

the coming generations will be better able to appreciate him than was his own.

Few men ever possessed a mind and tastes so well balanced as Bryant's. A true poet, he was yet a man of great business capacity; firm in his opinions and strong in his convictions, he was ever gentle and tolerant; opposed to frivolity and levity in any shape, he was in sympathy with every healthful amusement, and was known as one of the best art critics of the metropolis. The stern and rugged parts of his character were his in common with his ancestors of the Bryant family, whose names—Stephen, Ichabod, Philip and Peter—indicate sufficiently their leanings towards Puritanism. From a grandmother, Silence Howard, he inherited the lighter and finer traits, his poetical powers, and his love for all sorts of beauty.

Bryant was remarkable even from the day of his birth, which took place in a log house at Cummington, Massachusetts, in the year 1794. His father, Dr. Peter Bryant, was alarmed at the abnormal size of the child's head, and knowing no other way to prevent its growth, instructed two of his students to immerse the boy every morning in cold water. As he grew older he showed plainly that his big head was not for nothing. He rapidly learned all that his mother could teach him, and was then passed on to his father, and afterwards to an uncle. Like Coleridge, he profited most from the teachings of his father, who encouraged him in his earliest efforts in verse-making. When only ten years old he wrote translations of Latin poets, which were thought worthy of a place in the local paper. Remarkable as this "lispering in numbers" was, it is less so than his production at the age of fourteen of the "Embargo," a satirical poem. So much doubt was cast upon the possibility of so young a poet producing a work of such maturity of thought, that his friends were compelled to make a

public statement of the fact. Even now it is hard to believe the account. The poem is also worthy of remembrance from the fact that its keynote is that of all Bryant's subsequent work as poet, editor and citizen. Listen to these words:—

"E'en while I sing, see Faction urge her claim,
Mislead with falsehood and with zeal inflame;
Lift her black banner, spread her empire wide,
And stalk triumphant with a Fury's stride!
She blows her brazen trump, and at the sound
A motley throng obedient flock around;
A mist of changing hue around she flings,
And darkness perches on her dragon wings."

How applicable to the state of political affairs in any of our capitals at the present day!

Unlike most poets that have written in boyhood, Bryant was a persevering student of good ability. He tells us that in two calendar months he began the Greek alphabet, passed through the grammar, and read every book of the New Testament in the original. Not bad for a boy! He first left home to go to Parson Hallock, of Plainfield, who prepared him for college. One of his brothers relates that Cullen would often, in his visits home, recite prose and verse of his own composition. It will be a mistake, however, to look upon the boy as a mere book-worm, for he was fond of the sports of boys, was a prize runner and excelled as an angler. He himself tells us that he enjoyed the raisings, apple-parings, corn-huskings, sugar-bees, and cider-making so common in his boyhood.

In 1810 he was sent to Williams College. He spent here a year marked by great success in his studies; but tiring of college discipline, which, unfortunately, is always the most galling to the steadiest and best boys, he left with the expectation of attending lectures at Yale. He pursued his studies for some time, preparing for matriculation at this institution, but ultimately gave up the idea of attending, principally because of the