

THE IN-OSCULATION OF SCIENCE AND ART.

A LYRICAL LECTURE.*

YE linguists, pray, what does *inosculate* mean?
 That it's something like *kissing* a tyro can see :
 But in case any ladies should come on the scene,
 From such fervid ideas we'll try to keep free.
 Let Platonic emotions, then, reign in the heart
 At the In-osculation of Science and Art.

This In-osculation, of which I shall speak,
 With In-oculation has nothing to do :
 It is used, like another long compound in Greek,†
 When our vessels join mouths, and make one out of
 two.

So of some recent views I'll repeat you a part
 On the In-osculation of Science and Art.

* Suggested by Dr Lyon Playfair's excellent Lecture on this subject at Birmingham.

† *αναστομωσις*.

What a poor helpless being is Man at his birth !
(How unlike what we make him when trained in our
Schools !)
Like a sailor just shipwrecked he lies on the earth,
Without cover or clothes, without weapons or tools :
This, in Primitive Man, seems a very bad start
For the In-osculation of Science and Art.

But a Mind is within him, that sits on the watch,
To observe and infer, to grow skilful and wise ;
And from every event some advantage to snatch,
Till from Bad up to Better his faculties rise :
Or till Genius awakens, bright thoughts to impart
On the In-osculation of Science and Art.

Chance hits upon Fire ; and the wonderful gift
Soon sets men on boiling or baking their food ;
And when winter comes round with his ice and his
drift,
We're preserved by the warmth from his surliest
mood.
Then the Potter bakes clay, and the Smith, strong and
swart,
Shows an In-osculation of Science and Art.

Before Father Bacchus and Ceres were known,
Our life must indeed have been barren and bare :
To be fed upon Acorns and Water alone,
Though the Acorns be roasted, is very poor fare :
The addition of Bread and of Wine to our *carte*
Was a mighty improvement in Science and Art.

With implements awkward Man turned up the soil,
Till a well-fashioned plough, came his labour to
save ;
Or if doomed on the deep for subsistence to toil,
A clumsy canoe bore him over the wave.
For 'tis long ere the Ship, with her Compass and
Chart,
Proves the In-osculation of Science and Art.

But onward we move in our destined career,
The workman still working, and watched by the
Sage ;
Till the Sage, like a pilot, comes forward to steer,
By the light shed from Nature's and History's
page.
Then when Knowledge and Skill keep no longer
apart,
We discover new regions in Science and Art.

Yet for how many ages had Air been respired,
Ere its gases in part were by Priestley disclosed !
And how long had old Thales from business retired,*
Ere the Man came who told us how Water's com-
posed ! †

Such delays and obstructions seem often to thwart
The full In-osculation of Science and Art.

'Tis but now we find out that the Sun is the Source
And the Centre of most of the movements we see :
His radiance gives birth to each varying Force,
And not Proteus himself could more versatile be.
With his beams all our Energies come or depart :
All the Energies even of Science and Art.

He sucks up in mists from the wide-surgings brine,
The streams that our mountains send down to the
plains ;
And his rays, bottled up in the deeply sunk mine,
Are emerging to drive our swift iron-way trains.
While the herbs which he rears go to furnish the Mart
With good beeves for the lovers of Science and Art.

* It was the doctrine of Thales that the beginning of all things was Water.

† Cavendish or Watt?

Success then to Science ! success to the Sun !

May they long to our labours their influence lend !
Their beneficent course as they gloriously run,

May each Muse, grave or gay, on their progress
attend :

While the Wine-cup, at times, shall its brilliancy dart
On the In-osculation of Science and Art.