

be satisfied by the world-wide, ever-enduring fame of the poet, and that the humbler and not less unsubstantial shadow of future life which one lives in one's children and their descendants is at least not more satisfying in its nature, and that it lies greatly more open than the other to the blight of accident and the influence of decay.

Judging from the history of the past, there is no class of men less entitled to indulge in the peculiar hope of Shakspeare and Sir Walter Scott than the greater poets,—men whose blow of faculty, ratiocinative and imaginative, has attained to the fullest development at which, in the human species, it ever arrives. Has the reader ever bethought him how exceedingly few of the poets of the two last centuries have bequeathed their names to posterity through their descendants? No doubt, by much the greater part of them,—ill-hafted in society, and little careful how they guided their course,—were solitary men, who, without even more than their characteristic imprudence, could not have grappled with the inevitable expense of a family. Thus it was that Cowley, Butler, and Otway died childless, with Prior and Congreve, Gay, Phillips, and Savage, Thomson, Collins, and Shenstone, Akenside, Goldsmith, and Gray. Pope, Swift, Watts, and Cowper, were also unmated, solitary men; and Johnson had no child. Even the poets in more favourable circumstances, who could not say in the desponding vein of poor Kirke White,—

“ I sigh when all my happier friends caress,—
 They laugh in health, and future evils brave ;
 Them shall a wife and smiling children bless,
 While I am mould'ring in the silent grave,”—

even of this more fortunate class, how very few were happy in their offspring! The descendants of Dryden, Addison, and Parnell, did not pass into the second generation; those of Shakspeare and Milton became extinct in the second and