

solitary homesteads, the long winter nights. Because science flourishes, must poesy decline? The complaint serves but to betray the weakness of the class who urge it. True, in an age like the present,—considerably more scientific than poetical,—science substitutes for the smaller poetry of fiction, the great poetry of truth; and as there is a more general interest felt in new revelations of what God has wrought, than in exhibitions of what the humbler order of poets have half-borrowed, half-invented, the disappointed dreamers complain that the ‘material laws’ of science have pushed them from their place. As well might the Arab who prided himself upon the beauty of some white tent which he had reared in some green oasis of the desert, complain of the dull tools of Belzoni’s labourers, when engaged in clearing from the sands the front of some august temple of the ancient time. It is not the tools, it might be well said to the complainer, that are competing with your neat little tent; it is the sublime edifice, hitherto covered up, which the tools are laying bare. Nor is it the material laws, we may, on the same principle, say to the poets of the querulous cast, that are overbearing your little inventions, and making them seem small; but those sublime works and wonderful actings of the Creator which they unveil, and bring into comparison with yours. But from His works and His actings have the masters of the lyre ever derived their choicest materials; and whenever a truly great poet arises,—one that will add a profound intellect to a powerful imagination,—he will find science not his enemy, but an obsequious caterer and a devoted friend. He will find sermons in stones, and more of the suggestive and the sublime in a few broken scaurs of clay, a few fragmentary shells, and a few green reaches of the old coast line, than versifiers of the ordinary calibre in their once fresh gems and flowers,—in sublime ocean, the broad earth, or the blue firmament and all its stars.