

From Miss Martineau's Society in America.

LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES.

"The more (she says) one sees of the people, and the less of their books, the stronger grows the hope of the stranger. * * *

"The best productions of American Literature are in my opinion, the tales and sketches in which the habits and manners of the people of the country are delineated with exactness, with impartiality of temper, and without much regard to the picturesque. Such are the tales of Judge Hall of Cincinnati. Such are the tales by the author of 'Swallow Barn'; where, however, there is the addition of a good deal of humour, and a subtraction of some of the truth. Miss Sedgwick's tales are of the highest order of the three, from the moral beauty which they breathe. This moral beauty is of a much finer character than the *bonhomme* which is the charm of Irving's pictures of manners. She sympathises where he good-naturedly observes; she cheerily loves where he gently quizzes. Miss Sedgwick's novels have this moral beauty too, as has every thing she touches: but they have great and irretrievable faults, as works of art. Tale-writing is her forte: and in this vocation, no one who has observed her striking progression will venture to say what she may not achieve. Among the host of tales which appear without the names of their authors are three, which strike me as excellent in their several ways: 'Allen Prescott,' containing the history of a New England boy, drawn to the life, and in a just and amiable spirit: 'The New England Housekeeper,' in which the *menage* of a rising young lawyer with its fresh joys and ludicrous perplexities is humorously exhibited; and 'Memoirs of a New England village Choir,' a sketch of even higher merit. Irving's writing have had their meed. He has lived in the sunshine of fame for many years, and in the pleasant consciousness that he has been a benefactor to the present generation, by shedding some gentle, benignant, and beguiling influences on many intervals of their rough and busy lives. More than this he has probably not expected: and more than this he does not seem likely to achieve. If any of his works live, it will be his 'Columbus;' and the later of his productions will be the first forgotten. Cooper's novels have a very puny vitality. Some descriptions of scenery, and some insulated adventures, have great merit: but it is not human life that he presents. His female characters are far from human; and in his selections of the chances of mortal existence, he usually chooses the remote-st. He has a vigour of perception and conception, which might have made him, with study and discipline, a great writer. As it is, he is, I believe, regarded as a much-regretted failure. The Americans have a poet. Bryant has not done any thing like what he can and will do: but he has done some things that will live. Those of his poems which are the best known, or the most quoted, are smooth, sweet, faithful descriptions of nature, such as his own imagination delights in. I shall always remember the voice and manner with which he took up a casual remark of mine, about sights to be seen in the pine-barrens. When the visitors had all departed, his question, 'And what of the pine-barrens?' revealed the spirit of the poet. Of his poems of this class, 'The Evening Wind' is to me the most delicious. But others—'The Past,' and 'Thanatopsis'—indicate another kind, and a higher degree of power. If he would live for his gifts, if his future years could be devoted to 'clear poetical activity,' 'looking up,' like the true artist, 'to his dignity and his calling,' that dignity and that calling may prove to be as lofty as they, no doubt, appeared in the reveries of his boyhood; and he may be listened to as lovingly over the expanse of future time, as he already is over that of the ocean. The Americans have also a historian of promise. Mr. Bancroft's 'History of the United States' is little more than begun: but the beginning is characterised by an impartial and benevolent spirit, and by the indications which it affords of the author's fidelity to democratic principles; the two primary requisites in a historian of the republic. The carrying on the work to a completion will be a task of great toil and anxiety; but it will be a most important benefit to society at large if it fulfils its promise. The periodical literature of the United States is of a very low order. I know of no review where any thing like impartial, enlightened criticism, is to be found. The *North American Review* had once some reputation in England; but it has sunk at home and abroad, less from want of talent than of principle. If it has any principle whatever at present, it seems to be to praise every book it mentions, and to fall in as dexterously as possible with popular prejudice. The *American Quarterly*, published at Philadelphia, is uninteresting from the triteness of its morals, and a general dearth of thought, amidst a good deal of cleverness. The *Southern Review*, published at Charleston—some time ago discontinued, but, I believe, lately renewed—is the best specimen of periodical literature that the country has afforded. After the large deductions rendered necessary by the faults of southern temper, this review maintains its place above the rest; a rank which I believe, undisputed."

PALEY'S NATURAL THEOLOGY.

"It is philosophy in its highest and noblest sense; scientific without the jargon of science; profound but so clear that its depth is disguised. There is nothing of the 'budge Dutch' here; speculations, which will convince, if caught will, that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; are made familiar as household words. They are brought home to the experience of every man, the most ordinary observer on the facts of nature with which he is daily conversant. A thicker clothing, for instance, is provided in winter for that tribe of animals which are covered with fur. Now, in these days, such an assertion would be backed by an appeal to some learned Rabbi of a Zoological Society, who had written a deep pamphlet, upon what he would probably call the *Theory of Hair*. But to whom does Paley refer us? To any dealer in rabbit skins. The curious contrivance in the bones of birds, to unite strength with lightness, is noticed. The hore is larger, in proportion to the weight of the bone, than in other animals; it is empty; the substance of the bone itself is of a closer texture. For these facts, any operative, would quote Sir Everard Home or Professor Cuvier, by way of giving a sort of philosophical eclat to the affair, and throwing a little learned dust in the eyes of the public. Paley, however, advises you to make your own observations when you happen to be engaged in the scientific operation of picking the leg or wing of a chicken. The very singular correspondence between the two sides of any animal, the right hand answering to the left, and so on, is touched upon, as a proof of a contriving creator; and a very striking one it is. Well! we have a long and abstruse problem in chances worked out to show that it was so many millions, and so many odd thousands to one, that accident could not have produced the phenomenon: not a bit of it. Paley (who was probably scratching his head at the moment) offers no other confirmation of his assertion, than that it is the most difficult thing in the world to get a wig made even, seldom as it is that the face is made awry. The circulation of the blood and the provision for its getting from the heart to the extremities, and back again, affords a singular demonstration of the Maker of the body being an admirable Master both of mechanics and hydrostatics. But what is the language in which Paley talks of 'his process?'—technical—that mystical nomenclature of Dioscorus which frightens country patients out of their wits, thinking as they very naturally do, that a disease must be very horrid which involves such very horrid names? Hear our anatomist. "The aorta of a whale is larger in the bore than the main-pipe of the water-works at London Bridge; and the roaring in the passage through that pipe is inferior, in impetus and velocity, to the blood gushing from the whale's heart." He cares not whence he fetches his illustrations, provided they are to the purpose. The laminae of the feathers of birds are kept together by teeth that hook into one another, 'as a latch enters into the catch and fastens a door.' The eyes of the mole are protected by being very small, and buried deep in a cushion of skin, so that the apertures leading to them are like pin-holes in a piece of velvet, scarcely pervious to loose particles of earth. The snail without wings, feet, or thread, adheres to a stalk by a provision of sticking-plaster. The lobster as he grows, is furnished with a way of uncasing himself of his buckler, and drawing his legs out of his boots, when they become too small for him. In this unambitious manner does Paley prosecute his high theme, drawing, as it were, philosophy from the clouds.—*Quarterly Review*.

PHRENOLOGY.—Meeting a votary of this science one day at a bookseller's, he began to expatiate on its beauties. From theory he proceeded to practice, by making an analysis of my bumps. Tired of the manifestation, I turned him over to the head of the bookseller, who was standing by, professing to be a better judge of another man's qualities than of my own. Now, this bookseller was a singularly devout man, and the phrenologist instinctively sought the bump of veneration, as the other bowed his head for him to feel it. The moment the finger of the phrenologist touched the head, however, I saw that something was wrong and I had the curiosity to put my own hand to the skull. In the spot where there should have been a bump, according to the theory, there was positively a hollow. I looked at the phrenologist, and the phrenologist looked at me. At this moment the bookseller was called away by a customer, and I said to my acquaintance, "Well, what do you say to that?" "Say! that I have no faith in the fellow's religion."—*Cooper's England*.

STATISTICS WORTH KNOWING.—In G. Britain, says the Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, the number of individuals in a state to bear arms, from the age of fifteen to sixty, is 2,744,847. The number of marriages is about 98,030 yearly; and it has been remarked, that in sixtythree of these unions there were only three which had no issue. The number of deaths is about 332,708 yearly, which makes nearly 25,592 monthly, 6,398 weekly, 914 daily, and 40 hourly. The deaths among the women are in proportion to those of the men as 50 to 54. The married wo-

men live longer than those who continue in celibacy. In the country, the mean term of the number of children produced by each marriage is four; in towns, the proportion is 7 for every 2 marriages. The number of married women is to the general number of individuals of the sex as 1 to 3; and the number of married men to that of all the individuals of the male sex as 3 to 5. The number of widows is to that of widowers as three to one; but the number of widows who marry again is to that of widowers in the same case as seven to four. The individuals who inhabit elevated situations live longer than those who reside in less elevated places. The half of the individuals die before attaining the age of seventeen years. The number of twins is to that of ordinary births as 1 to 65. According to calculations founded upon the bills of mortality, one individual only in 3,126 attains the age of 100 years. The number of births of the male sex is to that of the female sex as 96 to 95.

THE PEARL.

HALIFAX SATURDAY, SEPT. 23, 1837.

AUTUMN.—The youthful spring has many charms for man—summer suns are pleasant and cheering—and winter with his ice-chained waters and frozen breath is not without its delights—but the mellowed autumn is our favorite season. Yes, autumn with its yellow corn, its ripened fruits, its teeming granaries, and its harvest home, we greatly love and admire. In the spring when we behold the husbandman going forth to his labour, scattering the precious seed on the newly-tilled soil, we feel a portion of his anxiety as to the ultimate result of his arduous toils—his is the painful conviction that all his labours may be destroyed by blasting, by mildew, by insects, and a variety of other casualties, and perplexity settles on his brow. Not so in the autumn—industry now gathers its full reward—the heart of the labourer thrills with gladness as his sickle cuts the loaded grain—with the abundant treasures of the earth before him he rejoices, and we are the partakers of his joy. Our sympathy with human nature in its griefs and joys is one great reason for our preference of this delightful season. To see the countenance of others brightened up with contentment and gratitude awakens within us emotions of a most pleasing nature.

To behold others happy, augments our own enjoyment. But man is not alone in his rejoicing, nature rejoices also in the autumn. It is the time of her smiles. She clothes herself in the drapery of gladness—she speaks in accents of kindness and causes the hills and the vales to become vocal with praise. With what inimitable simplicity of language does the royal poet of Israel, expatiate on the triumphs of autumn:

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it;
Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of
God which is full of water:
Thou preparest them corn, when thou hast
so provided for it.
Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly;
Thou settlest the furrows thereof;
Thou makest it soft with showers;
Thou blessest the springing thereof.
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness,
And thy paths drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness;
And the little hills rejoice on every side.
The pastures are clothed with flocks;
The valleys also are covered over with corn;
They shout for joy, they also sing.

Yes, it is now the fields are joyful and all the trees of the wood rejoice. Nature now puts forth all her luxuriance and glory—the perfection of her hand is visible in every thing she touches. How beautiful the smiling fruit! How lovely the appearance of the waving corn! How exquisite the garniture of nature, thus seen in its fulness of perfection! Who would not love the Autumn? But the autumn of 1837 how eloquently it speaks of the love and faithfulness of God. He has promised that 'whilst the earth remaineth, seed-time, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.' The present month is the fulfilment of the word of the Most High. Already it has dispersed the fears of many and revived hope in the breasts of thousands in this province. What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits? we trust and believe has been the general inquiry. May we be permitted to suggest that as the