

has been repressed, in order to make room for the most servile imitation; and every national attempt to develop an original character has been sacrificed to the reproduction of something conformable to the model which has been always before its eyes."

This is certainly true of us, since we not only adopt the English view of everything, but confine ourselves to the very subjects and imagery which have become consecrated to us by love and habit. Not to enter into the general subject of our disposition to parrotism, our neglect of Indian material in particular may be in part accounted for, by our having become acquainted with the aborigines after the most unpoetical fashion, in trying to cheat them out of their lands, or shooting them when they declined being cheated; they, in their turn, driven to the resource of the weak and the ignorant, counterplotting us, and taking, by means of blood and fire, what we would not give them in fair compensation. This has made our business relations very unpleasant; and everybody knows that when this becomes the case, it is hard for parties to do justice to each other's good or available qualities. If we had only read about the Indians, as a people living in the mountain-fastnesses of Greece, or the broad plains of Transylvania, we should without difficulty have discovered the romantic elements of their character. But as the effect of remoteness is produced by time as well as distance, it is surely worth while to treasure up their legends for our posterity, who will justly consider us very selfish, if we throw away what will be a treasure to them, merely because we cannot or will not use it ourselves.

A prominent ground of the slight regard in which the English hold American literature, or at least one of the most plausible reasons given for it, is our want of originality, particularly in point of subject matter. It is said that our imitativeness is so servile, that for the sake of following English models, at an immeasurable distance, we neglect the new and grand material which lies all around us, in the sublime features of our country, in our new and striking circumstances, in our peculiar history and splendid pros-