

HALF HOURS WITH OUR POETS.

SECOND ARTICLE.

NEXT in the list of Provincial Poets, whose writings have come before the public, and whose faults and merits may be freely touched upon, since the ear on which their mention might have fallen rudely or soothingly, is now "cold in death," stands the name of John McPherson, a resident of Brookfield, Queen's County, N. S. Born and brought up in humble life, with but the education afforded by the Common School of Nova Scotia, subsisting on the labour of his hands for his daily bread, the elevating spirit of poetry visited the poor artizan in his humble abode, refining his taste and cheering his solitary hours. Had he possessed means and opportunities for informing his mind, had sympathizing and intellectual companions been near to take an interest in his fancies, and counsel and instruct when blinded by their vagaries; had his circumstances afforded him the leisure necessary to prosecute a severe course of study, familiarizing his mind with the works of masters in ancient and modern verse, and applying to his own productions that severe test to which criticism subjects the poetry of the most gifted, we have no hesitation in affirming it as our belief that John McPherson would have taken a high stand in the literary world, and earned the brightest laurels in the gift of song. But cramped as he always was by the fetters of poverty, confined to his trade for his daily subsistence, the effusions from his pen were necessarily hurried and imperfect—and yet in almost every little poem which he has left in memorial of his brief life, there is some thought of beauty, some strong original idea, that would not do discredit to the polished poet. His character was timid and retiring, but tinged with melancholy. He had the consciousness of genius, and grieved that he was so little appreciated—it may have been that he over estimated his powers, but we have no evidence of the fact in his writings; a humble simplicity pervades almost every strain, and a confident trust in the beauty and holiness of religion seems the basis of all he wrote. In remarking on his talents and position, the Editor of a journal in whose columns his stanzas found frequent utterance, says:—

“Poet-like, his habits are secluded and reflecting, and not calculated, except through his songs, for placing him on the seething surface of busy life. His communion is with beautiful objects and thoughts, and making his pen, like the harp of the Minstrels, his pleasure and his pride, he dwells in a great degree, in a world of his own forming. He is one who loves glowing thoughts and flowing lines, for their own sake, and would write and read poetry, with elegance and enthusiasm, if existence gave him no audience but his own feelings. He is of the Troubadour age, in the simplicity and warmth of his manner, while a fine moral and christian tone, vastly enhances most of his melodies. For a sweet thought, elegantly and chastely developed and illustrated, in a few verses of liquid softness and flow, we would not be afraid to place our correspondent in competition with ninety-hundredths of those whose names adorn the “*Annals*” and “*Periodicals*” of older countries.”