

and care which high excellence demands from even the happiest geniuses, in order to become one of the enduring lights of British song.—*December 20, 1856.*

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## THE UNTAUGHT POETS.

IN more than one respect the untaught poets of England have fared better than those of our own country. In the first place, Southey,—perhaps the raciest English writer of his day,—wrote their history, and made not a few of them known, who had succeeded but indifferently in making known themselves; and in the second, we find from his narratives that, with few exceptions, their poetry served them as a sort of stepping-stone, by which they escaped upwards from the condition of hard labour and obscurity to which they seemed born, into a sphere of comparative affluence and comfort. For one of the first of their number,—John Taylor, the “Water Poet,”—a man who was certainly not a water-poet in the teetotal sense,—nothing could have been done. He was a bold, rough, roystering fellow, quite as famous for his feats and wagers as for his rhymes. On one occasion he navigated his cockle-shell of a wherry all the way from London Bridge to York; on another, he rowed it across the German Sea from London to Hamburg; on yet another, in 1618, he undertook to travel from London to Edinburgh, and thence into the Highlands,—“not carrying money to or fro, neither begging, borrowing, nor asking meat, drink, or lodging;” and what he undertook to do he did, and bequeathed to us, in his history of his “Pennyless Pilgrimage,” the best account extant of hunting in the Highlands by the “Tinckhell,” and of the “wolves and wild horses” which, at even that compa-