

ren. It is productive of sorrow rather than delight, and unless some principle is involved, they are ready to waive all objections they have, and find delight in coinciding with others.

But the man to whom I have referred, "delighted to be contrary." It was not with him a difference of opinion growing out of the decisions of his own judgment, nor a matter of principle, but something pertaining to his very nature; if not that, it is the result of a long-cherished and deeply-rooted habit. Whether he descended from Ishmael, of whom it was predicted, "his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him," I cannot tell; but certain it is, that he rarely agrees with others in opinion, and when he does, he seems to be uneasy and dissatisfied. Even projects of his own proposing, he would be tired of soon, if others favored those projects. I really believe the man never was happy when his views corresponded with the views of others. And how he could read the passage, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and believe it inspired, I never could conceive.

But the influence of such a man in a church is most trying and mischievous. The religious effect of many a church-meeting, that otherwise would be pleasant, is destroyed, for his objections to what is introduced are not founded upon reason, or made with a christian spirit, but for the most part are mere whims, and presented in an unamiable manner. I hope other churches have no such among their members. If they have, I hereby extend to them my heartfelt sympathy. I do not expect christians to be perfect in all respects, and have much charity for their imperfections. Upon the whole I can get along peaceably with those who have only the ordinary frailties of our humanity, but I pray that I may not have any church connection with one who delights to be contrary.—*Zion's Advocate.*

FOREST LEAVES.

I take increasing delight, on these mountain rambles, in studying the symmetry and varieties of the forest leaves, to learn Nature's wealth of resources as to graceful form, within narrow boundaries. An eye that is sensitive to the grace of curves, and parabolas, and oval swells, will marvel at the feast which a day's walk in the woods will supply from the 'rees, the grasses, and the weeds, in the varying outlines, and notchings, and veinings, and edgings of leaves. They stand for the art of sculpture in botany, representing more of the intellectual delight of nature in form, as the flowers express rather the companion art of painting. Leaves are the Greek, flowers the Italian phase of the plastic genius that works through the flora of the world.

I do not know any kind of museum that would attract me more than an exhaustive collection of leaves. Would it not be a privilege that would unseal, in some measure, the duller eye, to look, in one day, over the whole scale of nature's foliage-art, from the feathery spray of the moss to the tough texture on the Amazon lily's stem, that will float a burden of a hundred weight;—from the bristles of the pine tree to the Ceylon palm-leaf that will shield a family with its shade? Would it not astonish us into something like reverent admiration, if we could see how the general geometry of verdure is broken into ten thousand patterns; if we could sweep the gradations of nature's green, as it is distilled from arctic and temperate and tropic light, and varied by some shade on every leaf that grows; if we could scan all the textures of the drapery woven out of

salts and water in botanic looms, from the softest silk of the corn to the broad tissue of the banana's stalk; if we could see displayed in wide masses all the hues in which autumn dyes the leaves of our own forests, as though every square mile had been steeped in the aerial juices of a gorgeous sunset?—To say nothing of the natural theology that is exhaled from these lungs of the vegetable world, would not the forms into which the foliage of the plant is broken, and the marvellous subtilty of the tints it reveals, make a museum of leaves as engaging a school for the education of the intellect, as a collection of all vertebrate, or a representative conservatory of the globe?—*Boston Transcript.*

DISCREPANCIES OF HISTORY.

When Sir Robert Walpole, so long prime minister of England, was sick, and his son proposed to read for him, he answered, "read anything but history." For in history he had no faith. He had lived too long behind the scenes, and seen how rarely the real motives of the actors in history were recorded, to believe in what is commonly called history.

Walpole's age was a profligate one, and he may have been too skeptical as to history in general; but there is sufficient truth in his opinion to teach men caution in studying history. Who can doubt that, if the story of the Punic wars had come down to us as narrated by a Carthaginian, it would have differed, in many material points, from that told by the Roman writers? Even in our time the character of the first Napoleon has been painted, by different authors, in every variety of shade, from the hero to the charlatan, from the patriot to the tyrant. To this day, there are Americans who believe that Jefferson was an atheist, a scoundrel, and a coward, while others as falsely consider his great rival, John Adams, to have been a despot, if not a fool. If, with every facility at hand for ascertaining the truth, men commit such errors, what mistakes must not history fall into, when that history is written generations, or even centuries after.

A striking illustration of the blunders into which even careful writers may fall, is presented by the narrative of the sack of St. Quentin, as told by two late authors. St. Quentin was a fortified town on the borders of France, which was captured by the Spaniards three centuries ago. Prescott tells us, in his "Life of Philip the Second," that after the town was taken, Philip's heart was so melted by the spectacle of its being put to sack, that he interfered, took some of the women under his protection, and afterwards sent them into France for safety. Motley, in his spirited "Rise of the Dutch Republic," says, on the contrary, that Philip did not interfere, but permitted the plunder, the confiscation, the murder, and the ravishing to go on: and that when the soldiers had been glutted, when nearly every mail defender of the place had been slain, he drove the women of the place, as reluctant exiles, over the border, into France. Yet both historians cannot be right, yet both have a reputation for careful research and impartial candor. Either Prescott or Motley has been misled by partisan documents. The illustration teaches, however, not that no history is trustworthy, but that history should be cautiously read, at least by all who wish to avoid falling into the most egregious mistakes.

The history of the War of Independence furnishes another example of a singular character. As at first written, it was too highly colored by the fierce animosities of the struggle, so that, in the earlier writers, royalist is synonymous with tyrant, and tory with traitor. Yet there can be no question that many