

merit, and for whose genius and character he always felt and expressed the warmest admiration."

The criticism thus alluded to, was from the pen of Professor Wilson, and we gladly quote the words of "Christopher North," as showing the impression made on his mature judgment by the genius of Motherwell:

"All his perceptions are clear, for all his senses are sound; he has fine and strong sensibilities, and a powerful intellect. He has been led by the natural bent of his genius to the old haunts of inspiration—the woods and glens of his native country—and his ears delight to drink the music of her old songs. Many a beautiful ballad has blended its pensive and plaintive pathos with his day dreams, and while reading some of his happiest effusions, we feel—

'The ancient spirit is not dead,—
Old times, we say, are breathing there.'

"His style is simple, but, in his tenderest movements, masculine; he strikes a few bold knocks at the door of the heart, which is instantly opened by the master or mistress of the house, or by son or daughter, and the welcome visitor at once becomes one of the family."

Besides the poems contained in the work here referred to, and which are, with some additions, printed in that now under review, Motherwell published, in the year 1827, a collection of ballads, entitled "Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern," an undertaking which had the sanction and encouragement of Sir Walter Scott. At the time of his death, which occurred suddenly in the year 1835, he was engaged, in conjunction with the Ettrick Shepherd, in preparing for the press an edition of Burns' Works, which was enriched with many annotations from his pen.

Engaged so actively as Motherwell was, by his professional occupations, yet it is not to be supposed, that a man of his poetic temperament could throw off his allegiance to the Muse, even amid the musty parchments of the law, or the wet dreams of the *Glasgow Courier*. It was soon known that he had left behind him a number of fugitive pieces, and much anxiety was felt by those acquainted with his published poems, that these also should be given to the world. The editing of a new edition of his Poetical Works was undertaken by his literary executor, Mr. Philip Ramsay, a gentleman in every way admirably qualified for the task,—by high literary attainments, and excellent taste, and furthermore by an intimate friendship of many years with the poet.

The untimely decease of Mr. Ramsay prevented the completion of his purpose, and, well as the present editor, (the successor of Motherwell in the editorial chair of the *Courier*), has in general performed the duties devolving upon him, we cannot but regret that Mr. Ramsay did not survive to conclude the work to which he had applied his kindred mind. His labours have unfortunately

been rendered altogether unavailable, by the loss of the notes which he had prepared with so much care.

Perhaps the most widely known and generally admired amongst Motherwell's poems, are his lines to "Jeanie Morrison." They have been often quoted, but will bear quotation again:

"I've wander'd east, I've wander'd west,
Through mony a weary way;
But never, never, can forget,
The luve o' life's young day!
The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en,
May weel be black gin Yule;
But blacker fa' awaits the heart
Where first fond luve grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
The thochts o' bygone years
Still fling their shadows ower my path,
And blind my e'en wi' tears:
They blind my e'en wi' saut, saut tears,
And sair and sick I pine,
As memory idly summons up
The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'Twas then we twa did part;
Sweet time—sad time! twa bairns at schule,
Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
To leir ilk ither lear;
And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
Remembered ever mair.

I wonder, Jeanie, after yet,
When sitting on that bink,
Cheek touchin' cheek, loof lock'd in loof,
What our wee heads could think?
When baith bent down ower ae braid page
Wi' ae buik on our knee,
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

Oh mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
Whene'er the schule-weans, laughin', said,
We cleek'd thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays,
(The schule then skail't at noon),
When we ran aff to speel the braces—
The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
My heart flows like a sea,
As aye by aye the thochts rush back
O' schule-time and o' thee.
Oh, mornin' life! Oh, mornin' luve!
Oh, lightsome days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts,
Like simmer blossoms, sprang!

O mind ye, luve, how aft we left
The deavin' dinsome toun,
To wander by the green burnside,
And hear its waters croon;
The simmer leaves hung ower our heads,
The flowers burst round our feet,
And in the gloamin' o' the wood,
The throssil wexsil sweet.