

## A New Poetic Star.

A REVIEW: *vide* "Poetical Beginnings," by Sylvanus C. Vesperus. Printed by Hoké G. Dennis, at the sign of the new Dickey, 1082 Grub Street, next door to McKay's Tonsorial Parlors.

You have heard much of late about a liberal education and the fully rounded man; him whose powers have had a free and harmonious development; but has it ever struck you that there is one such, in objective reality, right among ourselves? We knew forsooth that to him nature had been lavish of her gifts, that his intellectual development was great, that he excelled as academician, prophet and seer; yet never did we suspect he was a son of Apollo. But now behold you! The latent powers of song have burst forth and he has appeared in the *role* of poet, with what unparalleled success, let his own numbers speak. As yet his writings are not voluminous and his most meritorious efforts are not lengthy, but in poetry it is quality and not quantity that counts; as witness the few short but finished productions of Gray, which will preserve his fame and memory green while our language endures; compared with the ponderous octavos of Southey, which years since have sunk into a just oblivion.

But to return to our poet-prophet, the products of his genius are few (but how precious!), and we shall here be obliged to confine ourselves to an examination of one or two pieces. Let us first look at his "Carmen ad Collegium Normalum," of which the following are the opening, 13th and 37th stanzas:

The weary student burns the midnight oil,  
And ponders o'er the mysteries of Fitch;  
But slumber's chain soon takes him in her coil—

He dreams, and dreaming, sees the centipede in the ditch.

Behold it moves and struggling, strives to scale

That bold ascent, yeapt the Alpine mount,  
While far below, reclining in his chair

The D—t—r, tells the ignorami how to count.

\* \* \* \* \*

Up! up it goes, and lingers not to rest,  
Its burning brow against those glaciers cool;  
It fondly seeks some still sequestered spot,  
Where it may 'scape the onslaught of the science school.

It is to be regretted that space did not permit the reproduction of the entire poem, but a glance at these extracts is surely all that is necessary for a due appreciation of its distinctive excellencies. What a world of promise there is in these three stanzas! What an exuberance of thought, what a wealth of imagery, what loftiness of sentiment, and what an insight into life and nature are revealed! Nor is there any deficiency on the side of technique or versification. Observe the judicious use of archaism, the beautiful alliterative effect in the last stanza, and with what skill the alexandrine is handled. And lastly note the eager abundance of diction, again demonstrating to us that when a great genius appears with great thoughts to give to the world, adequate language is always at his command in which to embody them.

But notwithstanding the genuine merits of the poem, from which the above stanzas are extracted, we are compelled to make one criticism. There seems to be a lack of proportion between the intellectual and feeling sides, and the poet appeals to the understanding rather than to the heart, which in a slight degree mars the symmetry and unity of the whole. But this criticism cannot be applied to the incomparable "Ode to Spring" from which the following lines are taken:

The quacklet of the ducklet on the brook—  
let doth appear,

The chucklet of the chicklet in the coolet  
do we hear;

The gruntlet of the piglet in the styler  
maketh cheer,

The birdlet on the branchlet of the bushlet  
pipeth clear.

Everything in nature tells us spring is here,  
spring is here,

And the maiden with her smilet dreams of  
love;