

folds; but it is the shirt of Nessus. Like a lion constrictor, he rolls himself slowly round his prey; first covers it from head to foot; administers then a fearful warmth; then beslaughters it with portentous flattery; then gradually crushes in its sides; and then, with a fiendish ease and glee, devours it.

But we must hear Mr. Gillfillan on the Poets; and first let us have the Bard of Hope, the one man in our time of whom it can be said, that "whatever he does is in its own line the best."

Campbell's great power is enthusiasm—subdued. His tempest moves on gracefully, and as to the sound of music. His muse keeps the step at the same time that she shakes the wilderness. You see him arranging the dishevelled and streaming hair, smoothing the furrowed forehead, compressing the full and thrilling lips of inspiration. He can arrest the fury of his turbulent vein by stretching forth the calm hand of taste, as an escaped lunatic is abated in a moment by the whisper of his keeper, or by his more terrible tap of quiet, imperious command. "There is a perpetual alternation going on in his mind. He is this moment possessed by his imagination; the next, he masters and tames it, to walk meekly in the harness of his purpose; or, to use its own fine image, while his genius is flaming above, his taste below, "like the dial's silent power,"

Measures inspiration's hour,
And tells its height in heaven.

He is inferior thus to the very first class of poets, whose taste and art are unconscious. His are at once conscious to himself and visible to others. Their works, like Nature's, arrange themselves into elegance and order, amid their impetuous and ecstatic motion; their apparent extravagancies obey a law of their own, and create a taste for their appreciation; their hair, shed on the whirlwind, falls abroad, through its own divine instinct, in lines of waving beauty; their flashing eye enriches the day; their wild, uncontrollable step, "brings from the dust the sound of liberty." But if Campbell be too measured, and timid, and self-watchful, to appertain to those demi-urges of poetry, he is far less to be classed with the imitative and the cold—the schools of Boileau and Pope. He not only belongs to no school; but in short, deep gushes of genuine genius—in single thoughts, where you do not know whether more to admire the felicity of the conception, or the delicate and tremulous finish of the expression—in drops of spirit-stirring or melting song—and in a general manliness and chastity of manner, Campbell is perhaps the finest ARTIST living. His mind has the refinement of the female intellect, welded to the energy of the classic man. His taste is not of the Gothic order, neither is it of the Roman; it is that of a Greek, neither grotesque nor finically fastidious. His imagery is select, not abundant; out of a multitude of figures which throng on his mind, he has the resolution to choose only the one which, by pre-established harmony, seems destined to enshrine the idea. His sentiment is sweet, without being mawkish, and *recherche* without being affected. Here, indeed, is Campbell's fine distinction. He never becomes metaphysical in discriminating the various shades, nor morbid in painting the darker moods of sentiment. He preserves continually

the line of demarcation between sentiment and passion. With the latter, in its turbulence—its selfish engrossment—the unvaried, but gorgeous colouring which it flings across all objects—the flames of speech which break out from its white lips, he rarely meddles. But of that quieter and nobler feeling, which may be called, from its stillness, its subdued tone, its whispered accents, its shade of pensiveness, the moonshine of the mind, he is pre-eminently the poet."

The sketch of Shelley—that highly gifted but lamentably perverted spirit, is able and elaborate, though we should perhaps scruple to subscribe to all the sentiments it contains. Many fine passages we might quote. To the following, who does not respond?

"As it is, we deplore the atheism of such a spirit, with humility and bitterness of heart; and 'wonder at it with a great admiration,' that a being of such richly endowed intellect, and warm quick-beating heart—who was no profligate, no worldling, tinged with no selfish or sinister motives, but a sincere, shy, and lofty enthusiast—standing up in a creation so infinitely full of testimonies to the existence of a Great Spirit; where there is not a flower that blossoms in the garden but preaches that there is a God, nor a leaf that twinkles in the sunbeam, nor a cloud that passes over the moon, nor an insect which flutters in the breath of the gale, or creates a tiny tempest on the waves of the pool, but repeats and re-echoes the testimony that there is a God; where the lion roars it out amid his native wilds, and the humming-bird says it in every colour of her plumage, and every vulture of her wing; where the eagle screams up the tidings to the sun, and the sun, in reply, writes them round the burning iris of the eagle's eye; where the thunder, like a funeral bell hung aloft in the clouds, tolls out there is a Deity, and the earthquake mutters and stammers the same great truth below; where snow in its silence and storm in its turmoil; summer in its beauty and winter in its wrath; the blossoms of spring and the golden glories of autumn, alike testify to a God; where the ten thousand orators of Nature, the thunderbolts, the hailstones, the rain-drops, the winds, the ocean waves, the flashing and the falling foliage of the woods, the lightnings of the sky, and the catenacts of the wilderness, are all crashing out, blazing out, thundering out, whispering out, and murmuring out, true and solemn tidings about the Being who made them all; who gave the torrents

Their strength, their fury, and their Joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal down;

who clothed the woods; who scooped out the bed of the sea; who bringeth the wind out of his treasures, and maketh a path for the lightning of the thunder!" That such a being, placed in the centre of so sublime a circle of witnesses, should say, 'I doubt, I deny, I cannot believe that there is a God,' nay, that he should have realized, in his imaginary experience, the tremendous dream of Jean Paul—have lifted himself up through the starry splendours of the universe, but found no God—have risen above their remotest suns, but found no God—have descended to the lowest limits of space—have looked down into the abyss,