

And swore in verse and fulsome rhyme,
 That never since the birth of time,
 Was such an angel seen ?
 Each morn and eve, her mirror gave
 Their wretched words the lie ;
 And though she fain would have believed,
 She could not close her eye.

John Knox is dealt with in like manner, in a piece that reads not unlike an anti-sabbatarian Westminster Review article turned into verse ! With such history we could have pardoned a pretty free use of the poet's license. But to return to the hero of the poem : the wild career of Bothwell is familiar to the student of Scottish story, and is not without materials for the poet's pen. Its close is nearly coeval with that of Mary's royalty and freedom ; and with a poetic justice rare in actual history, the remaining years of her betrayer's life were passed in a Danish dungeon, where, listening to the moaning voices of the lonely sea, and preyed on alike by the tortures of ungratified ambition and remorse, he at length died a raving maniac. The poet lays his scene in this Danish fortress of Malmoe, in the lone dungeon of which he presents Bothwell as his own biographer, wailing forth in bitter retrospect the strange romance in which he acted so prominent a part. In giving form to this, the author must be accredited with the somewhat rare merit among modern poets, of actually saying what he means, in sober intelligible verse, nor once indulging in hidden meanings, such as elude the unreflective reader—still less in the mysticism and metaphysical subtleties of poetica, which not only leave all readers in doubt of what is meant, but a good many in greater doubt whether they ever had a meaning known to writer or reader ! The author of " Bothwell " has, moreover, as in duty bound, kept steadily free from all spasmodic exuberance of fancy. Perhaps it may be thought by some that he even verges on the opposite extreme of insipidity and common place.

The following opening scene, representing the captive writhing in his dungeon, within sound alike of the Christmas revels of his jailors, and the wild swoop of the wind and wave on the northern sea, is well designed for awakening the sympathy of the reader, and may be accepted as one of the most vigorous passages in the whole poem :

Cold—cold ! The wind howls fierce without :
 It drives the sleet and snow ;
 With thundering hurl, the angry sea
 Smites on the crags below.
 Each wave that leaps against the rock
 Makes this old prison reel—