AN UNSURPASSED HYMN.

[In the *New Englander* for August, 1866, Dr. Bacon pronounces the following exquisite hymn unsurpassed in English or any other language, and adds that "perhaps it is as near perfection as any uninspired language can be." It is usually ascribed to Hillhouse, the poet, i. e., Jas. A. Hillhouse, but according to Dr. Bacon, it was written by his younger brother, Augustus L. Hillhouse, who died near Paris, in March, 1816.]

Trembling before Thine awful throne,
O Lord! in dust my sin I own.
Justice and mercy for my life
Contend! Oh! smite and heal the strife.

The Saviour smiles! upon my soul
Hew idea of hope tumultuous roll—
His voice proclaims my pardon free,
Seraphic transport wings the song.

Earth has a joy unknown in heaven—
The new born peace of sin forgiven!
Years of such peace and deep delight!
Ye angels! never dimmed your sight.

Ye saw of old on chaos rise
The beauteous pillars of the skies;
Ye know where morn exulting springs,
And evening dies her dropping wings.

Bright heralds of the Eternal Will,
Abroad His errand ye fulfill;
Or, throned in floods of beauty day,
Symphonious in his presence play.

Lend is the song—the heavenly plain
Echoes with the triumphant strain;
And dying echoes, floating far,
Draw music from the silent star.

But I amid your choir shall shine,
And your newborn delight be mine;
Ye on your harps your joy express,
A secret chord in that mine will bear.

BURNS'S FIRST BOSOM FRIEND.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

We all know the sort of life Burns lived at Lochlea; how hard he worked, how he thought and drank, and what sort of inspiration he found among his *fellettes* and boon-companions; how all the country-side admired him, and how he was reduced to comparative beggary; how soon after he had to fit on the farm of Ellisland, and how, at the call of the parish church, and to what the agreeable rank of schoolmaster, he was elected the situations afterwards gave rise. What between the Freemasons' Lodges and the Tarbolton Bachelors Club, he had plenty to do in the cold and bracing Ayrshire Uplands, as may not be generally known, were debaters—"by the young men," says a Scottish critic, "for poet, of active and inquiring intellect", and there meetings, held at least, at funeral and wedding, went Muzie, tucked under David's arm, perhaps in a quiet nook, the company, and covered with an old green tag. How could Burns help enamored!

"Even then, a wish (I mind its power)—
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast—
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan or book should make,
Or rise a sonnet or two!"

Poor old Scotland had at least this one glorious gift to bestow—that of those wondrous melodies, woven of the echoes of her hills, the singing of her brooks, and the heart-beats of her sons and daughters, and she bestowed it on her fondest, loving Bonnie.

By all existing tokens, Davie was a canker, quieter had then his friend, and though he had an eye for the ladies, and was accused by the crusty beasties fonder and fonder of the sonnies pieces of (especially) Davie, and, haughty our merry-making; farewell, Venus, flying from a cup of whisky. Dabble they had, and down go "raw," and assumed an apron. He actually had a fierce fight under the Tollbooth in Irvine, and on it the inscription, "David Sillar, Grocer." He was a poet at work then, and when the second edition of Burns appeared, and the success of the work quite took away his breath, when all the others flashed upon him the conviction that he too was a poet, and he was awful thought that the immortal companions of his muse might have been wrd to wrap up in a short time to Burns, would be furious. Three years after the Kilmarnock publication, there was issued, from the same press, "Poems by David Sillar," and prefixed thereto was a prose introduction after the manner of Burns. But Scotland frowned upon the introduction, and Sillar, as he wondered at, if he merely take into consideration that he was a poet and studious enough to answer Burns' letters, and was, in fact, with a similar edition (Sillar, not old—now different) in praise of *notre! Very* Wairy too, were the verses in spite of a few decent cuths. The chapman was enough to have it suppressed, regardless Scotland wanted but little here below, and wanted this little strong. So Davie's poetic ambition was crushed for the time, the reason for the failure, besides the plea of "truth" to be found in the grocer's own preface: "Natural genius alone is sufficient to enable a person, not the imperfections in the works of many of poetical writers, which are ascribed to want of education, may be shown, with much justice, to be ascribed to want of genius." Genius, forsooth! Imagine a Scotchman standing, shivering in the water, and abusing poor courage-inspiring John Barleycorn in terms as strong as those of Father Maxwell himself. This, too, from a man whom Burns has called "son of heaven!" Davie he forgives at all, 'tis only for his fiddle's sake.

The publication of the poems was unfortunate, in more than one way. In the anxiety of preparing the work for the press, he neglected his business. Directly he had failed as a poet, he failed as a grocer. Bankrupt for the sum of five pounds, poor Dabbie Burns was pulled off to prison. He came forth a changed man—a wiser if not a better one. Henceforth, though he continued occasionally to rhyme in secret, he never again counted publicly. He betook himself to his old profession of shoemaker, taught grammar in it, married, and had offspring. One day in, 1, married, and had offspring. One morning he awoke and found himself with the property of a brother, who had become wealthy abroad and died leaving his Davie's heritage; and a large share of the property of another, who also died abroad, was specially added. To rumin a Dominie any longer was out of the question. Respectability bigger Davie as but one thing, to do, to be, longer our old friend Dabbie Davie. His very fiddle must have blushed for him. Chief mourner at Burns' dead to all the remonstrances of Memory, the man who had drunk and made love, who had lived over whose fiddle all the vagabond tunes of his country had and had sung, became a town counsellor of Irvine. Dabbie Davie, the poet, the man who had written Burns' epitaph, the man who had written the "Address to the Deil," the man who had drunk with Burns, became a town counsellor of Irvine. Dabbie Davie, the man who had drunk and made love, who had lived over whose fiddle all the vagabond tunes of his country had and had sung, became a town counsellor of Irvine. Dabbie Davie, the man who had written the "Address to the Deil," the man who had written the epitaph, the man who had drunk with Burns