

The pensive and pathetic strains are seldom attempted in the volume before us. That great poet, though misguided man, Shelley said :

"Our sweetest songs are those which tell of saddest thought!"

But Swain is a bard of too much vivacity to excel in these. We could have wished in his writing more reference than we find to the highest truths, and homage to Him, who hath a 'name which is above every name.'

Charles Swain is a genial Englishman—no mere dreamer, lying a bed or loitering under shady trees the live-long day, but a man of affairs, who devotes his leisure to the Muse. Manchester does not seem to the traveller a city favorable to the production of poetry. But Montgomery at Sheffield, Smith at Glasgow, and Swain at Manchester, prove that the Muse is not unwilling to dwell and sing in the great seats of manufactures. Certainly the poetry before us will be accepted by the public, as a 'Manchester fabric' of high value and literary finish.

The American edition is issued in a style creditable to the taste of the publishers. It forms a pocket volume in blue and gold, similar to the recent Boston editions of Tennyson, Longfellow, and Tupper.

From about three hundred poems, almost all worthy to be known, it is difficult to make a selection. We give the following as a specimen of Mr. Swain's more serious moods of mind :—

THE ANGEL OF THE STORM.

The Angel rose—and from her wing
Shook tempest o'er the heaving tide :
I marked the sea convulsive fling
Its stormy billows wild and wide ;
Complaining all the weary day
Till came the stars, with peace and rest ;
Then calmness, like a blessing, lay,
With heaven's own image, on its breast !

Oh ! thus, amidst the clouds of care,
When tempests o'er our pathway roll—
When doubts and fears, like billows, tear
And 'whelm the sad and sinking soul—
As sets the sun of life, may light,
Calm in the shade of ages, shine !
And may our spirit, in Thy sight,
Reflect, O God, thy grace divine !

DARKNESS IN THE FLOWERY LAND. By the Rev. M. SIMPSON CULBERTSON. New York : Charles Scribner. Montreal : B. Dawson. 1857.

The above is the somewhat fanciful title of an interesting volume on the religious notions and popular superstitions of North China. The author is an American Presbyterian missionary, who resided and laboured for eleven years at Ningpo and Shanghai. He writes modestly and clearly ; and we have pleasure in recommending his work to all who wish to possess a knowledge of the actual moral and religious condition of the Chinese, and who have not opportunity to obtain or leisure to read more costly and elaborate works on the same subject. Indeed, with the exception of Dr. Williams' "Middle Kingdom," which is on a much larger scale, we have nowhere seen a more graphic account of the religious opinions and practices of the Chinese people than in the volume before us.

After two brief chapters on the Chinese empire and its population, Mr. Culbertson describes the existing religions of the empire—the Confucian—the Taoist—and the Buddhist. With the worship of Confucius, who founded a system of ethics rather than of religion, is associated the worship of Heaven and