

undergo a much longer probationary period ere they can elevate themselves into notice. James Ferguson was nearly forty ere he began to give public lectures on his favourite subjects, astronomy and mechanics. Franklin was in his forty-third year ere he had demonstrated the identity of lightning with the electric spark ; and not until he had attained the same age did Sir William Herschel render himself known as a great astronomer, and the discoverer of a new planet. Both in national and individual history, poetry is of early, and science of late growth ; the self-taught poet is not unfrequently developed at as early an age as men of a similar cast of genius who have enjoyed all the advantages of complete culture ; judging from the experience of the past, he need not lose a single year of life ; whereas the self-taught man of science may deem himself more than usually fortunate if he does not lose at least ten.

We have said, that in some respects we prefer Mr Mac-lagan's second publication, the "Ragged School Rhymes," to his first. It is, in the main, a more earnest, and, in the poetic sense, more truthful work. When the poet, in his earlier volume, sings, as he does at times, though rarely, of drinking "cronies" and usages, we know that he is catching but the dying echoes of a bypast time, when there was not a little staggering on the top of Parnassus, and Helicon used to run at times, like a town cistern on an election-day, whisky-punch by the hour. But there is none of this in the other volume. The distress which it exhibits, the sympathy which it expresses, the views of nature which it embodies, are all realities of the present day. The earlier volume, however, contains more thinking ; and the possession of both are necessary to the man desirous of rightly appreciating the untaught poet Maclagan. We find some little difficulty in selecting from the "Ragged School Rhymes" an appropriate specimen, not from the poverty, but from the wealth, of the