in that line of business here. . . . There are some two or even three outlooks opening on me unconnected with books. One of these regards the business of national education which Parliament is now busy upon, in which I mean to try all my strength to get something to do, for my conscience greatly approves of the work as useful.  

Although his momentary determination came to nothing, Carlyle continued for many years “to try all [his] strength to get something
to do." When the last realistic opportunities for that had passed, he persisted in advising everyone young enough to choose, to rededicate himself to a practical livelihood. This Scots Calvinist bias in favor of an active, externally directed life figures prominently in a letter from Carlyle to a literary aspirant in 1847:

[You are] not by any means to quit the solid paths of practical business for these inane froth oceans which, however gas-lighted they may be, are essentially what I have called them somewhere, base as Fleet Ditch, the mother of dead dogs. Surely it is better for a man to work out his God-given faculty than merely to speak it out, even in the most Augustan times.¹⁶²

In his reference to the need for toil even in "Augustan" eras, Carlyle seems to deny to literature a legitimate function in any epoch, however stable or just. There is no question that Carlyle's discouragement with his own idleness was, at times, profound. He writes despairingly to Forster in 1870: "My life [is a] dwelling mainly . . . in the vague, in the cloudy and (to practical purposes) mournful and inane. I read 3 or 4 hours daily; goodish Books . . . though of what use it is . . . I could not in the least explain to myself or another."¹⁶³ Yet work, for Carlyle and for the Calvinist, is not simply desirable on the grounds of utility. It has another purpose, for it alone "reduces us to submission" and acquaints us with the necessary miseries of our corrupt condition. In the postlapsarian world, imaginative creation, unlike "true" labor, does not entail sufficient suffering to offset the natural depravity of men. Carlyle implies as much in a journal entry for February 1848:

Neither does Art, etc., in the smallest hold out with me. In fact, that concern has all gone down with me, like ice too thin on a muddy pond. I do not believe in 'Art'—nay, I do believe it to be one of the deadliest cants. . . . In brief, nothing is—but by labour, which we call sorrow, misery, etc. Thou must gird up thy loins again and work another stroke or two before thou die.¹⁶⁴
Work, then, constitutes, for Carlyle and the orthodox Puritan, an expiation of guilt. Doggedness, in both cases, is often overlaid with morbidity; and like the Calvinist, Carlyle takes an almost masochistic pleasure in the wretchedness of his tasks. Although denied the exquisite sufferings of the laboring poor, he attempts, in later life, to compensate for his "sinful" good fortune by applying himself to scholarly projects that are basically joyless. He admits, for example, that he has no real enthusiasm for writing *Frederick*, yet one suspects from numerous letters that he hoped, by continually fronting a loathsome subject, to earn some measure of forgiveness from the spirit of his father. The effort to complete the eight-volume history, he tells Forster in 1861, "has fairly broken my heart" and excels all other activities "in disgusting bother . . . and discouragement"; nonetheless, he will "compel" himself to finish it, following the "true example" of his father's perseverance in all things. In such a context, literary practice has no intrinsic significance for Carlyle; it serves only as a hair shirt.

At about the same time Carlyle was finishing *Frederick*, he spoke to Froude of his disillusionment with the arts. As Froude recalls the monologue, Carlyle based his antipathy upon Hebraic principles, upon his own unfulfilled longing to work as his father had worked. The passage is remarkably close, in language and in temper, to the sketch he had written of James Carlyle thirty years earlier. The sentiments are straightforwardly Calvinistic and include a nagging suspicion of the honesty and humility of artists:

A "man of letters" . . . was generally someone who had gone into it because he was unfit for better work, because he was too vain or too self-willed to travel along the beaten highways, and his writing, unless he was one of a million, began and ended in nothing. Life was action, not talk. The speech, the book, the review or newspaper article was so much force expended—force lost to practical usefulness. . . . He once said to me that England had produced her greatest men before she began to have a literature at all. A man . . . was made better by being trained in habits of industry, by being
enabled to do good useful work and earn an honest living by it. . . . "If there be one thing," he said, "for which I have no special talent, it is literature. If I had been taught to do the simplest useful thing, I should have been a better and a happier man." 167

1. Essays, II, 2. In an article on Scott nine years later, Carlyle repeats, almost verbatim, his objections to "amusing" literature. See Essays, IV, 76. Carlyle detested writers who appealed only to the sensations—what he called the "stomach"; he writes in such a vein to Forster on 11 April 1853: "That was a capital article on Smith, the new "Poet" they [the Times] have discovered! . . . In his present course he seems to be but proclaiming, in an eloquent manner, that his stomach is bottomless . . . I, for my own solitary share, am inexpressibly wearied of all that" (from an unpublished letter in the Forster Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum, III, no. 175).

2. Essays, II, 380.

3. Journal extract in Froude, First Forty Years, II, 130–31. Despite the many years Jeffrey had spent reviewing poetry, he did give occasional evidence of what Carlyle called his "prose spirit." See especially his review of Wilhelm Meister in 1825, in which he labels Goethe's ideas "unclassical," "heretical," and lost in "the region of mysticism." The book, he says, amounts to a jumble "of misty metaphysics, and superstitious visions . . . [with which] it would be a baseness to be acquainted" (Contributions to the Edinburgh Review, pp. 120–42).

4. Essays, II, 175.

5. Unfinished History of German Literature, p. 11.


12. GR, II, 18–19.


14. SR, p. 57. See also Essays, IV, 478.


16. LS, p. 78.


19. PP, p. 36.

20. SR, pp. 138, 158.
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22. Essays, II, 442.
23. SR, p. 209.
25. Ibid., II, 369–70.
27. Unfinished History of German Literature, p. 87.
29. Essays, II, 133.
30. Science of Knowledge, p. 129. See also above, p. 111 n. 117.
33. Essays, I, 244. Compare Midsummer Night's Dream, V.i.12–17.
34. Essays, I, 208.
35. Ibid., III, 41.
36. WM, I, 29.
37. Essays, I, 255.
38. Unfinished History of German Literature, p. 12.
39. GR, I, 266.
40. Froude, First Forty Years, II, 294.
41. Ibid., p. 213.
42. GR, I, 266.
43. Essays, II, 29.
44. Froude, First Forty Years, II, 359.
45. Ibid., p. 294.
46. GR, I, 266; and Sterling, p. 156.
47. Allingham, A Diary, p. 263.
48. Ibid., p. 264. See also Meredith's sonnet "On a starred night Prince Lucifer arose."
49. Essays, II, 185.
50. Ibid., p. 289.
51. Unfinished History of German Literature, p. 87.
52. SR, p. 178.
55. GR, II, 125.
56. Heroes, p. 81.
57. MSB Letters, pp. 297–98.
58. The particular reverence of the transcendentalist for the literary man carries over into the American school. See especially Emerson's essays "Nature" and "The Poet."
60. Essays, II, 437.
61. Ibid., I, 225. Carlyle says much the same thing in his 1832 article, "Death of Goethe." See Essays, I, 377.
63. Ibid., II, 142.
64. Ibid., p. 159.
65. Sterling, p. 266.
67. Lectures, p. 205.
68. Essays, II, 375.
69. Ibid., p. 407.
70. PP, p. 86.
71. Note Books, p. 140.
73. Undated letter, Forster Collection, XIV, no. 251. My approximate date of 1841, based upon internal evidence, is conjectural.
74. Essays, I, 427.
75. Ibid., p. 425.
76. Ibid., pp. 454, 452.
77. Ibid., pp. 448-49.
78. Ibid., III, 111.
79. Ibid., p. 112.
80. Ibid., pp. 110-11.
81. Ibid., IV, 54.
82. Ibid., p. 38.
83. Ibid., p. 35.
84. Ibid., p. 75.
85. Ibid., pp. 36, 37.
86. Ibid., pp. 35-36.
87. Ibid., p. 85.
88. Ibid., III, 242, 244.
89. Ibid., pp. 234-35, 228.
90. Ibid., pp. 227-28.
91. For Carlyle's evaluation of Diderot's philosophy, see ibid., pp. 232-34.
92. Ibid., p. 234.
93. Ibid., pp. 84-85.
94. For orthodox views on this aspect of literary influence, see Murdock, Literature and Theology in Colonial New England, pp. 31-65.
95. New Letters, II, 266.
96. Essays, III, 49.
97. Ibid., V, 359-60.
98. Sterling, pp. 174-75.
101. P. 165.
103. Ibid., p. 24.
104. For a comparison of these passages, see letter, quoted above, p. 29.
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid., pp. 159, 169.
111. Ibid., II, 52.
112. Ibid., V, 351-52.
113. *Note Books*, facsimile letter appended to final page.
117. Ibid., pp. 320-21.
118. Ibid., p. 322.
119. Ibid., p. 323.
120. Ibid., p. 326.
121. Mrs. Tillotson has aptly described this sort of terminology as the "dismissive plural," in a lecture delivered at the University of London, winter, 1968. Some other examples: "Puseyisms"; "Scoundrel Protection Societies" (prisons); "Talking-Apparatuses" (the Houses of Parliament).
122. *LDP*, p. 326.
123. Ibid., p. 327.
124. Compare this to Carlyle's earlier scorn for politics, quoted above, p. 162.
125. *LDP*, p. 327.
129. *Note Books*, p. 265.
130. *LS*, p. 84.
134. Ibid., p. 283.
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135. Ibid., p. 250.
137. Heroes, pp. 81-82.
139. It is particularly appropriate that Carlyle should appreciate the works of Defoe, since both men not only place a high value on prosaic realism in literature but share, as well, a lifelong enthusiasm for the Presbyterian cause.
140. Essays, III, 52, 54.
141. Ibid., p. 78.
142. Ibid., p. 79.
143. Lectures, p. 72.
144. Essays, IV, 465.
145. Ibid., p. 470.
146. Ibid.
147. Ibid., pp. 478, 471, 481.
148. According to a conversation he held with John Tyndall, Carlyle wished for Goethe the same political destiny he had elsewhere hoped for Shakespeare: "Goethe's life as a writer he considered a tragic one. Such a man ought to have room to act in the world. I retorted that writing was really action. He replied it was a poor species of action, . . . Such a soul ought to have governed Germany; he ought to have been King of Germany." Recalled by Tyndall in a letter to Hirst, May 1855; see Eve and Creasey, The Life and Works of John Tyndall, pp. 74-75.
149. To John Carlyle, 15 November 1873, New Letters, II, 301.
150. Duffy, Conversations with Carlyle, pp. 59, 86, 63, 55.
151. HFG, I, 434.
152. There is a curious parallel between these sentiments of Carlyle and those of Tennyson in "The Palace of Art," especially lines 245-56 and 293-96.
153. LDP, p. 212.
155. Note Books, pp. 188-89.
159. In Froude, First Forty Years, II, 210-11.
160. Again, in his journal for 1831, he wonders about the efficacy of art "in this late era" (ibid., p. 214).
162. Ibid., p. 441.
165. Six volumes as originally published, 1858-65.
166. Unpublished letter, Forster Collection, XXIV, no. 119.