

burn and illumine—even as beacon lights before the eyes. Such a person can find a pleasure in comparing one people with another, in contrasting one epoch with the next, in ranking in their proper places those who soared above the littleness of each century and that appear above its hidden splendour, as the remains of the stately pillars, and gorgeous fanes which issue forth from the lava-covered ruins of Pompeii, the sole relics of despoiled magnificence for the traveller's eye to contemplate.

A coin is an index, a guide, a light, a real teacher, a powerful auxiliary to the study of the past. Coins are not to be laughed at, the study of coins is not to be despised, those who take the trouble of collecting coins are to be admired and thanked by all who have an interest in the past, We cannot live altogether in the present. As for the future we cannot touch upon it—all is uncertain in that direction. Then there remains merely the past into which the mind can wander for relief. The past is certain; it is there and cannot be changed. We have now seen, in an imperfect and rapid manner, how connected are those links which bind us to the past. The main link, the principal chain formed by documents: the next built up by monumental piles; the third composed of coins. There yet remains a fourth link, more powerful than any of those heretofore mentioned. This fourth branch consists of the *ballads* and *songs* of the different countries. There is no country, neither was there ever a country that had not its music, its songs, its ballads, its poems, its bards and its poets. From the minstrel king of Israel to the hoary bards of the Celts, in every age and every land the bard was the historian as well as the poet of the people.

In conclusion we would beg of all those who desire to study the past to bear in mind that their truest friends and aids are the *coins of the world*.