

The Burns Centenary.

A prize of fifty guineas, for a poem best adapted to the celebration of the memory of "Scotland's Bard," was awarded to Miss Isabella Craig, a Scotch "Lassie," a native of Edinburgh, of humble parentage. There were 621 competitors. Copies of this poem were sent to all the principal Cities and towns throughout the United Kingdom, where the Burns festival was being held, and thus, was the praise of him, whose body "moulders in the silent dust" of a hundred years, simultaneously sung throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles.

It would appear, from the numerous festivals held, not only in Scotland but in all parts of the civilized world, that there is a strong inclination, not to allow the memory of Scarths who could once so merrily sing,—*"auld acquaintances"* to "be forgot, and never brought to mind." However, notwithstanding there is something pleasant, in calling prominently to mind, the memory of those who once figured in the world as poets, philanthropists, statesmen, or philosophers,—still, how often does it happen that those very men,—the great ones of the earth, have been allowed to live in "honest poverty," all the days of their life; without even the necessary means of subsistence, and after their bodies have lain a hundred years in the grave, thousands of pounds have been expended in commemoration of their services to society,—so it was in the case of Robert Burns; and so it was with the poet Thomas Campbell,—not a hundred years it is true, have elapsed, since the body of the latter, was committed to the dust; he was allowed to live in want, without sufficient means to enable him to procure the real wants of life,—but when dead, and his body about to be committed to the tomb,—then did the powers that be, acknowledge his services, by My Lord So, and So acting as pall-bearers etc., and performing other funeral obsequies.

So this is the way the world, in too many instances remunerated her servants,—paying great respects to them after they are dead, while during life,

the proper time to be bountiful,—the time when a few pounds might be the means of giving to the world another poem, another philosophical problem solved, another scientific discovery made,—all useful to society, and enable the recipient to live above "abject poverty," they are allowed to grope their way unaided through life as best they can.

The following remarks made by Lord Brougham, at Edinburg, on the occasion of the Burns festival, are well worthy of a careful perusal. His Lordship after passing high eulogiums on the genius of Burns, turns to "the pure and classical language of Scotland, which must on no account," he says, "be regarded as a provincial dialect,"—in which "classical language," Burn's best productions were composed:—

"After his great poetical genius, there is nothing so remarkable in Burns' history as the extraordinary refinement of his sentiments, and even of his date, from his earliest years, the effect certainly of his education having been greater than falls to the lot of the peasantry, even in Scotland. But it is impossible to read the accounts of his family, and his description of, and correspondence with his friends of the same age, and the same humble station, and not be struck with the manner in which they were all raised above their condition by the ordinary education of the Parish Schools, and the taste for reading and for contemplation to which it gives rise, beside its effects in forming industrious habits. It led him further to the greater cultivation of his faculties, and the nursing and unfolding of his genius; and we have an unquestionable right to affirm that but for this education he, in all likelihood, would have passed through the life of a humble and unknown peasant; and that his genius would never have been known either to himself or the world. The existence of genius must ever be an accident; but as it cannot be confined to any class of the community, the chances of its appearing, that is of its existence being known, must needs be in proportion to the numbers