

perfect models in the art of writing history, and the memoirs of many modern statesmen are more lastingly valuable than the more elaborate and connected narratives of remote and secluded scholars.

13.
Value of
contempor-
ary records,
both of
Facts and
Thought.

But if the contemporary record of facts will always have a peculiar value, however incomplete it may be, still more must this be the case with the contemporary record of thought; especially if thought means the whole of the inner life of an age, not merely that portion which in the form of defined thought has been incorporated in the written literature of the age. For a large portion of this hidden life is known only to those who have taken part in it. The vague yearnings of thousands who never succeed either in satisfying or expressing them, the hundreds of failures which never become known, the numberless desires which live only in the hearts of men or are painted only in their living features, the uncounted strivings after solutions of practical problems dictated by ambition or by want, the many hours spent by labourers of science in unsuccessful attempts to solve the riddles of nature,—all these hidden and forgotten efforts form indeed the bulk of a nation's thought, of which only a small fraction comes to the surface, or shows itself in the literature, science, poetry, art, and practical achievements of the age. Equally important, though not equally prominent, this large body of forgotten thought has nevertheless been that which made the measure full, which heaped the fuel ready for the match to kindle; it constitutes the great propelling force which, stored up, awaits the time and aid of individual talent or genius to set it free. Philosophers tell us of

14.
Mystery of
the Life of
Thought.

15.
Latent
Thought
the material
for genius.