

and though, perhaps, regarded not without fear, he would, at all events, be deemed a man of infinite amusement. But to this imitative faculty, — this mere perception of the peculiarities that confer on men the stamp of individuality, — there was added a world-wide invention, an intellect of vastest calibre, depths unsounded of the poetic feeling, with a breadth of sympathy which embraced all nature; and the aggregate was a Shakspeare. I have seen this imitative ability, so useless in the abstract, rendered valuable by being set in even very humble literary attainment, — that of the newspaper reporter; and have had to estimate at a different rate of value the respective reports of gentlemen of the press, equal in their powers of memory and in general acquirement, and unequal merely in the degree in which they possessed the imitative faculty. In the reports of the one class I have found but the meaning of the speakers; in those of the other, both the meaning and the speakers too. Dickens, ere he became the most popular of living English authors, must have been a first-class reporter; and the faculty that made him so is the same which now leads us to speak of him in the same breath with Shakspeare. Bulwer is evidently a man of great reflective power; but Bulwer, though a writer of novels and plays, does not belong to the Shakspearian genus. Like those dramatists of English literature that, maugre their play-writing propensities, were not dramatic, — the Drydens and Thomsons of other days, — he lacks the imitative power. By the way, in this age of books, I marvel no bookseller has ever thought of presenting the public with the Bow-street reports of Dickens. They would form assuredly a curious work, — not less so, though on a different principle, than the Parliamentary reports of Dr. Samuel Johnson.

No one need say what sort of a building the church of Stratford-on-Avon is: no other edifice in the kingdom has half so