Hope, like a phantom, but allures
Our way from wave to wave,
With joys that never can be ours
This side the darksome grave.
As little wanton schoolboys try
Their shadows to out-run,
So we pursue the fleeting joy,
And end as we begun.

Then back through disappointment's tears,
On our past scenes we gaze :
There, in the vale of other years,
The stream of early days,
Bright as the azure vault above,
In hallowed glory lies :
Oh ! all seems happiness and love
'Neath young life's sunny skies.

## SPEAK GENTLY OF THE DEAD.

The dead—nay, mention not the dead,
Thy silence now they claim ;
Wherefore select the low-laid head,
If slander be the theme ?

Have they no virtues to record ?
Then let their vices lie ;
If from the upright path they err'd
Who says—"So have not I ?"

The dead—the lost—whate'er their fault
May've been in life, there's some,
Some who, with heart all sorrow—fraught,
Bewail their lonely home ;

Some who have miss'd them from their hearth,
And could with tears reveal
Such virtues of the "laid in earth,"
As purest bosoms feel.

But be it as it may—'tis not
For us to wound their fame,
And hold to view each tarnish'd spot
Once flung upon their name—

Perhaps by envy—for there are
Tongues that, with scorpian cling,
Lay venom'd hold on character,
E'en till they lose their sting.

But ah ! they might in pity spare
The sleepers 'neath the sod ;
E'en though their hearts were prone to err,
Their gracious judge is God.

Then who are we who so condemn
Our fellow-mortals here?
Arraigned at the same bar with them
All must at last appear;

Each one to answer for his own,
Not for his neighbour's guile;
Who then, before that awful throne,
Can clear himself the while?

Ah! then, speak gently of the dead,
When borne from earth away;
The green sod resting on their head
Might shield from calumny.

## ENVY NOT THE POET'S LOT.

Envy not the poet's lot,
Though his pathway seemeth
Strewn with roses, and each spot
Bright as sunlight gleameth.
There's a thorn amid the flowers
Which most deeply woundeth;
Oft when gladdest seem the bowers
Sorrow most aboundeth.

Covet not the starry wreath
Which the poet weareth,
There is bitterness beneath
Envy keen prepareth.
Deem not that each happy lay
Speaks a heart of gladness—
Oft his heart appears most gay
When his soul's all sadness.

Sigh not for the poet's breast
With its golden visions,
Still pursuing Hope's bright rest,
Finding still delusions.
Grasping at the shadowy thing,
Ever onward gaining,
Flinging glory from its wing,
Ne'er within attaining.

Yet whene'er the poet's hands
O'er the harp are straying,
Music's soothing voice commands,
Sorrow's throbs allaying.
Not rich eastern diadems
In his eye appeareth
Half so glorious as the gems
Which his forehead weareth.

## WILLIAM BUCHANAN, B.A.

NO town in the empire, nor even in the world, we feel certain, has produced so many poets as that of Paisley, and to that number must be added the name of the late William Buchanan, who was born in the year 1821. He was educated at the Grammar School there, and at the University of Glasgow, where he took the first prize for poetry in the Logic Class, and also shone as a quick and a clever scholar, taking the degree of B.A. Studying for the ministry, he became a licentiate of the Church of Scotland about the year 1843, or 1844, and soon after was engaged as assistant at Kilbirnie, in Ayrshire; and in a short time he received a presentation to the parish of Kilmaurs, about two miles from Kilmarnock. For a while things went on smoothly, and his eloquent pulpit ministrations were the delight of his people, and the talk of the neighbouring parishes. On retiring from the ministry he began to contribute pretty largely to the press, and was appointed editor of the Ayr *Observer*, the leading Conservative journal in the county, which he conducted with excellent tact, and uncommon vigour. He afterwards edited the *Edinburgh Courant* for a short time, and, latterly, succeeded the late Thomas Aird as editor of the *Dumfries Herald and Register*. Returning again to the Ayr *Observer*, he died suddenly there, in the county town, in 1866, or 1867.

In 1859, when the whole of the English-speaking world had gone into a state of almost delirious frenzy about the genius of Robert Burns, consequent on the centenary of his birth, Mr Buchanan published "Robert Burns, a Centenary Ode," one of the best of the thousand and one such poems which then inundated the land. The versification is flowing and easy, the imagery natural and graceful, the language

highly poetical, the sarcasm scathing and withering; while the sense and meaning are always clear and unmistakable.

In 1866, shortly before his death, he brought out "A Volume of Verses: Serious, Humorous, and Satirical," which was exceedingly well received, and fully established his fame as a poet of the direct and realistic school. Mr Buchanan had no patience with the crude obscurities and the maudlin conceits of that modern school of poetry, (then at its height, but which is now happily on the decline), which goes wandering about like a bewildered man on a misty moor in search of far-fetched, unmeaning, and ridiculous poetic figures of speech and comparisons, until the poet's strength and the intelligent reader's patience are alike exhausted In none of his poems did Mr Buchanan ever lose his own way, or bewilder his readers; though in the following withering style he could describe those poets who did both:—

> Far higher praises, surely must be thine,
> To spurn the probable in every line,
> To leave poor tame reality afar,
> And with dull reason wage eternal war;
> To agonize in rhapsodies unknown
> To men or angels, since they are thine own;
> To spout and rage, to mutter and to melt,
> With passions ne'er conceived, and pangs ne'er felt.
> . . . . . .
> You shake your head. Well then I'll not insist;
> I grant scarecrows loom largest through the mist;
> And ragged thoughts, just like those ragged birds,
> Show greatest covered with a cloud of words."

Had Mr Buchanan commenced earlier in life to cultivate his poetic faculty, or had that life been longer spared, he would undoubtedly have written other and nobler works than any he has left behind, though even these are sufficient to preserve his name.

We would have liked to have given entire the grand, fresh, and rolling "Centenary Ode," but its length compels us to abridge it.

## ROBERT BURNS: A CENTENARY ODE.

We hail to-day his glorious birth,
One hundred years ago,
Who taught his brothers o'er the earth
To think, to feel, to glow;
Whose independent spirit fires
In countless thousands now.
Ay, and will burn till Truth expires—
That Roman of the plough!—

Who spurned the falsehood of pretence,
The insolence of pride,
Who measured men by worth and sense,
And not by mere outside;
Who from the mob that worship state,
Turned to the sterling few
That honour—what alone is great—
The Good, the Just, the True!—

Thy story, Burns, a tale unfolds,
As thrilling as thy song;
Oh! that the age which now beholds
Might hate thy crying wrong—
The cold neglect, contemptuous airs,
The cruel, callous, sneers
Proud Dullness towards Genius bears;
And worse, mayhap, the tears—

The maudlin tears which only fall
As soon as men are dead,
And flow full-coursing down the pall
Of Bards who wanted bread;
The hypocritic tears accurst,
So like their ways and doom,
Who used to kill the prophets first,
And garnished next their tomb!

He gave a voice to every mood,
A tongue to every scene;
His scorn fell like a lashing flood,
Electric wit between;
And satire's blast, rough, roaring, loud,
Came on like driving hail;
How shrunk the shivering liars, cowed,
Behind their rotten pale!

His genius like the sun forth shone,
To bless our human sight,
And clasp the world in one broad zone
Of bright and living light;
To banish gloom—alas that gloom
His own career should mark!
Yet though the Sun all else illume,
The Sun itself is dark.

In Burns's lustre, oh ! how sweet
The wild flow'rs round us spread !
The mountain-daisy at our feet
Lifts up its modest head ;
The broom puts on a yellower flush
Along our banks and braes ;
The heather wears a deeper blush
As conscious of our praise.

Fairies foot lighter on the lea,
And dress in gayer green ;
Fate wears more pleasing mystery,
When he holds Hallowe'en ;
He waves his wand—witches and ghosts
Our wizard's spell abide ;
He speaks, and lo ! the hellish hosts,—
And "Tam's" immortal ride !

How softly blow those westland winds
Around the happy spot,
Where married love its dwelling finds,
Care and the world forgot ;
Where peace gives joy a deeper zest
And sanctifies our lives,
And each believes his "Jean" the best
Of women and of wives.

And when that swiftly-footed Time
Steals on us unaware,
Writes wrinkles on young Beauty's prime,
Binds Vigour to his chair ;
Age looks not crabbed or forlorn
Although its strength be gone—
The fresh dew of a second morn
Is round "John Anderson."

His lyrics stir our British blood
Wherever Britons toil ;
They fell the far Canadian wood,
Dig the Australian soil ;
Where Northern winters hold their reign,
And Eastern summers long,
They bind our sons in one strong chain
Of Sentimeut and Song.

Hail Scotia's Bard ! Long shall be felt
Thy lyre so many-string'd ;
To soothe, to madden, and to melt,
What words like thine are wing'd ?
One age—and do we deem it hard
That but one Burns appears ?
Nay, men were bless'd with such a Bard
Once in a thousand years !

For he shall live, and shall live on,
When all those years are past ;
While harvests wave and rivers run ;
While pangs and passions last ;
He'll be till Nature's final hour
Looks wan in Nature's face,
A name, a presence, and a power,
To move the human race.

## ALEXANDER LAMONT

("THE VICAR OF DEEPDALE.")

SCOTLAND has not, perhaps, produced so many scholars or eminent names as England, yet in the number of learned men who have been entirely the architects of their own fortune, who, born in the humble walks of life, have acquired erudition by their own unremitting exertions, Scotland is considerably ahead of the sister kingdom. For this, various reasons might be given. The excellence of the instruction afforded by the parish schools, placing learning within the reach of the poorest rustic, must have been one ; and the cheapness of the Scotch Universities, compared to England, is perhaps another. We have given numerous typical instances of this, and Mr Lamont is still another.

Alexander Lamont was born at Johnstone, Renfrewshire, in 1843. His parents removed to Glasgow shortly after his birth. He was educated in Glasgow, and having adopted the profession of a teacher, he attended the Normal College of that city, and then the Arts Classes in its University for three consecutive years. Mr Lamont's first appointment was to a large school in Hamilton, which he presided over for ten years. In 1876 his abilities as a teacher were recognised by the Glasgow School Board, and he accepted office under them as Head Master in Church

Place (Temporary) School, and then as second master in the City Public Schools—schools which the Board have established for the purpose of advancing the higher education, and where much attention is bestowed on the Classics, Mathematics, and Modern Languages.

In the midst of his arduous and exacting duties as a teacher, Mr Lamont has economised his spare moments, and has given to the world numerous deeply thoughtful essays, sketches, and poems, showing gentle and cordial goodness, warm affection and helpful sympathy, as well as ardour and devotion to the cause of human happiness and improvement. Such subjects he discusses with fervid eloquence, and he clothes his poetic ideas in happy and beautiful language. Indeed, to defecate life of its miseries and its evils is the ruling passion of his soul, and he dedicates to it every power of his mind, and every pulsation of his heart. Mr Lamont has contributed much to the periodical literature of the day. He wrote a romance, "Destiny's Daughter," which appeared in the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, and was well received. He has written to many of the leading magazines, including—*London Society*, *Belgravia*, *Chambers's Journal*, the *Quiver*, *Good Words*, &c. In 1873 he wrote a series of papers to the *People's Friend*, entitled "Thoughts from Deepdale, by the Vicar." These were presumably written by a vicar of the Church of England, who had reached his threescore years and ten, and gave his experiences in Deepdale, and his impressions of spiritual life, and of the sights and sounds of nature in the many years that had passed over his head in the quiet retreat, which he describes as "a little paradise embosomed in one of our sweetest English seaboard counties." The character was a difficult one for a young man, but it was sustained with much power, and these sweet and soothing "messages to the outer world" attracted the attention and admiration of many of our best-

known critics, including the late George Gilfillan, who then formed a warm friendship towards the author, which lasted till the great mind was called away. When he reviewed the papers in book form —a handsome volume published by Hodder & Stoughton, London, entitled "Wayside Wells; or, Thoughts from Deepdale, by Alexander Lamont, 1874"—he said: "When we read some of these beautiful papers in the *People's Friend* we took the author at his word, and supposed him to be an elderly English vicar, living in a romantic dale somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Lake Country, and were quite astonished to learn on enquiry that he was a young man in the West of Scotland, hitherto guiltless of the sin of authorship, except in the shape of some very pleasing verses, and who had life all before him." It was at Mr Gilfillan's urgent recommendation that the work was taken up by these London publishers, and it is pleasing to add that the book was an immediate success.

We are strongly tempted to give specimens of choice morsels from this work, but our space forbids. Every page is full of the beauty, freshness, and variety of Nature. "The Old Lieutenant's Story," "The Stream," "Wayside Wells," "The Book World," "A Dream in the Old Church," and, indeed, all of the papers, display the heart of a poet, and give evidence that the author has *written himself*. Mr Lamont writes in an easy graceful manner, with a fine flow of sentiment, and a depth of feeling, purity of taste, and broad human sympathy which cannot fail to strike a chord in the breast of the reader. Several of his subjects are tenderly pathetic, while others display brightness, richness of style and enthusiasm, affording a stimulus to the strong and thoughtful; while others are calculated to brighten a sad hour, or to afford comfort and hope on a sick-bed. He sees God in Nature, and inasmuch as God's works give us a revelation of Him, they are part of Him. Ex-

ternal Nature brings to the author nothing but hope and joy, and that rest which seems to be as infinite and deep as the blue heavens above him—in his own words, "It is this feeling that sanctifies the songs of the warblers of the grove, gives a deep and sacred mystery to the merry laughter of childhood, and hallows the rosy tints of the wild rose, or the dark purple of the full-blown violet."

These remarks apply equally to the poetical effusions of Mr Lamont. Many of them flow in a limpid current, with natural artlessness. This applies particularly to those in which he treats of women and children, while others are deeply thoughtful and suggestive. We rarely meet with *fine* lines taken by themselves. The poems, as a rule, are neat and complete, which is more important. It is unfair to a volume or a poem to pull to pieces a line here, or censure an epithet there, now to expose a faulty rhyme, now to turn up a loose construction. As was recently stated, "this may be an excellent way for a critic of activity earning his bread, but he has no more right to be called a critic than a weeder has to be called a gardener." It should be the business of a critic to detect and make known to the world the good that is in a work rather than the evil. We conclude our sketch with the words of a critic in the *Glasgow Herald*:—"Mr Lamont is quite the reverse of a puling sentimentalist. To those who are acquainted with him personally his book will suggest a singular feature in his literary character. By nature he is full of airy humour; but the moment he takes pen in hand he becomes, as a rule, so serious that readers to whom he is unknown would never imagine that, under his gravest mood and style, he conceals a world of wholesome, peaceful, and jubilant fun."

Let us hope that Mr Lamont will soon favour the world by publishing a selection of his verses in book form. Of late arduous professional work has pre-

vented him from writing much, but we trust he may yet be able to find time to prepare a second volume.

### CHANGED.

The music of Spring's in the grove, Will;
The flowers are out in the dell;
And the pioneer bee exults, lad,
O'er the gleam of the cowslip's bell.
Far down by the murmuring brook, there,
The shining daffodils blow;
But the golden dreams are away, lad,
That were mine in that spring long ago!

There is balm in the morning breeze, Will;
There is song in the morning skies;
And the rosy sunbeams kiss, lad,
The dew from the violets' eyes.
Far down in the depths of the wood, lad,
In the twilight the blackbirds sing;
But never the joy can they bring, lad,
That they gave in that golden spring!

There are frisking lambs in the meads, Will;
There are bees on the bending flowers;
And the wild dove coos to his mate, lad,
In the hush of the evening hours.
The lily dreams over the fount, Will,
And the sunbeam sleeps on the sea;
But the songs and the flowers of yore, lad,
Shall never come back to me!

There's a shadow across my path, Will,
In the midst of the gleam of Spring;
And the piping thrush on the thorn, lad,
Sings not as it used to sing.
And the lustre has gone from the stars, Will,
While they seem far away and cold;
They are not the stars that looked down, lad,
Through those glorious nights of old!

There's a grave far down in the vale, Will,
By the sacred churchyard wall;
There often I sit all alone, lad,
Till the dews in the twilight fall;
And I gaze on the violets sweet, Will,
That watch her with tender eyes;
And I mingle my tears with the dews, lad,
As they come from the far-off skies.

Here are the flowers she gave me, Will—
"Just withered violets," you say;
But I'll ever keep fresh in my heart, lad
That face that has passed away!

And when in that Garden we meet, Will,
Where the violets always blow,
She'll smile as I give her the flowers, lad,
That I got from her long ago !

## ONLY?

Only a withered violet ?
Ah ! there's more than the world knows there
In the eventide she gave it
As I gazed on her face so fair,
When her glad blue eyes were gleaming
With a love that was all for me ;
While one little star looked down from afar,
As we kissed 'neath the hawthorn tree !

Only a crumpled letter ?
I've had it for twenty years,
And each glowing word is hallowed
By Memory's sacred tears.
And I've lived in the life she gave me,
When first, in each burning line,
She laid at my feet, with a grace so sweet,
A love that was half divine.

Only a golden ringlet ?
To the world it is nothing more !
But my soul it clasps in its glory
To the light of the days of yore :
And I thrill to its silken softness,
In the depth of my lonely night ;
When I think of the grace of a fair young face,
Where lingered its golden light.

Only a lifelong vision ?
Only a dream of peace ?
Well, well, 'twill be something better
When sorrow and pain shall cease ;
So, I'll cherish these gifts she has left me,
And I'll render them up to her then :
My dream shall be fled, and my grief shall be dead,
When her blue eyes gaze on me again.

## THE ROUND OF LIFE.

Two children down by the shining strand,
With eyes as blue as the summer sea,
While the sinking sun fills all the land
With the glow of a golden mystery :
Laughing aloud at the sea-mew's cry,
Gazing with joy on its snowy breast,
Till the first star looks from the evening sky,
And the amber bars stretch over the west.

A soft green dell by the breezy shore,
A sailor lad and a maiden fair ;
Hand clasped in hand, while the tale of yore
Is borne again on the listening air.
For love is young though love be old,
And love alone the heart can fill ;
And the dear old tale that has been told
In the days gone by, is spoken still.

A trim-built home on a sheltered bay ;
A wife looking out on the glistening sea ;
A prayer for the loved one far away,
And the prattling imps 'neath the old roof-tree ;
A lifted latch and a radiant face
By the open door in the falling night ;
A welcome home and a warm embrace
From the love of his youth and his children bright.

An aged man in an old arm-chair ;
A golden light from the western sky ;
His wife by his side, with her silvered hair,
And the open Book of God close by.
Sweet on the bay the gloaming falls,
And bright is the glow of the evening star ;
But dearer to them are the jasper walls
And the golden streets of the Land afar.

An old churchyard on a green hillside,
Two lying still in their peaceful rest ;
The fishermen's boats going out with the tide
In the fiery glow of the amber west.
Children's laughter and old men's sighs,
The night that follows the morning clear,
A rainbow bridging our darkened skies,
Are the round of our lives from year to year !

## THE SEED AND THE THOUGHT.

I cast two seeds of precious flowers
All lightly from my hand away ;
Heaven watered them with freshest showers,
And sunlight kissed them all the day.
The one came up, a lily white—
A fairer never raised its head :
The other ne'er to mortal sight
Was seen, but in the ground lay dead.

I sent two thoughts of equal tone
Into the throbbing souls of youth ;
The one sank hopeless and alone,
Untended e'er by love or truth.

The other fell 'mid peace and song,
And grew in majesty and grace,
That made the heart that nursed it strong,
And looked from out a shining face.

Oh blessed earth that to thy breast
Took the small seed so cast away,
And brought it forth as vision blest,
To lighten up the gloomy day!
Oh, blessed heart, that took the thought
In all the love with which 'twas given;
To brighten with the joy it brought,
And bring the giver nearer heaven!

## LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

The evening sunlight slept on the bay,
And the West all gleamed like the ruddy ore;
The fishermen steered their bark away,
And the children shouted along the shore.
The fishermen sang, and the wild sea-mew
Shot up to the cliff from the shingly bars,
And it saw them lost in the deepening blue,
As they sailed away 'mid the rising stars.

The stars went out, and the storm came down,
And the wailing wind filled all the night;
With a chill on their hearts, in the far-off town,
The wives sat lone by the flickering light;
And the wild birds saw, 'mid the lightning's glare,
A dark speck sink in the seething foam;
And a shrill cry rung through the troubled air,
And a prayer for the babes who were left at home.

In the evening calm the sunlight slept
Like an amber flood all over the bay;
The wives sat down on the cliffs and wept,
Till the night chill fell on the dying day.
But the ships sailed on to lands afar,
And knew not the lingering grief on the shore;
The nightingale trilled to the evening star,
And the ways of the world went on as before!

The thrush pipes sweet to his mate on the thorn,
And the butterfly gleams past the wandering bee;
The lark sings shrill at the gates of the morn,
And the white sails shine on the far-off sea,
And the sea-mew answers the curlew's cry,
And the red sun sinks in the golden main,
And tears are falling, and lone hearts sigh
For those who shall never come home again!

## JAMES CRANSTOUN, LL.D.,

CLASSICAL Master in the Royal High School of Edinburgh, is an author and poet of much learning, varied accomplishment, and refined taste. He has proved himself to be a most faithful and vigorous translator from the Latin poets—exhibiting at once high attainments in scholarship and in literature. Dr Cranstoun was born in 1837 at Crossridge, in the parish of Carmichael, Lanarkshire, and was educated at the Parish School. He entered Glasgow University in 1852, and graduated B.A. in 1855. In 1856 he was appointed Classical Master in Hamilton Place Academy, Edinburgh, and was transferred to the Rectorship of the Grammar School of Kirkcudbright in 1860. He held this office till 1872, when he was appointed Rector of Dumfries Academy. In 1873 he received the degree of LL.D. from the University of Glasgow, and on being chosen as Classical Master in the High School of Edinburgh in 1878, he removed to that city. His sound scholarship and profound culture eminently qualified him for that distinguished post.

We have already indicated that it is a popular notion, and not without foundation, that eminence in literature is inconsistent with success at the bar. It is true that solicitors as a rule shun the young advocate who is known to dabble in verses, just as they avoid the great cricketer or the eminent bass singer. The same idea is prevalent in regard to other learned professions, including medical men and teachers. Yet in the fields of literature some names come before us as brilliant exceptions to the general rule, and the subject of our present sketch is one of these. In the midst of his arduous duties Dr Cranstoun has found time to court the Muse, and it has been said that several of the Latin poets have found in the Scottish schoolmaster the most faithful and

vigorous of translators—for he has performed his task with wondrous felicity of language, with a daintiness and delicacy above praise, and altogether creditable to Scottish scholarship. Indeed, fitness for such a work presupposes not only a thorough acquaintance with the style, idioms, and measures of the poets, but the possession of considerable poetic power on the part of the translator.

In 1867 Dr Cranstoun published "The Poems of Valerius Catullus" in English verse (Edinburgh: Nimmo), with life of the poet, excursus, and illustrative notes; in 1872 "The Elegies of Tibullus; and in 1875, "The Elegies of Sextus Propertius" (Edinburgh: Blackwood), with life and notes. These works have been highly spoken of by the leading reviewers of the day, and additional value has been given to the translations by the excellent lives of the poets and truly valuable notes. The undertaking was encompassed with difficulties of no ordinary description, and he has reason to feel proud that the result of his labours has called forth the gratitude, not only of the "gentle reader," but likewise of the professional critic—one of the latter writing as follows:—"Possessing rare qualifications as a translator, he is justly entitled to take a most creditable position among those who have exerted themselves to make the English reader familiar with the works of the leading classical poets. There is a pleasing absence of slovenliness in the present translation. The careful manner in which he has rendered each of the pieces, combined with the voluminous and learned notes that form the latter portion of the volume, shows that he considers no work should be attempted if not deserving of being well performed."

Regarding "Catullus" it has also been said that the "freedom and seeming ease of his style, the result of that high art which conceals itself, together with an unsurpassed richness of imagery and passionate power of conception in his graver pieces, make

the translation of the poetry of Catullus as delicate a duty as any scholar can assume. Honour due, then, to such poets as brave old Catullus—in truth he was not old, never will be old—and to the scholar proved and good who here introduces him in modern attire." The notes are full of much pleasant and ingenious criticism, while the parallel passages from other poets are numerous, apt, and beautiful, showing sparks of that high, pure power, which springs from true genius, and to which no mere versifier can ever attain.

Here we can only give selections from Dr Cranstoun's miscellaneous poems. These have as yet only appeared in our magazines and literary miscellanies, but we hope soon to hear of their being published in book form. They are of sufficient merit to secure the admiration of the general reader, as his translations have been found eminently useful to the scholar and the critic. Many of them abound in bright pictures of some of Nature's aspects—thoughtful and sympathetic, with numerous passages of much beauty. Dr Cranstoun might well be pronounced as a pure lover of Nature, and he gives evidence in the following verses of an appreciation of her beauties such as is given only to the true poet.

### THE NEREID.

In radiant splendour, on the glassy waters,
Fair Dian lay like innocence asleep;
When, clothed in beauty, one of Ocean's daughters
Rose from her palace deep.

Softly she issued through the azure portal,
Her every movement told she was divine;
I stood and gazed upon the fair immortal,
I knelt before her shrine.

She came, her silken tresses round her trailing,
Thin clouds of spray her forehead circling now
Like the transparent mists of Orient, veiling
Aurora's crimson brow.

Fair was her face, her soft blue eyes bright-beaming ;
She wore the aspect of a blooming bride ;
All o'er her form the silver rays were streaming ;
Round played the amorous tide.

I felt as if I'd drunk some magic potion,
Strange visions rose before my frenzied brain :
O could I dive to the deep caves of ocean
And see that face again !

O for one glimpse of that undreamt-of glory !
One brief and transient glimpse behind the veil !
Fearless I'd brave the billows wild and hoary,
Though Death bestrode the gale.

The heartless world may jeer in cold derision,
No scorn can from my heart its idol sever ;
The sweet remembrance of that midnight vision
Will haunt my soul for ever.

## MAY MORNING.

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Over the fresh green lea ;
Flow'ret and leaflet of glad Beauty born
Tell of the bright days to be !
Hail May ! blythe Comer !
First-born of Summer !
Welcome to thee !

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Over the old gray hill !
Myriads of insects of glad Beauty born
Murmuring melodies trill :
Rivulets glancing—
Lambkins a-dancing
Wayward of will !

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Close by the crystal stream !
Leaf, bud, and blossom of glad Beauty born
Faëry things in a dream !
Riverward drooping—
Lovingly stooping—
Trancèd they seem.

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Deep in the greenwood bowers !
Primrose on primrose of glad Beauty born
Fresh with the circling hours !
Nature restoring—
Lavishly pouring
Odorous showers.

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Down in the lonesome dell !
Cowslip and daisy of glad beauty born,
Jewelled with joy-tears that fell
As Aurora, while keeping
Her vigil, sat weeping :
May looked so well.

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Over the deep blue sea !
Wavelet on wavelet of glad Beauty born
Rolling unfettered and free !
Dimpledly streaming –
Goldenly gleaming—
Radiant with glee !

Sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
Under the clear blue sky !
Sunbeam on sunbeam of glad Beauty born
Glory showered down from on high !
Hark the glad voicing—
Hark the rejoicing—
Marred by no sigh !

O sweet is the breath of the merry May morn
By land and river and sea !
Flower, leaf, and wavelet of glad Beauty born
Tell of the bright days to be !
Hail May, blythe Comer !
First-born of Summer !
Welcome to thee !

## LIFE.

Stay ! pilgrim, cast thine eyes around,
Upon the many-coloured ground,
And see what glories there abound :
Such is Life's variety.

Or see the rainbow's varying hue
Enstamped on heaven's bright sea of blue,
A moment more—gone from the view :
Such is Life's stability.

Look at the painted butterfly
That flutters 'neath the Summer sky ;
With the first breeze 'twill struggling lie :
Such is Life's felicity.

Hast ever seen, in sunny hours,
Weeds coiling round the fairest flowers,
And spoiling Autumn's rosy bowers ?
Such is Life's amenity.

Hast ever seen the sweet-tongued bee
Kiss clover-bloom on verdant lea,
Then quickly from its charmer flee?
Such is Life's fidelity.

Hast ever seen a maiden smile,
And lealest lover sore beguile—
Her gay young heart clay-cold the while?—
Such is Life's sincerity.

Hast seen the clear blue sky o'ercast
By blackening cloud and darkening blast,
Then showers of hail come driving fast?
Such is Life's serenity.

The brightest sunshine will not last,
'Tis but a taper in the past;
Sweet Summer now—now Winter's blast:
Such is Life's reality.

Still while the stream of Time shall flow,
All that we cherish here below
Decay and change shall surely know:
*This* the only certainty.

## BEHIND THE VEIL.

Ever pants the heart of mortal
For a fairer, happier time,
Yearns to ope the golden portal
Will reveal a sunnier clime,
Where the purple hues of morning
Usher in a cloudless day,
Fadeless flowers life's path adorning—
Never dreaming of decay;
Sighing for delights and pleasures,
Joys in aspect ever new;
Rich domains, exhaustless treasures,
Gems of every gorgeous hue.
Such the fairy realm the heart of dreaming youth delights to rear;
Summer skies without a dark'ning cloud—a world without a tear.

Nought can cool our mad devotion—
Fancy paints the golden strand;
O'er the earth, across the ocean.
Still we seek the charmèd land;
And we live but to discover
That the happy dreams were vain,
And that clouds still round us hover,
Yet we sigh and dream again.

And we build our fairy palace,
Mightier, statelier than before ;
Deeper quaff from Fancy's chalice,
Quaff, and yearn, and dream the more.
Fancies fond as ever poet wove in rapture-breathing strain ;
Visions idle as the ravings of the fever-'wildered brain.

Since the curtain riseth never
This bright Eden to display,
Why, in idle longings ever,
Do we, creatures of a day,
Thus away our moments fritter
On a visionary gleam ?
And the sweets of life embitter
For the glory of a dream ?
Fruits there are that cannot perish,
Garner'd for the just above ;
Let us live content, and cherish
Faith in God's unchanging love.
This can shed upon our sin-blurr'd world a lustre pure and bright ;
Lead us to a land where lowering cloud ne'er glooms the Eternal light.

For there is a land of glory
Eye of mortal may not scan ;
Where the aged grow not hoary ;
Where the cheek is never wan ;
Where the path is never dreary
In the roll of endless years ;
Where the soul is never weary
Nor the eye bedimm'd with tears.
Death, the mighty, dread Magician,
Can alone, with potent hand,
Raise the veil that bars our vision,
And reveal the beauteous land.
Then the eye shall gaze on wonders such as man hath never seen ;
Grasp the glories of the future and the glory that hath been.

## PETER STILL,

AUTHOR of the "Cottar's Sunday, and other Poems," and father of the poet of the same name we sketched in our first volume, was born in the

parish of Longside, Aberdeenshire, in 1814. He was early sent forth to the world to add his mite to the family exchequer, for we find him when between ten and eleven years of age herding cattle on a wide and wild range of hills some miles distant from his father's house. During the winter months he was sent to school. After marrying (in his twentieth year) he became a day labourer, but his sight began to fail him, and for more than six months he was stone blind. On his sight being restored he was laid aside by other infirmities; indeed his life was one long struggle with misfortune, with sickness, and with poverty.

In 1839 he published a few poems in the hope of "realizing as much profit as keep my famishing family from absolute want." In 1844 he published another small volume, entitled "The Cottar's Sunday, and other Poems," which, coming under the notice of the Professors and Principals of King's College and University of Aberdeen, who interested themselves in his behalf, found a ready sale, and he was thereby enabled to continue the education of his children, and give himself many comforts which had been previously beyond his reach. Like Burns and Thom before him, he was taken to Edinburgh and other places by his patrons, and there lionised; but for all that his heart yearned for his "hamely" fireside, and for the sights and scenes of his struggling manhood. From the time of his being in "Edina, Scotia's darling seat," until his death, he seldom tuned his lyre. His frame had been so enfeebled by his hard labours in moss and moor that the spirit within him had no heart left to sing; but any lilt then warbled had the old fire and ring about it. After struggling a few more years he died at Blackhouse Tollbar, near Peterhead, in 1848, at the early age of thirty-four.

> His life was a fragment, a broken clue—
> His harp had a tuneful string or two.

He left a widow, who still survives; and we regret to learn that even yet, in her declining years, she has to earn a livelihood by going from house to house as a washerwoman.

His poems are pure specimens of the gentle Doric, with here and there a vein of quiet humour running through them, as witness his "Ye Needna be Courtin' at me, auld man." The following is a fragment of an incomplete, untitled, and unpublished poem, inscribed on the back page of a letter addressed to his brother some short time before his death:

There's sunlight on the earth again,
  There's music in the sky;
There's beauty on the brow of May,
  And glory in her eye.

She smiles benignly as of yore;
  Her mournful days are gone,—
Rejoice again ye fruitful fields,
  Put all your beauties on!

Bloom on the braes ye daisies dear;
  Bloom on the meadows green;
Ye cowslips yield your golden cups
  And mingle in the scene.

Ye bluebells and ye pansies pure
  O sweetly gem the plain;
There's glory in the eye of May
  And light on earth again.

## YE NEEDNA' BE COURTIN' AT ME.

"Ye needna' be courtin' at me, auld man,
  Ye needna' be courtin' at me;
Ye're threescore an' three, an' ye're blin' o' an e'e,
  Sae ye needna' be courtin' at me, auld man,
    Ye needna' be courtin' at me.

"Stan' aff, noo, an' just lat me be, auld man,
  Stan' aff, noo, an' just lat me be;
Ye're auld an' ye're cauld, an' ye're blin' an' ye're bauld,
  An' ye're nae for a lassie like me, auld man,
    Ye're nae for a lassie like me."

"Ha'e patience, an' hear me a wee, sweet lass,
  Ha'e patience, an' hear me a wee;
I've gowpens o' gowd, an' aumry weel stow'd,
  An' a heart that lo'es nane but thee, sweet lass,
    A heart that lo'es nane but thee.

"I'll busk you as braw as a queen sweet lass,
I'll busk you as braw as a queen ;
I've guineas to spare, an', hark ye, what's mair,
I'm only twa score an' fifteen, sweet lass,
Only twa score an' fifteen."

"Gae hame to your gowd an' your gear auld man,
Gae hame to your gowd an' your gear ;
There's a laddie I ken has a heart like mine ain,
An' to me he shall ever be dear, auld man,
To me he shall ever be dear.

"Get aff, noo, an' fash me nae mair, auld man,
Get aff, noo, an' fash me nae mair ;
There's a something in love that your gowd canna move—
I'll be Johnnie's although I gang bare, auld man,
I'll be Johnnie's although I gang bare."

## THE BUCKET.

The bucket, the bucket, the bucket for me !
Awa' wi' your bickers o' barley bree ;
Though good ye may think it, I'll never mair drink it—
The bucket, the bucket, the bucket for me !
There's health in the bucket, there's wealth in the bucket,
There's mair i' the bucket than money can see ;
An' aye when I leuk in't I find there's a beuk in't
That teaches the essence o' wisdom to me.

Whan whisky I swiggit, my wifie aye beggit,
An' aft did she sit wi' the tear in her e'e ;
But noo—wad you think it ?—whan water I drink it,
Right blythesome she smiles on the bucket an me.

The bucket's a treasure nae mortal can measure,
It's happit my wee bits o' bairnies an' me ;
An' noo roun' my ingle, whare sorrows did mingle,
I've pleasure, an' plenty, an' glances o' glee.

The bucket's the bicker that keeps a man sicker,
The bucket's a shield an' a buckler to me ;
In pool or in gutter nae langer I'll splutter,
But walk like a freeman wha feels he is free.

Ye drunkards, be wise noo, an' alter your choice noo—
Come, cling to the bucket, an' prosper like me ;
Ye'll find it is better to swig "caller water,"
Than groan in a gutter without a bawbee !

# LYDIA FALCONER FRASER

WAS the wife of Hugh Miller—a name of which Scotland is proud; and well may she boast of her son, for was he not a fine example of true genius educating itself amid unfavouring obstacles, producing works, the fame of which will be lasting? She was the daughter of an Inverness merchant of good Highland descent. Her education was concluded under the care of the well-known George Thomson, of Edinburgh, the musical correspondent of Burns; and the literary society she there met—Mrs Grant of Laggan, the Ballantines, the poet of "Anster Fair," and others—seems to have given a permanent tone to her singularly refined mind. She became a student of cumbrous philosophies as well as of lighter literature, and went through a course of Algebra almost unaided. In a tableau of that period we have a hint too of her personal attractions. In fading light one evening Mrs Grant's ageing eyes were unable to decipher some passage in the poets to which reference had been made. Miss Fraser brought a candle and stood with it, and in that charmingly sententious vein, now a thing classic, and of the past, the old lady, looking up, observed—"Poetry, lighted by one of the Graces."

In early womanhood she went to Cromarty with her mother, and there were realized these scenes which are pourtrayed in Hugh Miller's autobiography. As wife of Hugh Miller her culture and rare conversational powers stood her husband in good stead, and he has left, in his last words, a touching memorial of his affection for her. His love-making was characteristic and manly. Writing to Miss Fraser on one occasion he said:—"My mother has a very small garden behind her house. It has produced this season one of the most gigantic

thistles of the kind which gardeners term the Scotch, that I ever yet saw. The height is fully nine feet, the average breadth nearly five. Some eight years ago I intended building a little house for myself in this garden. I was to cover it outside with ivy, and to line it inside with books; and here was I to read and write and think all my life long—not altogether so independent of the world as Diogenes in his tub, or the savage in the recesses of the forest, but quite as much as is possible for man in his social state. Here was I to attain to wealth not by increasing my goods, but by moderating my desires. . . . . Only see how much good philosophy you have spoiled. I am not now indifferent to wealth or power or place in the world's eye. I would fain be rich, that I might render you comfortable; powerful, that I might raise you to those high places of society which you are so fitted to adorn; celebrated, that the world might justify your choice." Again:—"A good wife is a mighty addition to a man's happiness; and mine, whom I have been courting for about six years, and am still as much in love with as ever, is one of the best." There was no trace of intellectual dictatorship on his part. He highly valued every suggestion and remark of Mrs Miller's. She reverenced his mental power, without sacrificing her independent judgment. They were exactly on those terms on which it was desirable and beautiful that a man eminent in the intellectual world and his wife should be. Dr Bayne, in his "Life and Letters," says:—"In the friendliest tone she would hint to him that some part of his dress might be improved; and pleasant little banterings—'netted sunbeams' on the surface of the stream, showing the depth of the flow of conjugal happiness beneath,—would occur upon the subject. I remember, for instance, that his hat was once pronounced exceptionable, and that, by way of providing himself with an ally against Mrs Miller on the point, he had trained his

son Hugh, just beginning to toddle and lisp to say,

> Papa has got a very bad hat,
> And many a word he hears about that."

He took a lively interest in and encouraged her in her literary pursuits, and only a few days before his death expressed a warmly favourable opinion of the merits of her little work, "Cats and Dogs," then passing through the press. To the last she was his helpmeet and critic; and after his death edited with much labour several of his posthumous works, and greatly aided in the production of his biography. She was also herself, as we have indicated, an author. "Cats and Dogs" still retains its place as one of the minor classics of natural history. "Passages in the Life of an English Heiress," a story giving the impressions formed by an English lady of the state of the Scottish Church and its people during the Disruption controversy, although published anonymously, attracted attention at the time. Mrs Miller died in 1876.

The following poem, which is preserved in Hugh Miller's "Schools and Schoolmasters," was written upon the death of a winning child—their first. The plaintive words "awa, awa," were among its own first words, repeated, child-like, when they left it, and, after it was taken away from them, came back like a refrain upon their memories.

"THOU'RT AWA."

Thou'rt awa, awa, from thy mother's side,
And awa, awa, from thy father's knee;
Thou'rt awa from our blessing, our care, our caressing,
But awa from our hearts thou'lt never be.

All things, dear child, that were wont to please thee
Are round thee here in beauty bright,—
There's music rare in the cloudless air,
And the earth is teeming with living delight.

Thou'rt awa, awa, from the bursting spring time,
Tho' o'er thy head its green boughs wave;
The lambs are leaving their little footprints
Upon the turf of thy new-made grave.

And art thou awa, and awa for ever,—
That little face,—that tender frame,—
That voice which first, in sweetest accents,
Call'd me the mother's thrilling name,—

That head of nature's finest moulding,—
Those eyes, the deep night ether's blue,
Where sensibility its shadows
Of ever-changing meaning threw?

Thy sweetness, patience under suffering,
All promis'd us an opening day
Most fair, and told that to subdue thee
Would need but love's most gentle sway.

Ah me! 'twas here I thought to lead thee,
And tell thee what are life and death,
And raise thy serious thoughts first waking
To Him who holds our every breath.

And does my selfish heart then grudge thee,
That angels are thy teachers now,—
That glory from thy Saviour's presence
Kindles the crown upon thy brow?

O, no! to me earth must be lonelier,
Wanting thy voice, thy hand, thy love;
Yet dost thou dawn a star of promise,
Mild beacon to the world above.

## HUGH MILLER.

THE story of the life of Hugh Miller has been so often and well told that we are not called on to devote much space to it here; yet we will endeavour to show that he had a poetic side—that he could harmoniously combine poetry with science, and that there was much poetic beauty in his descriptive and scientific works. "Scenes and Legends" is a prose-poem, displaying science and philosophy, humour and pathos, studied in the spirit of poetry, and to a great extent bringing out his mental history.

His career proves that Nature cherishes her own, and that well-directed industry and perseverance—or genius if you will—will educate itself amid the most unfavourable circumstances, and will shine through the difficulties of the humblest lot. Born and bred in obscurity, receiving only the simplest elements of scholarship, apprenticed, when but a lad, to the trade of a mason, and following it steadily for many years, —these were not the most propitious circumstances in which genius could be reared; and his success must be wholly ascribed to native energy, and to his own high aspirations, and gallant exertions. He had consciousness of powers within himself, and the fireside tales and legends which merely awakened fear or curiosity in his playmates opened up to his imaginative soul old ages and different worlds. As the Rev. Peter Landreth says in his able work, "Studies and Sketches," "Nature, which was but a playground to his companions was his school, while his long and solitary rambles were earnest though informal studies. He was largely and eagerly observant, and deeply reflective concerning a world of things quite foreign to his early calling. He toiled in a quarry, but his own mind was a rich quarry in which he constantly worked, alone and unassisted."

Hugh Miller was born in 1802, in a cottage in the little town of Cromarty, on the Moray Firth. The town stands on a point of land beneath a hill beautifully variegated with heather fields, and woods; and in front is a bay which, ere the days of maritime discovery, was considered one of the finest in Europe. In the neighbourhood are fertile spots and sheltered nooks, brooks rippling through wooded dells, caves hollowed in the rocks; while from almost every point there is a gleaming of waters, and a chain of hills, running along the Firth on the north, leads the eye to Ben Wyvis, sleeping in the pearl-blue of distance. Here he enjoyed the beauties of Nature, and appreciated them with the eye and the

heart of a poet. Indeed, during the days of his boyhood, and while an apprentice with his uncle he had a deep-seated resolution to become a poet. He loved the birds, and bees, and flowers, and we are told that the strange marks on the rocks excited his curiosity and interest. Years after, however, he had the wisdom to see that there is a point at which poet and prose writer branch off into different roads. Before that point is reached, songs and poems of even more than average merit may be and often have been, composed by a prose writer, but they are only the practice needed to fit him for his own field of literary work. In seeing this Hugh Miller discovered where his strength lay, and in after years looked on his "Poems Written in the Leisure Hours of a Journeyman Mason," as a mere relaxation from graver studies, and doubtless the world at large has considered his utterances in prose as being conceived in the spirit of poetry. His diction was in the highest degree poetical, yet free from every extravagance which would at once be detected in a prose volume. He, of all men, held the mirror up to Nature, and while his language was highly figurative the figures were not mere idle ornaments.

It was while acting as bank accountant in Cromarty that he published his "Scenes and Legends," and part of his leisure time was occupied in writing for Wilson's *Tales of the Borders* and *Chambers's Journal*. In 1840 he became editor of the *Witness*, and distinguished himself as a controversial writer on ecclesiastical topics. His first publication after his removal to Edinburgh was "The Old Red Sandstone," followed by "First Impressions of England and its People," "Footprints of the Creator;" while his last work, the "Testimony of the Rocks," on which he had bestowed much and intense thought, was published directly after his death.

We do not require to follow in detail the narrative of his busy life, or to speak of what he has done in

his numerous works in disinterring the past, or to follow his career as a stone-cutter, bank accountant, at the editorial desk, as a fearless advocate of non-intrusion, or the tragic close of his noble life in the winter of 1856. Dr Bayne, Dr John Brown, H. A. Page, in his "Golden Lives," Jean L. Watson, and others have done this well and justly, while he himself has described the growth of his mind from the glimmering dawn of boyhood to the full light of maturity. Here and there he has wrought into the history as much as is worth knowing of the surroundings, which helped to mould his thoughts at each step of their progress, while he climbed the steep path that led him upward from the mason's shed to the editor's room, from the chisel to the pen.

Hugh Miller said that Burns taught the Scottish people to stand erect, so that now they have lost their habitual stoop. He taught the lesson himself even more effectually, and constantly backed it up by the uninterrupted practice of a life which was in every way great, manly, and sympathetic.

His wedding gift to his wife was a Bible, on which he inscribed the following verses expressive of the pious joy, deep but not exultant, and with its pensive vein, which he felt when he put it into her hand:—

TO LYDIA.

Lydia, 'twere ill by sordid gift
  Were love like mine expressed;
Take Heaven's best boon, this Sacred Book,
  From him who loves thee best.
Love strong as that I bear to thee,
  Were sure unaptly told
By dying flowers, or lifeless gems
  Or soul-ensnaring gold.

I know 'twas He who formed this heart,
  Who seeks this heart to guide;
For why?—He bids me love thee more
  Than all on earth beside—
Yes, Lydia, bids me cleave to thee,
  As long's this heart has cleaved;
Would, dearest, that His other laws
  Were half so well received.

Full many a change, my only love,
On human love attends ;
And at the cold sepulchral stone,
The uncertain vista ends.
How best to bear each various change,
Should weal or woe befall,
To love, live, die, this Sacred Book,
Lydia, it tells us all.

O, much beloved ! our coming day
To us is all unknown ;
But sure we stand a broader mark,
Than they who stand alone.
*One* knows it all ; not His an eye
Like ours, obscured and dim :
And knowing us, He gives this book,
That we may know of Him.

Then O, my first, my only love,
The kindest, dearest, best !
On Him may all our hopes repose—
On Him our wishes rest.
His be the future's doubtful day,
Let joy or grief befall :
In life or death, in weal or woe,
Our God, our guide, our all.

## SISTER JEANIE, HASTE, WE'LL GO.

Sister Jeanie, haste, we'll go
To where the white-starred gowans grow,
Wi' the puddock-flower, o' gowden hue,
The snawdrap white, and the bonnie vi'let blue.

Sister Jeanie, haste, we'll go
To where the blossom'd lilacs grow,
To where the pine tree, dark and high,
Is pointing its tap to the cloudless sky.

Jeanie, mony a merry lay
Is sung in the young-leaved woods to-day ;
Flits on light wing the dragon-flee,
And hums on the flowerie the big red bee.

Doun the burnie wirks its way
Aneath the bending birken spray,
An' wimples roun the green moss-stane,
An' mourns, I kenna why, wi' a ceaseless mane.

Jeanie, come ! thy days o' play
Wi' autumn tide shall pass away ;
Sune shall these scenes, in darkness cast,
Be ravished wild by the wild winter blast.

Though to thee a spring shall rise,
An' scenes as fair salute thine eyes ;
An' though, through mony a cloudless day,
My winsome Jean shall be heartsome and gay ;

He wha grasps thy little hand
Nae langer at they side shall stand,
Nor o'er the flower-besprinkled brae
Lead thee the lownest an' the bonniest way.

Dost thou see yon yard sae green,
Speckled wi' mony a mossy stane ?
A few short weeks o' pain shall fly,
An' asleep in that bed shall thy puir brother lie.

Then thy mither's tears awhile
May chide thy joy and damp thy smile ;
But soon ilk grief shall wear awa',
And I'll be forgotten by ane an' by a'.

Dinna think the thought is sad ;
Life vex'd me aft, but this maks glad ;
When cauld my heart and closed my e'e,
Bonnie shall the dreams o' my slumbers be.

## EPITAPH.

*Attempted in the Manner of the Scottish Poets of the Last Century.*

Morsel passed o'er Death's dark swallow !
Here lies . . . . straiked,—puir fallow !
A' his whims an' wild moods over ;
Mute the bard, and staid the rover.

Dost thou wish to ken his failings,
Troth, guid frien', they werena small anes ;
Yet though rude, an' wild, an' careless,
There are wiser folk could bear less.

Restless as the restless sea, still
Puir he was an' puir wad be still ;
Warl's gear he didna reck it,
Ev'n his ain he scarce wad seek it.

Puir folk, he saw mean ones press you,
But alas ! could not redress you ;
Vain folk, he look'd down upon you,
Rich folk, he sought naething from you.

Mean heart, gang your ways, forget him,
But think twice before ye wyte him ;
When he breath'd ye durstna raise him,
Wretch begone ! nor blame nor praise him.

Warm heart, pass na heedless by him ;
Brave heart, let na fules decry him :
Leal heart thou hadst sure caress'd him,
For the blin' wi' gowd might trust him.

What was gude in life he kent it,
Quiet he liv'd, and died contented :
Twa three honest bodies mourned him ;
A' the rest or blam'd or scorn'd him.

Here he lies all calm and lonely,
Loftier brows mann lie as meanly ;
Blume ye wild field floweries o'er him,
Birdies wi' your sangs deplore him.

## HARRIET MILLER DAVIDSON,

ELDER daughter of Hugh Miller, is the author of occasional poems and of several novels. Her poems, though they as yet show perhaps a little too much of the gloss of sentiment, are far from devoid of real beauty and pathos. The second of those here embodied possesses even a certain power to haunt the imagination. Mrs Davidson's writings, however, have been mainly in prose. "Isobel Jardene's History" is a temperance tale, possessing itself the virtue—rare enough in such matters—of calm temperance, and with excellent argument, skilfully inwoven with interesting narrative. "Christian Osborne's Friends" has many features suggesting a reference to her own hardy seafaring ancestors. Both those volumes were received by the press as not unworthy a daughter of Hugh Miller; we might especially indicate a prose poem towards the close of the second as recalling not a little of the power of the author of the "Mosaic Vision of Creation."

The following from one of her father's letters to her will give some idea of the early influences

that surrounded her:—"You tell me you were 'considering whether I wrote anything in the album at the John o' Groat's Inn, and, if I did, what I wrote.' Well, I did write in it, without adding my name, however; and what I did write was, though not poetry, a kind of verse. . . . . In all verse-writing a sort of marriage should take place between the lady *Rhyme* and the gentleman *Reason*; but in many verses the parties do not come together at all, and in many more the union is far from being a happy one. It is only those Heaven-made marriages that are happy, in which genius enacts the part of the priest. That in which I took a part at Huna was at best only a kind of humdrum fisher-wedding—the bridegroom, though not quite a fool, was decidedly commonplace, and the bride, if not a *fright*, was at least plain.

John o' Groats is a shapeless mound,
  John o' Groat is dust;
To shapeless mound and wormy ground
  Man, and man's dwelling, must;—
Rottenness waits on the pomp of Kings,
  On the sword of the warrior canker and rust.

John o' Groat lives still,
  Lives in another sphere;
Evil his fare if his life was ill;
  Happy, if righteous his course when here.
Traveller ponder on these things
  And depart in God's fear."

Mrs Davidson was the wife of the Rev. John Davidson, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Adelaide, South Australia, who died during the present year. The following poem on "Summer" attracted the kindly notice of Charles Kingsley.

SUMMER.

Blow, flowers, yellow and red,
  Down in the garden fair;
Sing, birds, with love-notes strong,
  In your swinging bowers in the air.

Sing, birds ; blow, flowers ;
Swing censers of sweetness high,
For the festival time of earth is begun,
And solemn, and sweet, and glad in one,
Is the summer that draweth nigh.

Blow, lilies, stately and tall,
Robed in your silver sheen ;
Sing, glad father-birds, over the nests,
Up in the tree-tops green.
Sing, birds ; blow, flowers ;
Ring out your anthems sweet ;
Little leaves, clap your innocent hands :
Summer is thrilling through all the lands,
With the touch of her golden feet.

Flame out, wallflowers, in fiery brown ;
Ope, early rosebuds in June ;
Brood, mother-birds in silent joy,
Waiting is over soon.
Sing, birds ; blow, flowers ;
Faint stirrings of life begun
Will come below in the thrilling nest,
Under the mother-bird's love-warm breast,
And the crown of her life be won.

Brighten, oh flowers, with the brightening days,
Down in the garden fair ;
Peal out, oh birds, your passionate notes,
On the quivering summer air.
Blow, flowers ; sing birds ;
Summer-time fleets amain ;
Bind my heart with a chain of song,
So shall its pulses beat brave and strong,
When winter-time comes again.

## LOST.

The night fell soft and starlit
On a beautiful harbour town,
Where crescents of tall white houses
To the golden beach crept down.

The windows were set wide open
To catch the gentle air,
And out on the darkening water
The glimmering lights shone fair.

The children's clear young voices
Rung out on the quiet night,
And the sound of merry music
And of dancing footsteps light.

And mingled with all the gladness
From a church close by the sea,
Came the sound of an organ pealing
Its solemn melody.

The people there were praying,
And singing an evening psalm,
And the sound of their voices floated
Away on the waters calm.

While some were buying and selling
Out in the lighted street,
Where the hum of many voices rose,
And the echo of many feet.

And no one guessed, among them all,
That out in the harbour fair
A lonely man was drowning
In darkness and despair.

. . . . . .

For hours he had been clinging
To a slender drifting spar;
He has drifted in from wilder seas
Beyond the harbour bar.

And now he knows by his dimming eye,
And his tired and numbing hand,
That here at last the end has come
*Just within sight of land.*

He hears the merry music,
He hears the children call,
He can catch a glimpse of the lighted rooms
As the slow waves rise and fall.

He can hear the organ pealing,
And the hymn's long-drawn refrain;
And a low sigh bursts from his heavy breast
In his last, long, lonely pain.

He knows that if he could but call,
If his voice could reach the land,
Full many a kindly heart would throb,
And many a helping hand.

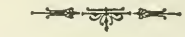
But his breath is spent. His weary breast
Heaves in low shuddering sighs,
And the lights are slowly fading
From his dim and tired eyes.

And so he sinks; and no one knows
In all that busy town,
When out in their beautiful harbour,
That lonely man goes down.

. . . . . .

Oh kind souls! pause in your praying!
Stay awhile the music sweet;
Silence the children's laughter
And the sound of dancing feet.

And listen, perchance if near you,
For want of one tender hand,
Some lonely soul may be drowning
Just within sight of land.



## JEANIE MORISON

JS a daughter of the late Rev. James Buchanan, D.D., Professor of Systematic Theology in the New College, Edinburgh, at one time one of the most admired among Scottish preachers, and of Mary Morison of Hetland, his wife. Her poetical talent awoke early. In girlhood one of her poems was submitted to Hugh Miller. "I think there is genius there," he said, and there could not have been a better judge.

In 1873 she published a collection of short poems, entitled "Snatches of Song" (London: Longmans, Green, & Co.); three years later she published (London: Daldy, Isbister, & Co.) "Pontius Pilate, a Drama," founded on a careful study of history and legend. Besides these two works she has been an occasional contributor in verse and prose to various periodicals, such as the *Sunday Magazine*, the *Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine*, and the *Family Treasury*. Early in life she married Major William Rose Campbell of Ballochyle, afterwards Lt.-Colonel, J.P. and D.L. for Argyllshire. She is now the wife of Mr Hugh Miller, of H.M. Geological Survey, second son of the eminent geologist. Mr Miller is thus following in his father's footsteps as a geologist, and *litterateur*,

and has written a biography of Sir Roderick Murchison.

Her volumes were well received, and it is interesting to note how various were the poems among her "Snatches" that were selected for approval by the different critics of the press. The late Mr Horne noticed her along with Jean Ingelow and several others in the *Contemporary Review* in an article on Mrs Barrett Browning, as one of the lady poets who have followed that rich genius. The poems of Jeanie Morison show considerable imaginative power, and the faculty of versification in an abundant degree. The drama of "Pontius Pilate" gives evidence of much originality in treatment and depth of thought, while her minor pieces are rich in natural tenderness and melody. To a highly cultivated taste she adds the indispensable qualification of being able to interpret the teachings of Nature; and many of her little poems contain, in a small compass, much that is sure to lighten and comfort perplexed minds and anxious hearts.

### THE GREEK GIRL.

Hush! for I hear them through the silent hill
At the hour when the shadows fall,
And their wild low tones o'er my heart-strings thrill,
And the blood runs chill,
And the pulse is still,
At the voice of their shadowy call.

I hear them, they come from the silent streams
Of the far-off voiceless shore,
On whose deep wave the Starlight beams,
And the Morning gleams,
And the shadow dreams
Never for ever more.

I hear them—they call—shall I answer not
When the Loved and the Dead is there?
Shall he say that the maiden he loved, forgot?
That she answered not,
In his lonely lot,
To the voice of his spirit's prayer?

Not so, not so, this wild mountain bed
When the day's glad course is o'er,
Shall pillow the faithful's weary head,
And the purple heather shed,
Its bloom o'er the dead,
The weary, for evermore.

It was far away where thou call'dst me first,
Thou voice of the Silent Shade!
In the sunny home where the bright flowers burst,
And the starlight gushed,—
And the waters husht
Heard, as they played.

Thou call'dst and I answered—I heard thy tone
When it spake in love's whisperings there,
Of the moonlit sea whence that voice hath gone,
And the billows moan,
And the midnight lone,
Breathing thy prayer.

'Twas morn on the waters—its silver light
On my own eastern sea,
When thou spak'st again and that voice of might,
O'er the waters bright,
Called through the night
Of Death, to follow thee.

I knew where that breath on the waters led,
To what doom of dread and fear;
But what to me though Death's wings were spread
Above my head,
If the Dead,
And the Loved were near?

'Twas night when that shadowy tone stole last
From thy bed on the ocean's breast
Where, 'neath the moon's soft radiance cast,
Touched by no sweeping blast,
Thou slumb'rest at last,
Belovéd, at rest.

I hear, I hear, shall I answer not,
When the Loved and the Dead is there?
Shall he say that the maiden he loved, forgot?
That she answered not,
In his lonely lot,
To the voice of his spirit's prayer?

Not so, not so, this wild mountain bed,
When the day's glad course is o'er,
Shall pillow the Faithful's weary head,
And the purple heather shed
Its bloom o'er the dead,
Thine, thine for evermore!

## "BLIND, BLIND, BLIND."

Wandering drearily
Faint and opprest,
Weeping so wearily,
Finding no rest,—
Lost in the wilderness,
Lonely and leaderless,
Blind and distrest.

Listening so breathlessly,
Fountains to hear,
Dying all hopelessly,
Water so near,
Hagar disconsolate,
Woman all desolate,—
God doth appear.

Faint one, all reverently
Drink of that tide,
Blind one, all trustingly
Lean on that guide ;
In the dark wilderness,
No longer leaderless,
Close to His side.

Lone one, all lovingly
Come to His breast,
Weak one, all tenderly
Thou shalt be blest ;
Living in joyfulness,
Dying in hopefulness,
There thou shalt rest.

## SPRING BLOSSOMS.

Bear them, bear them softly,
The youthful to their rest,
Whisper, whisper gently,
For they are blest ;
Lightly place them,
In kindred earth,
Again embrace them,
Earth to earth.

Weep not, weep not sadly
Over their rest,
Praise ye, praise ye gladly,
For they are blest ;
Seemeth life lonely,
Since they are fled ?
Mourn for thyself only,—
Weep not the dead.

Weep not the dead !
The spring bloom faded
Is but the brightness fled
Ere it was shaded ;
Say not untimely
The weary are gone,
Though scarce shineth dimly
The star of the morn.

Nor for thyself sorrow,
Long, broken-hearted ;
The autumn tints follow
When summer hath parted.
Weep not, weep not sadly
Over their rest ;
Praise ye, praise ye gladly,
For they are blest.

### DEEP SEA GRAVES.

A little splash in the ocean,
A child's form sunk in the wave,
And the ship, with stately motion,
Steers onward, proud and brave ;
But a mother's heart, all broken,
Went down to her baby's grave.

A little hope-flower wither'd,
Cast in the heart's deep sea,
And the life goes on unalter'd,
Bravely and steadfastly ;
But ne'er is such bloom regather'd
This side Eternity.

## MONTAGUE STANLEY, A.R.S.A.

THIS sweet poet, rising painter, and talented son of Thespis, was born at Dundee, in 1809, and crossed the Atlantic with his father, who was connected with the navy, when only fourteen months old. At the age of three he lost his father, and in the sole care of his mother, resided in New York until his seventh year, when they removed to Halifax

in Nova Scotia. Here he early contracted a love for the stage, and before he had completed his eighth year he had performed a part in one of the public theatres. His beautiful countenance and fine figure attracted the attention of the magnates of the place, and he was invited to take part in some private theatricals at the Government House, and was rewarded with a purse filled with gold. The purse he kept, the gold he gave to his mother.

In 1819 he came with his mother to England, and soon after he connected himself with the stage. For a length of time he acted at York, and in 1828 he was engaged for the Edinburgh Theatre, where he displayed great talent in his profession, while at the same time he began to take lessons in drawing, and soon after to paint for the annual Exhibition in Edinburgh. In 1830 he went to Dublin, where his fame rose high with the theatrical public. In 1832 and 1833 he performed with equal success in London; and in 1838, when in the height of his popularity, he, on account of religious convictions, closed his theatrical career in Edinburgh. Throughout life, however, he retained the highest respect for many members of his former profession.

For a short time after retiring from the stage, Mr Stanley gave lessons in drawing, but he soon devoted himself almost entirely to painting, and in 1839 he went to Hamilton to paint from Nature in the Duke's forest of Cadzow. In the summer of 1842 he wandered through Wales with a friend, to refresh and store his mind, and to fill his portfolio with sketches. That he sketched and painted with skill is proved by the fact that while his paintings always sold well, his sketches were much sought after. Having visited the islands of Bute and Arran, and being charmed with the unrivalled scenery of the Clyde, with its isles, its bays and innumerable estuaries, he took a house at Ascog, on the north-east end of Bute, a short distance from Rothesay, overlooking

the glorious Firth of Clyde. Here he painted much from Nature, and occasionally cultivated the Muse. But insiduous consumption had already begun to undermine his constitution and waste his frame. Early in 1844, weakness, lassitude, and a strange but strong dread of approaching calamity, and of some dark and unseen dispensation impending over his beloved family began to oppress and disturb his mind. Still he went on, labouring beyond his strength to finish paintings for the Edinburgh Exhibition. It was his last visit there, and he returned, greatly weakened, to lay himself down to die. In a little while, and in his thirty-fifth year, he breathed out his spirit as calmly as the dews of summer fall upon the sleeping flowers.

During his lifetime several of Mr Stanley's poems had appeared in a work published by Mr Oliphant, Edinburgh, and in the *Christian Treasury*. In 1848 these, with others which he had left behind him in manuscript, were collected and published by Mr P. W. Kennedy, Edinburgh, with a memoir of the author by the Rev. T. K. Drummond, and illustrated with numerous exceedingly beautiful woodcuts, taken from Mr Stanley's own pencillings.

### RELICS OF THE PAST—THE CASTLE.

Stern e'en in ruin, noble in decay ;
They seem as breathing forth defiance still,
Though long ere now the pow'r has pass'd away,
That arm'd them with a feudal chieftian's will.
No longer helms gleam from embattled walls,
Nor swells the warder's bugle on the breeze,
Loud fall the footsteps in the empty halls,
Where her close mesh the lonely spider weaves.

The race has pass'd.—Their very name is gone,
And the cold heedless earth enwraps their clay ;
For festive shout the night-bird's sullen moan
Sounds sadly from the ruin'd turrets grey.
Emblazen'd shields, and strangely antique scrolls,
Still cling in fragments to the wasting stones ;
Man's pride survives his life—lives on the rolls
That trace the proud descent of mouldering bones.

### THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

Go ! 'tis the hour of prayer ;
Night bindeth up her raven hair ;
The diadem from her dark brow,
With gems begirt, she lifteth now,
One star she leaves to herald in the sun—
Then in the shadowy twilight dun,
She flies his beams before ;
Go ! 'tis the hour of prayer.

Lose not the hour of prayer,
Through all the heated, quivering air,
The sun pours living light,
The noontide blazeth bright ;
Shake off the chains that indolence would wreathe,
Thy fervent, heartfelt, aspirations breathe—
Pour forth thy soul to God ;
Now, 'tis the hour of prayer.

The hour of prayer is come,
The sun hath journeyed home ;
Labour is o'er—and sweet repose
Soon will thy wearied eyelids close ;
Hold off its soft oblivion for a while
Till thou hast sought thy Heavenly Father's smile,
Haste ; 'tis the hour of prayer.

## WILLIAM STEWART ROSS,

FROM environments the most uncongenial, and by earnest and well-directed energy and perseverance, has made a mark not only in the walks of literature, but in publishing, which is the commerce of literature. Mr Ross was born in 1844, at Kirkbean, in Galloway. It was not till his ninth year that he first went to school, when he had to walk all alone, and with bare feet, three rough miles over crag and heather, and the same journey back again at night. The young poet, however, had a quick mind and retentive memory, and before he knew his letters he could repeat lengthy extracts from the Psalms of David and the poems of Burns.

He next attended the parish school of New Abbey, Kirkcudbrightshire, where the historic legends connected with the district, and the massive remains of Sweetheart Abbey, gave a stimulus to romantic musing. The worthy dominie was wont to call his promising pupil a "dungeon of a boy." He borrowed books of every description from the farmers and cottars around, and long considered it one of the most eventful days of his life when he came into possession of a dog-eared copy of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." He recited the poem to the crags and the brackens anent the tomb of Michael Scot and the knights of the bold Buccleuch till he could repeat it by rote from beginning to end. In a rural district a lad could not pursue a course like this without incurring more ridicule as an oddity than admiration for precocity at the hands of his schoolfellows, who perhaps never read a line except when they could not help it; but being endowed with more than ordinary muscular vigour and activity, and a determined will, he was regarded as one not lightly to be joked at.

William was the eldest, and before he had reached his twelfth year, he was sent out to help to earn his own livelihood at whatever rough work lay within his strength and skill. He could not afford to get either candle or lamp, and late into the night he would lie down flat with his book upon the hard clay hearth, and read by the dim light of the peat fire—frequently singeing his hair, and more than once actually setting fire to it. Yet it was under circumstances like these that the lad gained an acquaintance with English literature, remarkable alike for its extent and exactness of detail. After labouring and studying in this way for two or three years we find him in Hutton Hall Academy, Caerlavrock—his mother, a woman of intelligence and force of character, resolving that as "Willie was not like the rest of her bairns, and that if he could only get a chance,

he would turn out to be somebody," sent him, although the domestic meal-barrel could ill afford it, there to "finish his education." He made rapid progress, and the master took pride in his promising though then erratic pupil. In 1861 he became dominie on his own account in Glenesslin School, Dunscore, having undergone the necessary examination for a parish teacher in the University of Glasgow. In Dunscore he laboured for about one year, when he returned to Hutton Hall to become the principal assistant.

In 1864 Mr Ross entered the Glasgow University, with some vague notion of studying for the Church, although his bias was so emphatically literary that the adoption of any other than a purely literary vocation seemed to those who knew him best extremely improbable. Our young polemic wrote to magazines, and now and again to the *Dumfries Herald*, then edited by his first literary friend, Thomas Aird. He also sent fugitive pieces in prose and verse to the *Dumfries Standard*, edited by the accomplished and genial William M'Dowall, both of whom we have already sketched. Hard successful study, and the production of "Mildred Merloch," a border romance of the days of Queen Mary (for which he received forty guineas from Dr Cameron of the *Weekly Mail*), ended in his utter prostration, and his lying for three weeks in a poor lodging in the Gallowgate. He supported himself for several years by the productions of his pen—most of his poems and articles being either anonymous or under pseudonym. Several historical tales followed, and his subsequent works bore the author's name. These include "Caerlaverock," an interesting account of the traces of Roman invasion and occupation of lower Nithsdale; a dramatic work, "Marying for Money;" poems entitled "The Harp of the Valley;" and an elaborate "System of Elocution." The publication of the former brought its author under the notice of

the late Lord Lytton, and the latter under the friendly attention of Mr Laurie, an Edinburgh publisher. This friendship led to Mr Ross entering the publishing house of Mr Laurie, and here he prepared numerous new and important school books, including "The Last Century of British History," histories of England and Scotland, "Easy Latin Grammar," &c. These have run through many editions, and their sale has made his name known in every land in which the English language is spoken.

In 1872 Mr Ross began publishing on his own account in London, beginning on a small scale, and principally with new books, which issued with marvellous rapidity from his own pen.

The firm is now known as W. Stewart & Co., and they possess the copyright of many valuable educational works, including "Constable's Series," "Natural Philosophy Series," and "Stewart's Local Examination Series," which extends to over thirty volumes. Of the four educational magazines issued from their publishing offices, one, the *School Magazine*, is edited by Mr Stewart Ross.

We have left little space in which to give an estimate of Mr Ross as a poet, or for specimens of his productions—having been carried away with the extremely interesting nature of his "self-help" career from a peasant lad to the position of an influential London publisher. He is still the earnest student, and carries boyhood's freshness and energy into everything he undertakes. Poetry is too deeply implanted in his nature to be ploughed out by the cares of business, and during the present year he has issued a volume entitled "Lays of Romance and Chivalry," containing several powerful and spirited legendary and historical poems of the Roman and later periods, with valuable notes. In these poems we find a noble spiritedness, combined with much tenderness, quaintness, and melody that makes them exceptionally charming, and shows an intellect stored

with poetic fancy and scholarly lore; while the "Harp of the Valley" gives evidence of a nature-loving spirit.

## EDITH.

[Ancient chronicles record that the body of King Harold, as it lay in the field of Hastings, was so defaced with wounds that it could not be identified, till at length it was recognised by Edith (of the Swan Neck), a young lady of the King's household.]

Bretwalda, noble Harold! death's dark red roses blow
O'er the winter plain of Senlac—the mighty lying low.
Bretwalda, Edith seeks you—Edith you loved of yore,
The gold spangles of her slippers incarnadine with gore!

Alas, O race of Hengist! and alas! its evil star,
In ruin set, shall blaze no more over the field of war!
O Harold! wild and glorious has thy life's course been driven
From hence to meet Hardraga on the golden floor of heaven!

For but the brave may meet thee, wherever thou art now:
No earthly crown was grand enough for thy broad kingly brow;
And no steel blade was true enough to grace thy warrior thigh;
No paladin was worthy for thee to dare and die.

And but the fair may meet thee, wherever thou may'st be:
Alas! earth's best and fairest were all unworthy thee;
And ne'er shall England's maidens find in all the conquering race
The beauty even death has left upon thy manly face!

I kiss thee, son of Godwin; 'tis the last for evermore,—
Forget not Saxon Edith upon the eternal shore;
When all the harps of God are struck in heaven to welcome thee,
My Harold—Saxon Harold—oh, then remember me!

Think on the hush of summer eve, on the earth so far away,
When gleamed through England's leafy oaks the sheen of dying day
On Harold and on Edith, in young life's budding glow,
Ere darkened merry England this night of death and woe!

Lo, the midnight clouds are scattered by wild October's breath,
And the Star of Love looks down on the stricken field of death,
As though the might of Meekness would the sword of Hate defy,—
A glory burning on the cope of the everlasting sky.

Ah! the hate of Norman William can never reach you there;
But in the holy fields of heaven may Saxon Edith's prayer,
With memories of dear England, the land that gave you birth,
Sweet whispers of the sunshine and the green leaves of the earth.

. . . . . .

There are moanings from the slaughter-heaps and voices in the air—
A death-cold hand is lying 'mong the tangles of my hair.
Young Harold! England's hero-king! thine is the soldier's grave,
And the immortal name that marks the manhood of the brave!

## EVER MORE.

Weird is the night, dark is the day,
The pride of the world sleeps in clay;
Reckless ever of life and breath,
Onward the warrior rode to death:
He, in the flush of manhood's bloom,
Mangled, rests in a far-off tomb.
O come to me from the lone dim shore!
Alas! oh, never—never more!

Lorn I sit by your little chair,
I've a lock of your baby hair;
The very hoop you trundled round,
Unknowing of the battle-ground
Where rams should thunder, sabres sway,
From dawn till eve one fearful day.
O speak to me as you spoke of yore!
Alas! oh, never—never more!

I see thee not, worthy thy sire,
In thy young manhood's strength and fire;
My heart turns to an earlier day,
When I would join thee at thy play,
And kiss thy smooth young childish brow—
O God! where is that forehead now?
Rise, O rise from the shroud of gore!—
Alas! oh, never—never more!

Th' embattled rock rose sheer and high
Beneath the gloomy midnight sky;
High 'mong the mist the watchfire's glow
Gleamed on the armour of the foe.
A rush—a shriek—a maddening yell,
And my son fell where thousands fell.
Speak to me—ah, the north wind's roar
Has a wild shriek of 'Never more!'

For you your sister Brenda weeps,
In the old vault your father sleeps,
And, riderless, the charger neighs
You fearless rode in former days;
And Dora of the sunny brow,
My son, my son, would wed you now.
But your bride's Death on a hostile shore,
And you'll desert her never more!

Ah, little did your mother dree,
As you lay cradled on her knee,
What hard-won laurels you should win,
What lands you were to travel in,
And 'neath the banner streaming high,
The fearful death you were to die,
And, far away from kith and kin,
The tomb you were to moulder in.
'Twixt you and me the ocean's roar
Has a wild plunge of 'Never more!'



## JAMES JOHNSTON

WAS born at Whitburn, in 1849. He is a plasterer to trade, and at present resides in the town of his nativity, where, indeed, he has spent nearly all his days. He left school at the early age of ten years, but improved his defective education by attending the neighbouring night school for several winters. He has not written much, but every piece has the ring of genuine poetry—simple verses, full of gentle human feeling. He finds in every-day things a spirit of good, and does not wander in search of something unusual, but quietly and modestly lays his hand on the moral significance which underlies common things, and then tunes his instrument accordingly.

### LET'S LO'E ILK ITHER HERE.

There's mony a bitter mouthfu' in the varied cup o' life,
There's mony a heart-sick fighter in the spirit-sadd'ning strife;
But sweeter wad the bitter seem, the struggle less severe,
Gin a' were mair affectionate, an' lo'd ilk ither here.

Its no a time to lavish love when those to whom 'tis gi'en,
Like simmer flowers when winter blaws, are nae mair 'mong us seen;
'Tis richt an sweet in after years to hold their mem'ry dear,
But better far to let them ken we lo'e them while they're here.

We dinna ken the length o' life, we dinna ken hoo sune
Some fareweel may be whisper'd, an' some wanderer ca'd in.
Syne, oh! hoo sad for frien's behin' if wi' rebuke severe,
Stern conscience says, upbraidingly—"Ye didna lo'e them here."

There's no a stingin' word but leaves its venom'd scar behin';
But kindness fa's like sunlicht on the human depths within.
Then aye to mak' the maist o' life, an' that oor names may wear
The halo o' remembrance sweet—let's lo'e ilk ither here.

## SCOTLAND'S HEATHER.

Flower that gives to moor and mountain
Purple hues, attractive graces,
Decks the brink of lake and fountain,
Paints the wild and lonely places,
Tho' thy home be chill and cheerless,
Tho' the pompous stranger slight thee,
With the memory of the fearless,
And the faithful we unite thee.

Heroes, when to exile driven
By grim war's destroying billow,
Thy bleak home have made their haven—
Thou hast been their couch and pillow.
Princes in thy folds have slumber'd,
Kings, while humble robes arrayed them,
With no royal suite encumber'd,
Gladly in thy clasp have laid them.

Well the loyal Scot may love thee—
Link thy name with Bruce and Wallace,
For their spears have gleamed above thee,
That no tyrant might enthral us.
Well may Scotia's pride assign thee,
Honoured place in warrior story,
Thinking of her heroes twine thee
In the chaplet of their glory.

Thou hast carpeted the dwellings
And the churches of the saintly;
When 'mid persecution's swellings,
Liberty's fair light beamed faintly.
Thou hast draped their place of dying,
While their murd'rers stalked around them;
And, when in their lone graves lying,
Thou hast wreathed the moss that bound them.

With our father's bold achievements—
They who did not scorn or slight thee
With our country's sad bereavements—
With her true sons we unite thee.
Gaudier flowers by foreign fountains,
Gentler winds may proudly weather;
Nursling of the moors and mountains,
Scotchmen love thee—Scotland's heather.

# REV. ALEXANDER WALLACE, D.D.

THIS gifted, earnest, and warm-hearted author of "Sketches of Life and Character," the "Gloaming of Life," and numerous other delightful works, has a distinct claim to be added to our long list of Paisley poets, and his career is calculated to prove encouraging to the toiling youth who may be fighting through difficulties to a sphere of influence in which he can be more widely useful to his fellowmen. He was born in 1816, and in early life was thoroughly inured to labour. He passed, when very young, through the successive stages of a draw-boy and weaver's apprentice, but his aspirations soon rose above the loom, and the beautiful silk fabrics at which he wrought. He was a diligent reader, and so great was his thirst for knowledge that he frequently had an open book on the loom before him while engaged at work. This occasionally led him to be oblivious to his duties, till something getting out of joint brought him back to the stern world of reality.

At length a long and fondly-cherished wish was realised in his being enabled to enter the University of Glasgow, and afterwards that of Edinburgh. He carried off at both places college honours—two of the prizes being for annual poems. In 1839 he wrote a poem for one of the Philosophy Classes of the Glasgow University, which commanded the prize despite very formidable opposition. The subject was the famous Egyptian Pyramids, which he treated with great power—geographically and historically, as well as religiously. The poet thus describes the scenes of which the pyramids have been witnesses:—

> "How often have ye seen the gladsome Nile,—
> Studded with light-wing'd coracles and barks,—
> Bright with the setting sun, o'erflow your fields,
> And, like a deluge, sweep across your plains;

While pillar'd streets and temples, groves and spires
Gardens and palaces, and gilded towers,
And broken columns, porticos, and tombs,
Seem'd from your summits floating on the wave,
Like party-colour'd sea-birds, when their plumes
Are bath'd in all the orient hues that glow
Upon a rainbow's lovely face in spring!
How often have ye heard the merry din
Of sistrums, castanets, and cymbals shrill,—
The universal shout of joyous hearts,
That follow'd yearly when his waters reach'd
Their highest point, and promis'd happy days.
And smiling harvest homes; while thousands stoop'd
Upon his banks, with lotus lilies fringed,
And drank the sacred draught that pass'd their doors,
And knelt, and worshipp'd, and quaff'd again!
How often have ye seen, in ancient time,
The charming dark-eyed maidens of your land
Lead on the mystic dance, while music rose
In strains of melting melody, which seem'd
To mingle with the whisperings of shades,
And die away within your gloomy vaults!"

The subject of the Edinburgh Prize Poem was "The Tragedy of Cabul," and was highly commended by the Professor—Christopher North.

Dr Wallace afterwards studied at Berlin and Halle, in Prussia, and enjoyed the instructions of the celebrated Neander. He was licensed to preach in 1845, and from amongst several calls he accepted the unanimous invitation to become the pastor of the Secession Church in Alexandria, Vale of Leven, where he was ordained in 1846. While there the lofty Benlomond, with its glassy mirror, awakened his poetic nature, and afforded him a fitting opportunity for studying Nature in some of her wildest and sublimest moods. From a Glasgow newspaper, of the year 1847, we also learn that even then he was distinguished as a preacher. His mind united (as now) sober earnestness with poetic brilliancy. His thoughts were not only distinct but vivid. The charm of a chastened fancy played around them, and hence he espoused them with an interest peculiar to that class of mind.

In 1857 Dr Wallace accepted a call to East Campbell Street U.P. Church, Glasgow, having previously

held a charge at Bradford, Yorkshire, and in Edinburgh. At the former place he commenced special Sunday services for the working classes who do not attend any place of worship, and this was the first effort of the kind made in this country. The lectures were published under the title of "The Bible and Working People," and have been very widely circulated. He has long been an earnest and eloquent advocate of the temperance movement, both as a platform orator and author. His numerous narrative tracts on the subject, published by the Scottish Temperance League, have had, perhaps, as large a circulation as any ever published in connection with this benevolent enterprise. In addition to the works already noted, he has published three volumes of discourses—"The Clouds of the Bible," "The Model Life," and "The Desert and the Holy Land," where he spent several months in 1866. He is the author of numerous exceedingly engaging New Year's addresses and stories for children. These latter have also met with a warm welcome, being charming and graphic and well-written pictures of Scottish life—thrilling biographies, offering, in a convincing and pleasant style, encouragement to all who are beset with temptation. His famous story of "Our Poll" is known all over the country, and far beyond it. As a lecturer on Scottish topics Dr Wallace is exceedingly popular. Amongst his subjects of special interest we might note "The Poetry, Genius, and Enterprise of Scotland's Scottish Homes," "Native Woodnotes Wild," and "Scotland's Peasant Literature."

In 1864 he published a poetical work, entitled "Poems and Sketches," which is at present out of print. Several of his poems appeared in "The Harp of Renfrewshire," a work now very rare and valuable.

As a poet his versification is always smooth and graceful, and most of the pieces are very pointed and

expressive. His Scottish sketches are lively and well told, and recall old times and curious customs, while his more ambitious themes show purity of language and true poetic fancy.

### A HOME IN STRATHSPEY.

Hurrah! for the moors, all aglow with the heather,
So bright with the dew at the break of the day;
Hurrah! for the mountains, the glorious mountains,
The streams and the glens and the lochs of Strathspey.

Hurrah! for the forests, the birch and pine forests,
Which shelter the deer from the sun's fiercest ray—
Vast temples of nature, so peaceful and solemn,
That cover the hills and the dells of Strathspey.

'Twas *a red letter* day when to Lainchoil I wandered,
And mountain and moor wore their brightest array,
But brighter the friendship that gave me warm welcome
To a home of leal hearts and kind hands in Strathspey.

O, blest be that home on the braes of the Nethy
In the glints of the morn, or when gloaming falls gray!
I'll waft it my blessing where'er I may wander,
And cherish fond mem'ries of it and Strathspey.

God bless the dear mother who sits by the fireside,
Tho' her ninety-eighth summer has now passed away,
May her sunset of life gently melt into glory,
Like the calm afterglow on the hills of Strathspey!

And blest be the daughter who lives for her mother,
With the warmest devotion that love can display—
A ministering angel to cheer the old pilgrim,
Till the end of her journey is reached in Strathspey.

Oh Thou who temp'rest "the wind to the shorn lamb"—
A guide to the blind, to the feeble a stay,
Let the stroke that will sunder fall lightly on lov'd ones,
When the shadow shall rest on their home in Strathspey!

May the Saviour who wept where Lazarus was buried,
"Set the bow in the cloud" and their sorrow allay,
When the old armchair by the fireside is vacant
And the face long familiar has gone from Strathspey!

### THE TRAGEDY OF CABUL—1842.

. . . . .

Brave hearts with anguish and dismay were torn,
To scan the sorrows of the coming morn.
In vain they strove to snatch a brief repose,
And cast their toil-worn limbs on hardened snows.

The ceaseless musketry with deafening boom
Pealed the dire requiem of their awful doom ;
Death breathed at midnight in the piercing blast ;
If eyes were closed in sleep, it was their last ;
Or if in troubled dreams of shortest bliss,
A vision bright might cross a scene like this,
The wretched dreamer only woke to hear
The random gun of foes still hovering near.
Delusive fancy led him far away
To native glens, where sunny streamlets play,
To bosky dells, where weeping willows seem
To soothe the spirit of the murmuring stream.
His own dear hills, where life's glad morn was spent,
Where every hour a new enchantment lent,
Now lift their summits to the smiling skies,
And towering pines in light and beauty rise ;
His ear is ravished by a melting air,
Soft as the breath of angels when they bear
A parted spirit to the realms above—
Sweet as the first fond whispered pledge of love :
His icy hand is clasped, and warmly pressed
In youth's wild rapture to his Mary's breast.
Ah ! sport not, Fancy with his cruel woes,
He wakes encircled by the drifting snows,
O'er which the frosty winds of midnight sweep,
And bear his hollow groans along the steep ;
The curdling blood is chilled in every vein,
And maddening furies seize his troubled brain ;
He smiles, he shrieks, the vision melts away,
With quivering lips he fondly bids it stay.
The spell is broke—the mocking phantom flies,
Poor child of ruin ! thou shalt never rise
From the cold icicles that freeze thy breath,
And wrap thee shivering in the arms of death.

. . . . .

When shall the din of furious battle cease,
And Love triumphant bring the reign of Peace ?
Come blessed Epoch ! with thy golden beams
That shed their radiance o'er the Prophet's dreams,
That gild with living hues his Heaven-taught song,
And make his ravished soul the strains prolong ;
Till, wrapt in visions of a brighter time,
Earth new-created seems, as in her prime,
When angel music fell upon her ear,
And Heaven blessed the young revolving sphere.
But, ah ! before that halcyon morn shall rise
And spread its beauties o'er the smiling skies,
The tragic muse shall weep o'er nations' woes,
And tears of blood their awful strifes disclose.

## JOHN W. WOOD,

AUTHOR of "The Serpent Round the Soul," and of "Ceres Races," was born in 1834 at Cupar-Fife. The county which calls itself the "Kingdom" has long abounded in poets, its very lawyers devoting themselves to the Muses—as if these had the entire dispensing of fees. Ayrshire and other Scottish provinces regard Robert Burns as the father of all their bards; but Fife proudly claims a far more ancient parentage for her rhyming children—she looks back not only to Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, but to the far earlier minstrel who dwelt in Dunfermline. Fife journalists declare that the "Poet's Corner" in their broadsheets is ludicrously insufficient for the deluge of poetry incessantly pouring in, and that even their "Balaam-box" is not big enough to eke out due accommodation. The census schedules for Fife ought to have a column for poets, and then it would be seen that almost every native who wields a pen is a versifier.

Mr Wood, however, belongs, not to the promiscuous crowd of versifiers, but to that highly gifted and advanced band of *poets* which, in any locality, must be a very small one.

Like many of his brethren, he has led a life unmarked by incident though he resided for some years in America. He was educated in Cupar, attending three different schools in succession; but at none of these, as he confesses, was he induced to become either a diligent or an enthusiastic learner. The games of the playground, and the tricks of companions within the school, were more congenial; but, even then he was a peculiarly quick observer of character. At the age of twelve he became an apprentice to his father—a respectable baker. This trade he followed for four years; but, during the term, he gave his spare hours to the cricket field, or

to angling excursions, wisely quitting the oven's neighbourhood for a cooler and fresher atmosphere. A change of occupation now took place. He went to a writer's office, and was apprenticed to the study of law. The connection of this with the hooking and catching of trouts is more apparent than with baking work, and a skilful angler ought to be a successful lawyer. Confinement, however, within a law office and environment by parchments and heaps of "cases" could not be pleasant to a youth who had begun to look with a poet's eye and sympathy upon the beauty and magnificence of the external world. He yearned for a deliverance, and certainly he achieved it, for he crossed the broad Atlantic and reached America. There he remained for two years, his mind receiving a development, training, and stimulus which it could not have gotten anywhere else within a far longer period. His intellect, imagination, and humour rapidly ripened, and for their exercise he had acquired a cool self-possession which Yankeedom alone can give. He returned to Cupar-Fife: the stripling had, mentally as well as physically, become a man in the prime of all his capacities and energies.

Mr Wood's earliest poetic attempts were marked by nothing immature or juvenile in imagination and humour, or in the power of giving these a melodious expression, but were defective in taste and judgment. He was prone to satire, and employed it, not only against the folly and wickedness of mankind at large, but against the whims or presumption of a neighbour. Burns, indeed, too frequently distinguished himself by satirizing private persons who had displeased or slighted him; but even his example should not encourage poets to inflict such vengeance upon the trivial and passing offences of a neighbour.

Mr Wood's first elaborate poem bore a title which might have a thousand meanings—"The Serpent Round the Soul;" and when the poem has been read the title is felt to be alike arbitrary and inappropri-

ate. There is, indeed, a "serpent" in the piece, even "that old serpent, the Devil," but he can scarcely be said to be even *around* or *within* the "soul" of the hero; yet genuine poetry breaks out in every page with a shining train of ideas and sentiments. There is not a little of exquisite pathos, and the occasional humour would have been felicitous and successful if it had not in the piece been entirely misplaced.

A subsequent poem by Mr Wood on "Ceres Races" gives a much wider and freer scope to his faculty of humour. The amusements of a village can be far more adequately represented than those of a city, whether the sketcher be a poet or a painter. There is the "Pitlessie Fair" by Wilkie, and "Anster Fair" by Tennant, but who has, in words or colours, by pen or by brush, attempted to represent a fair held in London, in Edinburgh, or in Glasgow? Mr Wood gives a graphic and richly-comical representation of the various competitors and their respective bands of supporters, as well as of leading characters among the onlooking throngs.

Unlike the folk o' croodit slums,
Wha cram their bairns wi' sugar-plums
And dumplins made o' foreign floor,
And foreign fruit, and foreign stoor;
Unlike the gentry—sae by luck—
Wha canna even eat a juck,
But twa-three cook-heads maun be rackit,
To hae the beast wi' trashtrie packit,
Spoiling baith appetites and sowls,
Filling the earth wi' deein'-like owls,
Thin-shankit, white-skinned scraichs o' day,
Wha pass in idleness away,—
Yea, yea! the Ceres breed is hale,
For health and strength are in their kail,
Their pise-an'-ait and barley scones,
Pork, Cabbage, Leeks, an' grawnd Blue-dons,
Their Beer and Whusky frae the Stell,
Untouched wi' "kill-the-cairter" sheil,
Such as oor Pawrents, no oure nice,
Lived Tenant-folk on Paradise!

. . . .

Ilk Fayther there a noble Laird,
Wha brags a theekit hoose and yaird,
Braw gruntin' swine and plots o' kail,
Hams i' the neuk and bunks o' meal,
As bonny hams a' in a raw,
As ever hung on Adam's wa',
Big tawty-pits in wooden sheds,
And siller shoo'd within their beds,—
The auld Man's surety and his stay
When comes the hirpling, friendless day.

The poem, as a whole, lacks the coherence, regularity, and polish of Tennant's "Anster Fair," but it is incomparably more powerful and vivid. Mr Wood is yet in his most productive years. We give the following from a large volume of MS. poems:—

MY JOE JANET.

Tyndal for your courtesie
Draw in aboot your chair, Sir,
Redd the fire an' tell to me,
Wha made the worlds an' mair, Sir.—
Those wondrous worlds through space that sail,
Janet, Janet,
Were formed the same as peas o' hail,
My Jo Janet.

Tyndal, lad, ye maun explain,—
Your doctrine's far frae clear, Sir,
What ken I o' hail or rain,
But that God sends them here, Sir.—
Nocht ance but atoms reeled thro'ither,
Janet, Janet,
Which cooled and drew in dads thegither,
My Jo Janet.

Then, Tyndal, tell me, gin you please,
Hoo life at first began, Sir!
We see the shrubs an' muckle trees,
An' fowls, an' brutes, an' man, Sir.—
Dear me! the laws the wide world o'er,
Janet, Janet,
That grow them noo could do't before,
My Jo Janet.

Then is oor Bible a' a lee,
Got up by Kings an' Priests, Sir,
And do we, honest bodies, dee,
Juist like the very beasts, Sir?—
Weel, nae, sae far as can be seen,
Janet, Janet,
Ye'll juist gang back to what ye've been,
My Jo Janet.

But whence the first heat gin ye ken,
And what syne cooled it doon, Sir?
Gude fegs! 'twas still and cauldrife then,
Before the Sun and Moon, Sir.—
Noo! dinna cock your head sae hie,
Janet, Janet,
There's forces that we cannot see,
My Jo Janet.

Then where did seeds o' trees come frae,
The gorbies 'mang the heather, Sir,
The lammies on the sunny brae,
An' the first wee bairnie's mither, Sir?
Affinity draws like to like,
Janet, Janet,
As lads to lasses loup the dyke,
My Jo Janet.

Ah! Tyndal, tak' a thocht an' mend,
Before ye come to dee, Sir,
In case that at your latter end,
The Deil's the ane ye'll see, Sir!
No fear o' that, I do no wrong,
Janet, Janet,
An' gin some Power my life prolong,
I'll be wi' my Jo Janet!

## THE CAGED BIRD.

When spring in all its glory comes
I yield my sweetest lay,
That some kind Power might burst my bars
And let me fly away—
For God now calls me to the grove,
The sweet days to prolong;
Yet my dull Jailor ever deems
I sing to him my song!

In fancy oft I join the choir,
That flits among the trees,—
Or listen to the joyful notes
That float upon the breeze.
Again I see our cozy home,
Beside the waterfall,
The moss-grown rocks, the huge old trees
That overhangeth all.

Our tender offspring stretch their necks
Up from their downy nest,
Which makes me struggle in my cell,
With anguish in my breast;
Yet while I dash against the bars,
And stronger notes employ,
My Jailor's little selfish mind
Admires my "rising joy."

Once more I see the lively brood,
Their untaught wings prepare ;
And eyeing well the nearest twig,
Pass gently through the air ,
When, from the nest, my mate and I
Soon chirp them back again,
My Jailor deems me happy now,
While fancy ends in pain.

Thus in my solitary cell
I fret away the hours,
For vain man thinks for him alone,
Fair Nature gives her powers.
To him my language is unknown,
But Death shall be my friend,
And when my last sweet song is sung
Man's "love" shall mourn my end !

## THE WANDERER.

The bards of Nature cease their songs,
The vales rejoice no more,
A world is sleeping o'er the wrongs
That gnaw it to the core ;
Yet, as if wakeful spirits passed,
A moaning river fills the blast.

Dash on thou nursling of the hills,
Rave on from stone to stone,
The writhing of a thousand rills,
Is in that form alone :
Who wanders by thy lonely stream
Of God and far-off worlds to dream.

The vile Seducer came,—she fell,—
Her race is now her foe,—
But do not think she would compel
Thy waves to hide her woe :
For though she from her fellows fly,
She dreads an angry Father's eye.

O'er stranger-vales she wends her way,
From stranger-hand is fed ;
While ah ! the red-robed king of day
Sneers at her crust of bread ;
And bids her weep and tell her tale,
Where friendship shields the northern gale.

Borne like a withered autumn leaf
On every blast that blows :
The poor wretch wanders for relief
To where the torrent flows,
And where the stars of gentle beam,
Bend down and kiss the babbling stream.

Her bosom heaves a gentle sigh,
To bid these scenes farewell;
Yet pale Hope, dove-like, soars the sky,
And longs with God to dwell:
For from Earth's friendship rudely riven,
Her soul would rest its wings in Heaven.

O God! come to Thy outer gates,
When all the star-lights burn,
For there Thy erring Daughter waits
Till night to sunshine turn,
And call her from this world of tears,
Up to Thy everlasting spheres.

. . . . . .

Strange music floats along the skies,
The trembling stars have fled;
The feelings of her heart arise
Like children from the dead:
Her soul hath burst its mortal bars,
And singing sweeps the path of stars.

## MRS LOGIE-ROBERTSON,

WHOSE maiden name is Janet Simpson, is the daughter of a respected Edinburgh lawyer. Though only in her twenty-second year she has already taken a place in the arena of letters. She was born, in 1860, in the quaint old fishing town of Pittenweem. On the maternal side she can claim kindred with the celebrated preacher, Dr Chalmers, whose birthplace, Anstruther, is only about a mile east the Fife coast from Pittenweem. She was educated at the Edinburgh Educational Institution. Her curriculum there was a series of brilliant successes, and at its conclusion she carried off the gold medal awarded by the Merchant Company of Edinburgh to the Dux of the College. The College at that time numbered considerably over a thousand students.

About the same time she achieved, at Edinburgh University Local Examinations, the double distinction of prizes and a Certificate of the First Order.

Her first literary efforts were for the amusement of the domestic circle, and took the form of little dramas, which were enacted before juvenile audiences by the younger members of the family. The first of these to be printed is a dramatic rendering of the nursery tale, "Little Red Ridinghood." It was noticed very favourably by the press, and is now no longer to be had. Her next publication was in the same direction, the subject being "Cinderella," and the publisher Mr J. Murray, Queen Street, Edinburgh. The title-page fitly describes this production as "A Parlour Pantomime." It was favourably reviewed—the *Scotsman* being especially emphatic in its praise. It is embellished by several comic illustrations, and, we understand, is still on sale.

Our authoress's next effort was in a totally new direction—away from the department of the comic drama to what may be described as the department of lyrical character-sketching. The little book, a marvel of neatness and sweetness, externally and internally too, bears the very significant title of "Blossoms: A Series of Child-Portraits." There are, in all, twenty-five of these "Child-Blossoms;" and we can sincerely endorse the judgment of one critic of the little book who wrote—"There is not one which is not a little gem." They might, indeed, be studies from the life in their utter truthfulness to child-nature. In addition to this commendable quality—the first requisite in any writer who would touch the heart, as it is an indispensable proof of genius—there is an unobtrusive, straightforward simplicity of diction, as well as an artistic neatness of form, which the writer, probably instinctively, but inimitably adapts to the subject she has in hand. Our poetess was married in 1881 to Mr Logie-Robertson, the subject of our next sketch.

Let us now open the door—we have lingered long enough with our hand on the handle—and take as a specimen of the fair authoress' handicraft the following stanzas from "Marion and Willie." They have just discovered the first "gowan" of spring.

"How strange to see a snowflake grow!"
Cries Willie, wondering:
But nought says Marion, bending low
To touch the tiny thing.
With tender hand, and reverent,
She parts the pearly leaves;
While to her eyes new light is lent,
And joy her bosom heaves.

The boy's first wonder past, he too
Will handle this new toy:
Unmeaning rude, unused to woo,
His heedless hands destroy.
"O Willie, you have killed the Spring!"
With answering grief he hears—
O'er the dead daisy lingering,
Both children are in tears.

JOANNA.

Joanna with her dainty tread
Comes tripping down the alley;
Amid the trees she hides her head—
Our Lily of the Valley!
For sweet, and pale, and pure is she,
This bashful little lady;
And loves in Spring-clad woods to be,
And quiet nooks and shady.

The way is all of sombre hue,
Untouched by Sol's bright finger—
The sunlight from the scene withdrew
Within her eyes to linger!
Her soft dark locks are braided trim—
The fresh breeze, violet-scented,
Deems them a plaything kept from him,
And will not be contented.

Joanna with the gentle air
And shy and modest graces,
—You cannot tell how passing fair
And comforting your face is
Then keep it pure and tranquil still,
Whatever path you follow;
Be happy-hearted on the hill,
Contented in the hollow!

## LISETTE.

Little Lisette with the locks of gold
  Pale as the evening's glow
When the sun is set and the earth grows cold
  And the clouds are closing slow—
Wrinkles have spared your white-brow yet,
                Little Lisette !

Little Lisette with the light blue eyes
  Clear as a wintry sky
When the sparkling frost on the meadow lies
  And the wildflowers shiver and die—
Seldom these eyes with tears are wet,
                Little Lisette !

Little Lisette with the silent lips,
  Shut like the leaves of a rose
That is shy to ope till the Spring breeze trips
  O'er the garden where it grows—
Open them, while it is Spring-time yet,
                Little Lisette !

## MARJORY AND JOHNNIE.

Marjory and Johnnie, sitting
  'Neath the apple-tree,
Watch the merry sunbeams flitting
  Through their canopy.
All the air is full of gladness,
  All the earth is green ;
Birds and bees in summer madness
  Flutter in between.

He is thinking of the horses
  Cantering home at eve ;
She looks where the golden gorse is,
  Golden dreams to weave :
Wonders if it caught its colour
  From that brilliant sky,
And if, when the day grows duller,
  It will droop and die.

Johnnie thinks his time is wasted,
  Sitting silent there :
Marjory has gladly tasted
  Rest from all her care.
She is placid as the heaven,
  Whirlwind bound is he ;
Marjory is almost seven,
  Johnnie only three.

## J. LOGIE-ROBERTSON

IS one of the best and most promising of our living Scottish song and baliad writers. His imaginative powers are almost unlimited, his spirit is deeply patriotic, while his Doric is pure, rich, and sweet. Mr Robertson was born of respectable well-to-do parents in Milnathort, parish of Orwell, Kinross-shire, in the middle of the century. He was educated at the parish school there, and afterwards at Edinburgh University with the view of studying for the Church of Scotland, where he graduated M.A. in 1872. His university career was a brilliant success. He took prizes in the humanity class, as well as in logic and mathematics, and a place in natural philosophy; prizes and medal in the class of rhetoric and English literature, Gray's Essay Prize of £20, the first place in the Murchison Essay Competition, the Glasgow St Andrew Society's Prize Essay of ten guineas, and was admitted to the Honorary Membership of that Society in 1874. On completing his educational career, Mr Robertson voluntarily relinquished the idea of "waggin' his head in a pu'pit," and became mathematical tutor at Jedburgh Academy, and afterwards junior master in Heriot's Hospital in Edinburgh, master in the Senior Department of Watson's College for Boys, and at present he is English Master in the Edinburgh Merchant Company's College in Queen Street. Some years ago Mr Robertson was appointed Professor of Humanity in Adrian College, Michigan, U.S.A., but he declined the appointment. We do not require to refer at any length here to his professional standing, but we have reason to believe his scholarly attainments, great natural abilities, and earnest devotion to his duties make him a valuable instructor of the young. A very prominent feature is the great success he has in being able, by patience

and wisdom, to make the knowledge he imparts to his pupils not so much an end in itself, as a means to the development of their mental powers.

As a proof of Mr Robertson's wisdom, he did not seek to rush prematurely into print, yet before matriculating in the University he had the honour of being recognised as a worthy member of the society of poets by his first poem appearing in the *Scotsman*. He is indebted to the genial editor of the *People's Friend*—Mr David Pae—for his introduction to periodical literature, and he has been a valued contributor to *Blackwood*, *Good Words*, the *Graphic*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Mr Robertson has shown us in his poems and sonnets that he has been an intelligent and appreciative traveller, and has found Nature in various countries instinct with poetic suggestions. His tours have included the greater part of Scotland, the English Lakes, Norway—the last being described in a series of beautiful "Norwegian Sonnets" in his volume "Orellana, and other Poems," published by Blackwood in 1881—while he sings in the expressive mother tongue of "a snawy nicht-cap upon Benarty's pow," or bewails the loss the cottar has sustained in so many places in losing his little bit croft—

> "Oh, wae the day the puir man tint it,
> His cot an' pendicle abint it;
> Tho' short his bounds an' sma' his gain,
> *A bit o' Scotland was his ain.*"

In a poetical preface to his first volume, "Poems," (1878) he says—

> Splendid I know are the garlands
> That others more tastefully twine,
> As bids for a name
> Sacred to Fame,
> To be hung in the sounding dome
> Own'd by the Nine:
> And I who have been to the far lands,
> The lands of the myrtle and vine,
> In the gardens of Greece and of Rome,
> And dreamed through our gardens at home,
> Am bold to present you with mine.

Many of the poems in "Orellana" appeared anonymously in *Blackwood's Magazine*, the first instalment, entitled "From the Sicilian of Vicortai," attracting a good deal of attention that was very flattering to Signor Vicortai, and certainly very satisfactory to the translator. One London paper credited Sir Theodore Martin with the translation, and others alluded very complacently to "the well-known poet Vicortai." Critics of greater shrewedness saw traces of Swinburne, Poe, and Heine's influence in these Sicilian "Translations," while one individual called our poet's attention to them, assuring him that they had given one literary club great pleasure, and he felt certain they would prove a great treat to Mr Robertson. On the secret of authorship oozing out, the former, who knew Italian, asked the translator for a book of the poems in the original, as he had been unable to beg or buy a copy. We have only to add that considerable surprise was caused on its becoming known that the subject of our sketch was *Vicortai*. He had for a little amusement to himself followed Scott's and Mrs Browning's occasional device, only he had given "a name," as well as "a local habitation" to his poet.

The epic poem which gives the book its title is one of great ability, and one to which mere selections cannot do justice. It gives glowing descriptions and powerful dramatic scenes, while the narrative parts of the poem are exceedingly well sustained, and the whole proves the author to be gifted with the imaginative faculty in a high degree. Without stint he draws at will a wealth of phrase when engaged on descriptions of human passions, catastrophies, and intrigues, and his stock of epithets is not exhausted in merely telling us that the leaves are green, the sky blue, the plains rich, and the hills clothed with wood. The miscellaneous poems and songs in both volumes are varied in subject, and the language and form has been pronounced as being as pleasantly variegated

as a flowery bank in June. Whether it is a stinging satire, a sacred hymn, a melodious anacreontic, or a Scottish poem or song, the poet never loses control of what he has in hand. We find no spasmodic gaspings after an inexplicable and inexpressible something which is too frequently considered to be the true sign of a heaven-born bard. He is a lyrical poet of a very high order, and his songs possess a strikingly charming freshness and melody. Many of his sketches in a poem "On the Decadence of the Scots Language, Manners, and Customs" are vivid enough to be transferred to canvas. Back-lying farms, forlorn and grey hill slopes, are amongst its fine realisms, and the whole poem is an eloquent defence of our norlan' speech and norlan' ways, and recalls old times, customs, and sketches with excellent humour simple stories of rural life. Indeed, not a few of Mr Robertson's poems and songs are sure to become standard, and will be received with much favour at public readings. Altogether he is a poet of great promise.

A bright imagination, and trained and gifted poetic mind, illuminates and beautifies whatever it touches. We feel satisfied that he sings for the best of all reasons—that he cannot help it. His verse comes up like a clear spring of water; it has all the gracefulness of natural ease. Mr Robertson will take a very high place in national literature.

### A BACK-LYING FARM.

A back-lying farm but lately taken in;
Forlorn hill-slopes and grey, without a tree;
And at their base a waste of stony lea
Through which there creeps, too small to make a din,
Even where it slides over a rocky linn,
A stream, unvisited of bird or bee,
Its flowerless banks a bare sad sight to see.
All round, with ceaseless plaint, though spent and thin,
Like a lost child far-wandered from its home,
A querulous wind all day doth coldly roam.
Yet here, with sweet calm face, tending a cow,
Upon a rock a girl bareheaded sat,
Singing unheard, while with unlifted brow
She twined the long wan grasses in her hat.

## HORACE IN HOGGERS.

Fra whaur ye hing, my cauldrife frien',
  Yer blue neb owre the lowe,
A snawy nichtcap may be seen
  Upon Benarty's pow.
An' snaw upo' the auld gean stump
  Whase frostit branches hang
Ootowre the dyke aboon the pump
  That's gane clean aff the fang.
The pump that half the toon's folk ser'd,
  It winna gie a jaw;
An' rouch, I ken, shall be yer baird
  Until there comes a thaw.

Come, reenge the ribs, an' let the heat
  Down to oor tinglin' taes;
Clap on a gude Kinaskit peat
  An' let us see a blaze.
An' since o' water we are scant,
  Fesh ben the barley bree,—
A nebfu' baith we sanna want
  To weet oor whistles wi'.
Noo let the winds o' winter blaw
  Owre Scotland's hills an' plains,
It maitters nocht to us ava
  —We've simmer in oor veins!

The pooers o' Nature, wind an snaw,
  Are far aboon oor fit,
But, while we scoog them, let them blaw,
  We'll aye hae simmer yet.
An' sae wi' Fortune's blasts, my frien',
  They'll come an' bide at will,
But we can scoog ahint a screen
  An' jouk their fury still.
Then happy ilka day that comes,
  An' glorious ilka nicht,
The present disna fash oor thumbs,
  The future needna fricht.

## THE DECADENCE OF THE SCOTS LANGUAGE, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS.

. . . . . .

The gude auld honest mither tongue!
They kent nae ither, auld or young;
The cottar spak' it in his yaird,
An' on his rigs the gawcie laird.

Weel could it a' oor wants express,
Weel could it ban, weel could it bless;
Wi' a' oor feelin's 'twas acquent,
Had words for pleasour an' complent;

Was sweet to hear in sacred psalm
In simmer Sabbath mornin's calm ;
An' at the family exerceese,
When auld gudeman, on bended knees,
Wrastled as Jacob did langsyne
For favours temporal an' divine.

. . . . . .

'Twas gentler at a hushaba
Than a wud-muffled waterfa',
Or cushats wi' their downie croon
Heard through a gowden afternoon,
Or streams that rin wi' liquid lapse,
Or wun's among the pine-tree taps.

'Twas sweet at a' times i' the mooth
O' woman moved wi' meltin' ruth ;
But oh ! when first love was her care,
'Twas bonnie far beyond compare.

'Twas mair sonorous than the Latin,
Cam' heavier on the hide o' Satin,
When frae his Abel o' a poopit
The minister grew hearse an' roopit,
An' bann'd wi' energetic jaw
The author o' the primal fa'.
But if the poopit's sacred clangour
Was something aw'some in its anger,
Gude keep my Southlan' freen's fra' hearin'
A rouch red-headed Scotsman swearin' !

But wha wad hae audacity
To question its capacity ?

The mither croon'd by cradle side,
Young Jockie woo'd his blushin' bride,
The bargain at the fair was driven,
The solemn prayer was wing'd to heaven,
The deein' faither made his will,
In gude braid Scots :
—A language still !
It lives in Freedom-Barbour's lines,
In bauld Dunbar it brichtly shines,
On Lyndsay's page like licht it streams,
In Border scraps it fitful gleams,
An' like the shimmerin' spunkie strays
By Ettrick banks an' Yarrow braes.

It lives for aye in Allan's play,
In Coila's sangs, the Shepherd's lay,
The bird-like lilts fra' Paisley side,
The Wizart's tales that flew sae wide,
Forbye the vast an' various lore
O' later ballants by the score :

The gude auld Scots !—a language still,
Let fortune vary as she will.
Though banish'd from oor College ha's,
It frames the siccar auld Scots laws ;
Though from the lips, of speech the portal,
It lives in Literature immortal.

But oh, alas ! the waefu' change,
The customs new, the fashions strange,
Sin' the auld patriarchal days
O' sober thocht an' simple phrase !

. . . . . .

She sang auld Scotland's broomy knowes,
Her tourin' hills where heather grows,
Her scroggy glens to memory dear,
Her burnies wimplin' thro' them clear.

She flang owre cairn o' mountain stane
Familiar wi' the midnicht's maen,
Owre moory monumental fiel',
Owre river wi' its ruin'd peel,
A beauty mair than sun could gi'e,
Or blue-bells noddin' bonnilie.

The glamour o' the vanish'd past
On bare forsaken scenes she cast,—
The licht o' lang-descendit suns,
The wail o' lang-exhaustit wun's,
The shouts o' heroes in the dust,
The gleam o' glaives noo red wi' rust.

## A DITHYRAMB.

Lift up your voices in fraternal chorus
All ye who share
The joyous spirit of the poet,
Wheresoe'er
In the four corners of the earth ye dwell !
Lift up your voices ! Tell
Its owners Earth is fair !
Sing ! shout aloud, and show it !
Sing ! for the Earth is fair !
The same blue heaven is bending o'er us,
The same green Earth extends before us,
And Heaven is kind and Earth is fair
—But mankind do not know it !
Lift up your voices
Till the world rejoices
And knows that Earth is fair !

What though we stand in sunder'd lands
And sing in several voices ?
The brotherhood has many bands
But with one heart rejoices !

From the same Father-God we came,
To the same Father-God we go ;
Our hopes above are all the same,
The same our griefs below,
Our sadness !

Sing ! till the night of sorrow
Is frightened from the land !
Give into every hand
The torch of gladness !
—Gladness is a flame
Increasing if you lend or if you borrow—
And cry aloud ! proclaim
At midnight everywhere
*Good morrow ! and good morrow !*
Till timorous souls leap from their hidings
And know that Earth is fair !
Lift up your voices
Till the world rejoices !
Sing ! till the surging air
Beats on the battlements of Heaven the tidings
That man rejoices for the Earth is fair !

## THE COLD LIGHT OF STARS.

No ! tell me not that Nature grieves for human care and pain,
That aught but poor Humanity lifts up its voice to 'plain.
Man, in his misery blinded, thinks for him the sad wind sighs,
That sea and forest with him in his sorrow sympathise ;
In stormy skies he sees a gloom congenial to his mind,
And deems the stars with pitying look beam love upon his kind.

There's grandeur in the heavenly host, but 'tis a fearful sight,
Encompassing with silent siege the Earth thro' all the night ;
The glare of Mars bursts from their eyes, but ne'er a glance of love,
As they pursue with measured pace their marshalled march above.
So round the pitiless Hebrews went, with ordered ranks and calm,
The fair but fated city that was shaded by the palm.
Yon very star at last may reach its torch of scathing fire,
To blaze destruction round the globe, a red funereal pyre !

Years piled on years, a pyramid no finite mind can scale,
Have mounted high since finished were their order and their tale ;
Yet there they march as calm and cold in their primeval sheen
For all the sin and misery their tearless orbs have seen !

Silent and bright as when their light first clove chaotic gloom,
Silent and bright as on the night they first saw Eden's bloom ;
And bright when blasted was that bloom for evermore to be,
And silent when unthinking Eve plundered the deadly tree !

Silent when Abel shrieking fell beneath the club of Cain,
Silent when Adam's soul gave forth its sorrow for the slain ;
Undimmed when Adam's eyes were wet and Eve's with grief ran
o'er,
And bright, tho' hope withdrew its rays from Cain for evermore !

And so all down the centuries with steady stoic stare,
When tyranny usurped the Earth and battle rent the air ;
When empires rose and empires fell, and famine filled the land,
And pestilence and pain and death colleagued—a ghastly band ;
When floods did overwhelm the Earth, and Earth herself devour,
With hasty and unnatural man, her children of an hour ;
When storm and hail and solid fire, laden with death, were
hurled,
And all Pandora's fancied ills let loose on this poor world,
Till now it rolls a lazar-house of woes and wounds and sighs ;
—But think not, bending from the blue, that those are mourners'
eyes !

Unsympathetic Souls of Night ! ye arm our hearts with might,
But we catch no pity in your pomp, no love see in your light ;
So roll ye on in unconcern above this scene of woe,
And smile in mockery on the taint your robes may never know !

## GEORGE PAULIN.

GEORGE PAULIN is a native of the Scottish border, that land of song and romance, and was born at the village of Horndean, in the parish of Ladykirk, and county of Berwick, in the year 1812. In the village school there, and in the Grammar School of Selkirk, he received his early education. In 1832, he entered the Edinburgh University, at which he studied for six years, and greatly excelled as a scholar, taking numerous prizes in the Latin, Greek, Logic, and Moral Philosophy Classes. In 1838 he was appointed parish schoolmaster of Newlands, in Peeblesshire. In 1843 he was appointed to fill the same situation at Kirknewton, in Edinburghshire ; and, in November, 1844, he was chosen

Rector of Irvine Academy, in which office he continued till 1877, when, on his resignation, to crown

A youth of labour with an age of ease,

his old pupils presented him with a gift of £1000. His eldest son is the able minister of the parish of Muckhart, in Perthshire; but Mr Paulin still continues to reside at Irvine, so that when that town reckons up its poets in the generations to come, it is sure to claim him as one of its most gifted bards.

Although Mr Paulin had long been known as the writer of chaste and vigorous verses, and was the highly honoured and esteemed associate of poets and literary men, particularly of Christopher North, yet it was not till 1876 that he collected his poems and published a volume, which has been exceedingly well received by the press and by the most cultured portion of the reading public. His lines flow on with a graceful ease and smoothness, which greatly delights the ear; while their religious fervour, and fine patriotic glow purify, elevate, and animate the heart. Mr Paulin writes with equal elegance and correctness in the purest English or the truest Doric. His Scotch is not like that of a great many who attempt to write in that tongue in these modern times, but is the true Lowland tongue of Burns, Scott, The "Noctes," and the Ettrick Shepherd. Mr Paulin has a natural pathos which moistens the eye, and melts and subdues the heart.

### THE BRAVE AULD SANGS.

I've wandered east, I've wandered west, auld Scotland's hills amang,
An' listened to the ploughman's lilt, the shepherd's e'enin' sang,
An' sadly mused on bygane days—for there's nae sang ava,
To mind ye o' the brave auld times—the Covenant times awa.

The braid blue bannet still may cleed the pows in green Glencairn,
The laverock wake the mavis yet in howes o' auld Carsphairn;
But waes me for the Covenant psalm that echoed aince amang
The westlan' hames o' Scotland, mair sweet than mavis sang.

Aince gaed ye east, or gaed ye west, on howm or heather braes,
In clachan, cot, an' shiel was heard the e'enin' lilt o' praise ;
And i' the calm o' morn and e'en, the solemn sounds o' prayer,
Frae Scotland's hames amang the hills, went floatin' up the air.

Frae Solway to Dunnottar, frae the Bass to Fenwick Muir,
The Covenant life was bonnie aince, the Covenant faith was pure ;
The flowers o' heaven were rife on earth—frae 'neath the auld blue bannet
Cam' croonin' up King David's psalm, or aiblins Erskine's sonnet.

But noo nae mair amang the glens, nae mair amang the hills,
The simple strains o' Covenant times, the muirlan' shepherd trills ;
Ye'll wander far afore ye hear the e'enin' psalm ava,
The bonnie flowers o' Scotland's faith are nearly wede awa.

## IT'S NO WORTH THE WARSLE FOR'T.

It's no worth the warsle for't,
A' ye'll get on earth,
Gin ye hae na walth aboon
Mair than warl's worth.

It's no worth the lootin' for't,
Pickin' up a croon,
Gin ye hae na in yer heart
Arles o' ane aboon.

It's no worth the time it taks,
Biggin' on the sand ;
Better be a bairnie yet,
Ridin' on a wand.

It's no worth a body's while,
Coortin' fame and glitter,
It only maks the aftercome
Unco black and bitter.

It's no worth the fisher's heuk,
Fishin' here for pleasure,
Gin ye canna coont aboon,
Freend, an' hame, an' treasure.

## SOUN' SLEEPIN' NOO.

He's soun' sleepin' noo, Willie,
The warsle's ower wi' him,
The spraichle an' the hoist are ower,
The bonnie e'en are dim.

We'll lay him i' the mools, Willie ;
But oh ! we'll think on Johnny,
No 'mang the worms and clammy clay,
But 'mang the angels bonnie.

For haena we the blessed word,
" Wha sleep wi' Me shall live ?"
An' well we ken his tender heart
He to the Lord did give.

Then gang yer ways to bed, Willie,
Oor weary watchin's past,
An' dinna look upon his face
As ye wad look yer last.

We'll ken the face aboon, Willie—
Oor bonnie bairnie's face ;
He'll aye be oors, and Jesus' too,
Within God's holy place.

Kiss his face aince mair, Willie,
His thrabbin' broo's at rest ;
He'll never mair ken pain or wae
Upon the Saviour's breast.

## DAN CANNING,

AUTHOR of a number of smooth songs, mostly of a domestic nature, was born in Glasgow, in 1851. Dan's early education was very meagre, but he has made up for this loss by hard and diligent application. He is a lithographic printer, and has been a prize-taker for Scotch and Irish songs in local competitions. He has for years been popular as a vocalist, and in addition to his rhyming faculty he sings his own songs at soirees and concerts. He is about to publish a selection of his numerous fugitive pieces, and the collection will be prized by his numerous appreciative friends.

## WHEN OOR WEE PATE'S A MAN.

There's music in my laddie's voice,
Mair sweet than birds in spring;
Gin cronies cloot his brither's lugs
He gi'es them a' the fling.

Gin onything is wrang at hame,
Hoo deftly he will plan;
I trust and houp he'll keep the same
When he grows up a man.

He's daft aboot the sodgers,
And he haun'les weel the gun;
He aims and pu's the trigger,
And the crack gi'es glorious fun.

The lammie says he'll fecht for a'
The weans that's in the lan',
If they will only wait till he
Grows up to be a man.

He welcomes faither coming in
Wi' ready heart an' han';
I hope his Father true abune
He'll love when he's a man.

I feel as prood as ony king
To hear his stories told;
The kin'ly feeling he displays
Is mair to me than gold.

## NAE PLACE LIKE HAME.

There's nae place like hame, tho' ye roam far an' near;
Ither places look tame an' cauldrife an' drear;
By oor ain cozy fire-en' mair comfort we see,
Tho' we've little to spen', ay, an' far less to pree.

Wi' oor ain kith an' kin whyles we fain wad fa' oot,
To ilk kindness seem blin', an' true love misdoot;
But whate'er may betide, tho' a' friendship fa's tame,
Keep the warm fireside, for there's nae place like hame.

Live content, work for wealth, an' whaurever ye gang,
Tak' tent o' your health as you journey alang;
Help the hameless an' puir, an' you'll win love an' fame,
Giving what you can spare for the comforts o' hame.

## FRANK H. GORDON

HAS written very profusely. He is the author of numerous patriotic and spirited poems and songs. For several years he has been a regular contributor to newspapers. His verses have a fresh pleasing melody, with a broad hearty humour, rather than clear diction, and depth of sentiment. Frank Gordon was born in the parish of Durris, Kincardineshire, in 1854. His father is a shepherd, and many of his relatives have followed the pipe and the drum, and have gloried in the garb of old Gaul. He follows the calling of a forester, and has been for several years in the employment of Wm. Baird, Esq., of Elie House, Fifeshire. Our poet is thoroughly Scotch. He plays the pipes with much skill, and wears the kilt on "high occasions."

### WILL YE TRYST WI' ME, ANNIE?

The simmer sun has gaen to rest
Saftly in the glowin' west;
The cushat doo has socht her nest,
And sings sae blithe and free, Annie.
Oh, meet me in the munelicht pale,
Yonder by the fairy well,
Doon within the hazel dell,
Will ye tryst wi' me, Annie?

Calm the shades o' e'enin' close,
And nicht aroon' her mantle throws;
The weary laverock seeks repose
Upon the clover lea, Annie.
Oh, meet me by the ruined tower,
In yon little rocky bower;
Although the nicht be dark and dour
I'll keep my tryst wi' thee, Annie.

Should Fate gie oot the stern command
That I maun leave my native land,
To wander on some foreign strand,
Far ayont the sea, Annie,
Oh, dinna drive me frae your side,
But say you'll be my bonnie bride;
Then weal or woe, whate'er betide,
I'll aye keep tryst wi' thee, Annie.

Look up, my love, and smile again,
And dinna say it's a' in vain,
For little, little dae ye ken
The thocht it causes me, Annie.
Then by the burnie in the glen
We'll big a wee cot o' oor ain;
We'll share oor joys and sorrows then
Until the day we dee, Annie.

## THE NINETY-SECOND GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

All honour to our kilted lads, all honour to the brave,
Who fought the fight on Afghan's height, their country's right to save;
All honour to the sons of those who charged at Waterloo,
And fought and fell with gallant Moore on dark Corunna too.
When down the Alma's dreadful steep the bullets flew like hail,
Who silenced Russia's batteries but the hardy Scottish Gael;
Who manned the breach and saved Cawnpore when all had seemed but lost,
And with the bayonet backwards hurled the mighty rebel host,
When vengeance flashed from every eye, and death on every blade,
No quarter to the mutineers—avenge the murdered dead.
As brave as then they fight this day on India's bloody shore,
And rally round the good old flag, as their fathers did before.
As firm as then with muscles braced, and every eye aflame,
Determined to the last to fight for Scotland and for fame.
As stern as then with dauntless front, like native granite rock,
Our kilted lads can hold their own through bullets fire and smoke.
All honour to our Highland lad, our tartan-clad brigade,
Long may their names be cherished for the charges they have made.
Tho' many a heart that once beat high with fearless soldier pride
Lies cold and dead far far away upon the desert wide,
And many a loving mother, too, that dreadful day shall mourn,
For her soldier lad she loved so well shall never more return.
Long may their children's children live their gallant deeds to tell
How their fathers for their country fought and for their country fell.

## ANDREW PROCTER

IS a respectable, unassuming writer of verses. He was introduced to the poet's corner of one of our best-known weekly newspapers by the late Rev. George Gilfillan, and, until several years ago, he was a welcome and frequent contributor to the local press. Mr Procter was born near Dalkeith in 1841, and at present he is in business as a draper in that town.

### THE EVENING STAR.

O beauteous star ! that shines above
So sweet,
I would that from my heart such rays of love
Might meet
On earth's unresting tide,
That some dark wave might catch a gleam
Of light,
That in some heart no dismal dream
Of night
Should e'er again abide.

O gentle star ! that venturest forth
So still,
That this dim world knows not thy worth
Until
No other light is there ;
So would I when the shadows creep
So dim
O'er some forsaken mortal, deep
In sin,
That he might be my care.

O changeless star ! on heaven's pure height
For aye
Thy constant care to charm the right
Away,
And beckon on the morn.
Oh ! would that I, on Time's calm height
Outlying,
Might fix some truth, that like thy light
Undying,
Should deeper, holier burn.

## OOR ELDER.

Gien ye should meet a douce auld man,
Ower whas' croon sixty years hae blawn,
This inference may weel be drawn—
That man's oor elder.

His step is slow, but then he's thrang,
For meditation's deep and lang;
Sometimes 'bout right, but maist on wrang,
Crood on oor elder.

Weel read in Boston, Brown and Flavel,
His orthodoxy past a' cavil;
The deepest problem he'll unravel,
Oor worthy elder.

Of course he hands the Standards true,
Deny them, and your fate is blue,
They're richt, and that's enough for you,
So says oor elder.

His conversation, wha can doot it,
Shews faith in a' that's guid deep-rooted;
Vain thoughts, they maunna ance be mooted
Afore oor elder.

On Sunday, posted at the "plate,"
He watches like a very fate,
Ye'd think the wee coins e'en look blate
Afore oor elder.

The minister's main stay and prop,
The twa appear like Faith and Hope;
O! Charity come join the group,
And croon oor elder.

But here we leave him; heaven bless him:
May brighter suns, and kindlier kiss him,
When saints and sinners here shall miss him,
Oor ain bricht elder!

## REV. CHARLES ROGERS, D.D. LL.D.,

IS perhaps better known through his valuable volume, "The Scottish Minstrel," and some thirty other works, all, more or less, treating on our national literature, and his indomitable energy of character and antiquarian research, than as a writer of verse. We regret that we cannot now give the space we could wish, and which his name claims at our hands. Not only is he well-known through the numerous important volumes bearing his name, but from the energetic and practical way in which he has thrown himself into not merely any scheme that had for its end the temporal or spiritual welfare of the people, but for the readiness which he has ever shown to take a leading part in many of our national undertakings.

Dr Rogers was born at Dunino, near St Andrews, in 1825. His father was minister of the parish, and was a ripe classical scholar. The son was sent to college in his fourteenth year, but without any adequate preparation, and the lad never overcame the disadvantage. In his "Autobiography," Dr Rogers describes his college career as a failure, save towards its close, when he gained several prizes. When scarcely beyond boyhood, however, he was devoted to letters, and published "The Poems of Sir Robert Aytoun," a native of Fifeshire. Even at this early period, too, he interested himself in public affairs, and wrote a pamphlet advocating a line of policy in the administration of his college. A tax imposed on the students for admission to the college library he succeeded in removing. He was licensed as a probationer of the Church in 1846, and was appointed assistant to Dr Scott, author of the "Fasti." After assisting his aged father for short a time, he officiated w at Carnoustie and Dunfermline, and was, in 1855,

ordained as garrison chaplain of Stirling Castle. The associations of this beautiful district are singularly adapted towards inspiring in an ardent Scotsman sentiments of patriotism, and although the emoluments Dr Rogers received were light, the office was advantageous to him as enabling him to prosecute his peculiar studies.

We can only briefly allude to the great public undertakings conceived here. At a meeting of the influential inhabitants of Stirling and district, held in 1856, Dr Rogers proposed that Scottish nationality should be commemorated by a monument to its author, and moved that on the Abbey Craig a tower to the memory of Wallace should be erected. The motion was at once adopted, and soon after confirmed at a national gathering under the presidency of the Earl of Elgin. The movement extended to the colonies, and an ardent effusion of Scottish national feeling prevailed wherever the sons of Caledonia had penetrated. Within three years about £5000 were at the disposal of Dr Rogers' committee. In 1877 he assisted at Stirling in inaugurating a monument to King Robert the Bruce at the gate of Stirling Castle —the monument being begun and carried out mainly by his enterprise. Through his efforts a statue to the "Ettrick Shepherd" was reared in the Vale of Yarrow. Other notable Scotsmen, to whom monuments had already been reared, he has celebrated in genealogical memoirs. Among these are John Knox, Walter Scott, Robert Burns, &c. His genealogical monographs of several distinguished Scottish families will occupy a permanent place in the department of national biography. By publishing the hitherto unprinted common-place book of "James Boswell," accompanied by an exhaustive memoir, he has been the first to cast full light on the character of the eccentric biographer of Johnson. Through two other works Dr Rogers is perhaps more generally known— his "Memoir of the Baroness Nairne," and his

"Scottish Minstrel." In the first-mentioned work he has shown that many of the national lyrics which had been ascribed to Burns or to the "old makaris," were composed by Lady Nairne. Among these compositions are "Land o' the Leal," "Caller Herrin'," "John Tod," "The Laird o' Cockpen," and many of the best Jacobite lays. The "Minstrel," which originally appeared in six volumes, is now included in Nimmo's series of cheap re-prints. We can realise the labour and correspondence required in the preparation of this work. In prosecuting his researches, which during four years occupied a chief share of his attention, he personally visited the homes and haunts of many of the poets, and engaged in a correspondence which required the daily services of a clerk. Probably the most important of Dr Rogers' editorial undertakings is his "Lyra Britannica," in which he has produced the more approved hymns in the language, with the most authentic readings, accompanied by condensed memoirs of the writers.

In these works Dr Rogers has ever sought to bring to light those writers of merit whose diffidence had placed them in the shade. He has been a principal contributor to the works of the Royal Historical Society, and as founder of the Grampian Club, and editing works relating to Scottish history and antiquities he has rendered important service. His work entitled "Scotland, Social and Domestic," casts greater light on Caledonian manners than any other recent publication, while in "A Century of Scottish Life," and "Traits and Stories of the Scottish People," he has accumulated a rich store of anecdote. Dr Rogers has written numerous works of a religious character, and latterly he has devoted himself to the editing of Scottish Cartularies and ancient MSS. He has recently established his residence in Edinburgh, where he is engaged on a "Genealogical History of the House of Wallace," &c.

Though, in connection with several of his under-

takings. he has not escaped hostile criticism and persecution, his services have not passed without substantial acknowledgment. The beautiful residence he occupied in London was erected for him by his friends, who added a valuable testimonial of silver plate. He wrote the following lines on the occasion of his entering Grampian Lodge, while the other piece we quote is from his little volume, "Hymns and Verses for the Young."

Lord for this house we bless thee,
That friends have helped to raise;
On its walls we'll write salvation,
Its gates inscribe with praise.
May all who dwell within it
Come humbly to Thy throne;
For Thou'alike of worlds and homes,
Art Architect alone.

Lord with this blessing grant the gifts
Of charity and grace,
That corrupt thoughts and wickedness
May ne'er these walls disgrace;
And may the gentle words and acts
Of harmony and love,
Herein the fitting emblems prove
Of household joys above.

## THE PILGRIM'S PRAYER.

Pilgrims in this vale we languish,
Still by care and grief opprest;
Yet heavenly hopes dispel our anguish—
Tell us this is not our rest.

Lord, cast Thy shelt'ring mantle o'er us,
Place our feet upon the Rock;
By Thy guiding star before us,
Gently lead us like a flock.

When temptations sore assail us,
May we hear the Shepherd's voice
And when earthly comforts fail us,
Rest in Jesus and rejoice.

Succour send us, Lord, and blessing,
Help us in the narrow way;
Thus may we the truth confessing
Reach at length the perfect day.

Day of cloudless bliss and glory,
Ceaseless light and endless rest,
When the hallowed Gospel story
Wakes the anthems of the blest.

Day when fled are all oppressors,
Day when closed are all complaints
Day when martyrs and confessors
Hail their Master, King of Saints.

Gracious God in mercy hear us,
Blot out all the guilty past;
On the wings of faith upbear us,
And receive us home at last.

## JAMES ALLISON

WAS born in Glasgow in 1844, but spent his early years with friends at Locharbriggs, and the pastoral sweetness of that district first awakened his poetic nature. His walk of three miles with his uncle to the church at Dumfries every Sunday, and his saunters "'atween the preachings," still live in his memory, and he has depicted in fine thoughtful lines many of these youthful memories and surrounding scenes. His mother was left a widow when our poet was ten years of age, and she returned to Glasgow and struggled to support her two sons by working in a mill, till her health broke down, and she died in the course of a few years. By this time James was at work in a publichouse. This employment was far from congenial to his taste, and he was glad to get out of it, and found employment as storekeeper in an engineering work.

James Allison possesses the genuine spirit of poesy. The pervading sentiment of his poems is a marked originality of idea and expression. The themes are sufficiently varied to elicit his thoughts on numerous subjects. He possesses breadth of under-

standing, and his descriptive powers, both for portraying the beauties of Nature, and the varieties of human emotion are vivid and pathetic. He has contributed largely to several newspapers and literary journals.

### INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS.

With vigour my pulse is vibrating,
  There's joy in the strength of my stride ;
And the fluid of life in its circuit
  Doth pleasantly, ceaselessly glide,
But I know that a day cometh nigher
  On which my last steps I shall take ;
And this gladsome and robust pulsation
  A last throb will make.

I wonder in which of the seasons
  The slow, solemn cortege will wend,
With me, the unknowing occasion,
  Along to its shadowy end ?
But be it when birds are rejoicing,
  Or when winter bids them be dumb ;
Let nature be smiling or frowning—
  That journey will come.

Shall it be through the streets of the city,
  Unheeded by multitudes there ?
Or by rural, hedge-girted pathways,
  Where rustics will gapingly stare ?
And who of the few friends assembled
  Will feel the sincerest regret ?
Ah ! some one perhaps from a number
  Unknown to me yet.

And there will be crossboard and shovel,
  And words for the living to hear ;
Last looks at my sombre incasement,
  And from each true mourner a tear.
And still will be sunrise and sunset—
  The streets be as busy and gay ;
And harvest be mirthfully gathered
  When I am away.

But, oh ! what a sweet consolation ;
  What balm for those fancies of woe,
To be rising from glory to glory !
  While friends will be mourning below.
Then less than the weight of a snowflake
  Will seem all the cares that oppress,
When the arms of my blessed Redeemer
  Will fold me to rest.

## COME MIRTH.

Come, mirth ! with a lilt ; your neighbour
  Dull care, my companion has been
Owre lang ; but he'll stick in the shallows
  For me ; there's my han' to you, frien'
My heart has been sad, your music
  Shall banish all sadness away.
The sicht o' your face mak's me blythesome—
  The sound o' your voice mak's me gay.
    Then strike a bit lilt fu' cheery ;
      I'm done wi' dull care for a day :
    And fidgin' richt fain to gang wi' you
      On your rollickin,' frolicin' way.

Come, then, wi' your fun and frolic ;
  And come wi' your winsome glee ;
Your gay, jaunty step I delight in—
  Your voice is sweet music to me.
We'll feast on uproarious laughter !
  We'll riot in side-splittin' fun !
We'll sing but the songs that are merry,
  And dance when our singin' is done.
    Then strike a bit lilt fu' cheery ;
      I'm done wi' dull care for a day ;
    And fidgin' richt fain to gang wi' you
      On your rollickin' frolickin' way.

## PEACE—WAR.

There is calm on the lake—there is peace in the vale ;
And the hills are asleep and the twilight grows pale ;
And the sun sinks away on his course to the west,
As his dying rays glister the grey mountain's crest.

The birds for repose seek their nests in the brake—
The stallward-bound kine quench their thirst in the lake ;
And the song of the herdsman sounds peaceful and clear,
As the music of dreamland descends on the ear.

And children are playing in innocent glee,
Their elders rejoicing their frolics to see ;
And through the dim mist of the years far away
They see themselves merry and gladsome as they.

And love's chosen hour is availed in the shade,
Where the brook murmurs joy to the youth and the maid ;
From afar down the vale the ethereal song
Of peace floats away the grey mountains among.

Sinks further the sun, and the deeper shades roll
On the bosom of ether ; and man hath his soul
For slumber's brief season surrendered to God :
And the sweet sleep of peace on the people's bestowed.

. . . . . .

When the morn in its beauty hath fully awoke,
Comes the dread noise of war, and the sound of the shock
Between death-dealing armies is heard on the plain,
And the dying are shrieking, and trampled the slain!

The sabres are flashing--the bullets are sped
On their errands of death! and the piles of the dead
Show war's bloody carnage hath triumphed at last,
And the breath of God's kingdom's a thing of the past!

The late smiling valley is burdened with wail;
And horror, and anguish, and weeping prevail.
Sweet peace lieth slaughtered, and love is laid low,
And the war-stricken flock fall a prey to the foe.

The roofs are in flames, and the victor's steeds prance,
Where the villagers late gaily tripped in the dance;
And the clashing of arms, and the bugle's shrill call
Have replaced the sweet pipe that gave pleasure to all.

And husbandless women lament for their dead!
And fatherless children tremble with dread!
And loverless maidens all desolate mourn!
And friends are bewailed that will never return!

## GEORGE GIBB

HAS written numerous poems, of real merit, for newspapers and magazines, and we have pleasure in having it in our power to give publicity to his effusions in this work. He has had varied and extensive experience of life, and although very unassuming he has been a keen and intelligent observer. Mr Gibb has evidently thought deeply, and while evincing a taste for the picturesque, his more marked pieces show kindly humour, mingled with philosophical reflection. His poems and songs on "the auld times" furnish excellent pictures of Scottish life and manners now fast disappearing.

George Gibb was born at Gordon's Mill, Donside, Old Aberdeen, in 1826. The days of his childhood

were spent near the "Auld Brig o' Don," immortalised in song by Lord Byron. After receiving a fair education he, at the age of fourteen, became a factory operative, and worked as such till he reached his twenty-eigth year—contributing pieces to the Aberdeen newspapers. Mr Gibb's effusions, which appeared almost weekly with the initials "G. G.," were much admired, and through the influence of Mr Adam, editor of the *Herald*, he was appointed station-agent on the Great North of Scotland Railway, first at Kintore, and latterly at Longside, where our poet remained about ten years. As a railway official he was generally esteemed, and when he left to enter the employment of a firm in Aberdeen as foundry clerk, it was a matter of much regret. Several years after he again became connected with the railway service—the North British Company—at Edinburgh, and also at Alva, where, meeting with an accident, he had to resign, and he returned to the Granite City. He still warbles tender lilts o' auld langsyne, and his recent productions in the columns of the *Free Press* prove that he can sing as sweetly as he did nearly forty years ago.

### CHILDHOOD'S DAYS.

Losh ! sic a heap o' ups and doons
  There are in twenty years ;
But gin we backlins cast our e'e
  How short that space appears.

The dreamy days o' early life,
  Though season'd aft wi' pain ;
Yet lives there ane wha couldna wish
  To live them ower again.

Ah, reevin' Time ! you'll ne'er bring back
  Yon hours o' sunless glee,
When new fledged Fancy flapp'd her wing,
  An' ettled first to flee.

Ye war'ly thrang, whase prosy souls
  Nae raptured moment kens ;
But broods o'er what the future has,
  And what the present sen's.

Ye think it vain and profitless
To lat your fancy flee
To yon bricht spots o' early life,
As seen through memory's e'e.

An' ye wha row in fortune's lap
Wi' feint a woe to wail,
But what your folly or your pride
May bring upon yoursel'.

Yet favour'd brithers, will ye say
That fortune's smiles can gie
Sic bliss as sweeten'd early life,
When seen through memory's e'e?

Ye thochtless thrang, wha sail alang
On pleasure's shallow stream,
How stale your joys compar'd wi' those
Which gladden'd childhood's dream.

Alternate stouns o' grief an' pain
Your bosoms now maun dree,
Which kent nae pang in yon bricht days
We view through memory's e'e.

## THE AULD TIMES.

O! leeze me on the auld times,
The happy, hamely auld times,
He 's daft wha says the present days
Are equal to the auld times.

When I glint back twa score o' years,
Ah! me, hoo short that space appears,
But backlins memory aye careers
To revel 'mang the auld times.
The quiet, contented auld times,
The dear, lamented auld times,
Tho' cash was scant, distress and want
Were rarely kent in auld times.

The present age is past remeid
Wi' affectation's pride an' greed,
An' modern morals sairly need,
A lesson frae the auld times.
The pure and sainted auld times,
The vice-untainted auld times.
The moral law in cot an' ha'
Was Virtue's creed in auld times.

Oor lasses noo are dressed like dalls,
Wi' lots o' tawdry falderals,
Gi'e me the bannets, goons, an' shawls,
Our lassies wore in auld times.

The sonsy dress o' auld times,
The natural grace o' auld times,
A swaggerin' gait was ne'er a trait
O' lasses in the auld times.

The fu'some speech and vulgar ways,
The young fouks' manners nowadays
Are mixed wi' shoddy, like their claes,
Nae shoddy claith in auld times.
Discreet the walk in auld times,
Refined the talk in auld times,
Nae orra news defiled the mou's
O' youngsters in the auld times.

The kirks they used to hunt Auld Nicks,
An' clour'd his croon wi' gospel bricks,
But noo they're huntin' heretics,
A sport but rare in auld times.
Great was their zeal in auld times,
To ding the deil in auld times,
Puir Nick was aye the heretic,
That bore the brunt in auld times.

## REV. JOHN DONALDSON.

THE pleasing and quiet Scottish manse has often been visited and highly favoured by the Muse, and from the country manse especially the voice of truest and purest song has been heard. The Rev. John Donaldson is a son of the manse, and was born at Canonbie, on the eastern boundary of Dumfriesshire, in 1817, and received his education at home, until he went to study at the university. After leaving the Divinity Hall, and receiving licence to preach, he travelled for a considerable time on the continent. In 1843 he was ordained minister of the parish of Kirkconnell, in the upper district of Nithsdale, and there he still continues to minister with the greatest acceptance.

In 1864 he paid a visit to the Niederland and

Rheinland, the result of which was "Leaves from my Log-Book," published in 1866. The work is a highly pleasing medley of prose and poetry. In 1881 he published "A Minister's Week in Argyle," which is also sprinkled over with numerous sonnets, all of which are excellent, and some of them of great beauty.

IONA.

Iona! Isle of waves which round thee play;
O holy isle of St. Columba's cell,
Thy cloistered sacred ruins, strangers tell
Of a far better, brighter, nobler day,
When men in currach, borne from Erin's isle,
Bring the glad tidings of the risen Lord,
Thy summer sunlit waves around thee smile,
And hail the coming of the blessed Word;
Thy spray-washed pastures grey, silent so long,
Save to the long, low wail of ocean's roar,
Hear from Columba's lips the Gospel song,
And faithful men the Christian's God adore.
O! Isle, of saints and kings the sacred land,
Fair are thy green fringed shores and pebbly strand.

DUNSTAFFNAGE.

Rock-based Dunstaffnage! on Loch Linnhe's shore,
A coigne of vantage in a warlike age,
Where Etine's ebbing waters rush and rage,
And Connel's boiling eddies swirl and roar!
When chiefs of Lorn held high their feasts of pride,
And war-ships lay at Oban, side by side;
When island chieftians proudly scorned to bring
Submissive offerings to the lowland king,
Then waved thy flag for Kenneth's royal race,
The "Lion" oft in battle nobly borne,
"*Liath fail*," the stone of fate, unhewn, time-worn,
Held long within thy walls a treasured place!
How big with fate that grey unlettered stone,
Mourn not, O Scotland! thou hast won thine own.

## JAMES THOMSON.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE has said that James Thomson has written a number of "genuine Scottish songs, and that several of these deserve a

place amongst the best things of the kind." We have pleasure in being able to endorse this high opinion. He writes with natural tenderness, and has rare skill in the forcible expression of sentiment, and the richness and melodiousness of his language compels one to listen to his musings with close attention. His subjects are various, and they are excellent in tone, and give clear evidence of a warm heart, kindly feeling, refined taste, and rich culture.

James Thomson was born in 1825, at the village of Rothes, on Speyside. His father had a small croft, and our young poet loved the beautiful situation and surrounding scenery. He received his only school education at the village of Aberlour, and was herding cattle at the age of thirteen. This calling was distasteful to James. Although he was fond of the bonny birks and braes which surrounded his native place, he was anxious to become a gardener, and accordingly was apprenticed to the Laird of Elchies. He was afterwards in the employment of of Lord Cockburn at Bonny Bonnally, situated at the bottom of the Pentland Hills, and latterly settled down at Shawdon Hall, in the lovely Vale of Whittingham, where he found leisure to publish his volume, entitled "Northumbria, and other Poems."

Though he has resided for more than thirty years south of the Tweed, he is still a true-hearted Scotchman. He has not lost his partiality for his native Doric, and can still write in all its homely pathos and purity. Mr Thomson issued a third and enlarged edition of "Northumbria, the Captive Chief," during the present year, which he dedicated to Lady Fairfax, having served her Ladyship's father and grandfather in the capacity of gardener. The leading poem, a tale of Flodden Field, is spirited, smooth, and flowing. It gives evidence of an intelligent appreciation of lovely scenery—the hills, the streams, the vales, and rocky glens near which it has been his lot to live.

## MY LITTLE PRIMROSE FLOWER.

There grows a golden primrose
In a lone mossy dell,
The place where grows my primrose
I'll not to any tell;
Beneath the shelter of an oak,
That's wrinkled grey with age,
My pet flower blossoms sweetly there,
Safe from the tempest's rage.

A little rill that trickles by
Makes music to my flower,
And wafts itself in dewy spray
To cool its mossy bower.
The speckled trout leap up with joy
When bright it shines and clear,
And April brings its gentle rain
My little flower to cheer.

Spring wakens Nature from her sleep,
There little birds do sing,
To see the trees put forth their buds,
And flowers begin to spring.
The robin makes his cosy nest
Beside my little flower,
And close beneath its shelt'ring leaves
His little brood does cower.

When in the west the evening star
Shines like a diamond bright,
The feathered choir in brake and briar
Sing sweet their last good-night;
And ere the morning star has sunk
Behind the Cheviots grey,
They sing to my flower in its mossy bower
Their hymn to the coming day.

At morning dawn a sunbeam steals
Where my pet flower is laid,
And wakes it with a warm soft kiss
Upon its golden head.
My virgin flower, like maiden pure,
Lifts its head to the azure sky,
And wafts perfume from its golden bloom
On the breeze that passes by.

Then come the bees through budding trees;
With a hum of joy they sing
To the flower of my little primrose,
The queen of early spring;
From its cup of gold they sip
The honey sweet and clear,
And carry home with joyous song
The first-fruits of the year.

As 'neath this old oak-tree I sit,
I think of boyhood's day,
When, spotless as the primrose flower,
On the sunny bank I lay:
I gazed from earth to vaulted sky,
Till I seemed borne away
To a land of bliss, unlike to this,
Where flowers know no decay.

## MY WEE CREEPIE STOOL.

What memories surround thee, my wee creepie stool,
Linked to my childhood with its joy and dool;
When I first left the care of kind mother's knee,
My wee creepie stool, I sate proudly on thee.

There my mother would stroke my wee flaxen head—
I'll mind her soft touch till the day that I'm dead;
While a tear often stood in her clear sparkling e'e,
And I knew that my mother was praying for me.

From her lips I first heard of our Father above,
That His Son came to earth to teach men to love;
Then humbly I knelt by my wee creepie stool,
And said, 'Father in heaven, thy child keep and rule.

When the short day was done and the oil lamp was lit,
Entranced by the fire, on my wee stool I'd sit;
In the glowing red embers I saw strange things arise—
Men, rocks, and mountains, and star-studded skies.

And strange tales I've heard on my wee creepie stool,
So strange and unearthly they made my blood cool;
Of ghosts, and of fairies, and dead candle-lights,
And of the vile spirits that ride on dark nights.

With fear then I trembled on my wee creepie stool,
I wished for daylight with the loons at the school;
In bed I would cover my head with the clothes,
And never feel safe till the bright sun arose.

But true pleasure I've felt on my wee creepie stool,
When my tasks were all done, and ready for school;
Then down from the shelf came an old story-book—
To me ever new, though old it did look.

At the sound of sweet music, plaintive and low,
I have sat on my stool with my heart all aglow;
At the 'Flowers o' the Forest,' or 'Auld Robin Gray,'
My heart seemed to melt, and my pulse cease to play.

I shall never forget thee, my wee creepie stool,
For on thee I got lessons never taught me at school;
There I learned that life to the humble and low
Has a dark dreary side that the rich never know.

Though my wee creepie stool was a' low humble seat,
I have never yet envied the rich nor the great,
For life's purest pleasures are free to us all—
To the rich and the poor, to great and to small.

## JOHN VEITCH LL.D.

PROFESSOR VEITCH is the modern poet *par excellence* of the stirring associations of the Borderland, and of the hills, moorlands and burns of the south of Scotland—associations closely connected with the history of Scotland, as well as with its literature. He is known not only as a brilliant scholar and a true poet, but as an accomplished translator of Latin verse. In his "History and Poetry of the Scottish Border" he gives evidence of his patriotic and historical spirit, and high literary accomplishments. At a recent meeting of the "Edinburgh Border Counties Association" (the Most Noble the Marquis of Lothian presiding), Professor Veitch, referring to one main object of the Association—as an endeavour to recall the past, and keep alive the salient facts in Border story and Border history—said "our present life, no doubt, is very pressing and very important, but it seems to me we cannot live well without some kind of retrospect, and we may make our lives all the better by the light shed upon them by the mellow memories of the past. Doubtless, the past nursed very stern qualities, but I would fain hope and believe that the rudeness of the old times has passed into strength of will and strength of character, and that the energy, which is as great, I believe, and as continuous as ever, has now been transferred into the channels of peaceful industry and of public and domestic duty."

John Veitch, LL.D., Professor of Logic and Rhetoric in the Glasgow University, was born at Peebles in 1829. After attending the Grammar School, he, in 1845, entered the University of Edinburgh, where he completed the Arts curriculum, and distinguished himself as a student in logic and moral philosophy. Shortly after completing his course the University presented the young student with the honorary degree of M.A., and afterwards that of LL.D. In 1860 he was appointed to the Chair of Logic and Rhetoric in the University of St Andrews, and in 1864 he received the same appointment in the University of Glasgow.

Under the direction of the Stewart trustees, Professor Veitch wrote the memoir of Dugald Stewart for the new edition of that author's collected works, published in 1858. On the death of Sir W. Hamilton, in 1856, he assisted in editing the publication of the "Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic, by Sir W. Hamilton, Bart.," published in 1859-60, and in 1869 he published a "Memoir of Sir W. Hamilton." He is also the author of a translation of the "Works of Descartes, with an Introductory Essay," and of "Lucretius and the Atomic Theory." These works shew the elegant and judicious scholar—in the latter especially he handles philosophical questions with a calm sobriety and a poetical enthusiasm which are rarely found united in the same person. It has been said of the work that it is not in separate arguments or points, however able, that its great merit lies, but "it is in the fine spirit, the concern for truth and fairness, the poetic sympathy, and the grace of patient culture which it bears throughout." It is not merely on account of these works, showing ripe scholarship and refined poetic sympathy, that Professor Veitch is entitled to an important place among the poetic brotherhood; but in 1872 Mr Maclehose published his "Hillside Rhymes," followed, in 1875, by
x "The Tweed, and other Poems."

"The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border" was published in 1878. It is a work of the greatest research, and throws light on the history and the literature of our country. The subject is treated with intense feeling Vivid historical delineations, and interesting biographic sketches, together with as much of the poetry peculiar to the Borderland is presented so as to enable the reader to follow with deep interest its life of the past, and to feel the spirit of its song. Professor Veitch tells us that he has "sought mainly to trace the outline of Border history, to give in the order of development its salient characteristics, and to show how these, in connection with the scenery of the district have issued in its rich and stirring ballad and song." This he does in chapters on the semi-historic period (Arthur and the Arthurian Legends); the early history of the Lowlands, the War of Independence, Thomas the Rhymour and the early romantic school of poetry, the older poems descriptive of social manners, on the influence of the scenery, the poetry of the eighteenth century, and the modern period, including sketches and critical estimates of, and selections from, Leyden, Hogg, Scott, and recent poets. In a notice of "The Tweed, and other Poems," the *Quarterly Review* stated that he "combines two qualities seldom united in such measure—the reflectiveness, meditative depth, and dreamful interest for nature, which we identify with the name of Wordsworth, and the vivid sympathy for human character, especially as embodied in active and daring deed, which suggests the name of Sir Walter Scott." It is unnecessary to add anything to this high eulogium. He ever shows the thoughtful mind and those spontaneous felicities of language which distinguish the poet of natural power from the man of mere cultivation.

## OLD BORDER LIFE AND POETRY.

. . . . . .

Then let us lingering pause a moment brief
Upon the dim fast-fading lineaments
Of days of olden story,—catch the look
And soul of those who lived in these grey towers,
Who of a morning saw the sun and sky,
Trod the same haughs and hills, saw river gleam,
And felt the seasons' flow, through centuries
Now gone,—as we, heirs too unconscious all
Of their experience,—not thinking how
The past flows through the present, how the life
We live is tissue woven from the years
That were, by that dread power within the will.

Theirs was a life born of the heaven's pure air,
And nourished into strength by mountain breeze,
By sunshine and by storm ; theirs force of arm,
And theirs the courage of long-during breath,
Won from the broad hills they free-breasted trod :
A growth spontaneous as the rugged pine,
That, under open sky, unsheltered draws
Its spirit from the blast ; and they had hearts
That moved impulsive with the swelling wind,
Among the hills, or through the roaring wood,
Or when it tore and shook their banner stretched
For action bold and daring enterprize.

The sons of men who won them fair estates,
In troubled marge 'twixt English, Scottish rule,—
The trophies of the spear, or purchase free
Of bow and arrow,—won and held from foe
That ever pressed from southwards on their homes.
No marvel that they felt rude power to be
The highest law, and strength the last appeal,
And spurned the feudal claims of all the Kings
In Christenty ; themselves deemed rightful Kings,
But not by secondary parchment writ,
By force of arm and custom of the sword.

. . . . . .

As 'neath the open sky their life grew strong,
So from the breeze they snatched air melody,
That tuned their strength to beauty and to joy ;
Sweet sounds they knew of soft pathetic tone,
As simple airs of heaven, spontaneous piped
By pastoral reed,—a wail for absent love,
Low 'mid the broom at eve on Cowdenknowes,
Or deep pure passion's pleading tone in vain,
Beneath the birken 'Bush aboon Traquair :'
And sometimes into low voiced wail 'twould swell
As, born of nightly soughing of the burns,

Or plaintive midnight wind around lone tower,
The note told, o'er and o'er, in lingering strain
The dule of Flodden's dire disastrous day.
Yet prompt their spirits rose, when bugle horn,
Like rush of storm down trumpet-throated glen,
Pealed loud and long the thrilling call to war.

All this old life of centuries is gone,
And we regard it not: new men, new things
Are with us; blood and breed of olden knights
Are rare among us; their bright sun is set,
Their towers are roofless, bare; gaunt, grim walls given
To winds, dank weeds, and hooting owls by night.
We dread their rule no more, their powers of life
And death, of pit and vaulted donjon-keep;
And children play upon the gallows' mound,
And sit 'neath shadow of the tree of doom.

. . . . . .

'Tis well that o'er the present happy look
Of vale and stream, a shadow from the past
Is cast, as of a faded name to call
To mind old history. Oft where the stream
Bends round green knowe, beneath the alder boughs,
There stands the crumbling peel, deserted, lone,
Save for its brotherhood of ancient trees,
Few, straggling, wasted by long tides of storm,
Yet faithful still in their companionship
With relic of the past, the broken home,
Left by the careless years to sure decay.

Think, once in these old towers what feelings wrought—
Their bridal joy, and children's sunny smiles,
A mother's hopes and fears, a father's cares,
And all strong thrillings of this life have been,—
Home-welcome flashed to victor from old wars,
Dead burden borne from fatal feud o' night;
Ay such that 'tis a marvel this dull earth
Should lie so callous 'neath the memories,
Unless it be that surely in its breast
It keeps them latent for the final morn.

. . . . . .

Can we once marvel, that, with deeds like these,
The muse that broods amid the hills was stirred
To verse heroic, tender, human, true,—
And oft heart-fired by strains of old romance?
Unknown to fame she was, nor heeded phrase
Conventional that charmed a worldly crowd
That never felt the simple modes of life,
And never looked pure Nature in the face;
As Queen she ruled within the Border Land,
In Teviot's uplands wild; 'mid lonely glens

Where Ettrick creeps ; by Yarrow's pure green holms
That pleased and silent list the lively strain,
As loch-born waters leap from calm to sound,
And joyous flash by many a bonny knowe ;
Yet gathers sadness towards evening tide,
As gloamin' shadows o'er the Dowie Dens.

She spoke from simple heart to simple faith
And fervour, with a voice as of the soul
Of acts that thrilled the time ; a pure response
It was, no hue of personal colour blent,
Or trick of art, or ornament save what
Unconscious flashed upon the narrative,
Austere, of pictured deeds, yet marred it not ;
The shallow stream doth mingle with the scene
It shows its own poor pebbles ; nobler lake
In eyes of calm and depth profound has power
To mirror for us every feature fair
Of the o'ershadowing earth and sky it feels,
In purest picturing ; its sparkle clear
But lights, not breaks, the perfect imagery

. . . . .

## THE HERD'S WIFE.

In a lone Herd's house, far up i' the Hope,
By the hill with the winter cairn,
She paced the floor i' the peat-fire glow,
In her arms she clasped her bairn !

Out in the night the snow storm's might
Tore wild around the door ;
"Oh ! waes me for my ain gudeman,
Up on that weary moor !

"I canna bide that gruesome sough,
And swirl of blindin' drift ;
There's no a star in a' the sky,
Nor a glint o' moon i' the lift !

"Has the crook o' my lot then come sae soon
On our gleesome wedding-day ?
Wi' the ae bloom o' the heather braes
Is my blessing sped away ?

"O ! bonnie a' through was our year,
Frae Spring to the Lammas-tide ;
There was joy in the e'e blinks o' morn,
Was I wrang in wishin 'twad bide ?

"But little thocht I that the hay,
Deep ower the haugh and the lea,—

Our first crop he sae blithely mawed,—
Was the last we thegether wad see!

"Have I loved him ower muckle, O Lord,
Thocht mair o' his smile than o' Thine?
Oh! on earth I had nane but himsel'—
To be my sweet bairnie's and mine!"

She paced up and down, the bairn in her grip,
That knew not her sore unrest;
And aye about it her arms she clasped,
Pressed it, how close, to her breast!

High on the blast rose a piteous whine;
She thrilled as 'tween hope and fear,
'Twas the pleading wail of faithful Help,
But alone,—no Master there!

No warm hearth seeks the old dog to-night—
His face is set to the storm,—
He's come from where his master lies,—
He'll guide to the snow-numbed form!

One tender look has the wife for Help,
A tear-eyed glance for her child;
Out will she 'mid the fearsome night,
For him that lies on the wild.

With milk in vial, her sole resource,—
Laid in the warmth of her breast,—
She and Help 'gainst the 'wildering snow,
To her God she leaves the rest!

Fearless she faced the gruesome sough,
And swirl of blindin' drift,
There was no a star in a' the sky,
Or a glint o' moon i' the lift!

Bareheaded slept he 'neath the mound,
Where the wreath was o'er him laid,
There in the folds of the winding snow,
Help found him wrapt in his plaid!

Oh! how she clasped him there, and poured
Life-warmth through the chilled frame,
Heaven tender looked on her wifely love,
He breathed and blessed her name!

## ROBERT GRANT

WAS born in Peterhead in 1818. On leaving school, at the age of twelve, "Bob," as he was and is still called, was apprenticed to a "merchant tailor," a trade he still continues to follow. While still a young man he went to America, and having an early-formed literary bent, he was for several years connected with the newspaper press. On returning home he started and edited one or more newspapers in Aberdeen. Mr Grant performed his editorial duties with marked ability, and he has contributed political leaders, reviews and tales for many years to local and other papers. He has been known as a versifier since his boyhood. Not a few of his productions are fine imitations of the old ballad. We regret that our space will only admit of one specimen. He never preserves his poems, and many of his fugitive pieces can only be had from admiring friends. Mr Grant has spent much of his leisure moments in the study of literature, science, and art, and also in the open book of Nature. In Mr Scott Skinner's "Miller of Hirn" collection we find a number of his pieces, set to music by Mr Skinner, including his well-known ballad "By the Sea."

### JOHNNIE SMITH, A FALLA FINE.

"Johnnie Smith, my falla fine,
Can ye shee this horse o' mine?"
Weel I wat, an that I can,
Just as weel as ony man."

"Pit a bittie on a tae,
Gars a horse spur a brae;
Pit a bittie on a heel,
Gars a horsie trot richt weel.

"Gin ye're for the Hielan' road
Ye maun hae ye're beast weel sho'd;
An' I'm the man can dee it weel,
Wi' best o' iron an' o' steel.

"Wha like me can drive a nail,
Dress a beast, an' busk his tail?
Nane in a' the kintra roon'
Like Johnnie Smith o' Turra toon.

"The road is far I hae to ride,
Frae Turra toon to Gelder side;
But gin ye're canny wi' my meer,
I sall roose ye far an' near."

"Ye may roose me as ye like,
To Hielan' laird or tinkler tyke;
But five fyte shillings is my fee;
Gin it please ye we will gree?"

"Gree my man! 'tween you an' me
There sall never be a plea;
Wha wad grudge to pay a croon
To Johnnie Smith o' Turra toon."

Johnnie shod my meer richt weel,
Tipp'd ilk shee wi' bits o' steel;
An', e're the sun gaed doon that nicht,
I saw Balmoral's towers in sicht.

Hurrah! the smith o' Turra toon,
Tho' he's a gey camstairie loon,
There's nane like him can drive a nail,
Pare a hoof, or busk a tail.

## JAMES A. SIDEY, M.D.

DR SIDEY, in the midst of a laborious life as a city medical gentleman of high repute in his profession, has found leisure moments to cultivate his natural poetic talent. He has written much that is far above the average of what is called "fugitive poetry," although we have reason to believe that he himself attaches very little value on anything he has produced. He is esteemed by a wide circle not only for his talents and learning, but for his genial disposition and personal worth.

Dr Sidey is a native of Edinburgh. He was educated first at the Circus Place School and the High School, and passed M.D. at the University in 1846. He has been in medical practice in the Scottish metropolis since then, except during two years when he was in England as an assistant.

In 1869 Dr Sidey issued for private circulation a collection of songs and ballads, entitled "Mistura Curiosa, by F. Crucelli, with Illustrations by Charles Doyle and John Smart." The volume was got up in a most unique and elegant manner. The *Scotsman* at the time hailed it as "a curious book, with a curious name, and a more curious title-page; and it is certainly curious that a book so attractive in every way should not have been launched into life with the usual flourish of trumpets, but, like a bastard bairn, been allowed to claim no share in the legitimate perquisites of printed books—publication and review. However, we mean to say a single word about it; and hope that, as illegitimate children by the Scottish law acquire the rights of lawful children by subsequent marriage, so a second edition of the 'curious mixture' may be forthcoming to invest it with all the rights and privileges of a regularly published book. The work consists of a collection of miscellaneous songs and ballads, accompanied by a rich commentary of tiny illustrations, the product of a playful, graceful, and humorous fancy. One of the greatest misfortunes of the present age is that there is so much reading and so little singing—so much cramming of the brain with knowledge, so little flapping of the wings of vital enjoyment in song. It is strange, indeed, to consider how little the world, that ever runs after pleasure, knows how to cultivate the soil from which the best pleasures grow. The amount of innocent and ennobling amusement to be got from music exceeds that from other arts as a ripe peach excels a crab apple; and the best kind of music at once for pleasure and for culture is national

music. Where music is seriously cultivated in Scotland, a Scotch song is often the last thing thought of, and the accomplishment apparently sought for is rather an apt dexterity of the throat than a rich outcome of the soul. Young ladies are taught to sing for the purpose of showing how high they can stretch their pipes, as tumblers and posture-makers stretch their limbs, not for beauty, but for wonderment; and what they sing is Italian or German pieces, calculated to bathe the ear in luxury, not national Scotch songs, strong to stir the heart, to purify the sentiment, and to season everyday life with that best of all poetry which grows spontaneously out of national social relations, as heather on the brae or hyacinths in the wood."

In 1877 Dr Sidey brought out another handsome volume, with 150 pen and ink sketches, entitled "Alter Ejusdem: Being another Instalment of 'Lilts and Lyrics,' by the author of 'Mistura Curiosa.'" In the preface we are told that the contents were composed during hours which would otherwise have been spent in doing nothing. The author had not, in turning poet, wandered from the beaten track of his profession, for, with few exceptions, the "Lilts and Lyrics" had been written "in order to relieve the tedium of many a night-journey, as, weary with my day's work and unable to read or sleep, I lay in the dimly-lighted railway carriage, and listened half-dreamily to the sound of the wheels, which generally suggested to me first the music and then the words." His first song was "Wee Nannie," and it was written because a friend refused to give him the words of a song of a similar nature which he had sung at a supper party. We have reason to believe that our poet considers that the merits of his productions depend on the music—for to him music is not a mere combination of notes, but music *says* words to him, and he only *writes* these words down. Previous to 1869 he used to send pieces to various magazines

and newspapers, but as he never thought of keeping copies, he forgot about them as soon as they were written. Indeed, he only put pen to paper to amuse himself; and, had it not been the urgent wish of his artist friends to illustrate the book, none of his pieces would have seen the light of day. Regarding the illustrative sketches, including beautifully-executed landscapes, Scotch characters, initial letters, comic tail-pieces, groups, &c., it is sufficient to say that they are the productions of Messrs W. D. M'Kay, J. Oswald Stewart, C. A. Doyle, George Hay, Hugh Cameron, R. Herdman, Walter Reid, and many other well-known names.

Dr Sidey, recognising the truth of Douglas Jerrold's words, "Blessed be the hand that prepares a pleasure for a child," and assuming that sentence for his motto, gave permission to Messrs Waterston, Sons, & Co. to publish several of his nursery rhymes, enriched with very superior coloured illustration, as children's picture-books. These include "The Three Little Naughty Boys," "The Bears and the Bees," "Three Little Pigs," &c., and they have attained a wide popularity. In "Bairnies' Sangs" Dr Sidey will not suffer by comparison with the best of our poets of the nursery. James Ballantyne or Matthias Barr have not written anything to excel the tenderness, simplicity, and beauty of his verse-pictures of children's joys, while all his domestic scenes are happy and touchingly natural.

We hope to hear soon of Dr Sidey consenting to allow his delightful songs to appear in a form within the reach of all classes. "The Burnie," "The Auld Fail Dyke," and others, are fine pictures. Indeed, the first-mentioned song is one of the sweetest effusions of the modern Scottish Muse. They are brimful of our native spirit, and show true poetical genius. His comic songs are pervaded by humour

of the most catching description—quaint wit, and rare felicity of expression delicately combined.

## THE BURNIE THAT WINS TO THE SEA.

Up near the scaur whaur the hoodiecraw bides,
  Up near the foot o' the keelie-craig hie,
Deep i' the hidie heugh, riv'd frae its sides,
  Rises the burnie that wins to the sea.
    Out o' the fozy fog,
    Out o' the lairy bog,
  Cauld as it seips frae the wauchie well-e'e,
    Rinnin' in water draps,
    Toddlin' in spedlin' staps,
  Gullers the burnie that wins to the sea.

Doun thro' the slaps o' the staney head-dykes
  A' thro' the muir wi' nae bield nor lown lee,
Restin' its weary feet, whiles in the sykes,
  Hirples the burnie that wins to the sea.
    Roun' by the mossy knowe,
    Doun thro' the flossy flowe,
  Whaur lang-craiget herons and wheeplin' whaups flee,
    Doun whaur the moorcock churrs,
    Ower the bit linns wi' jurrs,
  Brattles the burnie that wins to the sea.

Thro' ilka link as it winds doun the rocky glens,
  Mony's the mile agait it gangs aglee ;
Sair tho' it's trauchelt wi' seggs in the rashy bends,
  Hirsels the burnie that wins to the sea.
    Close by the cosie stells,
    Doun thro' the hazely dells,
  Whaur grow the arne, the aik, an' birk tree ;
    Syne neth the briars an' broom,
    Whaur the witch thummles bloom,
  Laich louts the burnie that wins to the sea.

A' doun the cleughs, an' doun thro' the breckenshaws,
  Whaur haw-buss an' hainberries grow bonnilie ;
Whaur loup the trouties, whare laich jouch the water-craws,
  Wimples the burnie that wins to the sea.
    Syne wi' a racer's speed,
    Doun thro' the gurlin' lede,
  Doun thro' the mill-cloose aye tryin' to slee ;
    Syne wi' the jeggin' wheel,
    Roun' in a rummlin' reel,
  Thrummles the burnie that wins to the sea.

Doun by cot-houses, thro' a' the big farm toons,
  Leavin' the ana-fields, fallow an' lea,
Changin' its liltin' to lang weary wailin' croons,
  Wauchles the burnie that wins to the sea.

Aince it was young and yauld,
Noo it is doul'd an' auld,
Trailin' sae traiket-like doun by the ree,
Till wi' lang fetchin' breath,
Thro' the saut faem to death,
Warstles the burnie that's won to the sea.

## THE GATHERERS.

Come now, my bairnies fast,
For the hairst is ower at last,
The leadin' is a' dune, an' the stackyaird's fu';
The rakin's ower forbye,
Sae we'll a' gang out an' try,
An' see what we can "gather" for our auld hame now.

Sae come, my bairnie's a',
The grit as weel's the sma',
For ilka "pickle" helps to mak' the neive-fu' fu';
And syne when yin by yin
Ower the "knickle" ye can win,
We'll sune mak' up the "singles" for our auld hame now.

Now yer singles I maun "tie"
An' "plet" them a' "three ply,"
An' put them into "bunches" for an oxter fu';
But a' the while I plet,
Ye maun gather till ye get,
Some "heads" to eek my singles for our auld hame now.

An' when they're won an' dry,
On the hauks where they maun lie,
We'll beetle on the knowehead mony a lippie fu';
Syne we'll cave the "brok" awa',
An' the "caff" the wind will blaw,
An' we'll carry hame what's dighted to our auld hame now.

Syne we'll grund it at the mill,
An' I'm sure we a' can fill
The meal pock, or it maybes a big bowster fu';
An' gin that folk could stap
The miller's mouter-cap,
A hantle mair then wad we hae for our auld hame now.

Syne at last an' lang afore
Our gudeman comes to the door
We'll mak' upon the bawbrek mony a girdle fu';
An' the king we wadna ca'
Our cousin—no ava,
When we feast on new-bak't bannocks in our auld hame now.

## OH HOW I'VE LONGED FOR THEE.

Oh how I've thought of thee, longed for thee, dearest,
Pined to be near thee, beside thee once more :
Oh how I've wearied, thine eye to see, dearest,
Beaming with joy as in bright days of yore,
When by the mountain rills,
When o'er the heathery hills,
Roaming, we wandered, when no one was nigh,
When in the wildwood oft
(Dream of my childhood oft)
Love told a tale, in thy dark glancing eye.

Oh how I've longed for thee, waiting and weary,
Yearned from the depths of my sad breaking heart,
Oh how I've pined for thee, life has been dreary,
Sad, sad and lonely since e'er we did part.
Oh to be near thee now,
Kindly to cheer thee now,
Lest aught of danger to thee should come nigh,
Happy defending thee,
Guarding and tending thee,
Loving I'd live for thee, loving I'd die.

## OH, WHO IS THIS BAIRNIE?

Oh, who is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
Oh, I wonder whose bairnie this bairnie can be ;
This bonnie wee mousie,
This wee cheetie pussie ;—
Oh, its my ain wee bairnie that's kissing at me.

Oh, who is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
Oh, I wonder whose bairnie this bairnie can be ;
Wi' cheeks like the cherry,
An' lips like the berry ;—
Oh, its my ain wee bairnie that's kissing at me.

Oh, who is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
Oh, I wonder whose bairnie this bairnie can be ;
Wi' bonnie wee bosey,
Sae warm an' sae cosey ;—
Oh, its my ain wee bairnie that's kissing at me.

Oh, who is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
Oh, I wonder whose bairnie this bairnie can be ;
Wi' bonnie brow brenty,
An' wee mouthy dainty ;
Oh, it's my ain wee bairnie that's kissing at me.

Oh, who is this bairnie that sits on my knee?
Oh, I wonder whose bairnie this bairnie can be ;
This bonnie wee lambie,
Sae fond o' its mammie ;—
Oh, it's just my ain bairnie that's fond, fond o' me.

## THE AULD FAIL DYKE.

The auld fail dyke that's biggit on
The bare face o' the brae,
Grown green wi' age when ither dykes
Wi' crottle are grown grey.
In winter's bitter stormy blasts,
In winter's nippin' cauld,
Aye gie's its lowan side to the wee
Bit lammies o' the fauld.

The wimplin' burn that rowin' rins
And glints sae bonnily
In arny glen, as it gangs by
Gie's life tae ilka tree.
The ferny bank, the mossy stane,
And whiles a buss o' whin,
Drink deep the jaups the burnie gies
In lipperin' ower the linn.

The silvery saugh, though auld and gell'd,
Sends oot a flourish green,
And cosie shiel's the cushie doo
That croodles late at e'en.
The wee bit chirmin' birdies tae
A bield fin' in the wuds,
Afore the lift is cussin ower
Wi' mirk and rain-fraucht cluds.

E'en sae though poortith cauld be yours,
Frae nature tak' the lead,
And gie to freens and fremit-folk
A helpin' hand in need.
For a' your lear and learnin' ne'er
Can teach ye how to ken
How far intil the waefu' heart
A kindly word gangs ben.

## SCOTLAND'S NAMELESS GLENS.

My auld heart kens that Scotland's glens
Are dearer far to me
Than beauties fair, or riches rare,
In lands beyond the sea;
And proudly swells with love that tells
Of charms a Scotsman kens,
Sae blooming fair, beyond compare,
In Scotland's nameless glens.

Amang the hills, the wandering rills
Come down frae scaury fells,
Where far and wide, on every side,
Grow heath and heather bells.

Oh, my heart warms to feel the charms
Nane but a Scotsman kens,
Of beauties fair, beyond compare,
In Scotland's nameless glens.

For bonnie bloom, with sweet perfume,
The wild flowers on the braes ;
While wee bit birds, with loving words,
Sing saft their songs of praise.
Oh, my heart swells with love that tells
Of charms a Scotsman kens
The riches rare beyond compare,
In Scotland's nameless glens.

Oh, Scotland's glens, my leal heart kens
Where'er I chance to roam,
That rock and tree, each tells to me
Of loved ones left at home.
And ever warms to feel the charms
Nane but a Scotsman kens,
Of beauties fair, and riches rare,
In Scotland's nameless glens.

## DO ANGELS BID THEM COME.

Oh ! tell me why do little flowers,
In beauteous colours bloom ;
Oh ! tell me why are little flowers,
So rich in sweet perfume.
Why tiny birds with songs of praise,
And bees with busy hum,
Linger within our garden fair ;
Do angels bid them come ?

Oh ! tell me why do gentle rains,
On lovely flowers alight ;
Why dewdrops in the morning gleam,
Like diamonds sparkling bright ;
And when the ground is white with snow,
Why Robin for his crumb,
So trusting at the window waits ;
Do angels bid them come ?

Ah ! well I know our sister dear,
With kind and watchful eye,
Looks down on us, who loved her well
From heaven beyond the sky,
And sends as emblems of her love,
To all she left at home,
Those lovely tokens from above,
Yes, angels bid them come.

## OUR AIN HILLSIDE.

Nae grief can dim the e'e,
  Nae pang can chill the heart,
Like the sorrow near to me,
  That tells me I maun part
Frae the flowers that sweetly blaw,
  And down the burnies hide,
As croonin' saft they fa'
  On our ain hillside.

Nae flower sae fair can bloom,
  Or be sae dear to me,
As the heather bell and broom,
  Or the gowan on the lea.
Nae birdie sweeter sings,
  In a' this warld wide,
Than the lintie 'mang the whins
  On our ain hillside.

Oh ! I'll ne'er forget our glen
  Tho' I am far awa' ;
For ilka thing I ken
  Lives there wi' love for a'.
E'en the willow grey its lane,
  Or gall-bush by its side,
Gies a lown to some auld stane
  On our ain hillside.

The sun is sinking fast,
  Yet fain wad langer stay,
That its bonniest glints and last
  Micht linger on our brae.
Oh ! the sicht is a' to me,
  But mair nor I can bide,
Sin' I maun o'er the sea
  Frae our ain hillside.

My e'en are growing dim,
  My heart is staunin' still,
My tear-draps mak' me glim,
  I canna see the hill.
Oh ! let me kneel and pray,
  Whate'er in years betide ;
That meet again we may
  On our ain hillside.

## THOMAS NEWBIGGING, C.E.,

IS another Scottish poet who, although he has lived many years "across the border," has not forgotten his "guid auld mither tongue." In a handsome volume of "Poems and Songs," published during 1881, and in another volume (1857), which were very favourably received, we find examples of the simplicity and strength of the old ballads; while silent moors, crooning burns, green hill-sides, and sunny knolls are pictured in felicitous verse. His life has been a busy one, and he has attained his present position as an engineer of high repute in spite of early difficulties.

Mr Newbigging was born in Glasgow, in 1833. He received his early education, first at the Bridgeton Public School, and afterwards at the Guthen School, Gatehouse-of-Fleet, Kirkcudbrightshire, where he was the schoolfellow and companion of the younger Faeds—Susan, whose paintings are well-known, and George, now deceased, who, as an artist, promised to rival his distinguished brothers. Will Nicholson, the Galloway poet, and author of the "Brownie of Blednock," was also a frequent visitor at the house of his parents while the family lived in that district. He removed to Lancashire in his eleventh year, and at that age commenced to work in a cotton factory, and afterwards served as a mechanic at Bury. When twenty-four years of age he took to gas engineering, in which profession he has attained to considerable eminence. Mr Newbigging is author of the "Gas Manager's Handbook," and is joint author and editor of "King's Treatise on Gas," works to be found in the library of every gas engineer both at home and abroad, and showing much practical and scientific knowledge. He also wrote the "History of the Forest of Rossendale"

(1868), a large and interesting district in East Lancashire. This work is now one of the scarcest and most highly valued of local histories. Our poet is a Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, and of several learned societies. In 1870 he went out to Brazil as an engineer, where he resided for five years, and then returned to Manchester, where he commenced business as a civil and consulting gas engineer, and at present has a large and successful practice.

His poetic impulses were first awakened by association with the beautiful scenery of the Galloway Hills and the Vale of Fleet. Indeed, a passionate love of Nature seems to colour all he writes. These occasionally breathe noble thoughts and lofty diction, while his domestic scenes and character sketches are full of gentle feeling, with a vein of quiet, yet rich humour.

### SOBER, SOUTER WATTIE, O!

O' a' the souters 'neath the sun,
Frae Selkirk to Calcutta, O;
There's ne'er a ane can drive a pin
Wi' sober, souter Wattie, O.
His hammer and his brattie, O
His awls and wee paste pattie, O;
The steevest hand in a' the land
Is that o' sober Wattie, O.

His hame—O what a cheery hame!
A clean, wee, cozie cottie, O,
Cauld carking care gets never there,
For the merry sang o' Wattie, O,
And his cantie couthie Mattie, O,
And his wee bit toddlin tottie, O;
The best o' books, the kindest looks,
A' light the hame o' Wattie, O.

There's ne'er a heart but lowes beneath
His intellectual chattie, O;
He charms the ear, he draws the tear,
For pathos dwells in Wattie, O.
And O! he's blithe and happy, O,
And aye he shuns the drappie, O,
A tumbler full o' Adam's yill
The beverage o' Wattie, O.

He loves his country and his kin'—
A noble-hearted Scot he, O;
A helping han' to raise the fa'n,
Was ne'er denied by Wattie, O.
And aye he's blithe and happy, O,
Wi' his cantie, couthie Mattie, O,
The steevest hand in a' the land
Is that o' sober Wattie, O.

## THE DEWDROP AND THE MOONBEAM.

O, cozie cow'red the lintie
Within its whinny bield;
Its wee bit weary eyelid
In balmy sleep was sealed.
And lonely hung the harebell,
Forsaken by the bee,
When a Moonbeam fell to wooing
O' a Dewdrop on the lea.

O, pawkie was the Moonbeam,
He kenn'd the gait to woo;
And maidenly and artless
Was the bonnie drop o' Dew.
And aye he danced around her,
In the stillness o' the night;
And praised her silken forehead,
And her cheek sae pearly bright.

Her sappy mou' he tasted;
He gazed into her ee;
And he spak o' a' the beauty
O' his ain fair home on hie.
The Dewdrop was enchanted
Wi' the glowing tale o' love;
And, smiling, soon consented
To a happy home above.

Now from the east comes gleaming
The morning's sunny ray;
And fragrant flowers awaking,
Hail the advent o' day:
A myriad throats, fu' blithely,
To music's strains are given;
But the Dewdrop and the Moonbeam
Are on their way to heaven!

## THE MOUNTAIN CHILD.

She dwells apart, the mountain child,
Free as the wind that sweeps the plain;
Her no false hopes have e'er beguiled,
To check her song, or sting with pain.

For oft the maiden carols sweet,
With heart that feels the joys she sings;
Full oft the wild and lone retreat,
To her glad voice melodious rings.

The wild flowers bloom around her cot,
She views them and admires the while;
She has no favoured garden plot,
But the whole boundless breadth of soil.
The trusty thistle's noble form
Nods as she trips him lightly by,
She greets him with a smile as warm
As beams from yonder sunny sky.

The mavis, bird of various song,
Pours forth his love notes rich and clear;
The skylark, sweetest of the throng,
Arrests her young enraptured ear.
The blackbird, from his sylvan shade,
Gives to the breeze his mellow note,
And, though he be a cautious blade,
He dares to warble near her cot.

Thus lives the gentle mountain maid,
From vain alluring pleasures free;
In virtue's charming robes arrayed,
A happy, happy maid is she.
Oh! may she never feel the woes
That spring from earth's deceitful joys;
But in her innocence repose
Beneath her own loved native skies.

## AULD CARE.

Gae wa' wi' your sour-looking visage frae me,
Ye queer crabbit carle, auld Care, haud awa';
Wi' your thin runkled chafts, and your dour-looking ee,
And your long bony arms, and your fingers sae sma'.

The streamlet sings sweet as it runs down the glen,
The glad birds they warble on thorn-bush and tree,
The branches they dance to the music they len',
The wild flow'ret nods to the hum o' the bee.

Why should we be dreary when nature is cherry?
Why dauner through life ever gloomy and wae?
Awa' wi' dull dreamin', come, gladness, come streamin',
And scatter night's gloom wi' the brightest o' day.

## THE CARLE HE LAP ACROSS THE BURN.

The carle he lap across the burn,
Awa' the bonnie lassie ran;
And aye she leuch, but wouldna turn,
And sair provoked the fat auld man.

"Come here," he cried, "my bonnie hen,
Come back, and list to what I say;
I hae a but, I own a ben,
And sheep and kye on mony a brae."

"And fat the beasts, and rich the lan',
And bienly plenished is yon ha'."
"Gae hame and woo them, daft auld man!"
The lassie cried, and ran awa'.

O sairly flate the carle syne,
And aften stamped he on the grun';
"My richest acres I would tine,
To gar the limmer rue her fun."

"The souple jaud, to ca' me auld,
And scarce a grey hair i' my beard!
Ay, faith, she'll rue, ere she be cauld,
She didna tak the siller laird."

Wi' temper brittle as a slate,
And face that ony calf might spane,
He had to gang a mile agate,
For he couldna loup the burn again!

## CHARLES BALFOUR,

REFERRED to at page 170 of second series, as coming of a poetic family, was born in 1819, at Panmure, near Carnoustie. At the village school he received a very limited education, and was early engaged as "a farmer's boy." However, in after years he made up for this, and took a great delight in reading—never, as he tells us, being without Burns' poems, or some other volume, in his pocket for perusal in his spare moments. Not liking farm work, he was apprenticed to a brewer, but as the master drank as well as brewed, the business came to an end before the apprenticeship, and our poet got employment in a factory in Dundee, where he was soon appointed foreman. His health failing him, he en-

listed in the Cameron Highlanders, commanded by Colonel Lauderdale Maule, brother of the late Fox Maule, Earl of Dalhousie. He had become a total abstainer, and his good conduct and habits soon earned his promotion. He was appointed "orderly" to the General Commanding, and having only about half a day's duty in the two days, he found abundant time for self improvement, which he eagerly availed himself of. Having a knowledge of baking and brewing, he was set over the officers' mess department, and soon saved money sufficient to purchase his discharge—the Colonel reluctantly parting with him, and giving him a warm letter of commendation to his noble brother at Brechin Castle. Receiving an appointment in the railway service as parcel deliverer in Dundee, he was rapidly promoted to good's guard, and then passenger guard. In 1852, when the train was thrown over the lofty bridge which crosses Invergowrie Quarry, he went down with it, sustaining such fearful injuries that for months he lay in Dundee Infirmary, life trembling in the balance. Being no longer fitted for the duties of a guard he was appointed stationmaster at Glencarse, near Perth, where he still remains, greatly respected for his intelligence and kindly manners.

Although the love of song seemed inherent in him, Mr Balfour only began to compose when in the army, and for forty years he has been an occasional contributor to the press—numbers of his poetic sketches of Scottish life and character finding their way into the American and other papers—"Habbie Simpson and his Wife," "The Minister Praying for the Cuddy," "The Dry Sermon," &c., having been long widely and favourably known. The late Dean Ramsay for many years corresponded with Mr Balfour, and greatly admired his fine humour. He presents us with admirable portraits of actual existence, rather than transports us into imaginary worlds, while tender and pathetic touches of Nature and good feel-

ing, pervade his songs. We can now only give a brief outline of one character, and should remark that some years ago, we regret to learn, when the Glencarse Station was burned down during the night, he lost all his papers, and almost all record of his early work was thus destroyed.

HABBIE SIMPSON; OR AN AULD FRIEND WI' A NEW FACE.

Habbie Simpson and his wife
They lived a weirdless, drucken life;
For on a' occasions, sad or cheerie,
Baith managed to get unco beerie.
A'e mornin' after a carouse
Hab waukened Janet frae a snoose,
Sayin', "Jenny, lass, I'm dredfu' ill;
Cud ye no get me half a gill?"
"Deed, Hab, ye ken as weel as me,
There's no atween's a broon bawbee;
An' as for gettin't upon tick,
That's useless; nane will gie's a lick;
So just lie still, my daintie man,
An' thole awa' as weel's ye can."
Quo' Hab, "ye're no that ill at plannin';
Come clear yer head o' that bit flannen,
An' let me hear what you propose.'
"A weel," quo Janet, "here it goes,
I'll to the Laird o' Johnston gang;
He kens ye weel; he's kent ye lang.
I'll say ye're deid, an' maybe he
Will gi'e me something. What think ye?"
"First-rate," quo' Habbie, "aff ye gang,
An' see ye dinna bide ower lang."
Soon Janet reaches Johnston Place,
Wi' solemn step an' woeful face;
Rings, is admitted, meets the lady,
Who says, "Oh, Janet, here already.
Hoo's a' at hame? Is Habbie weel?"
"Poor Habbie's deid, atweel! atweel!"
"Poor Habbie deid, preserve me, Janet;
Just step inbye this way a minute.
Ye hadna been prepared for that."
"Prepared! I'm shure, no weel I wat;
There's no as muckle in the hoose
Wud feed a sparrow or a moose."
"Dear me! dear me! but lat me see,
Ye'll want some sugar an' some tea,
Some biscuits an' some bread and cheese"—
"An' a wee drap spirits, if you please."
"Weel, spirits ye might do withoot it;
But sit ye doon; I'll see aboot it."

The lady very soon came back
Wi' a basket full as it could pack
Of various good things frae the city,
Likewise a little aquavitæ.
Soon Janet she leaves Johnston Place,
Wi' solemn step, but cheerful face ;
She reaches hame, and in a blink
The table's spread wi' meat an' drink ;
And baith, without a blessin' asket,
Attack the contents o' the basket.
At last, quo' Hab, "the bottle's dry,
Cud ye no get a fresh supply?"
"Na, na," quo' Janet, "time aboot ;
Its I'll dee noo, an' ye'll turn oot,
Just try and do as weel as me,
An' then we'll ha'e anither spree."
Oot Habbie goes in desperation,
Without a'e plan of observation.
He scratched his head doon throo his bonnet,
Ashamed to be outdone by Janet ;
An' just as he the hill was muntin'
He met the laird straight frae the huntin',
"Guid e'enin' Hab ; I'm glad to see ye ;
But, guidsake, what's the matter wi' ye?
You look as dull an' hing your head,
As if your wife were lyin' dead."
"Aye, laird, that's it ; puir Janet's gane,
An' I'm left in the warld alane ;
An' hoo to get her i' the yird
I dinna ken, upon my wird."
"Well, Hab, that's sad ; but there's a croon,
An' in the mornin' I'll come doon,
And see if I can mak' ye richt,"—
"I thank ye, sir," quo' Hab, "guid nicht."
Home Habbie goes, an' cries to Janet,
"Look here, gudewife—ne'er mind your bonnet ;
We ha'e nae time to fyke an' scutter ;
Look sharp, auldwife, an' fraught the cutter."
The Laird o' Johnston he gaed hame,
And in the parlour meets his dame,
And says, "Ye'll be surprised to hear
Your auld maid Janet's dead, my dear."
'Ha, Laird, yer wrang ; its Hab that's gane ;
Janet was here in grievous mane."
'No, no, my dear, it must be Janet ;
I spak to Hab this very minute ;
An', oh, he was so casten doon,
I pitied him, an' gae'm a croon.
But now I'll bet that Hab and she
Are baith as live as you or me.
I scarcely can refrain from lauchin' ;
Come get your things, we'll to the clachin."
Hab an' his wife they sat fu' jolly,

Afar off care and melancholy ;
But turning round as he was drinkin',
Something in Habbie's e'e cam blinkin',
" I say, gudewife, just look out there ;
Noo isna' that a wiselike pair."
" As shure as I'm a livin' woman,
It's baith the Laird an' Lady comin'.
What's to be done ? Od, let me see ;
Od, Hab, I doot we baith maun dee."
" Ah, weel," quo' Hab, " mind ye said it,"
And in an instant baith were beddit.
The Laird o' Johnston he cam in,
Wi' solemn step an' little din ;
He gazed upon the silent bed,
And quietly to his lady said,
" I see my dear we've baith been richt ;
But, oh, this is a solemn sicht.
A solemn sicht ; a man an' wife,
And baith at once bereft of life.
But I would give a croon to know
Who first did quit this scene of woe."
Up Habbie springs, as brisk's a miller,
Crying, " Laird, it was me ; hand here the siller."

## JAMES HEDDERWICK, LL.D.,

THE well-known journalist, was born in Glasgow in 1814. He is highly esteemed both as a literary man by the *literati*, and also by the masses for his strong good sense. His father, who was latterly Queen's printer in the city, had James early put to work at "the case." His tastes, however, being more literary than mechanical, led to his being removed in his sixteenth year to the University of London, where he distinguished himself. He became sub-editor of the *Scotsman* by the time he was twenty-three. In 1842 he returned to Glasgow, and started the *Citizen*—a newspaper which soon held an influential and leading position, and is still represented in the *Weekly Citizen*, a journal exceedingly

popular as providing an excellent condensation of the news of the week, together with selections from magazines and new books. Here, also, the fine taste and culture of Mr Hedderwick has for years fostered and encouraged many of our bards, and the first-fruits of several of our young and struggling novelists, now well known to fame, have appeared in its literary columns. For a short time he conducted a weekly periodical entitled *Hedderwick's Miscellany*, and in 1864 he established the *Evening Citizen*, one of the first Scottish halfpenny daily newspapers, and which now occupies a high position amongst the leading Scottish journals. Some years ago the Glasgow University, recognising his great and varied literary attainments, conferred on him the degree of LL.D.

In the midst of a busy life, Dr Hedderwick has found little time to spare for the fascinating labours of poetical composition. Yet he has employed it to good purpose, and the result proves that the poetry of those who labour among their fellows and share their common troubles, and are likely to be more intimate with the various phases of human nature, is on that account more likely to appeal to the heart than the productions of those who live apart, and look upon humanity only with the eye of an artist. In 1844 Dr Hedderwick printed a small volume of his verses, several of which had previously appeared in the *Scotsman* and *Chambers's Journal*, and in 1859 produced his "Lays of Middle Age, and other Poems." This work established the name he had previously earned as a poet of chaste taste and melodious beauty. During the present year Mr Maclehose published a volume by the veteran journalist, entitled "The Villa by the Sea, and other Poems," which amply sustained his reputation. In the leading poem he achieves a remarkable success in psychological portraiture, being a deep and searching study by a man to whom phases of human

character are familiar, and who is accustomed to probe the spring of human action. It is the experience of a kinless old man, who, by the labour of his younger years, has secured a competency for himself, and is able to pass his old age in ease and comfort. Unfortunately, in his retirement, he does not find that contentment of spirit which he had hoped to find in his seclusion—*ennui* instead is the constant companion of the solitary old man. The landscape seen every day is no longer beautiful in his eyes:

Love of nature is a duty,
And I fain would love it more,
But I weary of the beauty
I have seen for weeks before.

Lofty are the hills and regal,
Still they are the hills of old,
And like any other seagull
Is the seagull I behold.

Oh, that ship so slowly sailing
That the landscape stiller seems!
Oh, that brook so softly wailing
That the silence deeper dreams!

From the leaves a linnet's treble
On my ear a moment breaks;
In the sea I cast a pebble
And I mark the rings it makes.

Sea and sky serenely plighted,
All the glory of the moon,
I might view with eyes delighted
Were this listless heart in tune.

. . . . . .

Fain but foolish moralising!
On the outer edge of thought
Lies a darkness agonising,
Into shapes of madness wrought.

Who the unseen may discover?
Who dare wring its secret out?
Must my soul for ever hover
In a seething sea of doubt.

All my upward-wing'd sensations
Bounded by a steel-cold sky!
All my god-like aspirations
Breaking to a helpless cry!

What a mock this puny reaching,
Where the stars like pulses beat;
Turn I to the dearer teaching
Of the daisies at my feet.

The minor pieces are chastely wrought, and abound in melodious cadences. They give evidence of the scholar and the practised pen, as well as of the artist's patience and taste, and carefulness in the setting of poetic conceptions.

### MIDDLE AGE.

Fair time of calm resolve—of sober thought!
Quiet half-way hostelry on life's long road,
In which to rest and re-adjust our load!
High table-land to which we have been brought
By stumbling steps of ill-directed toil!
Season when not to achieve is to despair!
Last field for us of a full fruitful soil!
Only spring-tide our freighted aims to bear
Onward to all our yearning dreams have sought!

How art thou changed! Once to our youthful eyes
Thin silvering locks and thought's imprinted lines
Of sloping age gave weird and wintry signs;
But now these trophies ours, we recognise
Only a voice faint-rippling to its shore,
And a weak tottering step as marks of eld,
None are so far but some are on before;
Thus still at distance is the goal beheld,
And to improve the way is truly wise.

Farewell, ye blossomed hedges! and the deep
Thick green of summer on the matted bough!
The languid autumn mellows round us now;
Yet fancy may its vernal beauties keep,
Like holly leaves for a December wreath,
To take this gift of life with trusting hands,
And star with heavenly hopes the night of death,
Is all that poor humanity demands
To lull its meaner fears in easy sleep.

### THE EMIGRANTS.

The daylight was dying, the twilight was dreary,
And eerie the face of the fast-falling night,
But closing the shutters, we made ourselves cheery
With gas-light and firelight, and young faces bright.

When, hark! came a chorus of wailing and anguish!
We ran to the door and look'd out through the dark,
Till gazing, at length we began to distinguish
The slow-moving masts of an ocean-bound bark.

Alas 'twas the emigrants leaving the river,
Their homes in the city, their haunts in the dell;
From kindred and friends they had parted for ever,
But their voices still blended in cries of farewell.

We saw not the eyes that their last looks were taking;
We heard but the shouts that were meant to be cheers,
But which told of the aching of hearts that were breaking,
A past of delight and a future of tears.

And long as we listen'd, in lulls of the night breeze,
On our ears the sad shouting in faint music fell,
Till methought it seem'd lost in the roll of the white seas,
And the rocks and the winds only echoed farewell.

More bright was our home-hearth, more bright and more cosy,
As we shut out the night and its darkness once more;
But pale were the cheeks, that so radiant and rosy,
Were flush'd with delight a few moments before.

So I told how the morning, all lovely and tender,
Sweet dew on the hills, and soft light on the sea,
Would follow the exiles and float with its splendour,
To gild the far land where their homes were to be.

In the eyes of my children were gladness and gleaming,
Their little prayer utter'd, how calm was their sleep!
But I in my dreaming could hear the wind screaming,
And fancy I heard hoarse replies from the deep.

And often, when slumber had cool'd my brow's fever,
A dream-utter'd shriek of despair broke the spell;
'Twas the voice of the emigrants leaving the river,
And startling the night with their cries of farewell.

## GEORGE BRECHIN

WAS born in Ellon, Aberdeenshire, in 1829. At a very early age he went to sea. After several voyages, he returned to Aberdeen, where he served his apprenticeship as a house painter. On its expiry he proceeded to Brechin, where he worked for some time, and finally settled down in Edinburgh, where he has been in business for over twenty years.

Mr Brechin has, during a long and chequered career, assiduously courted the Scottish Muse. Although he has a broadly-marked satirical vein, and a considerable amount of humour, he has written some sweet lyrics. During the present year Mr Brechin published a selection of his poems and songs, entitled "Sketches in Outline of Facts and Fancy."

### THE OLD RAVEN ELOQUENT.

On a tree top swaying, rocking,
Sat a grave old raven croaking,
Like a cynic sagely jokeing
O'er foibles of this life,
Save his own all others mocking,
Keen, piercing as a knife.

And what did this vain raven say?
And why did he the cynic play?
And wherefore wag his cranium grey,
Like a sage uplifted?
Thought he his croak a charming lay?
He divinely gifted?

He said as plain as raven could,
No other minstrel of the wood
Hath melody so strong and good
As winter to defy,
Mine hath an age unfailing stood,
While others droop and die.

The lark may warble for a day,
The thrush give forth a fleeting lay,
But winter comes, and then away
To silence or the grave,
While I alone undaunted may
The changing seasons brave.

A robin from a spray near by,
Ventured thus pertly to reply,
Your strength of voice none will deny,
Nor yet your length of days,
But better far, friend ass may try
To charm us when he brays.

You puny, piping, gaudy thing,
The loudest note that you can sing
Is silenced when I flap my wing.
Away, flee for your life,
Or to my brood your corpse I'll fling,
Dare you provoke the strife.

Swift to the thickets inmost bay,
With other minstrels in dismay,
The little robin flew away
To cheer with pipe and song,
While plaudits o'er the raven's lay
Rose from the tuneless throng.

And thus it is the world o'er,
Some raven-like will hoarsely roar,
And giddy crowds amused encore,
And follow fashion's maze,
And brazen voices evermore
Create a mental craze.

## JOHN KELLY,

AUTHOR of the following, was born in Glasgow in 1857. He is a frequent contributor of sweet little poems to the local press.

### OOR WEE MARGET.

A' ye wha ken the new-born joy,
That comes wi' first-born girl or boy—
Fair bliss, I troo, without alloy—
Come sing wi' me;
I've got a baby-maiden coy,
Life's ills to dree.

Twa sparklin' een, like liftie blue,
A winnin', witchin', smilin' mou',
Wee dimpled chin an' snaw-white broo—
Rich gowden hair;
An angel sent by God, I voo,
Oor love to share.

### THE SHIRT SEWER.

A thin pale face, with sunken eyes,
And fingers that ache with pain;
A slave is she in freedom's guise—
The needle and thread her chain.
The heart is weak thro' want and work;
The lips are parch'd and blue;
But there, in that cellar so dingy and damp,
With no warmth save that from a little oil lamp,
She toils the whole night through.

For twelve long hours the head is bent,
And twelve bronze pence the pay.
Alas! to think on millions spent,
That knaves kings' parts might play.
And this is how they treat the poor—
Is this a Christian's view:
To make Labour the tool of the rogue and scamp,
And brand honest toil with the pauper's stamp?
Alas! 'tis but too true.

## ALEX. NICOLSON, ADVOCATE, LL.D.

WITHOUT being an imitator, the talented and genial Sheriff-Substitute of Kirkcudbright can, in our opinion, claim kinship with the good old singers of Scotland, who distinguished themselves by the warm sympathy they always cherished for the history of their country and its noblest traditions, as well as by their pawky humour and deep but restrained feeling. We had some difficulty in being able to convince the Sheriff that he was entitled to a place in our work, and in reply to several requests for a few notes of his career, he wrote to the effect that his biography was as uncalled for ("being still alive and a bachelor") as a place for him among Scottish poets was undeserved, although he would "rather be remembered as the composer of one song than as the author of many superfluous books, whether heavy or light."

Sheriff Nicolson is a native of the "moist but beautiful" Isle of Skye, of which he has repeatedly sung the praises, both in prose and verse. He studied at the University of Edinburgh, of which he is B.A., M.A., LL.D., and did duty for several years there as Examiner in Philosophy, and for some time as a member of the University Court. He has

been employed in numerous literary occupations—as an encyclopædist, as a newspaper editor, as an art critic, reviewer, and redactor. The Sheriff also did very efficient duty as an Assistant Education Commissioner in 1865, and gave the results of his inspection of schools in the Hebrides in a report, published as a parliamentary blue-book. At one time he intended to be a Free Church minister, and a Highland one, but he found, after attending several Divinity Classes, "that the officer's uniform in that excellent body was painfully tight."

In 1860 he joined the Scottish Bar, and for above ten years reported cases for the *Scottish Jurist*, of which he was latterly editor. He was appointed Steward-Substitute of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright in 1872, and still holds "that not unpleasant office, although it is now divested of its ancient name." We believe the Sheriff has assisted in the making of a good many books, but he has never published any of his own, except a collection of Gaelic Proverbs translated, with notes, &c. His philological and literary attainments eminently qualified him for this work, and the result is a volume of the deepest interest, whether from a moral, literary, or antiquarian point of view. Sheriff Nicolson has contributed articles, in various departments of literature, to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *Chambers's Cyclopædia*, *Blackwood*, *Macmillan*, the *North British Review*, *Journal of Jurisprudence*, *Good Words*, *Scotsman*, *Inverness Courier*, &c.

In his professional capacity Sheriff Nicolson gives proof of high and varied endowments, and is distinguished by breadth of view, common sense, and uniform affability of demeanour. Of verses he says he has never composed "as much as would fill three pages of the *Brechin Advertiser*," and his own opinion of them is not high. But on that point he cannot be allowed to be so good a judge as he is of what other people do. As a poet he sings with sweet lyrical flow

and tender earnestness. When describing objects of natural beauty he writes with artistic felicity, and a warmth of colouring which a poet only can give. A conspicuous vein of racy humour occasionally breaks out, and when in a satirical mood he can smite unworthy abuses with a strong hand.

### AT KYLE RHEA.

[During the severe thunderstorm which raged in Skye last week a fatal occurrence took place. The people living at a house at Kyle Rhea were conducting family worship during the prevalence of the storm on Thursday night, and on rising from their kneeling posture they discovered the sad fact that one of their number—a girl of 15 years of age—was quite dead, having been evidently struck by lightning.—*Scotsman*, 2d July 1878.]

It was a lowly cottage,
On the shore of the Misty Isle,
Where towers dark Beinn-na-Caillich
Above the rushing Kyle.

It was the height of summer,
At the close of a long June day,
When the goodman "took the books,"
For the hour had come to pray.

Without, the clouds were warring,
Within was peace and calm;
'Mid roar of rain and thunder
Arose the plaintive psalm.

The chapter was read, unhurried,
'Mid lightning's lurid glare,
And then around that trustful hearth
They all knelt down to prayer.

The dusky place was lighted
By another awful flash,
And loud above the father's voice
Was heard the thunder's crash.

Duly the prayer was uttered,
While rolled the solemn peal,
Then all uprose but Annie—
Still does that young one kneel.

"Sleepest thou, Annie, dear one?"
Is said with gentle shake:
Yes! Annie sleeps full soundly,
Never on earth to wake.

By the lowly hearth, so hallowed,
Hath swept the Angel's car,
That wafted great Elijah
From sorrowing eyes afar.

Break not thy heart, O mother!
'Tis well with the child of thy love;
She will worship with you no more,
But with purer spirits above!

## THE BRITISH ASS.

AIR—The British Grenadiers.

[This song was composed for the dinner of the Red Lion Club, composed of members of the British Association, at the time of its meeting in Edinburgh in 1871, when the President, Sir William Thomson, threw out the idea, in his introductory address, of the transmission of the seeds of life from broken planets.]

Some men go in for Science,
And some go in for Shams,
Some roar like hungry Lions,
And others bleat like Lambs;
But there's a Beast, that at this Feast,
Deserves a double glass,
So let us bray, that long we may
Admire the British Ass!

*Chorus*—With an Ass-Ass-ociation, etc.

On England's fragrant clover
This beast delights to browse,
But sometimes he's a rover
To Scotland's broomy knowes;
For there the plant supplies his want,
That doth all herbs surpass,
The Thistle rude—the sweetest food—
That feeds the British Ass!

We've read in ancient story,
How a great Chaldean swell
Came down from all his glory,
With horned beasts to dwell;
If you would know how it happened so,
That a King should feed on grass,
In "Section D, Department B,"
Inquire of the British Ass!

To Grecian sages, charming,
Rang the music of the spheres,
But voices more alarming
Salute our longer ears;
By Science bold we now are told
How Life did come to pass—
From world to world the seeds were hurled,
Whence spruug the British Ass!

In our waltzing through creation,
We meet those fiery stones,
That bring, for propagation,
The germs of flesh and bones;

And is it not a thrilling thought,
That some huge misguided mass
Will, one fine day, come and sweep away
Our dear old British Ass!

The child who knows his father
Has aye been reckoned wise,
But some of us would rather
Be spared that sweet surprise!
If it be true, that when we view
A comely lad or lass,
We find the trace of the Monkey's face
In the gaze of the British Ass!

The Ancients, childish creatures!
Thought we derived from Heaven
The godlike form and features
To mankind only given;
But now we see our pedigree
Made plain as in a glass,
And when we grin we betray our kin
To the sires of the British Ass!

## DR PATRICK BUCHAN.

PATRICK BUCHAN, M.A., M.D., Ph.D., was the eldest son of the well-known ballad collector, the late Mr Peter Buchan, printer, Peterhead. The subject of this notice was born in Peterhead, where he received his elementary education, and afterwards studied at Aberdeen University, where he gained several bursaries, and took his M.A. and M.D. at an unusually early age. For two or three years he sailed as doctor of one of the Greenland seal and whale fishing vessels, and for a short time practised as a country doctor. He afterwards became a West India merchant, making Glasgow his head quarters, and occasionally visiting India. In 1880 he retired from active life, and resided at Orchardhill, Stonehaven, where he died in May of the present year.

Dr Buchan will be remembered by the sweet and genuine Scottish songs that he wrote for the "Book

of Scottish Songs," "Whistle Binkie," &c. Among the better known of his literary efforts, we may mention "The Garland of Scotia" (Glasgow: Wm. Mitchison, 1841), which was edited jointly by him and Mr John Turnbull. The introduction, "Remarks on ancient music and songs of Scotland," and the notes were by the Doctor, while Mr Turnbull was concerned with the arranging of the music. Dr Buchan assisted in editing the two volumes of Scottish Songs and Ballads, published by Maurice Ogle & Co., Glasgow, in 1871. In 1872 there appeared from his pen a handsome volume entitled "Legends of the North: The Guidman o' Inglismill and the Fairy Bride," printed and published by David Scott, of the *Peterhead Sentinel*. This volume was very favourably received. He wrote a number of popular legendary tales of the Highlands, which appeared in the *Celtic Magazine*, and afterwards in book form. For many years he was engaged on what promised to be an exhaustive and valuable work on the "Proverbs of all Nations;" but it is to be regretted that the worry of business prevented him finishing a work for which his taste, his scholarly attainments, and his knowledge of the subject specially fitted him. Few men were better acquainted with Scottish poets and poetry, and the Doric of his mother country possessed a living charm for him. His house in Glasgow, was a favourite resort for such men as Motherwell, Sandy Rodger, David Robertson, and other congenial spirits.

### AULD JOHN NICOL.

I sing of an auld forbear o' my ain,
Tweedledum twadledum twenty-one;
A man wha for fun was never out-done,
And his name it was auld John Nicol o' Quhain.

Auld John Nicol was born—he said,
Tweedledum, etc.;
Of man or of maid's no weel kent—sin he's dead,
Sae droll was the birth o' John Nicol o' Quhain.

Auld John Nicol he lo'd his glass,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
And auld John Nicol he lo'ed a lass,
And he courted her tocher—the lands o' Balquhain.

Auld John Nicol he made her his wife,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
And the feast was the funniest feast o' his life,
And the best o' the farce he was laird o' Balquhain.

The lady was fifty, his age was twal' mair,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
She was bow-hough'd and humph-back'd, twined like a stair,
'But her riggs are fell straucht,' quo' John Nicol o' Quhain.

By some chance or ither auld John got a son,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
He was laid in a cupboard for fear that the win',
Wad hae blawn out the hopes o' the house o' Balquhain.

The lady was canker'd and eident her tongue,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
She scrimpit his cog—thrash'd his back wi' a rung,
And dousen'd for lang auld John Nicol o' Quhain.

Ae day cam a ca'er wi' mony lang grane,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
"Oh! death"—quo' the laird, "come stap your wa's ben,
Ye'se be welcome to tak Mrs Nicol o' Quhain."

Auld John was a joker the rest o' his life,
Tweedledum, etc. ;
And his ae blythest joke was the yirdin' his wife,
For it left him the laird o' the lands o' Balquhain.

## THE BUIKIN' O' ROBIN AND MIRREN.

Gae bring me my rokeley o' grey,
My mutch and red ribbons sae dainty,
And haste ye, lass, fling on your claes,
Auld Rab's to be buiked to aunty.
Ae gloamin' last ouk he cam wast,
To speer for my auld lucky daddie,
Tho' sair wi' the hoast he was fash'd,
Ae blink o' auld aunt made him waddie.
Sae mak' yoursel' braw braw,
And busk yoursel' tidy and canty,
Guid luck may as yet be your fa,'
Sin' Rab's to be buiked to aunty.

The body cam' hirplin' ben,
Tho' warstlin' wi' eild, he was canty,
And he o'erly just speer'd for the men,
But he cadgily crackit wi' aunty.

Or e'er he had sittin' a blink,
He sang and he ranted fu' cheery,
And auld aunty's heart he gar'd clink,
Wi' "Mirren, will ye be my deary?
For I'm neither sae auld, auld,
Nor am I sae gruesome or uggin,
I've a score o' guid nowt i' the fauld,
And a lang neck'd purse o' a moggin."

At this Mirren's heart gae a crack,
Like the thud o' a waukin' mill beetle,
And she thocht, but she ne'er a word spak,
"Weel, I'd e'en be contented wi' little."
For Mirren, tho' threescore and ane,
Had never had "will ye," speer'd at her,
So she laid a fond loof in his han',
And quo' Robin "that settles the matter."
Sae busk ye, lass, braw, braw,
Busk and let's aff, for I'se warran',
We'se hae daffin' and laughin' an' a',
At the buikin' o' Robin and Mirren.

## THE FAIRY'S INVITATION.

"Come where the bright star of even is beaming;
Come where the moonlight o'er valley and hill,
O'er castle and cot in golden flakes streaming,
Shimmers on lake and leaf—glints on the rill.
Ever light, ever free,
Gay let our spirits be,
Roaming by burn and lea—roaming at will.

"Come where the mavis sings sweetest at gloamin';
Come where the woods wi' the wee birdies ring;
Come to the hill where the wild bee is roamin';
Come where the bonnie flow'rs bonniest spring;
Come to the trystin' tree,
Ever gay, ever free,
Sing our old songs with glee—cheerily sing.

"Come where the burn splashes down frae the mountain;
Come where the hazel nuts hang on the tree;
Come to the dell wi' its clear shining fountain,
Where lilies are listenin' the pipe o' the bee
There, by the whisp'ring stream,
Where the trouts golden gleam,
Tell that old tale—that brings joy to the ee.

"Come where Spring's bridal chimes blue bells are ringing;
Come where the yellow broom blooms on the brae;
Come where the lintie his love-sang is singing,
And wee birdies courtin' on ilka green spray.
Joyously let us sing,
Love awakes wi' the Spring,
Merrily let us roam—come, come away."

# THOMAS CARLYLE.

OUR last page cannot be better filled than in giving a specimen of the muse of one of Scotland's most strong-hearted sons, who was born in Dec. 1795, in the sequestered hamlet of Ecclefechan, and died at Chelsea in February, 1881. Had space permitted, we intended to give an estimate of the character and work of Thomas Carlyle, but in the brief space now at our command such an attempt would be absurd, and the task has been attempted by scores of other and abler pens. He was more than a writer of books and a censor of contemporary morals. His intellectual force, and the extent and quality of the service it enabled him to accomplish, are amply evidenced in the fact that no single writer of the past half-century has so deeply influenced thought and opinion in Britain, Germany, and America, and influenced it in the direction of deepening men's sense of the responsibility of life as a thing to be held in truthful stewardship, and of work as a thing to be honestly and earnestly done.

## THE SOWER'S SONG.

Now hands to seed-sheet, boys,
We step and we cast; old Time's on wing;
And would ye partake of harvest's joys
The corn must be sown in Spring.

Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthly bed,
And stand so yellow some morn,
That beast and man may be fed.

Old Earth is a pleasure to see
In sunshiny cloak of red and green:
The furrow lies fresh—this year will be
As the years that are past have been.
Fall gently and still, &c.

Old Mother, receive this corn,
The seed of six thousand golden sires ;
All these on thy kindly breast were borne ;
One more thy poor child requires.
Fall gently and still, &c.

Now steady and sure again,
And measure of stroke and step we keep,
Thus up and thus down we cast our grain ;
Sow well, and you gladly reap.
Fall gently and still, &c.

## TO-DAY.

Lo ! here hath been dawning
Another blue Day ;
Think wilt thou let it
Slip useless away.

Out of Eternity
This new Day is born ;
Into Eternity,
At night, will return.

Behold it afore time
No eye ever did ;
So soon it forever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue Day ;
Think wilt thou let it
Slip useless away.