

of no verse, since Shakespeare, which had so much the appearance of coming sweetly from nature. Under the fragrant birch trees, in the heathery glen, or among the moonlit sheaves, the gushes of music flowed warm from his heart. The range of it is not large, and one mellow, plaintive, delicious love-note always returns upon the ear in beauty. But the songs of Burns were no mere out-pouring of rich sounds. He composed with rapidity, yet devoted much time and patience to corrections. This is hardly the place to discuss with Matthew Arnold how much Scotch whiskey had to do with the inspiration of poor Burns, but some who have tasted the nectar of his native land, say that the poet might have sought for inspiration from a more unpleasant source. "I should have taken him," said Scott, "had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his linaments. The eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large and of a dark cast, which glowed (I say literally *glowed*) when he spoke with feeling and interest." What expression of sense and shrewdness reveals to us the same strong deliberate thought which gives to Scotchmen in general their characteristic soundness of judgement. It was this quality in Burns, refined and sublimed as in a superior nature, which enabled him to see and judge for himself the facts of man and nature. It was this same quality which gave such truth to his ideas, bring-

ing his spirit into actual contact with the reality of things instead of being satisfied with the reflections of them in the conventionalities and generalities of literature. To this same slow, strong quality of thought we may attribute that graphic force and racy life which animate the poetry of Burns and show the observant habit of his mind, and that rich humor which belongs to him who looks closely into things as they are, and sees their incongruities.

Were I to be asked what was the leading element in the genius of Burns, what was the very centre of his strength, I should answer that it was his vivid sense of the various states of the spirit of man, a faculty similar in kind to that which I have already noted in Scott, but far greater in intensity. Scott could appropriate to himself and awaken in others the spirit of the past, but Burns dwelt as a mighty wizard with all spirits which sway the human soul as his familiars. This powerful sense of the various passions and sentiments of human nature expressed itself by its own sheer force in language which seems as if smitten, by the strength of the thoughts to receive and return an exact impression of them. Such seems to me to be the essential nature of the genius of Burns. Slow, forcible, and inner, his spirit thought deeply and observed closely, and, in the realm of passion and sentiment, bore unlimited sway. The defects of Scotch genius are to a considerable degree similar to those of English genius, and I shall therefore not dwell on them here.

FRIENDSHIP.

What is friendship? I will tell you ;
 Eyes that weep for others' wrongs,
 Shoulders bearing others' burdens,
 Lips repeating others' songs.

Friendship is a sweet compassion,
 When brave courage is unmanned
 Asking naught, but trusting fully,
 Quick to soothe and understand.

—The Jewish Messenger.