

MONTGOMERY, JAMES, a distinguished poet, was born, November 4, 1771, at Irvine, in Ayrshire. His father was a Moravian missionary, who, leaving his son in Yorkshire to be educated, went to the West Indies, where he and the poet's mother both died. When only twelve years old, he composed some poems, but these indications of

genius could not save him from the fate of the poor, and he was sent to earn his bread as assistant in a general shop. Thirsting, however, for other occupations, he set out for the metropolis in the hope of finding a publisher for his verses. The bookseller who refused his poems made him his shopman. In 1792 he gained a post in the establishment of Mr Gales, a bookseller of Sheffield, who had set up a newspaper called the Sheffield Register. On this paper Montgomery worked *con amore*, and when his master had to fly from England for printing articles too liberal for the government, the young poet became the editor and publisher of the paper, the name of which he changed to Sheffield Iris. Soon afterwards he was prosecuted, fined, and imprisoned, for reprinting a song commemorating "The Fall of the Bastille," and for an account he gave of a riot in Sheffield. But confinement could not crush his love of justice, and on his release he went on advocating the doctrines of freedom as before in his paper and in his books. In the long interval between those

times and the present, the opinions which James Montgomery early pioneered in England have obtained general recognition, and as men became more liberal in their political views, he gradually rose in estimation. In 1797 he published "Prison Amusements;" in 1805, the "Ocean;" in 1806, the "Wanderer in Switzerland;" in 1809, "The West Indies;" and in 1812, "The World before the Flood." By these works, despite adverse criticism in the Edinburgh Review, he established his right to rank as a poet. In 1819 appeared "Greenland," a poem in five cantos; and in 1828, "The Pelican Island, and other Poems." In 1836 appeared the first edition of his collected poetical works, in three volumes; these were followed, in 1841, by another edition, in four volumes, embellished with portraits and vignettes; and lastly, in 1850, the entire collection of his poems appeared in a single volume. His latest contribution to religious literature was a volume of "Original Hymns." In 1846 Sir Robert Peel conferred on him a well-merited pension of £150 a year. Montgomery was a fervent hater of oppression and injustice. He was full of generous impulses, warm affections, and earnest longings after the welfare of his fellow-creatures. His religion was of no gloomy or sectarian character, but genial, broad, and healthy. His "Memoirs" have been published in 7 vols. Died, 1854. 242.2

On an Infant.

Art thou a Father's Child? — then live
To gladden long his sight.

Art thou a Mother's Child? — then give
Her bosom true delight.

In wisdom as in stature grow,
In love, joy, hope increase;
Stay'd be thy mind on God below,
And kept in perfect peace.

Though years bring other changes fast,
— Simple yet unbeguiled,

In Christ's sweet language to the last,
Be thou a "Little Child."

The Aunt,

Weymouth,

June 26. 1847.

J. Montgomery