CUS417/6.14

Characteristics

~~Politics~~

W.O. in Publics!!

As Leslie Stephen says (Hours in a Library) of Sir Thomas Browne

"He would have been hopelessly out of place on the floor of the Senate, stirring men's patriotism or sense of right; for half his sympathy would always be with the Opposition. He could not have moved the tears of the devotional rhetoric of congregations for he too vivid a sense that every dogma is true only in some far incalculable asymptote. Strong convictions are needed for the ordinary controversial successes, and his favorite point of view is the centre from which all convictions radiate and all become equally probable. But then instead of swallowing it all he sympathizes with all, and expresses the one sentiment ~~that~~ which results from their collision – the sentiment of humanity blended with scepticism. "It is a contradictory sentiment, one may say, in a sense, but the essence of humour is to be contradictory." ~~etc~~ etc.

Also these things are quite true of W.O. Humour never strong enough to set against his sense of fair play, and his charity the other fellow's foibles & failings would have made him unsuccessful as the great leader of a cause.

It has been familiar to see one that great leader of men & women perhaps one of the greatest revolutionary weighers – ~~Lincoln~~ Lincoln – have been conspicuous with a sense of humour.

W.O. like J.B., had "a disposition absolutely incapable of controversial bitterness"

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