

as the grand excellencies of each. But in the progress of mental cultivation, intellectual and moral force in man, constitutes a far higher claim to consideration than that of bones and sinews; and she, woman, who, in these times, has beauty of person and barrenness of mind, will be looked upon as a fine picture, and passed by, while she who possesses the higher attributes of mental excellence and moral beauty, will interest the more, the more she is known; and while the first will have gazers and flatterers, the latter will have lasting admirers and warm friends.

MODERN LITERATURE.

By W. E. Channing.

The character of the age is stamped very strongly on its literary productions. Who that can compare the present with the past, is not struck with the bold and earnest spirit of the literature of our times. It refuses to waste itself on trifles, or to minister to mere gratification. Almost all that is written has now a bearing on great interests of human nature. Fiction is no longer a mere amusement; but transcendent genius, accommodating itself to the imaginative and excitable character of the age, has seized upon this province of literature, and turned fiction from a toy into a mighty engine, and, under the light tale, is breathing through the community either its reverence for the old or its thirst for the new—communicates the spirit and the lessons of history—unfolds the operation of religious and civil institutions—and defends or assails new theories of education or morals, by exhibiting them in life and action. The poetry of the age is equally characteristic. It has a deeper and more impressive tone than comes to us from what has been called the Augustan age of English literature. The regular, elaborate, harmonious strains which delighted a former generation, are now accused, I say not how justly, of playing too much on the surface of nature and of the heart. Men want and demand a more thrilling note, a poetry, which pierces beneath the exterior of life to the depths of the soul, and which lays open its mysterious workings, borrowing from the whole outward creation fresh images and correspondences, from which to illuminate the secrets of the worlds within us. So keen is this appetite, that extravagancies of imagination, and violations both of taste and moral sentiment are forgiven, when conjoined with what awakens strong emotion; and the most stirring is the most popular poetry, even though it issue from the desolate soul of a misanthrope and a libertine, and exhale poison and death.

THE GREAT AND GOOD NEVER DIE.

By Daniel Webster.

How little is there, of the great and good, which can die! To their country they live for ever. They live in all that perpetuates the remembrance of men on earth; in the recorded proofs of their own great actions, in the offspring of their intellect, in the deep engraved lines of public gratitude, and in the respect and homage of mankind. They live in their example; and they live, emphatically, and will live in the influence which their lives and efforts, their principles and opinions, now exercise, and will continue to exercise, on the affairs of men, not only in their own country, but throughout the civilized world. A superior and commanding human intellect, a truly great man, when heaven vouchsafes so rare a gift, is not a temporary flame, burning bright for awhile, and then expiring, giving place to returning darkness. It is rather a spark of fervent heat, as well as radiant light, with power to enkindle the common mass of human mind; so that when it glimmers in its own decay, and finally goes out in death, no night follows, but it leaves the world all light, all on fire, from the potent contact of its own spirit. Bacon died, but the human understanding, roused by the touch of his miraculous wand, to a perception of the true philosophy, and the just mode of inquiring after truth, has kept on its course, successfully and gloriously. Newton died; yet the courses of the spheres are still known, and yet move on, in the orbits which he saw, and described for them, in the infinity of space.

POWER OF IMAGINATION.—An honest New England farmer started on a very cold day in winter, with his sled and oxen into the forest half a mile from home, for the purpose of chopping a load of wood. Having felled a tree, he drove the team alongside, and commenced chopping it up. By an unlucky hit he brought the whole bit of the axe across his foot, with a sliding stroke. The immense gash so alarmed him as nearly to deprive him of all his strength. He felt the warm blood filling his shoe. With great difficulty he succeeded in rolling himself on the sled and started the oxen for home. As soon as he reached the door he called eagerly for help. His terrified wife and daughter with much effort succeeded in lifting him into the house, as he was wholly unable to help himself, saying his foot was nearly severed from his leg. He was laid carefully on the bed, groaning all the while very bitterly. His wife hastily prepared dressings and removed shoe and sock, expecting to see a desperate wound when lo! the skin was not even broken. Before going out in the morning he had wrapped his feet in red flannel to protect them from the cold: the gash laid this open to his view, and he thought it flesh and blood. His reason not correcting the mistake all the pain and loss of power which attends a real wound followed. Men often suffer more from imaginary evils than from real ones.

THE SPIRIT OF BEAUTY.

Where does the Spirit of Beauty dwell?
Oh, said one, if you seek to know,
You must gaze around, above, below,
For earth and heaven and ocean tell,
Where the spirit of Beauty loves to dwell.
But see, she comes with the early spring,
And winnows the air with her fragrant wing,
Clothing each meadow and hill and tree
In the bloom of rich embroidery.
Ask her now ere she pass away
Where on the earth she delights to stay,
And the Spirit will pause, while earth and sky
Ring with the tones of her glad reply—

“Seek for me in the blue hare bell,
In the pearly depths of the ocean shell,
In the vesper flush of the dying day,
In the first faint glow of the morning ray;
I sleep on the breast of the crimson rose
And hide in the stately lily's snows;
I am found where the crystal dew-drops shine,
No gem so bright in a diamond mine;
I bloom in the flower that decks the grave,
And ride on the crest of the dark green wave;
I'm up and away o'er earth and o'er sea,
Till there is not a spot from my presence free.

“I am seen in the stars, in the leaf enshrined,
And heard in the sigh of the whispering wind;
On the rippling breast of the winding stream;
In the mellow glow of the moon's mild beam:
I fan the air with the bird's light wing,
And lurk in the grass of the fairy ring;
My tints in the rainbow arch are set,
And I breathe in the fragrant violet;
Look where you may, you will find me there,
For the Spirit of Beauty is every where.

[Foreign Jour.]

BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT.—It cannot be that earth is man's only abiding-place. It cannot be that life is a bubble, cast up by the ocean of Eternity, to float a moment upon its waves and sink into nothing—else why is it that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, are for ever wandering about unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with beauty that is not of earth, and leave us to muse upon their faded loveliness? Why is it that the stars which ‘hold their festival around the midnight throne’ are set above our limited faculties—for ever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? And, finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and then taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of our affections to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts? We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades—where the stars will be spread out before us like islands on the mighty ocean, and where the beautiful beings which here pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence for ever.—*Bulwer.*

WASPS, THE FIRST PAPER-MAKERS.

The wasp is a paper maker, and a most perfect and intelligent one. While mankind were arriving at slow degrees, at the art of fabricating this valuable substance, the wasp was making it before their eyes, by very much the same process as that by which human hands now manufacture it with the best aids of chemistry and machinery. While some nations carved their records on wood, and stone, and brass, and leaden tablets, others, more advanced, wrote with a style on wax; others employed the inner bark of trees, and others the skins of animals rudely prepared, the wasp was manufacturing a firm and durable paper. Even when the papyrus was rendered more fit, by a process of art, for the transmission of ideas in writing, the wasp was a better artisan than the Egyptians; for the early attempts at paper-making were so rude, that the substance produced was almost useless, from being extremely friable. The paper of the papyrus was formed of the leaves of the plant, dried, pressed, and polished; the wasp alone knew how to reduce vegetable fibres to a pulp, and then unite them by a size or glue, spreading the substance out into a smooth and delicate leaf. This is exactly the process of paper making. It would seem that the wasp knows, as the modern paper-makers now know, that the fibres of rags, whether linen or cotton, are not the only materials that can be used in the formation of paper, she employs other vegetable matters, converting them into a proper consistency by her assiduous exertions. In some respects she is more skillful even than our paper-makers, for she takes care to retain her fibres of sufficient length, by which she renders her paper as strong as she requires. Many manufacturers of the present day cut their material into small bits, and thus produce a rotten article. One great distinction between good and bad paper is its toughness; and this difference is invariably produced by the fibre of which it is composed being long, and therefore tough, or short, and therefore friable.

The wasp has been laboring at her manufacture of paper, from her first creation, with precisely the same instrument and the same materials; and her success has been unvarying. Her machinery is very simple, and therefore it is never out of order. She learns nothing, and she forgets nothing. Men, from time to time, lose their excellence in particular arts, and they are slow in finding out real improvements. Such improvements are often the effect of accident. Paper is now manufactured very extensively by machinery, in all its stages; and thus, instead of a single sheet being made by hand, a stream of paper is poured out which would form a roll large enough to extend round the globe, if such a length were desirable. The inventors of this machine, Messrs. Fourdrinier, it is said, spent the enormous sum of £40,000 in vain attempts to render the machine capable of determining with precision the width of the roll; and, at last, accomplished their object, at the suggestion of a bystander, by a strap revolving upon an axis, at a cost of three shillings and sixpence. Such is the difference between the workings of human knowledge and experience, and those of animal instinct. We proceed slowly and in the dark; but our course is not bounded by a narrow line, for it seems difficult to say what is the perfection of any art. Animals go clearly to a given point; but they can go no further. We may, however, learn something from their perfect knowledge of what is within their range. It is not improbable that, if man had attended, in an earlier state of society, to the labors of wasps, he would have sooner known how to make paper. We are still behind in our arts and sciences, because we have not always been observers. If we had watched the operations of insects, and the structure of animals in general, with more care, we might have been far advanced in the knowledge of many arts which are yet in their infancy, for nature has given us abundance of patterns. We have learnt to project some instruments of sound by examining the structure of the human ear; and the mechanism of an eye has suggested some valuable improvements in achromatic glasses.

What is man's history? born, living—dying—
Leaving the still shore for the troubled wave—
Struggling with storm-winds, over shipwrecks flying—
And casting anchor in the silent grave.