

Contemporary Thought.

THERE are a large number who have never learned either the meaning or the pronunciation of the word, liberty. They spell it correctly, but pronounce it, *license*.—*American Teacher*.

THE difficulty of obtaining a good model of either sex increases with the increase of civilization. A man's limbs may be perfect but his chest is narrow; or his head is fine while his shoulders are sloping. In one of the churches of New York, directly behind the pulpit, stands a noble stained glass window, in which is represented the full-length figure of a scantily-robed angel. Whether the angel is male or female nobody knows. After photographing fully a dozen female models, selected with infinite pains and at considerable expense, the artist had not one satisfactory figure. In his despair he fell back upon an uncouth Italian tramp, who turned out to be a good model with the exception of his ankles. With some "idealizing" of outlines a moderately successful angel was produced; but none of the worshippers who gaze at him know how much trouble he cost.—*lat.*

THE effort now being made by certain humanitarians to discourage the wearing of birds or their plumage by ladies in their hats is all very good in its way, and gives opportunities for such persons to pose as reformers; but why they should visit their wordy wrath upon the poor milliners, as some have done, is as mysterious as it is inconsistent. The milliner does not kill the birds, nor do they reach her until they have passed through the hands of several dealers or middlemen, and she would not sell them were they not demanded by her customers. The consumer of an article is the person responsible for its being offered as merchandize. So we advise our benevolent brothers and sisters to "go for" the consumers. And while they are about it, let them not stop at plumes on hats; let them recollect the beautiful tortoise-shell comb Miss Fashion wears in her hair was originally taken from a poor innocent creature who used this material for its only defence. The kid gloves she has on her hands were stripped from a babe whose parents had hoped that its maturity would be spent in the harmless amusement of bounding about on suburban rocks and foraging freely on fence-board circus-posters. The satchel she carries on her arm but a short time ago formed part of an amphibious animal, whose only crime consisted in basking in the sunshine on the mud flats of the St. John's River, Florida, occasionally frolicking in its waters, or watching for an incautious black pickaninny on whom to make a meal. The silk dress she robes herself in was made from the winding threads that form protection for thousands of nature's beautiful creations, who were cruelly scalded within their secluded retreats lest they might eat their way out and spoil the continuity of the valuable fibres. The sacque that shields the fair form from the rude and wintry blasts once helped to protect a beautiful animal, whose native home is amid the icy regions of Alaska, where he was ruthlessly sacrificed for a species of skin game; an animal susceptible of domestication, and capable of a high degree of culture, vying with the average Italian in musical ability, as was demonstrated by several that have been exhibited at various museums

where they handle the barrel-organ with marked skill. The porte-monnaie she so faintly carries in her hand, and the card case that accompanies her on calls of ceremony, were once part of beautiful tusks that excited the cupidity of Asiatic or African hunters, who murdered possible Jumbo to secure them for commercial purposes.—*Millinery Trade Review*.

IT would be difficult and invidious—and, we are glad to think, therefore, that it is a wholly unnecessary—task to attempt to fix Dr. Holmes' place in the ranks of American men of letters. That, on any reasonable estimate of his claims, his place must be a high one is too clear, we think, for dispute. He possesses what, without disparagement to transatlantic literature, we may say is a rare characteristic among its professors—the quality of originality. The fact that but few of her predecessors or contemporaries can lay claim to this quality is no discredit to them. It is but natural that a literature exposed to such powerful paternal influences as is this young offshoot from the venerable English tree of thought and language should for a long time be imitative, and imitative alone. When we consider how masterfully a great poetic individuality affects all youthful poetic minds within its range, we need not be surprised to see the same phenomenon repeat itself on a national scale, and with the master and the disciples represented respectively by whole communities of men. The test, however, of genius in the individual applies itself pretty speedily with the advance of maturer years. If there is "anything" in the aspiring bard, he will soon outgrow the influence which did "his green, unknowing youth engage," and dare to be himself alone. If there is nothing in him, the echo will remain an echo to the end of his days. And what is true of the individual is true of the nation. When a genuine literature is destined to grow up among the descendant race, it will, as the term of separate national life extends, begin—among the more vigorous intellects of the race, at any rate—to show signs of emancipation from the influence of the parent stock. Such signs are not wanting in the literature of America, and where they are to be found they are marked enough to afford it the fairest promise of a brilliant future; but as yet it must be owned—it is owned, indeed, by the best American critics themselves—that these signs are comparatively few in number. American writers of distinct and undeniable originality would not take long, even if we combine poets with prose writers, to enumerate. Edgar Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Ralph Waldo Emerson—though the claim of the last to originality has been questioned, and his debt to Carlyle for certain qualities of thought, apart from the mode of expression, must be admitted—these would, perhaps, almost exhaust the list of departed American writers who possess the distinction to which we have referred. Pre-eminent among still living litterateurs stand the names of Mr. Lowell and Dr. Holmes—men who combine the culture of the Old World with the indefinable and incommunicable spirit of the New. Both alike are masters of our common language, but each is to the tips of his fingers an American of the Americans. Men of such gifts are not produced every day in any country, but the originality, or rather the nationality, which belongs to them will,

we doubt not, become a more and more commonly diffused characteristic of their successors when the time comes for the younger of them to hand on the torch which they have so worthily borne.—*Daily Telegraph* (London, Eng.).

THE London journals have naturally had much to say with regard to the Colonial Exhibition. They are unanimous in the expression of admiration of its magnitude and material value, while not a few look beyond and see in it a moral aspect infinitely greater. Take for instance, the *Times*, still the leader of the press. At the time of the first great exhibition, five-and-thirty years ago, it says that it could hardly have occurred to anyone that the British Empire itself would, in the next generation, be capable of furnishing from its own resources an exhibition of the products of its industry, agriculture, and fine arts, by the side of which even the great Exhibition of 1851 would almost have paled its ineffectual fires. But it is as the symbol of the moral unity of national sentiment which constitutes a world-wide Empire that the Exhibition appeals most strongly to every subject of the Queen. In the Conservative press the Exhibition is commented upon with much enthusiasm. To the *Standard* it is the first distinctly Imperial festival celebrated on English soil—a display of immense commercial and political value. The fraternity of nations, to accomplish which was the object of the Exhibition of 1851, was a dream; the oneness of the British Empire, as shown by the present show, is a fact. The *Morning Post* passes in hasty review the vast changes in the British Empire since the age of Exhibitions commenced. India was still unsettled, New Zealand was the object of contention between the English settlers and the Maories, the magnificent colonies of Australia were still but a "dumping ground" for the dregs of the criminal classes of the Old Country, while Canada was only commencing the work of constructing the network of railways which now brings the produce of her most distant fields within reach of the markets of Europe. The occasion reminds the *Daily Telegraph* that Canada is now not only within a week of Liverpool, but has supplied in its transcontinental railway a new link with our distant dependencies in the Pacific Ocean. The evening *Globe* thinks we might fairly challenge the whole world to produce a counterpart of the splendid spectacle. The Liberal press is not less appreciative. The *Daily News* sees in the display a proof of the noble work that England's race has done, and of the birth, or at least the development, of the Imperial idea. It will give a new sense of the vast resources, the industrial activity, and the artistic culture of these new Englands beyond the seas. The *Daily Chronicle* says the work of organizing this collection under one roof in the heart of London of articles from every corner of the Empire, was done with a feeling that all so engaged were toiling for the common good. The Radical *Echo* also regards the opening as an event of national importance. It will, it says, bring home to the crowds, as nothing has brought home to them before, the greatness of that Colonial Empire of which most Englishmen know so little, and show them that if the union of the whole be once beyond uncertainty a career lies before us which may even eclipse our past lustre.—*Canadian Gazette*.