And yet again, with still greater beauty, if not greater energy, he says,—

> "Your life from hence immortal life shall have,
> Though I, once gone, to all the world must die.
> The earth can yield me but a common grave,
> While you, entombēd in men's eyes, shall lie.
> Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
> Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read,
> And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,
> When all the breathers of this world are dead;
> You still shall live (such virtue hath my pen)
> Where breath most breathes,—e'en in the mouths of men."

And yet this great poet, so conscious of the enduring vitality that dwelt in his verse, could find more pleasure in the idea of living in future ages in his descendants,—a sort of pleasure in which almost every Irish labourer may indulge,—than in being one of the never-dying poets of his country and the world. What may be termed the human instinct of immortality,—the natural sentiment which, when rightly directed, rests on that continuity of life in the individual in which the dark chasm of the grave makes no break or pause,—may be found, though woefully misdirected, both in the sentiment that rejoices in the prospect of posthumous celebrity, always so shadowy and unreal, and the sentiment that gloats over the fancied, delusive life which one lives in one's descendants. Shakspeare felt himself sure of posthumous cebrity; and finding it, like every sublunary good, when once fairly secured, valueless and unsatisfactory, he fixed his desires with much solicitude on the other earthly immortality, and sought to live in his offspring. It would have been well had the instinct been better directed, both in Sir Walter and his great prototype the dramatist of Avon. It would be also well, with such significant lessons before us, to be reading them aright. They tell us that the longings after immortality, in which it is the nature of man to indulge, are not to