

slonate. And his works are full of this. We hear 'the car rattling on the stony street,' the sound of the distant gun, the clash of battle and the groans of the dying. Again, and we hear the half-stuffed sob and sneer of malicious triumph; and then

'The solitary cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.'

He paints too, and the picture starts up before us. We look upon the beauty and the strength of Rome;

'We see before us the gladiator lie
And through his side the last drops obbing slow
From the red gash fall heavy one by one,
Like the first of a thunder shower: and now
The arena swims around him.—He is gone!

He paints again, and we see a cave and the ocean is near; and there is a fond and confiding pain, 'with eyes that speak of love, and hope, and joy.' Can you not see them?

Once more; and the victim is bound to the panting steed; and there is the forest, and the flight, and the pursuit and the fainting. We look up and see the vulture wheeling in narrowing circles impatient for his prey.

Cowper seeks not excitement. Truth, Charity, the Sofa, the morning walk, the winter evening, the water lily—these are his themes, and there he excels, these he renders delightful. In Cowper's poetry there is a moral beauty. His charm consists, chiefly, in his tender, elevated, generous sentiments; in his warmth, his praises of retirement, his love of Liberty. Is there any moral beauty in Byron's poetry? We can expect none; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak.

Cowper was a descriptive poet. We see it in the sweetness, the fidelity, and the wonderful minuteness of his pictures. He was a lover of Nature, and with him 'Nature was but a name for an effect, whose cause is God.'

'Not a flower
But shows some touch in freckle, streak or stain,
Of His unrivall'd pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odors, and imparts their hues
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,
In grains as countless as the sea side sands,
The forms with which he sprinkles all the Earth.'

Task. Book VI.

Byron would not stoop to Nature. Other poets had described her charms. If Nature would come and sit at his feet, he might perhaps condescend to clothe her in the fantastic garb of his own imagination. But what communion can there be between the heart of Nature and the heart of the victim of pride, the slave of passion? None whatever. The Poet of Nature must be a good man, not a Byron.

Both were original poets; though Byron's originality has an appearance of design.

Cowper exists by sympathy; Byron is the creature of his own will. Byron projects himself into antiquity and invokes the spirit of its heroes and its men of genius. Cowper regards human philosophy and human genius with something of contempt; for he looks to the great inspiring Mind of all.

Byron seeks to astonish by some new speculation; Cowper is incite to known duty. When we read Cowper's works we are convinced that he is sincere; Byron affects singularity, and we distrust him. The one describes the workings of his own gloomy and solitary mind; the feelings of the other are the feelings of half the universe.

But to understand the real character of poetry you must look at its influence. Observe, then, the influence of Byron's poetry on the mind. There is a young man just entering on a course of intellectual discipline, he reads Byron and he is at first fascinated. He indulges in a pleasing melancholy, and begins to exist in a new world—the world of the imagination. Let the poetry perform its perfect work, and then observe its effects, in ebbs and flows of feeling, in moodiness of temper, in aversion to common every-day duties in the blighting of the social affections, in suspicion, and finally in scepticism.

We walk forth with Cowper into the fields and shady lanes, and the eye is opened and the ear tuned to all that is beautiful and harmonious. We drink delight from the common air, the earth, the skies,

'We learn to look on Nature, and we hear
The still sad voices of humanity.'

There is a poetry which comes home to our bosoms and to our experience, and yet withdraws us from the power of the senses—a poetry which warms the heart while it expands the mind—which prompts to offices of kindness and scatters flowers in the path of duty; in a word, which makes us better and happier. Such is the poetry of Cowper, and over such Time has no power.

A. R.

Our Library.

No. 10.

"The Poems, Sacred, Passionate, and Humorous, of N. P. Willis."

N. P. Willis, though not generally considered the first of American poets, is yet one of the most pleasing and popular writers of verse, which the age has afforded. His writings, both in prose and verse, are numerous, and have gained for him a greater European reputation, than that of perhaps any other author on this side of the Atlantic. His "Scripture Sketches," written in blank verse, upon some of the most thrilling events in the Bible, have a high and pure elevation of thought, a felicity of expression, and a vividness of conception, which enable them to be read over and over again without tiring the attention of the delighted reader. His poetical genius is well displayed in the piece on Ambition, which is given in another column.

No. 11, 12.

"Horæ Biblicæ Quotidianæ, or Daily Scripture Readings By the late Thomas Chalmers, D.D.L.L.D." In 3 vols.

This useful and interesting work, published since the death of the venerable author, and consisting of remarks, which he himself made on each chapter in his daily reading of the Bible, cannot but be of great service to the Christian public. The plan and scope of each chapter is clearly laid down, together with such additional explanations, as Travels, History, and other researches may have afforded. His own profound mind, and his intimate acquaintance with every part of the Scriptures, have also supplied many excellent reflections on the different subjects which came before him. We can cordially recommend it as an invaluable aid in reading the Holy Scriptures. The third volume, comprising the parts after Job, has not been printed.

No. 13, 14.

"The Life of Joseph Brant—Thayadanegea. By William L. Stone." In 2 vols.

The life of this celebrated Indian warrior, written by Col. Stone, whose extensive researches had well fitted him for the task, is a narrative of peculiarly captivating interest. The Mohawk Chief took a prominent part in the exciting events of the Revolutionary War, and his operations and achievements during its progress are ably portrayed. His character has been cleared by his biographer from much of the obloquy, which had hitherto rested upon it, especially with regard to the Massacre of Wyoming, from which he is shown to have been absent. The biography derives additional interest, also, from Joseph Brant having spent a great part of his life in Canada.

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D. C. VAN NORMAN, A. M.,
Hamilton, August 9, 1848. Principal.