BURNS THE POET OF THE COUNTRY.

MORE than any other poet, Burns was a son of the soil. He was a phenomenon in the city, and suffered by the change. His health and strength and inspiration were drawn from rural sources. One does not need to read far into his poems to perceive this. To know it, a knowledge of the outward history of his life is unnecessary. There is the smell of corn-rigs, and furrowed fields, and fragrant hedgerows diffused like a straying wind through all his poetry. The man who so freshly employed the symbolism of Nature in the utterance of his thoughts was a dweller in open country spaces, with nothing between him and the presence of the mighty mother. Nature was not far off, but near to him; her imagery was no recollection; he was in the midst of it. True to the letter is his own simple statement—how unnecessary it is!—"The Poetic Genius of my country found me . . . . at the plough, and threw her inspiring mantle o'er me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of my natal soil."

Burns was a constant dweller in fields and farms for thirty-two years. His life in their open spaces is no mere figment, it was veritable fact. He mostly ate and slept under a roof, but he met the majority of the

four-and-twenty hours in the open. The merry lark was his clock—it has been the ploughman's from time immemorial. He found his calendar in the signs of the seasons. By them he dated his epistles. The sons of prose give month and day in dry almanac fashion. But with Burns it was—

"While briers an' woodbines budding green,
An' paitricks scraichin' loud at e'en,
An' morning poussie whiddin' seen,
Inspire my muse;"

or—

"While new-ca'd kye rowte at the stake,
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik;"

or—

"While at the stook the shearers cow'r
To shun the bitter blaudin' show'r;"

and then the news of the epistle begins. The new style of counting poetical time, introduced in this delightful way by Burns, was a great advance upon the manner of the old *makers* from Chaucer to Thomson. That manner was to send the eye rolling in a fine frenzy from earth to heaven, and seize upon some sublimity of the zodiac with which to mark the time o' day. Chaucer's pedantry in his uninspired moments is simply insupportable, but he had the genius to anticipate in the opening of his immortal "Prologue" the natural style of Burns. Thomson's sun rolling from Aries, and being received by the bright Bull, has only sonorousness to recommend it. In this, too, as in other respects, Burns brought poetry down from heaven to earth, glorified with it the monotony of unpoetical lives, and made it fit and showed its strength for daily work and wear.

This robust, open-air life, conducive to strong thoughts and true feelings, was relieved now and again by a short session of indoor study, or diversified by a dip into tavern sociality. Poetry he both studied and practised in the field—everybody has heard of that collection of verses which was his *vade mecum* behind the plough and beside the cart; but philosophy and divinity demanded undivided energy, and were for the fireside and the elbow-chair. Now it was

> "Smith, wi' his sympathetic feeling,
> And Reid, to common-sense appealing;"

and now it was a trinity of reverend B's that kept him pondering "butt the house":—

> "My shins, my lane, I there sit roastin',
> Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston."

And occasionally, it must be confessed, he stayed indoors to rest a fatigued body, and if possible, compose a mind ill at ease with itself and its activities. There can be little doubt that his fits of mental depression were largely the result of overwork. He was not the man to spare himself—could not if he would. He "threshed the barn" like a brownie, and was content with the brownie's recompense, or little more—the creambowl and a "lean" by the kitchen fire. In his despondent humiliation he would have sunk into the ignoble content of the brownie altogether; he was on the point of forswearing poetry as the cause of all his woe; he had heaved on high his waukit loof preparatory to taking the oath; when such a "Vision" as never visits the eyes of brownies

appeared before him in the smoky spence, to re-assure his heart and comfort him with a peep into futurity.

All Burns's best work as a poet was done in the open air. If this is so, it was an evil day that brought him into town, and restricted him to the distracting monotony of streets. The Bannockburn Ode, "Tam o' Shanter," the address to "Mary in Heaven," the "Death and Dying Words of poor Mailie" are characteristic specimens of his genius. They were, as is well known, composed not only in the country, but in the open air, and in circumstances as varied as their subjects. The imagery of their special circumstances shows in two of them. The lingering star with lessening ray actually shone upon the composition of the hymn; and the war ode, as Carlyle points out, should be sung with the strength of the storm that manifestly inspired it—with "the throat of the whirlwind!" The poetical productivity of Burns was another feature of his life in the country. Not only did residence in town reduce the quality of his poetry, it checked its amount as well. The quantity of artistic work that Burns turned off in the country is simply marvellous, when it is viewed in a proper light. It cannot, of course, be forgotten that much of it was produced while his hands were busy with the heavy implements of agricultural toil, or at odd moments of necessary or enforced idleness and leisure. Now it is "lie" time in the harvest field :—

> "I'm bizzie, too, and skelpin' at it,
> But bitter, daudin' showers hae wat it,
> Sae my auld stumpie pen I gat it
> Wi' muckle wark,
> An' took my jocteleg an' whatt it
> Like ony clark."

Another time it is the hour "on e'ening's edge" that is taken to answer a correspondent's letter. We certainly owe something to the bad weather which, while it forbade field work, favoured the composition of those poems. With more leisure, or—which is the same thing—with less necessity for such close and continuous manual work as the bondage of the farm required, Burns, there can scarcely be a doubt, would have written more poetry; and there is no reason to believe that the increase would have been at the expense of the quality. It is indeed a significant thing in the history of the poet that his most productive were his most poetical years. Perhaps the most productive year of his life was the year 1786; the number of pieces which he threw off in that year was something like sixty, an average of rather more than one piece per week; yet plentiful though the year's supply was, it included such excellent specimens of his art as "The Twa Dogs," "The Author's Earnest Cry," "The Ordination," the "Epistle to James Smith" (in some respects the best and most delightfully discursive of his rhymed epistles), the "Address to the Unco Guid," "The Vision," "The Holy Fair," "To a Mountain Daisy," "The Brigs of Ayr," "The Gloomy Night," "The Winter Night," and "The Bard's Epitaph." Some of these poems are over two hundred lines in length. Few poets, that were indeed poets and not mere "metre-ballad mongers," have shown such astonishing fecundity. Now it was the year in his country life in which he felt warranted in allowing himself most literary leisure. By the middle of it he had made up his mind to

break with his whole wretched past. He would give up farming—which seemed indeed to have given him up, escape from the evil repute in which the unco guid of his parish held him, and leave a country which he loved, but which was too poor or too parsimonious to allow him a livelihood. He was arranging matters for a final leave-taking. Gradually his industry on Mossgiel slackened. He hurried a volume of his poems through the Kilmarnock press. With part of the proceeds of the sale of his book he bought a steerage ticket to the West Indies. As the ship from time to time delayed sailing, he found himself in the unaccustomed position of a man with leisure. This leisure time he devoted to poetry, and perhaps in the whole course of his life he was never more favourably placed for the production of poetry than in the months of October and November of this memorable year. He felt the pressure of conflicting feelings with an acuteness he had never felt before, and was never again to feel. His position and feelings he has himself described in his "Farewell to the Banks of Ayr." It was written one day in October, but is expressive of his outcast condition from the beginning of August till the end of November. The publication of his book did not stop his poetical industry. He was as busy in the autumn of 1786 as when in the spring and the summer he fed the press of the Kilmarnock printer. And this activity continued till, in the end of November, he left the country and repaired to Edinburgh. He stayed in and hovered around Edinburgh for a year and a half, producing now and again, in the course of one or other of his flights from

the capital for a mouthful of country air, a set of rattling verses like "Willie's Awa'," or a snatch of song like "The Birks of Aberfeldy," in some degree worthy of the poetical work done at Mossgiel; but composing in the city itself nothing very specially remarkable in point either of quantity or quality, except the "Epistle to the Guidwife of Wauchope House," commencing, "I mind it weel in early date," and perhaps the "Address to the Haggis." His industry as a poet recommenced on his settlement at Ellisland. He again met the Muses on hillside and by stream. His hopes were bright, his inspiration and faculty were unimpaired. It was no very fortunate day that brought him his Excise commission, and it was undeniably an evil day when he resolved to break connection with rural life, and carried himself and his household gods to the town. He lived a little over three years in Dumfries; the best of his poetical work in the period was still done in the course of a walk or a ride in the country; what he did actually compose in the burgh itself, in his house in the Wee Vennel or the Mill Vennel, was of no remarkable merit for Burns—the Burns that had been!—excepting always the immortal manifesto of the superiority of manhood (we must not call it a poem; both its author and Matthew Arnold have forbidden it!)—"A Man's a Man for a' That."

The question is inevitable—Could nothing have been done to save Burns and the fountain of poetry that was in him? Neither town life nor the gauging of ale firkins was for him. Neither of them was fitted for the conservation or development of his rare

poetical faculty. On the contrary, they dimmed his vision and choked his utterance. Carlyle argues that an office in the Excise was the best thing for him, because upon that his heart was set. It was rather his despair that was set upon it. This is what his heart was set upon: "The appellation of a Scottish bard is by far my highest pride; to continue to deserve it my most exalted ambition. Scottish scenes and Scottish story are the themes I could wish to sing. I have no dearer aim than to have it in my power, unplagued with the routine of business, for which Heaven knows I am unfit enough, to make leisurely pilgrimages through Caledonia; to sit on the fields of her battles; to wander on the romantic banks of her rivers; and to muse by the stately towers or venerable ruins, once the honoured abodes of her heroes." The wish was expressed in these terms in 1787, and was substantially repeated in other forms. It implied an offer, but the nation was too blind to see it, or too callous to heed it. Surely the creation of a Scottish Laureateship would have been an act honourable to the nation. Burns was proud, but the acceptance of such an office would have compromised in no degree either his dignity or his freedom.

BURNS'S SCHOOL READING-BOOK.

In the August of his twenty-ninth year Burns sat down one day in Mauchline to write an account of his education and early life, in a letter which is at once his longest, and most interesting, and in respect of its composition the best specimen of his prose that we have. The letter was addressed to Dr John Moore, the poet's senior by thirty years, and then famous as the author of *Zeluco*, published in 1786, better known now as the father of the hero of Corunna. In the course of the letter reference was made to an English school-book which the young schoolmaster, John Murdoch, had apparently introduced from Ayr into the little seminary over which he presided at Alloway. The book was popularly known as *Mason's Collection.* A great interest of no ordinary significance attaches to this book, for it was in its pages that the boy Robert Burns first felt the charm of literary expression. It would be wrong to say that the book made him a poet, for the poet is born and not made, but its influence in developing and directing his early poetical faculty was, by his own avowal, of the utmost importance. "The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in was 'The Vision of Mizra,' and a hymn of Addison's beginning 'How are thy servants

blest, O Lord!' I particularly remember one half-stanza which was music to my boyish ear—

> 'For though in dreadful whirls we hung
> High on the broken wave.'

I met with these pieces in *Mason's English Collection*, one of my school-books." This declaration of indebtedness to Addison, and to him through Mason, is familiar to every student of the history of Burns, and many must have felt on reading it at least a passing curiosity to know something more about that long-since forgotten school-book, *Mason's Collection*. A copy of it has recently come into the possession of the writer of these lines, and now lies before him. It purports to be the tenth edition, "with valuable additions;" and, as the date on the title-page is given as 1786, it is probable that the "valuable additions" were made subsequently to the period when Burns was a boy at school. There is, at least, no doubt that it is substantially the book that young Robbie Burness hugged, and dog-eared, and cried over till he became, at "ten or eleven years of age," a proficient, nay "a critic, in substantives, verbs, and participles." "Though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings," he wrote (in rather ambiguous English, it must be owned), "I made an excellent English scholar." The turn of that expression about thrashing presumably alludes to the combined conscientiousness and clemency of young Murdoch. It seems to imply that he would by all means do his duty by his pupil, but that it would grieve him to be obliged to have recourse to the ultimate persuasion of

leather. But to return from tawse to text-book, the first thing one notices, on the back of the binding, is a correction of Burns's designation of the collection, for it is Masson's and not Mason's. The full title on the first page is as follows:—"A Collection of English Prose and Verse for the Use of Schools. By Arthur Masson, M.A., late Teacher of Languages in Edinburgh and Aberdeen." The same page gives the information that the book is "printed for, and sold by, all the booksellers in Scotland." A curiosity of the collection is its dedication to "The Most Noble Douglas, Duke of Hamilton," whose titles, to the number of sixteen, followed—as Cowley puts it—by "a long etcetera," occupy a whole page. Then comes an advertisement warning the public against spurious editions, and other collections sold as Masson's, from which one may infer the widespread reputation of the book. The book itself is a substantial octavo of 340 pages, got up very much in the style of a volume of the old *Spectator*. It is supremely didactic, and invariably "proper" from beginning to end; there is not a single sparkle of wit or gleam of humour from its first to its 340th page —unless one excepts the elephantine fun of "The Horn-Book, by a gentleman in his old age." It is heavy with solid instruction and moral advice, and dim with the gloom of a sombrous religion. Its prose passages include such fables as Virtue and Vice, such stories as Unnion and Valentine, such tales as Anningait and Ajut, and Inkle and Yarico; such histories as the Twelve Cæsars, the Marian Persecutions, and an Abridgement of the Bible; such essays

as Hints on Education, a Rhapsody on Art, and Meditations on Happiness. There are, besides, extracts from Robertson and Hume, translations from Demosthenes, the Bedlam scene from "The Man of Feeling," and a series of six "moral and entertaining" letters from the pen of the once famous Mrs Rowe. The poetical pieces fill rather more than 100 pages, and are crammed together in the first half of the book, the process of cramming having seized the compiler at page 62. They commence with a set of hymns, of which one hears little or nothing nowadays, drifting into Scriptural paraphrases, and passing, by the bridge of Pope's Messiah, into Parnell's Hermit, with its strange exposition of the divine government of human affairs. Addison, Mallet, Dryden, Thomson, Akenside, Shenstone, and Home are then laid under contribution. Even Somerville is drawn upon—Goldsmith, by some inscrutable "influence malign," is unrepresented; and with a few scenes from Paradise Lost, a touch of Shakespeare's tragic quality as revealed in Hamlet, Othello, and Romeo and Juliet, and the inevitable elegy written in the Buckinghamshire churchyard, the collection may be said to be before the reader. The Vision of Mirza, upon which the fancy of young Burns fixed at once, is undoubtedly the best bit of prose literature in the volume; and if there are better specimens of poetry in the collection than the hymn beginning "How are thy servants blessed," it is at least the best specimen of Addison's poetical talent, and so far approves the critical taste of the young scholar. Upon the whole, the book is a compilation which is fairly illustrative of the style

and influence of last century's literature; it has the pompous conventionalisms, the ponderosity and prosiness, the buckram morality and copy-line maxims of worldly prudence, which mark so much of the literary produce of the eighteenth century.

It goes without saying that a popular common school-book, such as Arthur Masson's collection, has necessarily a great and extensive influence upon the minds of youth. Their feelings being fresh, are susceptible, and their taste is easily moulded. No after-reading or discriminative study can quite divorce their minds from the favourite authors of their boyhood. The poetry or the prose narrative which they liked to read when young remains up to manhood and on to old age the cherished guest of their memory. And to very many of the labouring classes, more especially of our rural population, the English reading-book of their boyhood, the book they thumbed at the parish school, is the only standard of literary taste, and, it may be, the only source of literary knowledge. How many of the present adult generation derived the groundwork of their literary knowledge, and perhaps their sole acquaintance with literature, from the once popular *M'Culloch's Course of Reading* or *Series of Lessons?* You will hear them lament the banishment of those old favourites from the modern public school. Nothing that has superseded them, they declare, is at all their equal. Whatever Burns's opinion, when he had attained to manhood, may have been of *Mason's Collection*, this much at least is certain, that the book awoke his poetical instincts, and continued to influence his literary taste probably

to the end of his career. How otherwise are we to account for his life-long infirmity of affection for Shenstone? And where else did he borrow the stiffness of his prose epistolary style? Here, probably, he found the inspiration, if not the material, for his "Lament of Mary Stuart." Here he found part of that wealth of historical simile which runs riot in his Letter to Arnot of Dalquatswood, written in April 1786: it was in the *History of the Twelve Cæsars* he read about "Pompey at Pharsalia." Here, as already shown, he first read "The Vision of Mirza," and drew from the perusal an impression which remained to influence his habits throughout his life. Writing to Mrs Dunlop, from Ellisland, on New Year's Day morning 1789, he says:—"This day; the first Sunday of May; a breezy blue-sky'd noon, some time about the beginning, and a hoary morning, and calm, sunny day, about the end of autumn—these, time out of mind, have been with me a kind of holiday. I believe I owe this to that glorious paper in the *Spectator*, 'The Vision of Mirza'—a piece that struck my young fancy before I was capable of fixing an idea to a word of three syllables." It was here he found, in a passage from Thomson's too-much-neglected "Summer," that idea of a virtuous populace standing as "a wall of fire around their much-loved isle," which occurs in the penultimate stanza of "The Cottar's Saturday Night." Thomson's prayer is—

> "Send forth the saving *virtues* round the land
> In bright patrol!"

Here he may have first made acquaintance with the

name "Hornbook;" it is unlikely that he ever saw the article so designated. And here, in the hymns, will be found an occasional line or half-stanza, the echo of which can be started in that group of lugubrious poems with which Burns may be said to have commenced his career as poet, and of which "Winter —A Dirge" is a characteristic specimen.

BURNS AND GOLDSMITH.

THE generosity of his criticism is a feature of the correspondence of Burns scarcely less marked than it is amiable. He has many references to his brethren of the pen, and there is hardly a harsh word said of any one of them. On some point or other he has a high regard for them all. To contemporary versifiers he was particularly indulgent. A poem by Helen Maria Williams on the Slave Trade was "excellent"; he read it "with the highest pleasure." "Fully equal to 'The Seasons,'" was his verdict on James Cririe's "Address to Loch Lomond." Even John Armstrong's very juvenile poetry was to his liking; while that obscure author's prose was "quite astonishing" in no ironical sense. Now, it cannot be denied that the work of those writers was at best literary commonplace, if it was not downright trash. Yet there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Burns' estimate. He probably imported into pages, originally dead or dull, the fire which so warmed his admiration. The fine glow of imagination which seemed to light up those lifeless pages was the reflection of his own eyes as he read.

Scarcely less generous was Burns's commendation of

authors of approved merit. To a great deal of the incense he offers them they are justly entitled; his generosity shows itself in his invariable avoidance of a classification of them according to their respective values. Comparisons were odious. Each in his kind was good, and Burns shrank from arranging them in degrees of relative worth. His criticisms, in short, proceeded from his heart, which was sympathetic to sensitiveness, rather than from his head, which, though capable of keen discrimination, was habitually subordinated to his affections.

In his affections Goldsmith had a chief place. But so, it might be said, had Young and Shenstone, Beattie and Barbauld, Pope and Addison, Fergusson and Ramsay. They were all favourites, and each at the moment seemed, from the warmth of his appreciation, to be *the* favourite. It is indeed impossible to say, if one were to judge merely from the evidence of explicit remark, which of those authors really held the highest place in his estimation. Probably he never allowed his understanding to decide. But if one may be allowed to infer Burns's partiality for one author over another by noting what correspondence of sentiment and expression exists between his own literary work and that of his favourites, a good case can be made out to the credit of Goldsmith. It is unnecessary here to insist that Burns knew and had been a close and appreciative student of the character and art of the Irish poet. He was, for that part, equally well read in at least a score of authors of repute of the eighteenth century. The time is gone by for regarding Burns as the illiterate and isolated

prodigy, who, "without models or with models only of the meanest sort," attained by sheer force of native genius to a foremost place in literature—as Carlyle, flattering the vulgar opinion (the reader may remember how picturesquely), represented him to be. Neither do the direct references to Goldsmith in the letters of Burns, nor the quotations from the "Deserted Village," and "The Traveller," whether incorporated with a set of verses, or prefixed as a motto to a popular poem, need to be taken into account for the present purpose. It is to those acknowledged passages in the poetry of Burns, which in respect of thought or feeling or style of expression betray a recollection of Goldsmith, that attention is now invited. The subject is one that hitherto has received little notice. And perhaps the last remaining task of the critic of Burns, who has been so exclusively busy with the morals of his subject, is to trace the nature and extent of Burns's relations as a poet with the poets and thinkers of his country, of whose works he was a confessed student and admirer. Such an examination cannot fail to prove fruitful of important results. It will show that Burns directly shared in the literary inheritance of his country to an extent far greater than is commonly believed. It will furnish the means of indicating his indebtedness to his predecessors. It will reveal the methods by which he assimilated to his own legitimate uses what they had grown and garnered for the common good. It will tend to prove that, great as was Burns's gift of original thought, his gift of original expression was greater; that, while his common sense was quick to see the naked truth when truth was

presented in whatever guise or disguise, it was his feelings that grasped and appropriated the idea like a discovery, and that found for its utterance to the world again that force and graphic felicity of language in virtue of which it became his own. It will, in short, demonstrate that Burns was no vulgar prodigy or phenomenon, but a natural historical development, drawing nourishment and inspiration from both English and Scottish literary sources, and more copiously from the former than from the latter.

To come back to Goldsmith, to whose influence on Burns this article is confined, the men had many feelings in common. Both were endowed by nature with unusual tenderness and sensitiveness of heart, and both had intimate sympathetic knowledge from their boyhood of humble peasant life. Before the sunshine of Burns, Goldsmith flung a radiance as of moonlight on the huts of poor men. He, too, though in a plaintive strain, very different from the robust and even uproarious passion of Burns, sang the simple pleasures of the lowly train. He had no liking for "the long pomp" and "the midnight masquerade;" his heart "distrusting asked if that was joy." "To me" he says—

> "To me more dear, congenial to my heart
> One native charm than all the gloss of art."

Burns was of the same express opinion—

> "There's sic parade, sic pomp and art,
> The joy can scarcely reach the heart."—*The Twa Dogs.*

Sympathy with the peasant to both Burns and Goldsmith implied, of course, hatred of the local tyrant of

the fields. Goldsmith recurs to the tyranny again and again—

> "The man of wealth and pride
> Takes up a space that many poor supplied,
> Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds . . .
> His seat . . . . .
> Indignant spurns the cottage from the green."

He had a vision of the village made desert. He saw

> "Opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
> Lead stern depopulation in her train,
> And over fields where scattered hamlets rose
> In barren solitary pomp repose."

With genuine regret he viewed

> "Trade's unfeeling train
> Usurp the land and dispossess the swain;
> Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
> Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose."

Burns looked upon those scattered hamlets with the same loving eye as Goldsmith; he, too, had the same mournful tale to tell—

> "How pampered luxury
> Looks o'er proud property extended wide,
> And eyes the simple rustic hind
> A creature of another kind."—*A Winter's Night.*

They had the same passion for liberty, symbolised in both as a transitory flower—"fair freedom's blossoms" in the one, "fair freedom's blooms" in the other. The instinct for personal freedom in Goldsmith carried him from all domestic restraints into actual vagabondage. He wandered for a solid year over the face of Southern Europe with the careless gaiety of a born vagrant. One wonders if the Contarini blood in his veins determined in any degree the direction and

limit of his wanderings. It was his fortune, he said, "to traverse realms alone, and find no spot of all the world my own." And yet he presently exclaims, kindling at Creation's charms of lake and field and forest combining round him—

> "For me those tributary stores combine,
> Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!"

Burns, too, after his disruption from Mauchline, became an unsettled rover, though not quite a vagrant; and the idea that want and an early old age (the lot of his class) would one day reduce him to the lowest rung of life's ladder, the condition of mendicancy, was long familiar to his imagination; and even in the heyday of health and strength he had schooled his pride to the acceptance of it. The last o't, and warst o't, was only—just to beg. He was so accustomed to the prospect, the view of it gave him little concern. He consoled himself by a humorous anticipation of the fine daunderings by burn banks and hillsides, such as Edie Ochiltree so greatly extolled. And, as Sir Walter Scott says, alluding to this very subject, "he with a true poetical spirit found something to counterbalance the hardships and uncertainty of a mendicant's life in the free enjoyment of the beauties of Nature." Burns therefore sang, like Goldsmith:—

> "What tho', like commonérs of air,
> We wander out we know not where,
> But either house or hall?
> Yet Nature's charms, the hills and woods,
> The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
> Are free alike to all."—*Epistle.*

Again, both were convinced by poverty and a natural habit of philosophical reflection that the source of happiness is not in education, or rank, or riches, which are at best but the favouring conditions of its growth. It is entirely dependent upon no form of political government, and by no means peculiar to any advantage of social position. Says Goldsmith:—

> "Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
> Our own felicity we make or find."

The search for this felicity outside ourselves is vain; it is "a bliss which centres only in the mind." Burns is not more convinced in his mind than Goldsmith of the truth of this doctrine, but he is more pronounced in his opinion. "The heart's aye the part aye," he sings, "that makes us richt or wrang;" and

> "If happiness have not her seat
> And centre in the breast,
> We may be wise, or rich, or great,
> But never can be blest."—*Epistle.*

As a result of this conviction, both poets necessarily set small store by rank and riches. The highest worth in their estimation is manliness, the highest rank manhood. Their motto is formulated by Burns in the well-known lines:—

> "The honest, friendly, social man,
> Whoe'er he be,
> 'Tis he fulfils great Nature's plan,
> And none but he."—*Epistle.*

And so Goldsmith is indifferent to the loss and gain of titles:—

> "Princes and lords may flourish or may fade;
> A breath can make them as a breath has made."

While Burns repeats the same cry :—

> "Princes and lords are but the breath of Kings."
> —*Cottar's Saturday Night.*

> "A King can mak a belted knight,
> A marquis, duke, an' a' that ;
> But an honest man's aboon his might,
> Gude faith, he manna fa' that !"—*Honest Povertie.*

A part of this creed of worth is a chivalrous, gentle, fraternal regard for woman ; more especially for those who, from their humility of birth, were deemed undeserving of the honourable notice of the knight-errant and his modern representative. Perhaps the most pathetic passage in the "Deserted Village" is that which describes the poor, houseless, shivering female, whose modest looks had once adorned her father's cottage. Burns is no less tender in his consideration of "Sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth" ("Cottar's Saturday Night") ; and again returns to the subject, in words that at once recall Goldsmith's, in "A Winter Night."

Again, their devotion to poetry as an art is announced by both poets with the same fervour and in very similar language. Both debate the worldly wisdom of this devotion, with the same ultimate open-eyed choice of poetry and poverty, preferably to plenty and prose. It was in the following frank, devoted style that Goldsmith wooed the muse :—

> "Sweet Poesy ! thou loveliest maid !
> Dear charming nymph ! . . .
> My shame in crowds, my solitary pride,
> Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,
> That found'st me poor at first and keep'st me so," etc.

Burns admits us to a dramatic view of the manner of his decision. The scene is the smoky spence of his own humble farmhouse, and the time is a winter fore-night. He is alone, sad in mind and fatigued in body. He had been swinging the flail in the barn all day long, while his less necessitous farmer-neibors had been curling :—

"All in this mottie, misty clime,
I backward mused on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' prime
An' done nae thing,
But stringing blethers up in rhyme
For fools to sing.

Had I to good advice but harkit
I might by this hae led a market,
Or strutted in a bank and clarkit
My cash account ;
While here, half-mad, half-clad, half-sarkit,
Is a' th' amount.

I started, mutt'ring 'Blockhead ! coof !'
An' heav'd on high my waukit loof
To swear by a' yon starry roof,
Or some rash aith,
That I henceforth would be rhyme-proof
Till my last breath :

When click ! the string the sneck did draw,
An' jee the door gaed to the wa' ; "

and Poesy herself, crowned with holly and looking supremely lovely, entered just in time to stop these reckless vows, which, the poet naively adds, would in any case have soon been broken. She consecrated

him for ever to her service, and crowned him with holly from her own brows :—

"'Wear thou this!' she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head;
The polished leaves and berries red
Did rustling play,
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away."

Notice may now be taken of a few instances in which Burns has recollected not so much the sentiment as the language of Goldsmith. "In all my wanderings," begins Goldsmith,

"Round this world of care,
In all my griefs, and God has given my share," etc.

Burns follows in a variation of stanza in the famous "Epistle to Davy":—

"In a' my share of care and grief,
Which Fate has largely given,
My hope, my comfort, and relief
Are thoughts of her and Heaven."

Goldsmith has the line—

"Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore;"

Burns has—

"Here Wealth still swells the golden tide,
And busy Trade his labour plies."—*Address to Edina.*

Goldsmith has—

"Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly."

In "Sappho Rediviva" Burns has—

"In vain Religion meets my shrinking eye:
I dare not combat, but I turn and fly."

The expression, "These degenerate times of shame," occurs in both—see "The Deserted Village" and "The Elegy on the Death of Dundas of Arniston."

> "All the bloomy flush of life is fled,"

says Goldsmith; while Burns, in "The Lament for the Earl of Glencairn," writes—

> "In weary being now I pine,
> For all the life of life is dead."

Goldsmith, describing a scene on the Apennine slope, places "woods over woods in gay theatric pride;" Burns at Kenmore, in the Scottish Highlands, describes "the sweeping theatre of hanging woods." Perhaps it was from the Irish poet that Burns got the trick of interpolating "sure"—

> "Sure those ills that wring my soul
> Obey thy high behest."

He was certainly imitating, in the bard's song in "The Jolly Beggars," that peculiarity of Goldsmith's style which is brought in with such delightfully surprising effect in the two immortal elegies on "The Mad Dog," and on "The Glory of her Sex—Miss Blaize." These elegies are too well known to need quotation. Burns writes—

> "He had no wish but—to be glad,
> Nor want but—when he thirsted,
> He hated nought but—to be sad," etc.

And there is probably an echo of Goldsmith's

> "The king himself hath followed her—
> When she has walked before,"

in the lines to Gavin Hamilton :—

> "And gar him follow to the kirk—
> Aye when ye gang yoursel'."

There is unmistakable similarity of style to "The Retaliation" of Goldsmith in Burns's little-known sketch inscribed to Charles James Fox :—

> "Thou first of our orators, first of our wits,
> Yet whose parts and acquirements seem just lucky hits,
> With knowledge so vast, and with judgment so strong,
> No man with the half of them e'er could go wrong;
> With passions so potent, and fancy so bright,
> No man with the half of them e'er could go right," etc.

And it may be noticed here, in conclusion, that Burns seems to have had in his eye Garrick's clever additional portrait to "The Retaliation" when he wrote the Epistle to his later patron, Graham of Fintry :—

> "When Nature her great masterpiece design'd,
> And fram'd her last best work, the human mind,
> Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
> She form'd of various parts the various man," etc.

With this, and what follows in the same poem, the reader may at his leisure compare Garrick's lines on the "Making of Goldsmith," which commence—

> "Here, Hermes, said Jove, who with nectar was mellow,
> Go get me some clay, I will make an odd fellow."

BURNS AND YOUNG.

Of English writers of lugubrious verse, probably the most long-winded was Edward Young. He seemed to luxuriate in woe. His "Complaint" runs to nine long "Nights," and the last is at least as long as any other two. Never was the mournful muse so severely exercised. There are over ten thousand verses in "Night Thoughts"; it would be too much to expect even from a goddess that she should have breath to inspire them all. It may be going too far to deny that Young was a poet in the ordinary sense of the word, but certainly his long "Complaint" does wear the look of a ponderously elaborate rhetorical composition. This question of poetry apart, it is the fact that "Night Thoughts" deals with themes of deepest interest, presents them in a way that arrests attention, and often at least suggests the poetical mood which it fails quite to express. The work was a perfect store-house of phrases and reflections for the minor poets and preachers of last century. Even authors of superior intellect, and of a stronger and purer poetical faculty than his warmest admirer can allow to Young, were more or less indebted to "Night Thoughts." Traces of this indebtedness are to be found not only in "Beattie's wark" and the graceful art of Gold-

smith, but in some of the best passages of Cowper and Burns.

Young was an author of whom popularity was to be predicated in religious Scotland. His "sairiousness" and his sombreness were congenial to the national religious feeling. And nowhere was he more likely to be welcomed than among the descendants of the hill-men of the west country. Burns, even as a lad, was a thoughtful reader, and though it is not known precisely where or when, made early acquaintance with the thought of Young, and was profoundly and permanently affected by the acquaintanceship. Once, it is true, in a Bacchanalian mood, he makes a rebellious and rather disrespectful reference to the night-thinker:—

> "Life's cares they are comforts—a maxim laid down
> By the bard What-d'ye-call-him that wore the black gown:
> And faith! I agree with th' old prig to a hair,
> For a big-bellied bottle's the whole of my care."
>
> *No Churchman am I.*

The maxim here quoted occurs in "Night the Second" of Young's "Complaint":—

> "Life's cares are comforts; such by Heaven design'd;
> He that has none must make them, or be wretched."

But the sally was exceptional, and the current of Burns's deeper thought ran in harmony with that of Young. Many of Young's expressions as well as ideas remained in the memory of Burns, and some of them he quoted repeatedly. He writes to Clarinda: "I have been this morning taking a peep through—as Young finely says—'the dark postern of time long

elapsed.'" The "fine saying" is from "Night the First." Clarinda, by the way, seems to have liked quotations, and Sylvander did not spare her. They served the lover in a double purpose; he was frank enough to inform her that he liked to have quotations for every occasion—"they save one the trouble of finding expression adequate to one's feelings!" It must be remembered, however, that she was an exacting correspondent, and required from him three letters per week for three consecutive months. Burns's favourite expression from Young occurs near the beginning of "Night Thoughts":—

> "On reason build resolve,
> That column of true majesty in man."

Want of resolution was Burns's principal want; hence probably his helpless admiration of the virtue. "Firmness," he wrote to Peggy Chalmers, "is a character I would wish to be thought to possess. I have always despised the feeble resolve." That he did feebly resolve, and that he despised himself for so doing, are the tragic facts of his life-drama; his worst loss at last was loss of self-respect. It was inevitable that Burns should put Young's lines into a poem of his own, admiring their sentiment as he did so inordinately. We find them accordingly in a rhymed epistle to Dr Blacklock, but slightly paraphrased:—

> "Come, firm Resolve, take thou the van,
> Thou stalk of carl-hemp in man."

None of the productions of Burns is more expressive of his political creed that "A Man's a Man for a' That." It is commonly regarded as a sympathetic echo of one of the cries of the French Revolution.

The date of its composition is 1st January 1795. But it contains sentiments which, long before that date, were already familiar to the poet's mind in the language of Young. It not only reproduces those sentiments, but significant traces of that language as well. In the "Sixth Night" of his "Complaint" Young writes:—

> "External homage and a supple knee
> To beings pompously set up!
> . . . All more is Merit's due,
> Her sacred and inviolable right,
> Nor ever paid the monarch but the man,
> Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth.
> . . . . . .
> Each man makes his own stature. . . .
> High worth is elevated place:
> Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man;
> Tho' no exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth:
> And, though it wears no ribband, 'tis renown."

Compare with these quotations, which occur within the compass of some forty lines, the following bits from Burns, and it must be owned there is a parallel, and that Burns drew it with a singularly bold, firm, and free line:—

> "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man's the gowd for a' that.
> The honest man, tho' e'er so poor,
> Is king o' men for a' that.
> Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
> Wha struts an' stares and a' that?
> Though hundreds worship at his word,
> He's but a coof for a' that.
> For a' that, and a' that,
> His riband, star, and a' that;
> The pith o' sense an' pride o' worth
> Are higher rank than a' that."

It is surely needless to say that these two sets of quotations, from Young and Burns respectively, while

they constitute a parallel, stand in the relation of first draught and finished picture, and that the finished picture is the lyric of Burns.

In "Man was Made to Mourn," while there are undoubted traces of Shenstone's influence, there is probably also a suggestion of Young. "Man's inhumanity to man" is a notable line in the complaint of Burns. In the "Third Night" of Young's we have—

> "Man hard of heart to man—
> Man is to man the sorest, surest ill."

In the "Fifth Night"—

> "Inhumanity is caught from man."

And in the "Ninth"—

> "Turn the world's history; what find we there?
> Man's revenge . . . .
> And inhumanities on man."

Again, in "Night the Eighth" Young employs the familiar image of ships at sea to illustrate the course of human life:—

> "Some steer aright; but the black blast blows hard,
> And puffs them wide of hope; with hearts of proof
> Full against wind and tide some win their way,
> And when strong effort has deserved the port
> And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won—'tis lost!"

There is at least a similarity, if an absolute connection cannot be proved, between these and the following lines of Burns:—

> "Wi' wind an' tide fair i' your tail
> Right on ye scud your sea-way," etc.
> *Address to the Unco Guid.*

"A' your views may come to nought
When every nerve is strain'd."
Epistle to a Young Friend.

In the beautiful "Address to the Mountain Daisy" there is a well-known image of Young's:—

"For thee who mourn'st the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine, no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate
Full on thy bloom," etc.

In the Ninth Book of "The Complaint" one reads:—

"Final Ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er creation."

Again, in "Winter—A Dirge" occurs the passage:—

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,
The joyless winter day,
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May."

The first line here is an acknowleged quotation from "Dr Young" in all editions of Burns. But it is rather a recollection of a stanza of Young's exhausting and exhaustless "Ocean—an Ode":—

"The northern blast,
The shatter'd mast,
The syrt,* the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking spout,
The stars gone out,
The boiling strait, the monster's shock,
Let others fear,
To Britain dear;
Whate'er promotes her daring claim," etc.

The following lines of Burns have been the subject

* Sandbed.

of much comment, especially by clerical critics and censors of the poet in Scotland:—

> "Thou hast formèd me
> With passions wild and strong,
> And listening to their witching voice
> Has often led me wrong."—*A Prayer.*

> "I saw thy pulse's maddening play
> Wild send thee Pleasure's devious way,
> Misled by Fancy's meteor ray
> By passion driven;
> But yet the light that led astray
> Was light from Heaven."
> *Coila in the Vision, Duan II.*

It may interest some of these critics to know that Burns had clerical authority for his daring apology; in the seventh book of his "Night Thoughts" the Rev. Dr Young holds forth in the following strain:—

> "What though our passions are run mad, and stoop
> With low, terrestrial appetite to graze
> On trash, on toys, dethroned from high desire?
> Yet still, through their disgrace, no feeble ray
> Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell."

A few phrases common to both Burns and Young may now be noted. "By passion driven," already quoted in Burns's "Prayer," occurs in Young's "Eighth Night" of "The Complaint;" "inwoven in our frame," in the "Seventh Night," appears in "Man was made to Mourn;" "pacing the round of life" will be found in the "Third Night" and in "The Cottar's Saturday Night;" the expression "honest poverty," popularised by Burns, occurs in Young's "Eighth Night." Burns has—

> "Stringing blethers up in rhyme
> For fools to sing;"

Young in his "Second Night" has—

> "Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip,
> Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,
> Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song."

Burns has—

> "'God save the King's a cuckoo sang
> That's unco easy said aye:"

Young has—

> "The cuckoo seasons sing
> The same dull note."—*Book Third.*

And in the same "Third Book" Young has the lines:—

> "Death is the crown of life;
> Were death denied poor man would live in vain."

They suggest "The Lazy Mist" of Burns:—

> "Life is not worth having with all it can give;
> For something beyond it poor man sure must live."

We have probably a recollection of Young's line in "Night the Fifth"—"Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow"—in Burns's "Song of Death":—

> "Thou strik'st the young hero—a glorious mark!
> He falls in the blaze of his fame."

For such single words as "tenebrific" (or "tenebrious"), "terræ-filial," "conglobe," etc., Burns's best excuse is that they were employed, if not coined, by Young. The learned Doctor's coinage was commonly pedantic; a few of them may be presented for curiosity's sake—they are taken at random: "Ichor of Bacchus" (this is wine), "antemundane father," "extramundane head," "irrefragable smile," "con-

certion of design," "a brow solute," "grand-climacterical absurdities," etc. Burns picked up a few, but after all he was remarkably modest with such a wealth of novelties before him. It is very probable that Burns got his classical nomenclature—his Cynthias and Castalias—rather from Young's and Shenstone's verse than from the Rector of Ayr Academy. Brief as this paper is, it is sufficient to show that Burns knew his Young.

BURNS AND SHENSTONE.

We have it on the authority of Wordsworth that "poets in their youth begin in gladness, but thereof comes in the end despondency or madness." When Wordsworth thus formulated the result of his reflections on the poetic life, Burns was one of the poets of whom he had been particularly thinking. But while it is true that something very like despondency and madness beclouded the life of Burns at its close, it is unhappily not quite so clear that his career as a poet commenced in gladness. No doubt he rejoiced with a keen delight in the exercise of his rare poetical faculty; he has himself sung of "the rapture of the poet" at the moment when "fancy lightens in his e'e;" but the delight was hardly at the first, as an examination of his earlier efforts in the craft of verse-making sufficiently reveals. In these we find a significant proportion of melancholy moods, for which the misery and monotony of his circumstances are usually made to account. Of the first twenty-five of his recorded pieces, the larger half are full of a genuine sadness which sorts ill with one's conceptions of a youth-time of gladness and hope. They are elegies on the inequalities of fortune, the frailty of life, and the sinfulness of human nature. His twenty-third year seems to have

been a period of exceptional gloom. The poetical fruit of that year, some six or eight pieces in all, has a strong tang of Calvinism. Even of the poems of his apprenticeship that are not fairly to be described as gloomy, not a few have the ring of a bravely-assumed but hollow mirth. So that, taking his earlier poems altogether, one is not far wrong in saying that Burns's poetical career, which ended in gloom, began also in a gloom which did not readily give way. To most people an adequate explanation of this gloom is to be found in the poet's circumstances. Burns himself had a somewhat different explanation. True, he characterised the condition of his early life, in a well-known retrospective letter, as "the cheerless gloom of the hermit with the unceasing moil of a galley slave;" but he knew that such a life did not determine his brother Gilbert, for example, to the melancholy views which he himself entertained. He believed, and he seems to have cherished the belief, that he was the victim of a constitutional melancholy; and he appears to have found at last some consolation in knowing that it was common to the poetic temperament, if indeed it was not an essential part of it.

His natural predisposition to melancholy, which the "angustæ res domi" must have at least tended to foster, had an important influence upon the reading and thought of young Burns from the very first. Here it is necessary to discriminate between the kind of reading to which he was directed by the advice and example of his father and that to which, when the years of his pupilage was over, he turned of his

own freewill and choice. His father's bent was to divinity, moral philosophy, and the exact sciences, and these were subjects of evening study more or less systematic in the farmhouse of Mount Oliphant, as well as of frequent discussion out of doors at intervals of leisure in the work of the field. The text-books, so to say, for those studies were Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, and Euclid's *Elements*. They were read and pondered by the future poet chiefly because they were recommended by his father. But when he was free to follow the bent of his own mind and to choose his own reading—a freedom which he entered upon somewhere about his sixteenth year—he turned instinctively to poetry, and particularly to that kind of it which expresses religious or philosophical reflections in elegiac strains. William Shenstone was an early favourite; Blair, Gray, and Young were also soon discovered; and they remained, it may almost be said, lifelong friends. It is scarcely inaccurate to describe these authors as writers of elegy; two of them employed the recognised elegiac measure; and though Blair and Young expressed their mournful reflections in blank verse, they may be regarded as essentially elegiac poets. They were, at or near the outset of his poetical career, Burns's favourite authors. There is evidence, both plain and implied, that he studied them deeply and sympathetically. They inspired no inconsiderable amount of his thought; and, while they were not seldom suggestive of new trains of thought and feeling, they were occasionally contributory of poetical phrases

and poetical situations to the verse of Burns. It is the purpose of the present paper to notice Burns' more important references to Shenstone, and to point out the nature and extent of his indebtedness to that once famous and now, perhaps, too neglected English poet.

It was in the village of Kirkoswald, whither he had been sent in his seventeenth year to learn land surveying, that Burns first made acquaintance with Shenstone's poems. "They were," he announced, "an important addition to his reading." Eight years afterwards Shenstone was still first on the list of his favourite authors. Writing from Lochlee, in January 1783, to his schoolmaster, Mr John Murdoch, then settled in London, he declares: "My favourite authors are of the sentimental kind, such as Shenstone, particularly his Elegies." Three years later his opinion of the merits of Shenstone was still high—so high that in his interesting preface to the Kilmarnock edition of his poems he makes direct mention of him as "that celebrated poet whose divine Elegies do honour to our language, our nation, and our species." Even after his arrival in Edinburgh, at a time when he was patronised by "The Lounger," and lionised by the first literary society of his country, he wrote with a strange modesty that he was not vain enough to hope for distinguished poetic fame in a language "where Shenstone and Gray had drawn the tear." And later on, in his charming letters to Peggy Chalmers and Mrs Dunlop, we come across now a quotation from Shenstone's prose, and now an admiring reference to his poetical genius.

Burns's opinion of Shenstone was his own, and his admiration, so frequently and so warmly expressed, was undoubtedly genuine. At the same time, he was by no means ignorant of the high place which contemporary criticism assigned to Shenstone, nor of the particular qualities for which that poet was praised. Beattie was well known to Burns, and Beattie, in his attack upon Churchill in 1765, had represented "all the Loves and gentler Graces" as mourning over Shenstone's "recent urn." It would be easy to show that Burns's individual opinion of Shenstone was strengthened by his knowledge of Beattie's criticism, and that the language of Beattie was lingering in his memory when, as in the fine passage in "The Vision," he described the art of Shenstone in the grace of its pathetic touch as utterly beyond the range of his own genius :—

> "Thou canst not learn, nor can I show
> To paint with Thomson's landscape glow,
> Or wake the bosom-melting throe
> With Shenstone's art,
> Or pour with Gray the moving flow
> Warm on the heart."

It is worth while comparing with this the following lines of Beattie—upon which, it may be noticed in passing, a powerful passage* in Coleridge's "Monody on the Death of Chatterton" is modelled :—

> "Is this the land where Gray's unlabour'd art
> Soothes, melts, alarms, and ravishes the heart?"

---

* "Is this the land of song-ennobled line?
Is this the land where genius ne'er in vain
Poured forth his lofty strain?
Ah me! yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
Beneath chill Disappointment's shade,' etc.

> While the lone wanderer's sweet complainings flow
> In simple majesty of manly woe.
> . . . . . .
> Is this the land, o'er Shenstone's recent urn
> Where all the Loves and gentler Graces mourn? " etc.

The closeness of Burns's study of Shenstone, and the nature and extent of his obligations to him, will be best shown by a citation or comparison of parallel passages taken from both authors. Take first the poetical situation and scenery represented in "Man was Made to Mourn." It is an evening of chill November, and the poet wanders forth along the banks of Ayr. He meets an old man with hoary hair, who thus addresses him :—

> " Young stranger, whither wandrest thou?
> Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain?" etc.

In the background of this scene are "moors extending wide." Turn, now, to the seventh of Shenstone's series of Elegies. It is a stormy evening of autumn, and the poet strays by Orwell's winding banks. He meets a venerable figure with white locks, who thus accosts him :—

> " Stranger, amidst this pealing rain,
> Benighted, lonesome, whither wouldst thou stray?
> Does wealth or power thy weary step constrain?" etc.

In the background of this scene are "distant heaths." Here, it will be observed, the situation is very similar, while the language quoted is almost identical.

In another passage of "Man was Made to Mourn" occur the lines—

> " Look not alone on youthful prime
> Or manhood's active might."

The latter has been obviously adopted, consciously or more probably unconsciously, from Shenstone's Eleventh Elegy—

"Not all the force of manhood's active might," etc.

A recollection of this same Eleventh Elegy, mingling in the poet's memory with echoes of Gray's Ode on Eton, will be found in the last stanza of Burns's Ode on Despondency. "O enviable early days!" says Burns, recalling the period of childhood:—

"Ye tiny elves, that guiltless sport
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court
When manhood is your wish."

The lines were penned in 1786; and there is a peculiar pathos in this young man of twenty-seven warning the young from his own experience of the tears and fears of dim-declining age. Shenstone, however, had already written:—

"O youth! enchanting stage, profusely blest!
Then glows the breast, as opening roses fair,
More free, more vivid than the linnet's wing," etc.

It is unnecessary to give the full quotation, but the moralising is in the same strain precisely.

Again, most readers of Burns are familiar with the rather strange expression "dear idea," which occurs not less than thrice in various parts of his poetry—in the Epistle to Davie, "Her dear idea brings relief and solace to my breast"; in his early lyrical fragment on Jean, "Her dear idea round my heart should tenderly entwine"; and in "Sappho Rediviva," "Your dear idea reigns." The expression occurs in Shenstone,

but it would be hazardous to say that it was absolutely original and his own creation. In his Ninth Elegy one may read—"Restore thy dear idea to my breast."

Again, the opening lines of Burns's "Sonnet on hearing a thrush sing in January" seem to have completely caught the echo of a couplet in the Sixth Elegy of Shenstone. The sonnet begins—

> "Sing on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough,
> Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain."

The couplet of the elegy expresses the same sense in similar words—

> "Sing on, my bird, the liquid notes prolong:
> Sing on, my bird, 'tis Damon hears the song."

If we turn to "The Cottar's Sunday Night," and read it alongside of "The Schoolmistress," we shall find that in respect of measure, theme, and style of both treatment and language, it was modelled scarcely less after the manner of Shenstone than according to the pattern of Fergusson's "Farmer's Ingle." Unlike the latter, but like "The Schoolmistress," it maintains the perfect form of the Spenserian stanza. It would take up too much space to indulge in quotations here, but the student of Burns may profitably compare the stanza of "The Cottar" which commences "They chant their artless notes in simple guise," and the two succeeding stanzas, with stanzas xii. and xiv. of "The Schoolmistress"—not for sentiment, but for style. He will scarcely fail to perceive a suggestive likeness. On the one hand, there is an enumeration of psalm tunes; on the other, an enumeration of garden herbs. The enumeration in both cases proceeds on the same

lines. There is, further, in the dame's singing of Shenstone, a very possible suggestion of the cottar's reading of Burns. The passage

> "Sweet melody! to hear her then repeat
> How Israel's sons beneath a foreign king," etc.

may have inspired

> "The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
> How Abram was the friend of God on high," etc.

And none will deny that the advice of the dame to her infant charge might have formed part of the "admonition due" of the cottar-father to the "younkers" of his family:—

> "And warned them not the fretful to deride,
> But love each other dear, whatever them betide."

That such advice was given is indeed implied, for

> "With joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,
> And each for other's welfare kindly spiers."

The mysterious elegy, "the work of some hapless son of the Muses," which Burns presented in his own manuscript to Mrs Dunlop, should perhaps be noticed here, if only for his own estimate of it, as being in point of sentiment "no discredit even to that elegant poet," though clothed in a language admittedly inferior to Shenstone's. If it be Burns's own work, which is on the whole very doubtful, one might be excused for regarding it as descriptive of his sorrow and solitude of soul at the grave of Highland Mary. The scene of the following verses may be imagined to be the West Churchyard at Greenock, where Mary

Campbell is believed to lie buried, and the time a sorrowful hour of unavailing regret immediately preceding his projected emigration to the West Indies :—

> " At the last limits of our isle,
> Washed by the western wave,
> Touched by thy fate, a thoughtful bard
> Sits lonely by thy grave ;
> Pensive he eyes before him spread
> The deep, outstretching vast :
> His mourning notes are borne away
> Upon the rapid blast."

BURNS AND BLAIR;

WITH A NOTE ON BEATTIE.

THE name of Robert Blair is associated in English literary history with a gloomy and powerful poem "The Grave," which had an immense popularity, especially in Scotland, all through the latter half of last century. It was hardly eclipsed even by Young's "Night Thoughts"—if one may speak of gloom eclipsing gloom. Southey referred to it as the most meritorious of all poems written in imitation of the "Night Thoughts"; but Southey does injustice to the genius of Blair, for "The Grave" was composed before the publication of Young's gloomy masterpiece, though it was not printed till 1743. It was written before its author's appointment as minister to the parish of Athelstaneford, in Haddingtonshire, and when Blair was still a young man between twenty and thirty. A well-known line of Campbell's—"Like angels' visits, few and far between"—it may not be generally known, was lifted from Blair, who refers to good impulses returning in an evil life "in visits like those of angels, short and far between." But a greater than Campbell was indebted, and indebted to a greater extent, for both turn of phrase and general tenor of reflection, to the author of "The Grave."

Burns was a close and earnest student of this powerfully suggestive poem. Both his correspondence and his poems bear the clearest evidence, direct and indirect. The passage—

> "Tell us, ye dead! will none of you in pity,
> To those you left behind disclose the secret?
> Oh, that some courteous ghost would blab it out,
> What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be?"

must have been often on his lips, and was often transcribed by his pen. As well known to him, and as often quoted, was another passage from "The Grave" of some thirty lines commencing—

> "Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul!
> Sweetness of life, and solder of society!
> I owe thee much; thou hast deserved of me
> Far, far beyond what I can ever pay."

But the greatest honour that can be attributed to the passage lies in the undoubted fact that, along with a scarcely remembered lyric of Thomson's, it suggested much of the imagery and sentiment of Burns's unutterably rich and tender hymns on Highland Mary. Blair represents himself and his "friend" as "wandering heedless on" in the ample security of a thick wood; the lovers rest on a flowery bank beside a stream that murmurs sweetly through the underwood; the thrush in their hearing renews and "mends his song of love;" the fragrance of wild rose and eglantine exhales around them—

> "O, then, the longest summer's day
> Seemed too, too much in haste; still the full heart
> Had not imparted half."

"To Mary in Heaven," like the companion verses

on "Highland Mary," contains the same imagery of woodland and water, birds and flowers, the same situation of lovers fain, the same sentiments of affection, the same sad reflections afterwards to be noted. The lovers meet by the winding Ayr that gurgled and kissed its pebbly shore, half hidden in an underwood of birch and blooming thorn;

> "The flowers sprang wanton to be press'd,
> The birds sang love on every spray:
> Till too, too soon the glowing west
> Proclaim'd the speed of wingëd day."

To both poets their memories are for ever sad and for ever sacred by reason of the death of the loved one. Blair's reflections are thus expressed—

> "Dull Grave! thou spoil'st the dance of youthful blood,
> Strik'st out the dimple from the cheek of mirth,
> And every feature from the face."

The beloved dead is "dumb as the green covering turf." Far more tenderly uttered is the sorrow of Burns—

> "O pale, pale now those rosy lips
> I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly,
> And closed for aye the sparkling glance
> That dwelt on me sae kindly. . . .
> Now green's the sod's and cauld the clay
> That wraps my Highland Mary."

At least one other bit from this fruitful passage in "The Grave" of Blair reappears in the familiar poetry of Burns. In the plaintive flow of "Banks and Braes o' Boonie Doon" the maiden all forlorn sings sadly—

> "Thou minds me o' departed joys,
> Departed never to return."

The expression may of course be a mere coincidence, but is more probably a recollection of the words of Blair—

> "Of joys departed
> Not to return, how painful the remembrance!"

Other traces of Burns's study of Blair are in all likelihood discoverable in the following parallel passages:—

> "He whistled up Lord Lennox' march
> To keep his courage cheery."—*Hallowe'en.*

This is said of "fechtin' Jamie Fleck" when he boldly went forth into the darkness to sow his hempseed. Blair had already pictured the schoolboy as he passed "the lone churchyard"—

> "Whistling aloud to bear his courage up."

Again, in "The Petition of Bruar Water," a noble poem framed on the lines of Ramsay's "Salutation of Edinburgh to the Marquis of Carnarvon," Burns describes the harvest moon as making a moving check-work with the trembling twigs and leaves of "lofty firs, and ashes cool," and "fragrant birks in woodbines drest": he has a visionary glimpse of

> "the reaper's nightly beam
> Mild-chequering thro' the trees."

The same peculiar expression occurs in Blair, of—

> "Moonshine chequering thro' the trees."

Everybody remembers the line, which prepares us for the revelry of Tam o' Shanter and Soutar Johnnie; it is—

> "When drouthie neibors neibors meet."

Blair hints at a similar orgy, if the word may be

allowed, with a grave-digger for Thaliarch—only his expression is less euphemistic; it is—

> "When drunkards meet."

It was to a different Blair—"damnation" Blair, as he has been irreverently called—that Burns was indebted for a notably felicitous alteration of his text—

> "Moodie speeds the holy door
> Wi' tidings of *salvation.*"—*Holy Fair.*

In modern editions of the minor poets the verses of Beattie are usually bound up with those of Blair. Beattie figured so prominently in both prose and rhyme in the heyday of his reputation as rather to astonish us now. "The Minstrel" first appeared in 1771, and from that year till about 1775 its singularly fortunate author was one of the lions of his time, patronised on all hands, and encouraged to roar, by Royalty, the Church, and the literary profession. It was impossible that Burns should be ignorant of him, or fail to peruse him. But Beattie seems to have had little influence upon either the thought or the language of Burns. He was no doubt, though in a small degree, indebted to him—as already shown—for the criticism of Shenstone and Gray which occurs in "The Vision":—

> "Thou canst not learn nor can I show . . .
> To wake the bosom-melting throe
> With Shenstone's art,
> Or pour with Gray the moving flow
> Warm on the heart."

Beattie's opinion of those poets will be found in a

somewhat bitter and uncharitable poem "on the report of a monument to be erected in Westminster Abbey in memory of a late author," which he had the good taste to reject from later editions of his poems. The author referred to was Churchill, satirised as Bufo. In the course of the satire he makes mention of "Gray's unlaboured art, soothing, melting and ravishing the heart;" of the Elegy written in a Country Chnrchyard, "flowing in simple majesty of manly woe;" and of the amiability and grace of Shenstone's character as a poet. If there is no trace of Beattie's influence in the lines quoted from "The Vision," there is no trace of it anywhere else in the work of Burns. There are, however, several references which go to show Burns's admiring acquaintanceship with his writings and his reputation. And, indeed, without their evidence, it is past doubt that Burns must have had no mean regard for one who could turn in his own favourite measure so graceful a stanza as—

> "Oh, bonnie are the greensward howes,
> Where thro' the birks the burnie rows,
> And the bee bums, and the ox lows,
> And saft winds rustle,
> And shepherd lads on sunny knowes
> Blaw the blith whistle."

The stanza is from a rhyming epistle to Ross of Lochee, the author of "The Fortunate Shepherdess" —a pastoral drama which has done for Scotland north of the Tay what Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd" has done for the Lowlands; and it is part of an effort, in the vernacular (of Aberdeen), which approves the

capability of Beattie to produce such a poem as that "On Pastoral Poetry" which one diffidently attributes to Burns.

Probably the most convincing proof of Burns's admiration for Beattie is expressed in his letter, of date January 1787, to "Zeluco" Moore—"In a language where Thomson and Beattie have painted the landscape . . . I am not vain enough to hope for distinguished poetic fame." Thomson's ability to paint the landscape will be universally allowed, but Beattie's will be questioned—because it is not so generally known. Which of his descriptions of natural scenery may have been in the mind of Burns when he elevated him to the level of Thomson, it is of course impossible to say definitely, but an examination of "The Minstrel" will reveal several impressive scenes informed with the graceful spirit which pervades the reposeful passages of Campbell's "Wyoming," and which may well have enraptured the responsive heart of Burns. The student who is curious in such matters will find favourable specimens of "Beattie's wark" in stanzas xxxviii. and xxxix. of the First Book, and stanza viii. of the Second Book of "The Minstrel." The last-mentioned stanza is distinctly echoed in the well-known "flamingo" stanza of "Gertrude of Wyoming." A better specimen of Beattie's descriptive art occurs in the opening passage of his once widely known, now clean forgotten, "Hermit." But perhaps he attains his highest pitch as a descriptive poet in an obscure poem, written in his twenty-fourth year; here we have

such picturesque touches, such suggestive melodies as—

> "What time the wan moon's yellow horn
> Gleams on the western deep;"

and—

> "Be mine the hollow cliff, whose pine
> Waves o'er the gloomy stream—
> Whence the scared owl on pinions gray
> Breaks from the rustling boughs,
> And down the lone vale sails away
> To more profound repose."

In January 1787 Burns sent, by way of New Year's gift, a copy of the Poems of Beattie to a certain Miss Logan, residing with her brother and mother at Park Villa, near Ayr. The brother, well known to us as "thairm-inspiring Willie," from his accomplishments as a virtuoso on the violin, was a retired military officer holding the rank of major; and the sister was "Sentimental Sister Susie" of the poet's "Epistle to Major Logan." The copy of Beattie was accompanied with the lines:—

> "I send you more than India boasts
> In Edwin's simple tale,"

along with the sentiment—"and may, dear maid, each lover prove an Edwin still to you!"

Perhaps the only other reference to Beattie in the works of Burns are those of the delightfully frank "First Epistle to Lapraik"—

> "Thought I, can this be Pope, or Steele,
> Or Beattie's wark?"

and of "The Ordination":—

> "Common-sense is gaun, she says,
> To mak to Jamie Beattie
> Her plaint this day."

The appositeness of the latter allusion is in the fact that Beattie's "Essay on Truth"—a blast impotently intended to sweep David Hume's philosophy behind the horizon—revealed him as one of the "Moderate" party in the clerical dissensions of the time. Sir Joshua had painted Beattie as a champion aiding an angel in strife with Scepticism, Folly, and Prejudice. His "Essay on Truth" brought him the compliment from Reynolds. But nowadays one only remembers the "Essay" because it explains the picture and illustrates the reference in Burns.

DUNBAR IN BURNS.

LITERARY Scots, it has been daringly said, is of no higher antiquity than "The Gentle Shepherd" of Allan Ramsay. The statement may safely be traversed. It is, indeed, no less absurd than to say that there is no Scottish literature of earlier date than the beginning of last century. For the fact is patent that William Dunbar's best poetry is expressed in a vigorous vernacular, and one of the most obvious features in the history of the Scottish language is the persistency with which for centuries that tongue has maintained its distinctive peculiarities of word and idiom. Quite three centuries lie between Burns and Dunbar, yet the earlier poet is not one whit less vernacular than the later, and the vernacular they severally employ is substantially one and the same. Every one knows that the language of Burns was the current dialect of the peasant Lowlander of his day, put to poetical uses, but it is not so generally recognised that it was also the almost perfect tradition of more than three centuries. Scottish words and phrases of remarkable expressiveness, which we now for the most part refer to Burns as if he were their grand first parent, were already current and mature both in the country and at the Court of James the Third, and are to be picked by scores from the pages of Dunbar. Open the book at random, and the sample comes readily—"attour,"

"wale," "haggis," "swats," "hurcheon," "hirpling," "branking," "aver" (*for* cart-horse), "swanky," "oxter," "hallan," "get" (*for* offspring), "roose" (*for* extol), "smoor," "widdie," "eldritch," "coft," "wauk," "swith," etc. Yet these words, and others like them, are mostly credited to the account of Burns. Scottish phrases and turns of expression common to both poets, and even more significant of the integrity of the language than single words, are no less plentiful. "Air and late," "scaith and scorn," "wae worth," "ill-willie," or "guid-willie," "hale an' fere," "I rede thee," "tak guid tent," "at kirk an' market," "to think lang" (*for* to weary), "drive ower" (*for* spend —said of time); and such terms as "true as ony steel," "shine like ony saip," etc.—these and other idioms are well known as occurring in the verse of Burns; but they may also be found in the verse of Dunbar, and probably in no single instance originated with him.

Such a comparison of language as is here rather suggested than instituted is not without interest, and might be made of value; of more popular interest, however, is the comparison of the genius of Burns with that of Dunbar in regard to their choice of subject. This it is proposed here briefly to point, not in the vague and general way, which would prove that hundreds of poets are very like each other because they all write upon the beauty of nature, and the rapture or wretchedness of love, and similar simple distractions; but by noting in Dunbar certain distinct and definite poems which directly or indirectly remind the critical reader of achievements by Burns on the same or very kindred themes. The comparison is not

meant to be exhaustive, yet it will probably surprise the reader to learn, if he does not already know, that in Dunbar may be found the anticipation—I do not say the suggestion—of such well-known poems or themes by Burns as the following:—"Epistle to a Young Friend," "Death and Dr Hornbook," "The Deil cam' Fiddling thro' the Toun," "Mary Morrison," "Macpherson's Farewell," "Auld Farmer's Salutation to his Auld Mare," "Address to Edinburgh," "Guid Morning to Your Majesty," "Green Grow the Rashes, O," "The Vision"—("Had I to Guid Advice but Harkit,") "A Winter Night," and certain pieces exemplifying that peculiar poetical somersault and recovery to which Burns has given the designation of *per contra.*

The anticipation of Burns's gnomic poem containing his advice to Andrew may be found in Dunbar's verses commencing "To dwell in Court, my friend." Each poet counsels his friend on the subjects of friendship, fortune, religion, etc. Only on the topic of love is the elder poet silent. "Aye free, aff-hand," says Burns—

> "Aye free, aff-hand, your story tell
> When wi' a bosom crony,
> But still keep something to yoursel'
> Ye scarcely tell to ony";

and Dunbar offers the same cautious advice:—

> "Beware whom to thy counsel thou disco'er,
> For truth dwells not aye for that truth appears;
> Put not thy honour into aventure,
> A friend may be thy foe as fortune steers."

Burns's advice on the subject of wealth is to wait assiduously upon Fortune—

> "And gather gear by every wile
> That's justified by honour."

Dunbar's view of fickle fortune being the same, he gives the same advice—

"With all thy heart treat business and cure."

"Yet," says Burns—

"They wha fa' in fortune's strife
Their fate we shouldna censure."

And Dunbar counsels his friend to "be nowise despiteful to the puir." Burns reflects that "a man may have an honest heart tho' poortith hourly stare him"; while Dunbar reminds his young friend to be patient though he possess no lairdship, "for hie virtue may stand in low estate." On religion both poets give the same advice—to avoid profane company and reverence the Creator. Burns' language is well known—

"Ne'er with wits profane to range,
Be complaisance extended."

And—

"A correspondence fixed with Heaven
Is sure a noble anchor."

Dunbar's language carries the same counsel—

"Hold God thy friend, ever stable by Him stand,
He'll thee comfort in all misadventure."

And—

"In company choose honourable feres,
But from vile folk withdraw thee far aside;
The Psalmist says *cum sancto sanctus eris*,
And he rules weel wha weel himself can guide."

Burns's Dr Hornbook is notorious. But the keen eye of Dunbar also caught the character, and subjected it to the same style of handling. It is a satire with touches of grim humour on the arch-quack John Damian *alias* French John, *alias* John-the-Leech, etc. Beginning with a murder in Italy, this wholesale homicide qualified in France, and finally set up and secured a general practice in

Scotland. He was at once apothecary, physician, and surgeon. But he revelled in blood. His "garde-vyance" was crammed with irons and other "instruments for slaughter." "Where he let blude, it was nae lauchter." "He left neither sick nor sair unslain" in France; and in Scotland

> "His practiks never were put to preif
> But sudden death, or great mischief!"

Dunbar's Deil, as he passed through the market, was not simply in search of an exciseman; nor did he just confine his operations to taverners, maltmen, and brewsters, and those in any way connected with "the trade." Mahoun—so Dunbar calls him—took a wider sweep in the good old times. The clergy had the honour of first catching his eye; but he made little if any distinction of crafts or professions. He called his followers from all classes—merchants, goldsmiths, tailors, and souters, baxters, blacksmiths, fleshers, and fish-wives, the last-mentioned all in a body.

> "A tailor said—'In a' this toun
> Be there a better weel-made goun,
> I give me to the Fiend all free!'
> 'Gramercy, tailor!' said Mahoun,
> 'Renounce thy God, an' come to me!"

The measure of "Mary Morrison" was known to Dunbar. The prevailing tone and the characteristic sentiment of Burns's poem will be found in Dunbar's Lines to a Lady, beginning "My heart's treasure, and sweet assured foe." Burns entreats for pity at least, and finds comfort in the reflection that

> "A thocht ungentle canna be
> The thocht o' Mary Morrison."

Dunbar, too, entreats for ruth, with the "tears falling from his face," and though less hopeful than Burns, is not hopeless—

> "For how should ony gentle heart endure
> To see this sicht in ony creature?"

Dunbar's Donald Owre, that "fell strong traitor," who "mair falset had than other fowre," was the Macpherson of his day. But Dunbar's "Epitaph for Donald," it must be owned, shows no glimpse of that admiration for the daring and dauntless freebooter which is more than suggested in Burns' "Macpherson's Farewell." The fault, however, was not Dunbar's, for the earlier freebooter, though, like the later, he lived a life of "sturt and strife" (the phrase occurs in Dunbar), and "died by treacherie," had not that redeeming touch of grace which Carlyle notes in Macpherson, and which probably recommended his character to the "strange half-barbarous, half-poetic fellow-feeling of Burns."

> "Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
> Sae dauntingly gaed he;
> He played a spring, and danced it round,
> Below the gallows-tree."

The reference is to the air which bears his name, said to have been composed by Macpherson the night before his execution—proof, as Carlyle remarks, of a fibre of poetry in his savage heart. "On the wings of that poor melody his better soul would soar away above oblivion, pain, and all the ignominy and despair which, like an avalanche, was hurling him to the abyss."

"The Petition of the Gray Horse" of Dunbar may

well stand beside Burns's record of the long and faithful service of the auld mare, grown

> "dowie, stiff, and crazy,
> And thy auld hide as white's a daisy."

There is much of the same tender humour in both poems, heightened in the case of Dunbar's by self-identification with the Gray Horse. When the auld mare was a filly, we are told—

> "She set weel doun a shapely shank
> As e'er tread yird,
> And could hae flown out-owre a stank
> Like ony bird."

The Gray Horse, when a colt, was also "i' the foremost rank"—

> "When I was young and into ply,
> And would cast gambols to the sky,
> I had been bocht in realms near-by,
> Had I consentit to be sauld."

In the end the happier lot was the auld mare's—

> "Thinkna, my auld trusty servan',
> That now perhaps thou's less deservin',
> An' thy auld days may end in stervin';
> For my last fow
> A heapit stimpart—I'll reserve ane
> Laid by for you."

The Gray Horse, on the other hand, was left lamenting—

> "I have run lang furth in the field,
> On pastures that are plain and peel'd;
> I micht be now ta'en in for eild.
>
> My mane is turnëd into white,
> And thereof ye have a' the wyte:
> When ither horse had bran to bite
> I gat but girse," etc.

Burns's Address to "Edina, Scotia's Darling Seat,"

is well known. Dunbar's Address to London, the "A *per se* of towns," is pitched in the same lofty strain of compliment and admiration, but his address to Edinburgh is far from complimentary :

" May nane pass thro' your principal gates
For stink of haddocks and of skates,
For cries of carlines and debates,
For 'fensive flytings of defame :
Think ye not shame,
Before strangers of all estates,
That sic dishonour hurt your name?"

In his address to King George—"Guid Morning to your Majesty!"—Burns, it will be remembered, reminds the King that he is his humble debtor for "neither pension, post, nor place." Dunbar, too, besides sending Royalty his good wishes for a New Year, makes no less bold a declaration—

" Though that I, amang the lave,
Unworthy be a place to have,
Or in their number to be told—
As lang in mind my work shall hold
As ever ony of them a',
Supposin' my rewaird be sma'!"

Perhaps the most notable passage in "Green Grow the Rashes" is the last stanza—

" Auld Nature swears the lovely dears,
Her noblest wark she classes, O ;
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
And then she made the lasses, O."

Precisely the same sentiment is in Dunbar's panegyric poem addressed to Queen Margaret :—

" Of thy fair figure Nature might rejoice
That so thee carved with all her curious slight ;
She has thee made this very warld's choice,
Showing on thee her handicraft and might,
To see how fair she could depaint a wight."

In the first "Duan" of his "Vision," Burns for the moment regrets that he had surrendered his life to poesy; he backward mused on wasted time, found he had nothing to show for the past but a few foolish rhymes, and contrasted his present condition—"half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit"—with what might have been had he listened to gude advice. Dunbar was subject to similar fits of reminiscence and despondency:—

> "In some part on myself I 'plain
> When other folk flatter and feign;
> Alas! I can but ballads breif—
> Sic folly held my bridle reign:
> Excess of thocht does me mischief."

Some points of resemblance will be found between Burns's "A Winter Night" and Dunbar's noble "Meditation in Winter": the situation is the same, and similar melancholy thoughts course through the minds of the sleepless poets. Burns's use of the *Per Contra* is illustrated in "Tam Samson's Elegy." Dunbar has brilliant examples of it in his poems on James Doig, and on the Souters and Tailors of Edinburgh.

Burns, it is safe to say, was unacquainted with the poetry of Dunbar, if we except those specimens of it which are included in Ramsay's "Evergreen." The similarity in several important relations between the two poets is the more remarkable, and well illustrates the consistency and continuity of our literary history.

THE END.