

were strictly and literally *true*. This I have myself heard from an eye-witness, who could not have been swayed by any leanings towards the anti-puritan side ; and, doubtless, many others are aware of testimony on the same side of equal weight.

We may hope that the time is passing away when the more exceptional parts of Burns's character and writings are capable of working mischief, at least among the higher and middle classes. It is cause of thankfulness that in regard to such, and with him as with others, there is a sort of purifying process going on, which leaves the higher and finer elements of genius to float buoyantly, and fulfil their own destiny in the universal plan, while the grosser are left to sink like lead in the mighty waters. Thus it is in those portions of society already refined and elevated. But there is yet a portion of the lower strata where midnight orgies continue to prevail, and where every idea of pleasure is connected with libertinism and the bottle ; and there the worst productions of Burns are no doubt still rife, and working as a deadly poison. Even to a superior class of working-men, who are halting between two opinions, there is danger from the very mixture of good and evil in the character and writings of the poet. They cannot forget that he who wrote

"The cock may crow, the day may daw,
Yet still we'll taste the barley bree,"

wrote likewise the immortal song,

"A man's a man for a' that";

and they determine, or are in danger of determining, to follow the ob-