

ally as to the proud patrician, or the titled representative of a long line of illustrious ancestry. She is no respecter of persons; and all other distinctions yield to the title which her favors confer. The names, be they ever so humble, which she illustrates, need no other decoration to recommend them; and hence even that of our 'journeyman mason' may yet be destined to take its place with those of men who, like him, first poured their 'wood-notes wild' in the humblest and lowliest sphere of life, but, raised into deathless song, have become familiar as household words to all who love and admire the unsophisticated productions of native genius." The late Dr. James Browne of Edinburgh, author of the "History of the Highlands," and working Editor of the "Encyclopedia Britannica," was, as I afterwards learned, the writer of this over-eulogistic, but certainly, in the circumstances, generous critique.

Ultimately I found my circle of friends very considerably enlarged by the publication of my Verses and Letters. Mr. Isaac Forsyth of Elgin, the brother and biographer of the well-known Joseph Forsyth, whose classical volume on Italy still holds its place as perhaps the best work to which the traveller of taste in that country can commit himself, exerted himself, as the most influential of north-country booksellers, with disinterested kindness in my behalf. The late Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, too, resident at that time at his seat at Relugas in Moray, lent me, unsolicited, his influence; and, distinguished by his fine taste and literary ability, he ventured to pledge both in my favor. I also received much kindness from the late Miss Dunbar of Boath,—a literary lady of the high type of the last age, and acquainted in the best literary circles; but who, now late in life, admitted among her select friends one friend more, and cheered me with many a kind letter, and invited my frequent visits to her hospitable mansion. If, in my course as a working man, I never incurred pecuniary obligations, and never spent a shilling for which I had not previously labored, it was certainly not from want of opportunity afforded me. Miss Dunbar meant what she said, and oftener than once did she press her purse on my acceptance. I received