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WORDSWORTH.

The recent death of Wordsworth affords an irresistible invitation to say something about his poetry. So long has he been before the public, that for some years past men have sat in judgment on him with almost the coolness which we ascribe to posterity. It is hard to say whether he has suffered most from his enemies or his friends. His excesses, simplicities, and almost hoaxes, such as Peter Bell, the Idiot Boy, and those Lyrical Ballads in which he did a violence to nature, and brought the Muse not only into the highway but into the very mire, together with his drowsy, dreamy, long-winded homilies in measured prose, have been embalmed and worshipped by a certain class of his admirers. This has done him more harm than Jeffrey's insulting sneers and unrighteous garbling, or than all the laughter exploded against the Lake School.

That Wordsworth will assume his place among the classic poets of England cannot be doubted for a moment. That he will occupy the same level with Shakspeare and Milton, it would be ridiculous to predict. Great contemporaries and rivals, not excepting his bitter lordly satirist, have recorded later judgments, which ought to hush the petty snarlings of

## MONOSYLLABICS.

## I.

Think not that strength lies in the big round word,  
 Or that the brief and plain must needs be weak.  
 To whom can this seem true, that once has heard  
 The cry for help, the tongue that all men speak,  
 When want or woe or fear is in the throat,  
 So that each word gasped out is like a shriek  
 Pressed from the sore heart, or a strange wild note,  
 Sung by some fay or fiend. There is a strength  
 Which dies if stretched too far or spun too fine,  
 Which has more height than breadth, more depth than  
 length.  
 Let but this force of thought and speech be mine,  
 And he that will may take the sleek fat phrase,  
 Which glows and burns not, though it gleam and shine—  
 Light, but no heat—a flash, but not a blaze!

## II.

Nor is it mere strength that the short word boasts,  
 It serves of more than fight or storm to tell,  
 The roar of waves that clash on rock-bound coasts,  
 The crash of tall trees when the wild winds swell,  
 The roar of guns, the groans of men that die  
 On blood-stained fields. It has a voice as well  
 For them that far off on their sick beds lie ;  
 For them that weep, for them that mourn the dead ;  
 For them that laugh and dance and clap the hand.  
 To joy's quick step, as well as grief's slow tread,  
 The sweet plain words we learnt at first keep time,  
 And though the theme be sad, or gay, or grand,  
 With each, with all, these may be made to chime,  
 In thought or speech or song, in prose or rhyme.

B. SHORT.

May 18, 1850.