

LITERATURE.

CHIMES FOR THE TIMES.

Be ye not jealous over-much,
But hope, and time will make you better:
There is a faith care cannot touch,
Which leaves the soul without a fetter.
Oh it is but a sorry creed
To look for nothing but deceiving,
To meet a kindness in your need
With a smile of misbelieving!
The tide of ill is not so strong;
Man loves not always wrath and wrong.

It cannot be that every heart
Is steeled so much against its neighbour;
Let each with reason play his part,
And fruit will spring from out the labour:
Progressing still life's journey through,
Be just and kind towards your fellow,
Remembering, whate'er you do,
That duty spreads the smoothest pillow;
And ne'er the hand of friendship spurn,
But trust, and man will trust in turn.

Some men there be who deem it good
In trade to overreach a brother;
And some who would not, though they could,
Upraise a hand to help another:
They deem not, though convulsions wide
May show the earth by danger shaken,
That still of hearts unjust through pride
A dark and true account is taken:
Kingdoms may quake and thrones may fall,
But God is looking over all.

Oh join not then the strifes of men,
But hourly show, by waxing kinder,
That ye have reached the moment when
Reason no more is growing blinder!
And though ye hope that time should yield
A change for each benighted nation,
Seek not at first so wide a field
To fling the seeds of reformation;
But sow them first in hearts at home,
Then trust in God, and fruit will come.

HONOURS OF LITERATURE.

HUME, in his history of the reign of James I., justly observes that 'such a superiority do the pursuits of literature possess above every other occupation, that even he who attains but a mediocrity in them, merits the pre-eminence above those that excel the most in the common and vulgar professions.' In France, the mere title of 'homme de lettres' is as indicative of a distinct and honourable profession as those of 'militaire,' 'jurisconsulte,' or 'medecin;' and it forms, as they do, an unobjectionable passport with all the upper classes. Till lately, in England it was a common complaint that men of learning and artists, who had not parliamentary interest, or could not give a *quid pro quo*, were defrauded of their fair share of state honours. It is hoped, however, that a change is about to take place, if it is not now in the course of operation; and the less that is said upon the subject the better. Some have contended for titles for men of letters; but genius is itself a sufficient distinction for all who possess, and abuse it not. Raleigh, Sidney, Newton, and a thousand other names of nature's noblemen, are familiar in our mouths as household words; and the 'Sirs' which were added to these words, so big with meaning, so fraught with high remembrances, are never thought of when we think of the men. 'Sir Charles' adds nothing to the lustre of Linnæus; and who ever thought that the names of Shakespeare or Milton would receive additional dignity or value if 'Sir William' or 'Lord John' were prefixed to them?

We believe that at no time had good literature more solid consideration than at present; at no time were its representatives, according to their respective personal claims, more freely accepted on a footing of equality with the highest. 'But,' to use the words of a recent reviewer, 'to the honour of humanity be it said, conduct goes far in regulating the author's position in society; and there is little risk of a scampish Aretine meeting with toleration or fellowship. If, indeed, there still remains any cause for complaint respecting the position of literary men, it must be attributed to their desire for high associations being mixed with such parasitic toadyisms as are incompatible with self-respect. If literature be a distinction, if genius be nature's own aristocracy, and if philosophy be a benefactress to mankind, why should their representatives voluntarily take their place below the salt, and look up where they should look down?' To the same effect are the remarks of Mr. Dunlop, who, in an address to the New York Academy, says, 'It is in vain to look for honour from others, if we do not honour ourselves. It is for authors and artists to teach mankind the true estimation in which they must be held. And first, they must esteem themselves so far as to avoid all that is low, all that is servile, all that is false. Can there be anything so contemptible as a sycophant who debases the talent he possesses? Sycophancy is incompatible with true genius. We often see it united to mediocrity in the

arts. If you see a man bowing to the rich or influential for patronage and good dinners, flattering power for recommendation and protection, becoming a thing of bows, smiles, and honied words, be assured that he lacks mind as much as he lacks self-respect. The bowing, smiling sycophant is as opposite to the polite man as possible; for politeness, the desire to exchange both civilities and services, belongs to the independent man of genius. Genius is modest, but never suffers itself to be trampled upon. It feels that it belongs to nature's aristocracy, and despises the aristocracy of mere wealth. The aristocracy of nature is composed of the nobles who are stamped such by their Maker, and are, in principle and practice, true democrats—lovers of their fellow-men, and supporters of the equal rights of all.'

Many very praiseworthy examples are on record of the reverence which even monarchs have shown towards genius. When Beethoven formed a part of the household of the Elector of Cologne, the prince, a true worshipper of talent, ordered that if both required attendance at the same time, the great composer should be waited on first. This precedence was no doubt gratifying to Beethoven, who says correctly enough, 'Kings and princes can indeed create professors and privy councillors, and bedeck them with titles and orders; but they cannot make great men—spirits that rise above the world's rubbish: these they must not attempt to create; and therefore must these be held in honour. When two such come together, as I and Goethe, these great lords must note what it is that passes for greatness with such as we. Yesterday, as we were returning homewards, we met the whole imperial family: we saw them coming at some distance, whereupon Goethe disengaged himself from my arm, in order that he might stand aside; in spite of all I could say, I could not bring him a step forwards. I pulled my hat more firmly on my head, buttoned up my top-coat, and walked, with my arms folded behind me, right through the thickest of the crowd. Princes and officials made a lane for me; Archduke Rudolph took off his hat; these great people knew me! It was the greatest fun in the world to see the procession file past Goethe, who stood aside, with his hat off, bending his head as low as possible. For this I afterwards called him over the coles properly and without mercy.'

A nobleman having called on Holbein while he was engaged in drawing a figure of life, was told that he could not see him, but must call another day. Foolishly taking this answer as an affront, he very rudely rushed up stairs to the painter's studio. Hearing a noise, Holbein opened his door, and feeling enraged at his lordship's assumption and intrusion, he pushed him backwards from the top of the stairs to the bottom. However, reflecting immediately on what he had done, he repaired to the king. The nobleman, who pretended to be very much hurt, was there soon after him, and having stated his complaint, would be satisfied with nothing less than the artist's life; upon which the king firmly replied, 'My lord, you have not now to do with Holbein, but with me; whatever punishment you may contrive by way of revenge against him, shall assuredly be inflicted upon yourself. Remember, pray, my lord, that I can, whenever I please, make seven lords of seven ploughmen, but I cannot make one Holbein of even seven lords.'

Edgar Quinet, the young German poet, repaired one day to the Chateau des Tuileries to visit one of the queen's maids of honour, and was on this occasion more than usually melancholy. Suddenly, while he was conversing with her, a young person entered, so fair, so naturally elegant, that our poet would immediately have recognised her, had he not been so absorbed in his grief that he could see nothing. However, the newcomer took pity on his sufferings, and with much elegance and feeling began to talk to him of his new poem 'Prometheus,' telling him that it was an excellent work, perhaps the best he had ever written; and she even knew by heart several of the rustic verses, extemporised as bards extemporised before the mead. Imagine the delight of the poet at hearing her thus speak! Seeing that it pleased him, she poured the healing balm, drop by drop, upon his wounded heart. She gradually and carefully proceeded from the poem in verse to the poem in prose: she passed from 'Prometheus' to the touching story of 'Abasuerus,' that masterpiece of poetical legends. 'Follow me,' said she to Quinet, 'and you will see whether I love this poem.' The two ladies immediately arose and conducted him to a Gothic studio, filled with drawings and sketches. What was the joy of the poet when four admirable bas-reliefs, taken from his poem, were pointed out to him! Yes, his heroes themselves, in the very attitude, and exhibiting the very passions which his poetry had given them! It would be quite impossible to describe his feelings when the fair young artist said to him, in her sweet voice, 'This is your work, take it with you,' and when he read at the bottom of these exquisite bas-reliefs the royal name Marie d'Orleans. We have heard of a great prince who held the ladder for Albert Durer; of a powerful monarch who picked up the pencils of Titian; we know that the sister of a king of France kissed the lips of Alain Chartier while he slept; but this great surprise given to a poet—this unlooked-for and consolatory gift—the infinite grace of the young girl, the princess, the great artist—cannot be too much admired.

M. d'Abbadie, writing of the Abyssinians, says that the Gojam scholars well remember the single verse spoken in Axum by a mendicant, and which so much delighted a native prince, that he stuffed the ragged

poet's mouth with gold dust, and seated him on his throne.'

Reverence for genius is displayed not merely by the high and educated classes, but this feeling prevails amongst even the poor and untaught, and sometimes forms a redeeming virtue among the cruel and abandoned. The wife of a Silesian peasant being obliged to go on foot to Saxony, and hearing that she had travelled more than half the distance to Goethe's residence, whose works she had read with the liveliest interest, continued her journey to Weimar for the sake of seeing him. Goethe gave her his portrait, and declared that the true character of his works had never been better understood than by this poor woman. At the close of the coronation of George IV., Sir Walter Scott received a mark of homage to his genius which delighted him. Missing his carriage, he had to return home on foot from Westminster after the banquet—that is to say, between two and three o'clock in the morning—when he and a young friend found themselves locked in the crowd somewhere near Whitehall. A space for the dignitaries was kept clear at that point by the Scots Greys. Sir Walter addressed a sergeant of his celebrated regiment, begging to be allowed to pass by him into the open space in the middle of the street. The man answered shortly that his orders were strict, that it could not be suffered. While he was endeavouring to persuade the sergeant to relent, some new wave of turbulence approached from behind, and his companion exclaimed in a loud voice, 'Take care, Sir Walter Scott; take care!' The stalwart dragoon, on hearing the name, said, 'What! Sir Walter Scott! He shall get through anyhow!' He then addressed the soldiers near him—'Make room, men, for Sir Walter Scott, our illustrious countryman!' The men answered, 'Sir Walter Scott! God bless him!' and in a moment he was within the guarded line of safety. Tasso, on one of his journeys between Rome and Naples, fell into the hands of banditti, who immediately proceeded to plunder him and his fellow-travellers. But no sooner did the captain of the band hear the poet's name, than, with tokens of admiration and respect, he set him at liberty nor would he permit his gang to plunder Tasso's companions. A prince of royal birth confined the poet in a madhouse for more than seven years—the great and wealthy left him to a precarious life, which was often a life of absolute want—the servile writers of the day loaded him with abuse and most unjust criticism—but a mountain robber, by the roadside, protected him, and kissed the hand of the author of 'Jerusalem Delivered.'

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A WORD ON THE HIGHLANDS.

ONE of the most agreeable of the many agreeable tours which may be performed during summer in Scotland, is an excursion from Loch Lomond, by an interesting line of road, to Glencoe and Fort-William; and thence, after some rambling about the skirts of Ben Nevis, to Inverness by steamer along the Caledonian Canal. A short time ago it was my fortune to make this journey, partly with the view of indulging in the picturesque, but chiefly to have a glance at some of those scenes rendered memorable by the destitution which prevailed during the winter of 1846-7.

Among other novelties which the tourist is promised a sight of in passing towards Glencoe, is the Black Mount, a recently-created deer forest of many miles in extent, belonging to the Marquis of Breadalbane. In crossing this tract of bleak mountainous country in the stage, little time is afforded to gratify curiosity; but he would be a dull traveller who could not, in a ride of two or three hours, observe the peculiar aspect of a district cleared of sheep and cattle, and inhabited only by herds of wild animals, and the scarcely less wild bands of gillies who are employed to take care of this extensive chase. The scene is silent and dismal. You glide through a waste of marshy hollows environed by lofty mountains; and the only living things which greet the eye are here and there startled packs of grouse, or a few deer, relieved against the sky, on the summits of the brown heathery hills. The Black Mount, however, is only a specimen of the great tracts of country which within the last twenty years have been rendered useless to man in the Highlands of Scotland. Shortly after the close of the Rebellion in 1745, many Highland proprietors, according to new economical views, turned their dependent clansmen adrift, rooted out small crofters, and dividing their lands into large sheep tracts, leased them on advantageous terms to store-farmers of skill and capital from the south. Much of the Highlands is still under this system of pasturage; but much has latterly suffered the new transformation into hunting-grounds—a remarkable change; for in the nineteenth century, when all else is advancing, the enforcing of lands formerly useful seems like taking a step back to the earliest ages of mankind. I have often wondered whether it would be consistent with public rights for individual holders of property to render their lands utterly useless to the community?—or, to put an extreme case, whether the owner of an estate is entitled to sink his lands in the sea, if he feel so disposed? Questions of this curious nature may with propriety be considered in relation to the Black Mount and other Highland deer forests, where, for the sake of a little amusement in autumn, the means of human existence are effectually extinguished. Some writers, indeed,