

P R E F A C E.

WHEN an author writes a preface to a fifth edition of his book, he generally plumes himself on the success which a fifth edition implies; but so far from indulging in any exultancy on the subject, I confess that, were the following pages to be submitted to the world for the first time, I should fear to publish them; for I feel there are many among them unequal to bear the test of a strict criticism, if considered as merely literary productions. At the same time, I venture to believe that, in this continued and enlarged publication, some are sufficiently readable to save me from the charge of presumption.

This volume is not put forth to court a *new* celebrity. It is but a collection of compositions, most of them *old* in public favor; and though they are, therefore, almost beyond the perilous pale of the critic, still would I say a few words to some who may read them for the first time, divorced from the music to which they have been wedded.

In the first place, I would beg to remind the critic that a song, as a peculiar sort of composition, must not be measured by ordinary rules of criticism. The song-writer is limited within many bounds to which other writers are not restricted. The song-writer's work must be within a small compass; so far he must have the power of condensing—a great quality, which if he possess, allowance ought