

sessed of the true faculty, was a small man compared with Robert Burns ; and the Ducks, Woodhouses, Bryants, and Bennets, were slim and stunted of stature, compared with the Falconers, Tannahills, Wilsons, Allan Cunninghams, and Hoggs. In this, as in other walks, though English genius of the highest class takes the first place in the literature of the world, its genius of the second class fails to equal second-class genius in Scotland. There have been poets among our countrymen whose lives no one thinks of writing, and whose verses have failed to attract any very large share of notice, who possessed powers greatly superior to most of the authors enumerated by Southey in his *Essay on the Uneducated Poets*, and who, had they written in England, would have been extensively known. To one of these, still among us, we find pleasing reference made in the correspondence of Jeffrey. "The greater part of your poems," we find him saying, in a note to the self-taught poet Alexander Maclagan, "I have perused with singular gratification. I can remember when the appearance of such a work would have produced a great sensation, and secured to its author both distinction and more solid advantages." And in another note, written in reference chiefly to a second and enlarged edition of Mr Maclagan's poems, and which occurs in the volume of "Correspondence" edited by Lord Cockburn, we find the distinguished critic specifying the pieces which pleased him most. "I have already," says his Lordship, "read all [the poems] on the slips, and think them, on the whole, fully equal to those in the former volume. I am most pleased, I believe, with that which you have entitled 'Sisters' Love,' which is at once very touching, very graphic, and very elegant. Your 'Summer Sketches' have beautiful passages in all of them, and a pervading joyousness and kindness of feeling, as well as a vein of grateful devotion, which must recommend them to all good minds. The 'Scorched Flowers' I thought the most picturesque."