

Authors of the second class, who postpone their thinking until they begin to write, are like a sportsman who goes out at random--he is not likely to bring home very much. While the writing of an author of the third, the rare class, is like a chase where the game has been captured beforehand and cooped up in some enclosure from which it is afterwards set free, so many at a time, into another enclosure, where it is not possible for it to escape, and the sportsman has now nothing to do but to aim and fire--that is to say, put his thoughts on paper. This is the kind of sport which yields something.

But although the number of those authors who really and seriously think before they write is small, only extremely few of them think about \_the subject itself\_; the rest think only about the books written on this subject, and what has been said by others upon it, I mean. In order to think, they must have the more direct and powerful incentive of other people's thoughts. These become their next theme, and therefore they always remain under their influence and are never, strictly speaking, original. On the contrary, the former are roused to thought through the \_subject itself\_, hence their thinking is directed immediately to it. It is only among them that we find the authors whose names become immortal. Let it be understood that I am speaking here of writers of the higher branches of literature, and not of writers on the method of distilling brandy.