

either to be considered as a teacher, or nothing." And again to his friends who revered him, when they complained bitterly of the injustice of the public;—"Make yourselves at rest respecting me; I speak the truths the world must feel at last." The world's taste had been vitiated; but the only way in which you can make an old toper appreciate pure water, is by giving him pure water to drink for a considerable time. Poetry had abandoned its high mission of teaching the world, and trusted to "perfumers' and milliners' shops" rather than to nature and the immortal in man; to jingle and glitter, to "storm and stress" rather than to the vision and the faculty divine? If the poet wished to interest, he did not choose a subject that appealed to men's ordinary experience and feelings. No: every thing at home was hackneyed; the farther away he went the better. And so at last the world was getting nothing but "veiled prophets of Khorassan," and Ghebres, and Giaours and Corsairs, and blood and thunder. And what then could the world make of a poet to whom

"The meanest flower that blows could give
Thoughts do often lie too deep for tears,"

or of an epic, the hero of which was an old Scotch pedlar! What could a critic like Jeffry, who though a "smart man" had as much poetry in him as a saw-mill has, make of it, when as he snarled, "the other persons of the drama are, a retired military chaplain, grown half an atheist and half a misanthrope, the wife of an unfortunate weaver, a servant girl with her natural child, a parish pauper, and one or two other personages of equal rank and dignity." The vulgarity was frightful; equal almost to that of the Bible. In fact as Coleridge had early told Wordsworth, "every author as far as he is great and at the same time original must create the taste by which he is to be enjoyed," a profound remark that suggests much to me. We can hardly understand now the Revolution that "the Lakers" as they were absurdly called, effected, or how utterly fallen was the public taste then, or how absurd the recognized canons of criticism. You have all read "We are Seven." Well, think of friend James Tobin imploring Wordsworth not to publish that, "as it would make him everlastingly ridiculous": or of the gentleman who when the "Cumberland Beggar" was read to him, said, "Why, that is very pretty: but you may call it *anything but poetry*." But the world did "feel at last." In 1817 Blackwood's Magazine was started, with men on its staff who judged poetry not by the Jeffery canons; and in the very next year John Wilson came forth in its pages to proclaim again and again what manner of man he had found Wordsworth to be; and the tide turned, and to what extent may be judged from the reception he received at Oxford in 1839, when he and Bunsen went up to receive the degrees that had been conferred on them. Dr. Arnold