

+My friend+

(FOR THE PORTFOLIO.)

† sing to the praise of my mightiest friend ;
 † Yet a friend unassuming withal,
 † Who is never puffed up, and never cast
 down

And yet always "goes to the wall."

A friend who in summer complains not of heat,
 Nor feels he the bitterest cold.

For the young he is full of the merriest fun

And of wisdom profound for the old.

His sorely-vexed temper is always unruffled,

And he never is "down in the mouth ;"

His spirit's the same when the north wind doth
 blow

As when it soft sighs from the south.

He never complains of "the hardness of times ;"

He never, I'm sure "had the blues."

He's certain no glutton—he lives not to eat,

And all manner of drink he eschews.

Though my friend's a mere pigmy—scarce six
 inches high,

He is not (like most small men) vain :

Lives up to the precept—"Little folks should
 be seen

And not heard"—too wise to complain.

When the day with its cares gives place to the
 night

And I sit by my fireside reposing,

In the midst of his story he takes no offence

When he oftentimes catches me dozing.

When the sorrows of life bloom thick o'er my
 path,

And I'm getting the worst of the fight,

Like a light-house unmoved when the elements
 war,

He streams through the darkness his light.

He's a flat contradiction to the worn-out old saw—

"Two's company, three's none"—He's no bore.

Full many a maid with the youth of her choice
 With him passes many an hour.

Of his praises I've sung but a few ; lest you
 weary,

A thousand I'll quite over-look.

He lives in all lands—is a friend to all seekers

And speaks all their tongues—He's a Book.

CLARENCE LUCAS.

+Poetry of Scotland.+

HAVE you ever traced the river Dee ?
 —followed the western stream
 from its rising far off in Gaick
 forest, as it flowed eastward through
 mossy glens that tinged its waters with
 that deep yet clear amber, so character-
 istic of Highland rivers, and then turned
 to the northern stream born in the deep
 gorge below Ben Dhui, and which after
 dashing for miles over a clean bed of grey
 granite boulders, poured into the western
 stream a flood of water of the purest
 crystalline green ? Have you noted that
 for many miles after their junction, the
 two currents flowed side by side unblended
 —the northern retaining its clear trans-
 parent crystal, the western as distinctly
 its deep amber brown ? These two
 distinct and unmingling currents are an
 apt image of the character and history of
 Scotland's poetry. The amber colored
 stream typifies the literary poetry, the
 production of educated men, flowing
 tinged with the culture of other lands, to
 which it was indebted for its form, its
 metre, and in some measure for its
 language and its sentiments. The pure
 crystal current represents the home-born
 popular poetry, which springs out of the
 hearts and habits of the people, breathes
 of native manners, utters itself in the
 vernacular language and in home-spun
 melodies. It is in this last that the inner
 spirit of Scotland found vent ; this is her
 peculiar heritage of song ; a heritage
 which after it has lived on for centuries
 in the hearts and by the firesides of the
 people, at last flowed forth into bright
 and consummate expression, in the two
 great national poets, Robert Bruce and
 Walter Scott. Before, however, dwelling
 on this last, the most truly national poetry
 of Scotland, a word must be said on the
 early literary or learned poems which
 have come down to us.

Passing by for the present the
 "Romance of Sir Tristram," the
 Chronicles of Barbour's "Bruce," and of
 Blind Harry's "Wallace," we come to
 the earliest poems in Scotland that