

rights of man. Burns caught the flame, and spread it among his countrymen. His, "Scots wha hae," "A man's a man for a' that," and other songs, were kindled at the new altar. He was then fallen from his high estate in the town where he lived; he dwelt carelessly among men, and had ceased to entertain or express respect for power and authority. The world was not his friend, nor the world's law; and the bitterness of his solitary hours, the comparative penury of his fireside, no less than the daring flights of his genius, disposed him to listen eagerly to the oracles of French freedom. He lived to see that bright morning set in blood and darkness, and in his last hours he turned again to the old fabric of the constitution. On his deathbed he also counselled one of his friends and neighbours "never to doubt as to the religion of his country." Thus on two of the most important of human considerations "the boy was father of the man," and the man returned to the hopes and feelings that had inspired him when a boy.

From early habit and necessity, Burns composed his poetry chiefly in the open air. The sun, lighting up the woods and rivers, inspired him with joy and gladness, and with the true materials of poesy before and around him, and in his heart he needed not the incentive of books. While he held the plough, or scattered the seed along the furrows, he was at liberty to "mutter his wayward fancies," and to shape them into verse. It was thus that he composed his "Mountain Daisy" and the "Mouse's Nest." Even "Tam o' Shanter," which would seem to have been the inspiration of flowing cups and merry nights, was written out of doors, to the murmurs of the Nith and the waving of the woods at Ellisland. His solitary rides, as an exciseman, were converted to the same service, and if he crooned over a song, or conceived a happy idea in his elbow-chair, he was never satisfied till he had sailed out, stick in hand, and completed the sketch in the true study of nature.

"The muse, nae poet ever fand her,  
Till by himself he learned to wander  
Adown some trotting burn's meander,  
An' no think lang;  
O sweet, to stray an' pensive ponder  
A heart-felt sang!"

Hence, Burns' rural and woodland descriptions are true as nature itself. Such images were ever present to his mind, and rose unbidden to his tongue and pen. When he commemorates the death of a friend, he indulges in no undertaker-like catalogue of mourning weeds and trappings of woe: he does not, like Milton, call on the Sisters of the sacred well from the seat of Jove, to join in his grief; but he invokes all nature—the rivers, forests, hills, and plains—and all the seasons.

"Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year!  
The cowslip cup shall keep a tear:  
Thou, Summer, while each corny spear  
Shoots up its head,  
Thy gay green flowery tresses shear  
For him that's dead!  
  
Thou, Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,  
In grief thy fallow mantle tear!  
Thou, Winter, hurling through the air  
The roaring blast,  
Wide o'er the naked world declare  
The worth we've lost."

Nor, in this exquisite elegy, are the humbler objects of external nature, so well known to the poet, overlooked.

"Mourn like a grove the cushat kens!  
Ye hazelly shaws and briery dens!  
Ye burnies wimpling down your glens  
Wi' toddlin' din,  
Or foaming strong, wi' hasty stens,  
Frae lin to lin!"

Mourn, little harebells, o'er the lea;  
Ye stately foxgloves, fair to see;  
Ye woodbines, hanging bonnilie  
In scented bowers;  
Ye roses on your thorny tree,  
The first o' flowers.

At dawn, when every glassy blade  
Droops with a diamond at its head,  
At even, when beans their fragrance shed,  
I th' rustling gale,  
Ye maukins whiddin through the glade,  
Come join my wail."

These were the tools with which the poet worked—the authorities he consulted—the pandects he followed and obeyed. We have sometimes marvelled what sort of a poet Cowper would have been, if his lot had been cast in Scotland. Would the northern burns have inspired a different strain from the brooks of England? Would he have sung of Bruce, and Wallace, and Scotch drink,

as he sang of Wolfe, and Chatham, and ladies' employments, and sober tea-parties? Thomson did not wholly forget Scotland in England—Campbell is still full of it. James Montgomery was born in Ayrshire, but he owes nothing to Scotland but his birth: he had not time to inhale the spirit of the mountains, and his Muse is wholly English. Wordsworth would have been a sort of Ossian, if born in the Highlands—wandering up and down, lamenting the decay of chiefs and clans, a firm believer to the *second sight*, and celebrating solitary mountains and valleys, overhung by mists, roaring waterfalls, and the mournful dashing of waves along the friths and lakes!

Having, at the commencement of this sketch, alluded to Burns' eldest son, we shall here subjoin a pleasing and spirited copy of verses by that gentleman, on the accession of Queen Victoria. Poetical talent is seldom hereditary, but we believe our readers will admit that at least a small portion of Burns' lyrical genius has descended to his son.

#### "THE GATHERING OF SCOTLAND.

Air—*The Campbells are coming.*

"Oh, come ye to welcome our gallant young queen!  
Oh, come ye to welcome our gallant young queen!  
Of the blue-bell and gowan, and thistle so green,  
Oh twine ye a wreath for our gallant young queen!  
Let the lion of Scotland wave bright in the gale,  
With the cross of her glory all stainless and pale;  
Let them shine o'er our hills and our valleys so green,  
As they shone o'er the sires of our gallant young queen.  
Oh, come ye, etc.

With the spear of his fathers the Johnstone shall ride,  
The spears of the Border shall gleam at his side;  
The Flowers of the Forest in pride shall be seen,  
The men of Buccleuch, round our gallant young queen.  
Oh, come ye, etc.

The Gordon shall march through the mist and the dew;  
And Douglas, the noble, the tender and true;  
The Grene and the Ramsay the battle shall glean  
With the swords of their fame for our gallant young queen.  
Oh, come ye, etc.

Mac Garadh his banner with pride shall display,  
With its well-crimson'd buckler of Luncarty's day;  
Argyll and Breadalbane in might shall convene  
Clan-Dermid's bold race round our gallant young queen.  
Oh, come ye, etc.

Like the mist of Ben Nevis, that darkens the glen,  
The clansmen shall shadow the heather again;  
The swords of their chieftains in light shall be seen,  
Like the sunbeams of war, round our gallant young queen.  
Oh, come ye, etc.

The fir on our mountains in triumph shall wave,  
Our mountains where wander the free and the brave,  
With the oak of Old England, majestic and green.  
True Liberty's tree, o'er our gallant young queen!  
Oh, come ye, etc.

#### REMARKABLE DREAMS.

There are various classes of dreams, which present interesting subjects of observation. One class includes those in which a strong propensity of character, or a strong mental emotion, is embodied into a dream; and by some natural coincidence is fulfilled. A murderer, mentioned by Mr. Combe, had dreamt of committing murder, some years before the event happened; and Dr. Abercrombie received from a distinguished officer to whom it occurred, the following history; in which a dream of a very improbable kind was fulfilled, ten years after it took place, and when the dream was entirely forgotten. At the age of between fourteen and fifteen, being then living in England, he dreamt that he had ascended the crater of Mount Etna; that, not contented with what he saw on the outside, he determined to descend into the interior; and proceeded accordingly. About the top, there seemed to be a good deal of flame and smoke; but a short way down, all was quite; and he managed to descend by means of steps, like the holes in a pigeon-house. His footing, however, soon gave way; and he awoke in all the horrors of having nearly suffered the fate of the philosopher Empedocles. In the year 1811, being then a captain in the British army, and stationed at Messina, he made one of a party of British officers, who proceeded to visit the top of Mount Etna. By the time they reached the bottom of the cone, several of the party became so unwell, that they could proceed no farther; but this gentleman, accompanied by two other officers, and two guides, proceeded upwards; and, after a severe scramble of several hours, they reached the summit, in time to witness the rising of the sun. "After having rested for an hour," said the officer, "and had something to eat, I said to my companions—'We are now on the top of this famous crater; why should we not pay a visit to the bottom?' I was of course

laughed at; and on applying to the guides to know if they would accompany me, they said—'We have always heard that the English are mad; but now we know it.' I was not, however, to be put off; and, being strong and active, determined to go alone, but Captain M. at last agreed to go with me. The guides would not assist in any way. The circumference of the crater is about three miles outside; the interior is like a large amphitheatre; with an area of about an acre, I should say, at the bottom. It is only towards the upper lips of the crater, that smoke now issues; no eruption having taken place from the bottom for very many years. At one particular part of the crater the matter had given way, and slid down; so as to form a sloping bank to the very bottom. To this point we proceeded, and found our descent easy enough; and without much difficulty, or any great danger, we stood in the course of an hour, to the no small astonishment of the guides, on the very lowest stone on the inside of the crater of Mount Etna. In the centre is a large hole, like an old draw-wall; partly filled up with large stones and ashes. Our ascent was tremendous, and the fatigue excessive. I suppose we were at least five hundred feet below the lowest part of the upper mouth of the crater; and as our footing was entirely on ashes, and stuff which gave way, the struggle upwards was a trial of *bottom*, which I believe very few would have gone through. We reached the top much exhausted, but very proud of our achievement; and we had the satisfaction to learn at Catania, that we were not only the first that ever went down, but the first who had ever thought of it. When in bed that night, but not asleep, the dream of ten years back came to my recollection for the first time; and it does appear to me remarkable, that I should have dreamt of what I never could have heard of as possible; and that ten years afterward, I should accomplish what no one ever had attempted, and what was looked upon by the natives as an impossibility."

To this part of the subject we are to refer those instances, many of them authentic, in which a dream has given notice of an event which was occurring at the time, or occurred soon afterward. The following story has been long mentioned in Edinburgh; and there seems no reason to doubt its authenticity. A clergyman had come to this city, from a short distance in the country, and was sleeping at an inn; when he dreamt of seeing a fire, and one of his children in the midst of it. He awoke with the impression, and instantly left town on his return home. When he arrived within sight of his house, he found it on fire; and got there in time to assist in saving one of his children; who, in the alarm and confusion, had been left in a situation of danger. Without calling in question the possibility of a supernatural communication in such cases, this striking occurrence may perhaps be accounted for on simple and natural principles. Let us suppose that the gentleman had a servant, who had shown great carelessness in regard to fire, and had often given rise in his mind to a strong apprehension that he might set fire to the house. His anxiety might be increased by being from home; and the same circumstance might make the servant still more careless. Let us further suppose that the gentleman, before going to bed, had in addition to his anxiety suddenly recollected, that there was on that day, in the neighbourhood of his house, some fair or periodical merry-making, from which the servant was very likely to return home in a state of intoxication. It was most natural that these impressions should be embodied into a dream of a house being on fire; and that the same circumstances might lead to the dream being fulfilled.

FASHION constantly begins and ends in the two things it abhors most, singularity and vulgarity. It is the perpetual setting up and then disowning a certain standard of taste, elegance, and refinement, which has no other formation or authority than that it is the prevailing distraction of the moment; which was yesterday ridiculous from its being new, and to-morrow will be odious from its being common. It is one of the most slight and insignificant of all things. It cannot be lasting, for it depends on the constant change and shifting of its own harlequin disguises; it could not depend on the breath of caprice; it must be superficial, to produce its immediate effect on the gaping crowd; and frivolous to admit of its being assumed at pleasure, by the numbers of those who affect, by being in the fashion, to be distinguished from the rest of the world. It is not anything in itself, nor the sign of anything, but the folly and vanity of those who rely upon it as their greatest pride and ornament. It takes the firmest hold of weak, flimsy, and narrow minds, of those whose emptiness conceives of nothing excellent but what is thought so by others, and whose self-conceit makes them willing to confine the opinion of all excellence to themselves, and those like them. That which is true or beautiful in itself, is not the less so for standing alone. That which is good for anything, is the better for being more widely diffused. But fashion is the abortive issue of vain ostentation and exclusive egotism; it is haughty, trifling, affected, servile, despotic, mean, and ambitious, precise and fantastical, all in a breath—tied to no rule, and bound to conform to every whim of the minute.

"The fashion of an hour marks the wearer."

William Hazlitt.