

**GREATNESS IN
LITERATURE,
AND OTHER PAPERS**

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Greatness in literature, and other papers by W. P. Trent

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BY

W. P. TRENT

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
AUTHOR OF "SOUTHERN STATESMEN OF THE OLD
RÉGIME," "THE AUTHORITY OF
CRITICISM," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

THIS volume might have been described as a collection of literary addresses rather than of "papers," since far the larger portion of its contents was prepared for delivery on academic occasions. Everything, however, has been somewhat altered for publication, whether here or in the magazines from which I have been kindly allowed to reprint some articles; hence I have adopted the rather non-committal term "papers." I could not bring myself to employ that delightful and alluring word "essays," because that connotes to my mind a discursive charm which, perhaps, I could not impart to any composition, and which I certainly did not try to impart to most of the writings here collected. In every case except the last paper I was pursuing, successfully or unsuccessfully, a line of thought rather than loitering in the highways and byways of appreciative criticism. This fact, or what I think to be a fact, seemed at least not obscured by the

use of the term "papers," whereas, if I had employed the term "essays," I should have run the risk of beguiling some readers not acquainted with my idiosyncratic deficiencies into supposing that they were taking up a book designed primarily to give them pleasure. I should be delighted to give pleasure, and I sincerely hope I shall give no pain; but my main object is to discuss certain topics with all the readers I can secure, especially with those who like myself are interested in the problems that confront the critic and the teacher of literature. But now, having done my best to warn off any reader who is on the lookout for true essays and to indicate the class of persons likely, if any are, to find something to their account in my volume, I leave that newcomer into the world of books to take care of itself.

W. P. TRENT.

NEW YORK,
March 11, 1905.

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I

THE QUESTION OF
"GREATNESS IN LITERATURE"