

## CHARLES WESLEY, THE MINSTREL OF METHODISM.

BY THE REV. S. B. DUNN.

## IV.—A TRUE CHILD OF PARNASSUS.

“ Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,  
 The POETS—who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight, by heavenly lays.”

MAY not the world's sweet singers be doing as much for the race as its workers? Busy hands, like spiders in kings' palaces, are ever weaving their webs in which to catch the wherewithal to nourish life; but who can tell how much of heart and inspiration these toilers get from our poet-minstrels that warble for us, pouring down their melodies like caged songsters from above our heads. Poetry has always been felt to have a charm and to wield a spell ever since the lyre of Jubal was first sounded, and

“ The first-born poet ruled the first-born man.”

The work of a true poet is nearest to the divine of any work possible to mortal man. “ He is an artist,” says Vernon Lee, “ who plays his melodies not on cat-gut strings, or metal stops, but upon human passions.” Among the ancient Athenians the life of a poet was held in peculiar esteem. The death of Eupolis, a comic poet who was killed in a naval battle, was so much lamented that a law was enacted exempting a poet from bearing arms.

Yet “ to be indeed a poet,” says Southey, “ does not happen to more than one man in a century.” Keats goes further still where he laments :

“ The count  
 Of mighty poets is made up ; the scroll  
 Is folded by the muses ; the bright roll  
 Is in Apollo's hand. . . . .  
 . . . . . the sun of poesy is set.”

Still, as Keats flourished after Charles Wesley's death, his elegy does not necessarily exclude the name of this prince of