

could not be said so decidedly of them. But we must not forget, that their compositions, though not without fault in their character as wholes, and often primed in, as a painter might say, on too thin a groundwork, contain some of the most brilliant passages in the wide range of modern poetry. To this school Gerald Massey,—a name already familiar to most of our readers,—has been held to belong. He has less of its peculiar faults, however, than any of its other members, with certainly not less of its peculiar beauties. With all the marked individuality of original genius, he reminds us more of Keats than of any other English poet ; but with the same rare perception of external beauty, and occasionally the same too extreme devotion to it, he adds a lyrical power and a depth of feeling which Keats did not possess. And from these circumstances we augur well of his future. It is ever the tendency of genuine feeling to pass from the surface of nature to its depths ; and though, as we see exemplified in the songs of Burns, the true lyrist may find in description adequate employment for his peculiar powers, it is always in preparation for some burst of sentiment, or by way of garnishing to some striking thought. Mr Massey's new poem "Craigcrook Castle" furnishes admirable illustrations of the various phases of his genius. The plan of the work is one of which our literature has furnished many examples, from the times of the "Canterbury Tales" down to those of the "Queen's Wake," and which is taken up year after year in the Christmas stories of the writers connected with the "Household Words." There is a meeting of friends at the hospitable board, over which Jeffrey once presided, and at which a man of similar literary tastes and feelings presides now ; and each guest, in passing the evening, brings forward his contribution of song or story. The introduction, with none of the cadences of Keats, reminds us in every line of that poet's delight in sensuous imagery and influ-