Jesse is the orphan of a poor clergyman, who goes, upon her father's death, to live with a rich old lady who had been his friend; and Colin is a young farmer, whose father had speculated away an handsome property; and who, though living in a good degree by his own labour, yet wished the damsel (who half wished it also) to remain and share his humble lot. The rich lady proves to be suspicious, overbearing, and selfish; and sets Jesse upon the ignoble duty of acting the spy and informer over the other dependents of her household; on the delineation of whose characters Mr. Crabbe has lavished a prodigious power of observation and correct description:—But this not suiting her pure and ingenuous mind, she suddenly leaves the splendid mansion, and returns to her native village, where Colin and his mother soon persuade her to form one of their happy family. There is a great deal of good-heartedness in this tale, and a kind of moral beauty, which has lent more than usual elegance to the simple pictures it presents. We are tempted to extract a good part of the *denouement*.

" The pensive *Colin* in his garden stray'd,
But felt not then the beauties he display'd;
There many a pleasant object met his view,
A rising wood of oaks behind it grew;
A stream ran by it, and the village-green
And public road were from the garden seen;
Save where the pine and larch the bound'ry made,
And on the rose beds threw a soft'ning shade.
" The Mother sat beside the garden-door,
Dress'd as in times ere she and hers were poor;
The broad-lac'd cap was known in ancient days,
When Madam's dress compell'd the village praise:
And still she look'd as in the times of old;
Ere his last farm the erring husband sold;
While yet the Mansion stood in decent state,
And paupers waited at the well-known gate.
" ' Alas! my Son!' the Mother cried, ' and why
That silent grief and oft-repeated sigh?
Fain would I think that *Jesse* still may come
To share the comforts of our rustic home:
She surely lov'd thee; I have seen the maid,
When thou hast kindly brought the Vicar aid—
When thou hast eas'd his bosom of its pain,
Oh! I have seen her—she will come again.'
" The Matron ceas'd; and *Colin* stood the while
Silent, but striving for a grateful smile;
He then replied—' Ah! sure had *Jesse* stay'd,
And shar'd the comforts of our sylvan shade,' &c.
" Sighing he spake—but hark! he hears th' approach
Of rattling wheels! and lo! the evening-coach;
Once more the movement of the horses' feet
Makes the fond heart with strong emotion beat:
Faint were his hopes, but ever had the sight
Drawn him to gaze beside his gate at night;
And when with rapid wheels it hurried by,
He griev'd his parent with a hopeless sigh; [sum
And could the blessing have been bought—what
Had he not offer'd, to have *Jesse* come?
She came!—he saw her bending from the door,
Her face, her smile, and he beheld no more;
Lost in his joy! The mother lent her aid
T' assist and to detain the willing Maid;
Who thought her late, her present home to make,
Sure of a welcome for the Vicar's sake;
But the good parent was so pleas'd, so kind,
So pressing *Colin*, she so much inclin'd,
That night advanc'd; and then so long detain'd
No wishes to depart she felt, or feign'd; [main'd.
Yet long in doubt she stood, and then perforce re-
" In the mild evening, in the scene around,
The Maid, now free, peculiar beauties found;
Blended with village-tones, the evening gale
Gave the sweet night-bird's warblings to the vale;
The youth embolden'd, yet abash'd, now told
His fondest wish, nor found the Maiden cold." &c.
pp. 240, 241.

"The Struggles of Conscience," though visibly laboured, and, we should suspect, a favourite with the author, pleases us less than any tale in the volume. It is a long account of a low base fellow, who rises by mean and dishonourable arts to a sort of opulence; and, without ever committing any flagrant crime, sullies his mind with all sorts of selfish, heartless, and unworthy acts, till he becomes a prey to a kind of languid and loathsome remorse.

"The Squire and the Priest" we do not like much better. A free living and free thinking squire had been galled by the public rebukes of his unrelenting pastor, and breeds up a dependent relation of his own to succeed to his charge. The youth drinks and plays with his patron to his heart's content, during the progress of his education;—but just as the old censor dies, falls into the society of Saints, becomes a rigid and intolerant Methodist, and converts half the parish, to the infinite rage of his patron, and his own ultimate affliction.

"The Confidant" is more interesting, though not altogether pleasing. A fair one makes a slip at the early age of fifteen, which is concealed from every one but her mother and a sentimental friend, from whom she could conceal nothing. Her after life is pure and exemplary; and at twenty-five she is married to a worthy man, with whom she lives in perfect innocence and concord for many happy years. At last, the confidant of her childhood, whose lot has been less prosperous, starts up and importunes her for money—not forgetting to hint at the fatal secret of which she is the depository. After agonising and plundering her for years, she at last comes and settles herself in her house, and embitters her whole existence by her selfish threats and ungenerous extortions. The husband, who had been greatly disturbed at the change in his wife's temper and spirits, at last accidentally overhears enough to put him in possession of the fact; and resolving to forgive a fault so long past, and so well repaired, takes occasion to intimate his knowledge of it, and his disdain of the false confidant, in an ingenious apologue—which, however is plain enough to drive the pestilent visiter from his house, and to restore peace and confidence to the bosom of his grateful wife.

"Resentment" is one of the pieces in which Mr. Crabbe has exercised his extraordinary powers of giving pain—though not gratuitously in this instance, nor without inculcating a strong lesson of forgiveness and compassion. A middle-aged merchant marries a lady of good fortune, and persuades her to make it all over to him when he is on the eve of bankruptcy. He is reduced to utter beggary; and his wife bitterly and deeply resenting the wrong he had done her, renounces all connection with him, and endures her own reverses with magnanimity. At last a distant relation leaves her his fortune; and she returns to the enjoyment of moderate wealth, and the exercise of charity—to all but her miserable husband. Broken by age and disease, he now begs the waste sand from the stone-cutters, and sells it on an ass through the streets:—

——" And from each trifling gift
Made shift to live—and wretched was the shift."

The unrelenting wife descries him creeping through the wet at this miserable employment; but still withholds all relief; in spite of the touching entreaties of her compassionate handmaid, whose nature is as kind and yielding as that of her mistress is hard and inflexible. Of all the pictures of mendicant poverty that have ever been brought forward in prose or verse—in charity sermons or seditious harangues—we know of none half so moving or complete—so powerful and so true—as is contained in the following passages:—

" A dreadful winter came; each day severe,
Misty when mild, and icy-cold when clear;
And still the humble dealer took his load,
Returning slow, and shivering on the road:
The Lady, still relentless, saw him come,
And said,—' I wonder, has the Wretch a home!'
' A hut! a hovel!'—' Then his fate appears
To suit his crime.'—' Yes, Lady, not his years;—
No! nor his sufferings—nor that form decay'd.'—
' The snow,' quoth *Susan*, ' falls upon his bed—
It blows beside the thatch—it melts upon his head.'—
' 'Tis weakness, child, for grieving guilt to feel.'
' Yes, but he never sees a wholesome meal;
Through his bare dress appears his shrivel'd skin,
And ill he fares without, and worse within:
With that weak body, lame, diseas'd and slow,
What cold, pain, peril, must the suff'rer know!—
Oh! how those flakes of snow their entrance win
Through the poor rags, and keep the frost within!
His very heart seems frozen as he goes,
Leading that starv'd companion of his woes:
He tried to pray—his lips, I saw them move,
And he so turn'd his piteous looks above;
But the fierce wind the willing heart opposed,
And, ere he spoke, the lips in mis'ry clos'd!
When reach'd his home, to what a cheerless fire
And chilling bed will those cold limbs retire!
Yet ragged, wretched as it is, that bed
Takes half the space of his contracted shed;
I saw the thorns beside the narrow grate,
With straw collected in a putrid state:
There will he, kneeling, strive the fire to raise,
And *that* will warm him rather than the blaze;
The sullen, smoky blaze, that cannot last
One moment after his attempt is past:
And I so warmly and so purely laid,
To sink to rest!—indeed, I am afraid!' "
pp. 320—322.

The Lady at last is moved, by this pleading pity, to send him a little relief; but has no sooner dismissed her delighted messenger, than she repents of her weakness, and begins to harden her heart again by the recollection of his misconduct.

" Thus fix'd, she heard not her Attendant glide
With soft slow step—till, standing by her side,
The trembling Servant gasp'd for breath, and shed
Relieving tears, then uttered—' He is dead!'
" ' Dead!' said the startled Lady. ' Yes, he fell
Close at the door where he was wont to dwell.
There his sole friend, the Ass, was standing by,
Half dead himself, to see his Master die.' "
pp. 324, 325.

"The Convert" is rather dull—though it teaches a lesson that may be useful in these fanatic times. John Dighton was bred a blackguard; and we have here a most lively and complete description of the items that go to the composition of that miscellaneous character; but being sore reduced by a long fever, falls into the hands of the Methodists, and becomes an exemplary convert. He is then set up by the congregation in a small stationer's shop; and, as he begins to thrive in business, adds worldly literature to the evangelical tracts which composed his original stock in trade. This scandalises the brethren; and John, having no principles or knowledge, falls out with the sect, and can never settle in the creed of any other; and so lives perplexed and discontented—and dies in agitation and terror.

"The Brothers" restores us again to human sympathies. The characters, though humble, are admirably drawn, and the baser of them, we fear, the most strikingly natural. An open-hearted generous sailor had a poor, sneaking, cunning, selfish brother, to whom he remitted all his prize-money, and gave all the arrears of his pay—receiving, in return, vehement professions of gratitude, and false protestations of regard. At last, the sailor is disabled in action, and discharged; just as his heartless brother has secured a small office by sycophancy, and made a prudent marriage with a congenial temper. He seeks the shelter of his brother's house as freely as he would have given it; and does not at first perceive the coldness of his reception.—But mortifications grow upon him day by day. His grog is expensive, and his pipe makes the wife sick; then his voice is so loud, and his manners so rough, that her friends cannot visit her if he appears at table! So he is banished by degrees to a garret; where he falls sick, and has no consolation but in the kindness of one of his nephews, a little boy, who administers to his comforts, and listens to his stories with a delighted attention. This too, however, is at last interdicted by his hard-hearted parents; and the boy is obliged to steal privately to his disconsolate uncle. One day his father catches him at his door; and, after beating him back, proceeds to deliver a severe rebuke to his brother for encouraging the child in disobedience—when he finds the unconscious culprit released by death from his despicable insults and reproaches! The great art of the story consists in the plausible excuses with which the ungrateful brother always contrives to cover his wickedness. This cannot be exemplified in an extract; but we shall give a few lines as a specimen.

" Cold as he grew, still *Isaac* strove to show,
By well-feign'd care, that cold he could not grow;
And when he saw his Brother look distress'd,
He strove some petty comforts to suggest;
On his Wife solely their neglect to lay,
And then t' excuse it as a woman's way;
He too was chidden when her rules he broke,
And then she sicken'd at the scent of smoke! [find
" *George*, though in doubt, was still consol'd to
His Brother wishing to be reckon'd kind:
That *Isaac* seem'd concern'd by his distress.

Gave to his injur'd feelings some redress;
But none he found dispos'd to lend an ear
To stories, all were once intent to hear!
Except his Nephew, seated on his knee,
He found no creature car'd about the sea; [boy,
But *George* indeed—for *George* they'd call'd the
When his good uncle was their boast and joy—
Would listen long, and would contend with sleep,
To hear the woes and wonders of the deep;
Till the fond mother cried—'That man will teach
The foolish boy his loud and boisterous speech.'
So judg'd the Father—and the boy was taught
To shun the Uncle, whom his love had sought."
pp. 368, 369.

"At length he sicken'd, and this duteous Child
Watch'd o'er his sickness, and his pains beguil'd;
The Mother bade him from the loft refrain,
But, though with caution, yet he went again;
And now his tales the sailor feebly told,
His heart was heavy, and his limbs were cold!
The tender boy came often to entreat
His good kind friend would of his presents eat:
Purloin'd or purchased, for he saw, with shame,
The food untouch'd that to his Uncle came;
Who, sick in body and in mind, receiv'd
The Boy's indulgence, gratified and griev'd!
"Once in a week the Father came to say,
'*George*, are you ill?'—and hurried him away;
Yet to his wife would on their duties dwell,
And often cry, 'Do use my brother well;'
And something kind, no question, *Isaac* meant,
And took vast credit for the vague intent.
"But, truly kind, the gentle Boy essay'd
To cheer his Uncle, firm, although afraid;
But now the Father caught him at the door,
And, swearing——yes, the Man in Office swore,
And cried, 'Away!—How! Brother, I'm surpris'd,
That one so old can be so ill advis'd,'" &c.
pp. 370—371.

After the catastrophe, he endures deserved remorse and anguish.

"He takes his Son, and bids the boy unfold
All the good Uncle of his feelings told,
All he lamented—and the ready tear
Falls as he listens, sooth'd, and griev'd to hear.
"'Did he not curse me, child?'—'He never curs'd,
But could not breathe, and said his heart would
burst:'— [pray;
'And so will mine!'—'Then, Father, you must
My Uncle said it took his pains away.'"—p. 374.

The last tale in the volume, entitled, "The Learned Boy," is not the most interesting in the collection; though it is not in the least like what its title would lead us to expect. It is the history of a poor, weakly, paltry lad, who is sent up from the country to be a clerk in town; and learns by slow degrees to affect freethinking, and to practise dissipation. Upon the tidings of which happy conversion his father, a worthy old farmer, orders him down again to the country, where he harrows up the soul of his pious grandmother by his infidel prating—and his father reforms him at once by burning his idle books, and treating him with a vigorous course of horsewhipping. There is some humour in this tale;—and a great deal of nature and art, especially in the delineation of this slender clerk's gradual corruption—and in the constant and constitutional predominance of weakness and folly, in all his vice and virtue—his piety and profaneness.

We have thus gone through the better part of this volume with a degree of minuteness for which we are not sure that even our poetical readers will all be disposed to thank us. But considering Mr. Crabbe as, upon the whole, the most original writer who has ever come before us; and being at the same time of opinion, that his writings are destined to a still more extensive popularity than they have yet obtained, we could not resist the temptation of contributing our little aid to the fulfilment of that destiny. It is chiefly for the same reason that we have directed our remarks rather to the moral than the literary qualities of his works;—to his genius at least, rather than his taste—and to his thoughts rather than his figures of speech. By far the most remarkable thing in his writings, is the prodigious mass of original observations and reflections they every where exhibit; and that extraordinary power of conceiving and representing an imaginary object, whether physical or intellectual, with such a rich and complete accompaniment of circumstances and details, as few ordinary observers either perceive or remember in realities; a power which, though often greatly misapplied, must for ever entitle him to the very first rank among descriptive poets; and, when directed to worthy objects, to a rank inferior to none in the highest departments of poetry.

In such an author, the attributes of style and versification may fairly be considered as secondary;—and yet, if we were to go minutely into them, they would afford room for a still longer chapter than that which we are now concluding. He cannot be said to be uniformly, or even generally, an elegant writer. His style is not dignified—and neither very pure nor very easy. Its characters are force, precision, and familiarity;—now and then obscure—sometimes vulgar, and sometimes quaint. With a great deal of tenderness, and occasional fits of the sublime of despair and agony, there is a want of habitual fire, and of a tone of enthusiasm in the general tenor of his writings. He seems to recollect rather than invent; and frequently brings forward his statements more in the temper of a cautious and conscientious witness, than of a fervent orator or impassioned spectator. His similes are almost all elaborate and ingenious, and rather seem to be furnished from the efforts of a fanciful mind, than to be exhaled by the spontaneous ferment of a heated imagination. His versification again is frequently harsh and heavy, and his diction flat and prosaic;—both seeming to be altogether neglected in his zeal for the accuracy and complete rendering of his conceptions. These defects too are infinitely greater in his recent than in his early compositions. "The Village" is written, upon the whole, in a flowing and sonorous strain of versification; and "Sir Eustace Grey," though a late publication, is in general remarkably rich and melodious. It is chiefly in his narratives and curious descriptions that these faults of diction and measure are conspicuous. Where he is warmed by his subject, and becomes fairly indignant or pathetic, his language is often very sweet and beautiful. He has no fixed system or manner of versification; but mixes several very opposite styles, as it were by accident, and not in general very judiciously;—what is peculiar to himself is not good, and strikes us as being both abrupt and affected.

He may profit, if he pleases, by these hints—and, if he pleases, he may laugh at them. It is no great matter. If he will only write a few more Tales of the kind we have suggested at the beginning of this article, we shall engage for it that he shall have our praises—and those of more fastidious critics—whatever be the qualities of his style or versification.

(July, 1819.)

Tales of the Hall. By the Reverend George Crabbe. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 670. London: 1819.

Mr. Crabbe is the greatest *mannerist*, perhaps, of all our living poets; and it is rather unfortunate that the most prominent features of his mannerism are not the most pleasing. The homely, quaint, and prosaic style—the flat, and often broken and jingling versification—the eternal full-lengths of low and worthless characters—with their accustomed garnishings of sly jokes and familiar moralising—are all on the surface of his writings; and are almost unavoidably the things by which we are first reminded of him, when we take up any of his new productions. Yet they are *not* the things that truly constitute his peculiar manner; or give that character by which he will, and ought to be, remembered with future generations. It is plain enough, indeed, that these are things that will make nobody remembered—and can never, therefore, be really characteristic of some of the most original and powerful poetry that the world has ever seen.

Mr. C., accordingly, has other gifts; and those not less peculiar or less strongly marked than the blemishes with which they are contrasted; an unrivalled and almost magical power of observation, resulting in descriptions so true to nature as to strike us rather as transcripts than imitations—an anatomy of character and feeling not less exquisite and searching—an occasional touch of matchless tenderness—and a deep and dreadful pathetic, interspersed by fits, and strangely interwoven with the most minute and humble of his details. Add to all this the sure and profound sagacity of the remarks with which he every now and then startles us in the midst of very unambitious discussions;—and the weight and terseness of the maxims which he drops, like oracular responses, on occasions that give no promise of such a revelation;—and last, though not least, that sweet and seldom sounded chord of Lyrical inspiration, the lightest touch of which instantly charms away all harshness from his numbers, and all lowness from his themes—and at once exalts him to a level with the most energetic and inventive poets of his age.

These, we think, are the true characteristics of the genius of this great writer; and it is in their mixture with the oddities and defects to which we have already alluded, that the peculiarity of his manner seems to us substantially to consist. The ingredients may all of them be found, we suppose, in other writers; but their combination—in such proportions at least as occur in this instance—may safely be pronounced to be original.

Extraordinary, however, as this combination must appear, it does not seem very difficult to conceive in what way it may have arisen, and, so far from regarding it as a proof of singular humorousness, caprice, or affectation in the individual, we are rather inclined to hold that something approaching to it must be the natural result of a long habit of observation in a man of genius, possessed of that temper and disposition which is the usual accompaniment of such a habit; and that the same strangely compounded and apparently incongruous assemblage of themes and sentiments would be frequently produced under such circumstances—if authors had oftener the courage to write from their own impressions, and had less fear of the laugh or wonder of the more shallow and barren part of their readers.

A great talent for observation, and a delight in the exercise of it—the power and the practice of dissecting and disentangling that subtle and complicated tissue, of habit, and self-love, and affection, which constitute human character—seems to us, in all cases, to imply a contemplative, rather than an active disposition. It can only exist, indeed, where there is a good deal of social sympathy; for, without this, the occupation could excite no interest, and afford no satisfaction—but only such a measure and sort of sympathy as is gratified by being a spectator, and not an actor on the great theatre of life—and leads its possessor rather to look with eagerness on the feats and the fortunes of others, than to take a share for himself in the game that is played before him. Some stirring and vigorous spirits there are, no doubt, in which this taste and talent is combined with a more thorough and effective sympathy; and leads to the study of men's characters by an actual and hearty participation in their various passions and pursuits;—though it is to be remarked, that when such persons embody their observations in writing, they will generally be found to exhibit their characters in action, rather than to describe them in the abstract; and to let their various personages disclose themselves and their peculiarities, as it were spontaneously, and without help or preparation, in their ordinary conduct and speech—of all which we have a very splendid and striking example in the

Tales of My Landlord, and the other pieces of that extraordinary writer. In the common case, however, a great observer, we believe, will be found, pretty certainly, to be a person of a shy and retiring temper—who does not mingle enough with the people he surveys, to be heated with their passions, or infected with their delusions—and who has usually been led, indeed, to take up the office of a looker on, from some little infirmity of nerves, or weakness of spirits, which has unfitted him from playing a more active part on the busy scene of existence.

Now, it is very obvious, we think, that this contemplative turn, and this alienation from the vulgar pursuits of mankind, must in the first place, produce a great contempt for most of those pursuits, and the objects they seek to obtain—a levelling of the factitious distinctions which human pride and vanity have established in the world, and a mingled scorn and compassion for the lofty pretensions under which men so often disguise the nothingness of their chosen occupations. When the many-coloured scene of life, with all its petty agitations, its shifting pomps, and perishable passions, is surveyed by one who does not mix in its business, it is impossible that it should not appear a very pitiable and almost ridiculous affair; or that the heart should not echo back the brief and emphatic exclamation of the mighty dramatist—

——"Life's a poor player,
Who frets and struts his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more!"—

Or the more sarcastic amplification of it, in the words of our great moral poet—

"Behold the Child, by Nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickl'd with a straw!
Some livelier plaything gives our Youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite:
Scarfs, garters, gold our riper years engage;
And beads and prayer-books are the *toys* of Age!
Pleas'd with this bauble still as that before,
Till tir'd we sleep—and *Life's poor play is o'er!*"

This is the more solemn view of the subject:—But the first fruits of observation are most commonly found to issue in Satire—the unmasking the vain pretenders to wisdom, and worth, and happiness, with whom society is infested, and holding up to the derision of mankind those meannesses of the great, those miseries of the fortunate, and those

"Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise,"

which the eye of a dispassionate observer so quickly detects under the glittering exterior by which they would fain be disguised—and which bring pretty much to a level the intellect, and morals, and enjoyments, of the great mass of mankind.

This misanthropic end has unquestionably been by far the most common result of a habit of observation; and that in which its effects have most generally terminated:—Yet we cannot bring ourselves to think that it is their just or natural termination. Something, no doubt, will depend on the temper of the individual, and the proportions in which the gall and the milk of human kindness have been originally mingled in his composition.—Yet satirists, we think, have not in general been ill-natured persons—and we are inclined rather to ascribe this limited and uncharitable application of their powers of observation to their love of fame and popularity,—which are well known to be best secured by successful ridicule or invective—or, quite as probably, indeed, to the narrowness and insufficiency of the observations themselves, and the imperfection of their talents for their due conduct and extension. It is certain, at least, we think, that the satirist makes use but of half the discoveries of the observer; and teaches but half—and the worser half—of the lessons which may be deduced from his occupation. He puts down, indeed, the proud pretensions of the great and arrogant, and levels the vain distinctions which human ambition has established among the brethren of mankind;—he

"Bares the mean heart that lurks beneath a Star,"

—and destroys the illusions which would limit our sympathy to the forward and figuring persons of this world—the favourites of fame and fortune. But the true result of observation should be, not so much to cast down the proud, as to raise up the lowly;—not so much to diminish our sympathy with the powerful and renowned, as to extend it to all who, in humbler conditions, have the same, or still higher claims on our esteem or affection.—It is not surely the natural consequence of learning to judge truly of the characters of men, that we should despise or be indifferent about them all;—and, though we have learned to see through the false glare which plays round the envied summits of existence, and to know how little dignity, or happiness, or worth, or wisdom, may sometimes belong to the possessors of power, and fortune, and learning and renown,—it does not follow, by any means, that we should look upon the whole of human life as a mere deceit and imposture, or think the concerns of our species fit subjects only for scorn and derision. Our promptitude to admire and to envy will indeed be corrected, our enthusiasm abated, and our distrust of appearances increased;—but the sympathies and affections of our nature will continue, and be better directed—our love of our kind will not be diminished—and our indulgence for their faults and follies, if we read our lesson aright, will be signally strengthened and confirmed. The true and proper effect, therefore, of a habit of observation, and a thorough and penetrating knowledge of human character, will be, not to extinguish our sympathy, but to extend it—to turn, no doubt, many a throb of admiration, and many a sigh of love into a smile of derision or of pity; but at the same time to reveal much that commands our homage and excites our affection, in those humble and unexplored regions of the heart and understanding, which never engage the attention of the incurious,—and to bring the whole family of mankind nearer to a level, by finding out latent merits as well as latent defects in all its members, and compensating the flaws that are detected in the boasted ornaments of life, by bringing to light the richness and the lustre that sleep in the mines beneath its surface.

We are afraid some of our readers may not at once perceive the application of these profound remarks to the subject immediately before us. But there are others, we doubt not, who do not need to be told that they are intended to explain how Mr. Crabbe, and other persons with the same gift of observation, should so often busy themselves with what may be considered as low and vulgar characters; and, declining all dealings with heroes and heroic topics, should not only venture to seek for an interest in the concerns of ordinary mortals, but actually intersperse small pieces of ridicule with their undignified pathos, and endeavour to make their readers look on their books with the same mingled feelings of compassion and amusement, with which—unnatural as it may appear to the readers of poetry—they, and all judicious observers, actually look upon human life and human nature.—This, we are persuaded, is the true key to the greater part of the peculiarities of the author before us; and though we have disserted upon it a little longer than was necessary, we really think it may enable our readers to comprehend him, and our remarks on him, something better than they could have done without it.

There is, as everybody must have felt, a strange mixture of satire and sympathy in all his productions—a great kindliness and compassion for the errors and sufferings of our poor human nature, but a strong distrust of its heroic virtues and high pretensions. His heart is always open to pity, and all the milder emotions—but there is little aspiration after the grand and sublime of character, nor very much encouragement for raptures and ecstasies of any description. These, he seems to think, are things rather too fine for the said poor human nature: and that, in our low and erring condition, it is a little ridiculous to pretend, either to very exalted and immaculate virtue, or very pure and exquisite happiness. He not only never meddles, therefore, with the delicate distresses and noble fires of the heroes and heroines of tragic and epic fable, but may generally be detected indulging in a lurking sneer at the pomp and vanity of all such superfine imaginations—and turning from them, to draw men in their true postures and dimensions, and with all the imperfections that actually belong to their condition:—the prosperous and happy overshadowed with passing clouds of *ennui*, and disturbed with little flaws of bad humour and discontent—the great and wise beset at times with strange weaknesses and meannesses and paltry vexations—and even the most virtuous and enlightened falling far below the standard of poetical perfection—and stooping every now and then to paltry jealousies and prejudices—or sinking into shabby sensualities—or meditating on their own excellence and importance, with a ludicrous and lamentable anxiety.

This is one side of the picture; and characterises sufficiently the satirical vein of our author: But the other is the most extensive and important. In rejecting the vulgar sources of interest in poetical narratives, and reducing his ideal persons to the standard of reality, Mr. C. does by no means seek to extinguish the sparks of human sympathy within us, or to throw any damp on the curiosity with which we naturally explore the characters of each other. On the contrary, he has afforded new and more wholesome food for all those propensities—and, by placing before us those details which our pride or fastidiousness is so apt to overlook, has disclosed, in all their truth and simplicity, the native and unadulterated workings of those affections which are at the bottom of all social interest, and are really rendered *less* touching by the exaggerations of more ambitious artists—while he exhibits, with admirable force and endless variety, all those combinations of passions and opinions, and all that cross-play of selfishness and vanity, and indolence and ambition, and habit and reason, which make up the intellectual character of individuals, and present to every one an instructive picture of his neighbour or himself. Seeing, by the perfection of his art, the master passions in their springs, and the high capacities in their rudiments—and having acquired the gift of tracing all the propensities and marking tendencies of our plastic nature, in their first slight indications, or even from the aspect of the disguises they so often assume, he does not need, in order to draw out his characters in all their life and distinctness, the vulgar demonstration of those striking and decided actions by which their maturity is proclaimed even to the careless and inattentive;—but delights to point out to his readers, the seeds or tender filaments of those talents and feelings which wait only for occasion and opportunity to burst out and astonish the world—and to accustom them to trace, in characters and actions apparently of the most ordinary description, the self-same attributes that, under other circumstances, would attract universal attention, and furnish themes for the most popular and impassioned descriptions.

That he should not be guided in the choice of his subject by any regard to the rank or condition which his persons hold in society, may easily be imagined; and, with a view to the ends he aims at, might readily be forgiven. But we fear that his passion for observation, and the delight he takes in tracing out and analyzing all the little traits that indicate character, and all the little circumstances that influence it, have sometimes led him to be careless about his selection of the instances in which it was to be exhibited, or at least to select them upon principles very different from those which give them an interest in the eyes of ordinary readers. For the purpose of mere anatomy, beauty of form or complexion are things quite indifferent; and the physiologist, who examines plants only to study their internal structure, and to make himself master of the contrivances by which their various functions are performed,

pays no regard to the brilliancy of their hues, the sweetness of their odours, or the graces of their form. Those who come to him for the sole purpose of acquiring knowledge may participate perhaps in this indifference; but the world at large will wonder at them—and he will engage fewer pupils to listen to his instructions, than if he had condescended in some degree to consult their predilections in the beginning. It is the same case, we think, in many respects, with Mr. Crabbe. Relying for the interest he is to produce, on the curious expositions he is to make of the elements of human character, or at least finding his own chief gratification in those subtle investigations, he seems to care very little upon what particular individuals he pitches for the purpose of these demonstrations. Almost every human mind, he seems to think, may serve to display that fine and mysterious mechanism which it is his delight to explore and explain;—and almost every condition, and every history of life, afford occasions to show how it may be put into action, and pass through its various combinations. It seems, therefore, almost as if he had caught up the first dozen or two of persons that came across him in the ordinary walks of life,—and then fitting in his little window in their breasts, and applying his tests and instruments of observation, had set himself about such a minute and curious scrutiny of their whole habits, history, adventures, and dispositions, as he thought must ultimately create not only a familiarity, but an interest, which the first aspect of the subject was far enough from leading any one to expect. That he succeeds more frequently than could have been anticipated, we are very willing to allow. But we cannot help feeling, also, that a little more pains bestowed in the selection of his characters, would have made his power of observation and description tell with tenfold effect; and that, in spite of the exquisite truth of his delineations, and the fineness of the perceptions by which he was enabled to make them, it is impossible to take any considerable interest in many of his personages, or to avoid feeling some degree of fatigue at the minute and patient exposition that is made of all that belongs to them.

These remarks are a little too general, we believe—and are not introduced with strict propriety at the head of our *fourth* article on Mr. Crabbe's productions. They have drawn out, however, to such a length, that we can afford to say but little of the work immediately before us. It is marked with all the characteristics that we have noticed, either now or formerly, as distinctive of his poetry. On the whole, however, it has certainly fewer of the grosser faults—and fewer too, perhaps, of the more exquisite passages which occur in his former publications. There is nothing at least that has struck us, in going over these volumes, as equal in elegance to Phœbe Dawson in the Register, or in pathetic effect to the Convict's Dream, or Edward Shore, or the Parting Hour, or the Sailor dying beside his Sweetheart. On the other hand, there is far less that is horrible, and nothing that can be said to be absolutely disgusting; and the picture which is afforded of society and human nature is, on the whole, much less painful and degrading. There is both less misery and less guilt; and, while the same searching and unsparing glance is sent into all the dark caverns of the breast, and the truth brought forth with the same stern impartiality, the result is more comfortable and cheering. The greater part of the characters are rather more elevated in station, and milder and more amiable in disposition; while the accidents of life are more mercifully managed, and fortunate circumstances more liberally allowed. It is rather remarkable, too, that Mr. Crabbe seems to become more amorous as he grows older,—the interest of almost all the stories in his collection turning on the tender passion—and many of them on its most romantic varieties.

The plan of the work,—for it has rather more of plan and unity than any of the former,—is abundantly simple. Two brothers, both past middle age, meet together for the first time since their infancy, in the Hall of their native parish, which the elder and richer had purchased as a place of retirement for his declining age—and there tell each other their own history, and then that of their guests, neighbours, and acquaintances. The senior is much the richer, and a bachelor—having been a little distasted with the sex by the unlucky result of an early and very extravagant passion. He is, moreover, rather too reserved and sarcastic, and somewhat Torryish, though with an excellent heart and a powerful understanding. The younger is very sensible also, but more open, social, and talkative—a happy husband and father, with a tendency to Whiggism, and some notion of reform—and a disposition to think well both of men and women. The visit lasts two or three weeks in autumn; and the Tales, which make up the volume, are told in the after dinner *tête à têtes* that take place in that time between the worthy brothers over their bottle. The married man, however, wearies at length for his wife and children; and his brother lets him go, with more coldness than he had expected. He goes with him, however, a stage on the way; and, inviting him to turn aside a little to look at a new purchase he had made of a sweet farm with a neat mansion, he finds his wife and children comfortably settled there, and all dressed out and ready to receive them! and speedily discovers that he is, by his brother's bounty, the proprietor of a fair domain within a morning's ride of the Hall—where they may discuss politics, and tell tales any afternoon they think proper.

Though their own stories and descriptions are not, in our opinion, the best in the work, it is but fair to introduce these narrative brothers and their Hall a little more particularly to our readers. The history of the elder and more austere is not particularly probable—nor very interesting; but it affords many passages extremely characteristic of the author. He was a spoiled child, and grew up into a

youth of a romantic and contemplative turn—dreaming, in his father's rural abode, of divine nymphs and damsels all passion and purity. One day he had the good luck to rescue a fair lady from a cow, and fell desperately in love:—Though he never got to speech of his charmer, who departed from the place where she was on a visit, and eluded the eager search with which he pursued her, in town and country, for many a long year: For this foolish and poetical passion settled down on his spirits; and neither time nor company, nor the business of a London banker, could effect a diversion. At last, at the end of ten or twelve years—for the fit lasted that unreasonable time—being then an upper clerk in his uncle's bank, he stumbled upon his Dulcinea in a very unexpected way—and a way that no one but Mr. Crabbe would either have thought of—or thought of describing in verse. In short, he finds her established as the *chère amie* of another respectable banker! and after the first shock is over, sets about considering how he may reclaim her. The poor Perdita professes penitence; and he offers to assist and support her if she will abandon her evil courses. The following passage is fraught with a deep and a melancholy knowledge of character and of human nature.

"She vow'd—she tried!—Alas! she did not know
How deeply rooted evil habits grow!
She felt the truth upon her spirits press,
But wanted ease, indulgence, show, excess;
Voluptuous banquets; pleasures—not refin'd,
But such as soothe to sleep th' opposing mind—
She look'd for idle vice, the time to kill,
And subtle, strong apologies for ill;
And thus her yielding, unresisting soul,
Sank, and let sin confuse her and control:
Pleasures that brought disgust yet brought relief,
And minds she hated help'd to war with grief."
Vol. i. p. 163.

As her health fails, however, her relapses become less frequent; and at last she dies, grateful and resigned. Her awakened lover is stunned by the blow—takes seriously to business—and is in danger of becoming avaricious; when a severe illness rouses him to higher thoughts, and he takes his name out of the firm, and, being turned of sixty, seeks a place of retirement.

"He chose his native village, and the hill
He climb'd a boy had its attraction still;
With that small brook beneath, where he would
And stooping fill the hollow of his hand, [stand,
To quench th' impatient thirst—then stop awhile
To see the sun upon the waters smile,
In that sweet weariness, when, long denied,
We drink and view the fountain that supplied
The sparkling bliss—and feel, if not express,
Our perfect ease, in that sweet weariness.

"The oaks yet flourish'd in that fertile ground,
Where still the church with lofty tower was found;
And still that Hall, a first, a favourite view," &c.

"The Hall of Binning! his delight a boy,
That gave his fancy in her flight employ;
Here, from his father's modest home, he gaz'd,
Its grandeur charm'd him, and its height amaz'd:—
Now, young no more, retir'd to views well known,
He finds that object of his awe his own;
The Hall at Binning!—how he loves the gloom
That sun-excluding window gives the room;
Those broad brown stairs on which he loves to tread;
Those beams within; without, that length of lead,
On which the names of wanton boys appear,
Who died old men, and left memorials here,
Carvings of feet and hands, and knots and flowers,
The fruits of busy minds in idle hours."
Vol. i. pp. 4—6.

So much for Squire George—unless any reader should care to know, as Mr. Crabbe has kindly told, that—"The Gentleman was tall," and, moreover, "Looked old when followed, but alert when met." Of Captain Richard, the story is more varied and rambling. He was rather neglected in his youth; and passed his time, when a boy, very much, as we cannot help supposing, Mr. Crabbe must have passed his own. He ran wild in the neighbourhood of a seaport, and found occupation enough in its precincts.

"Where crowds assembled I was sure to run,
Hear what was said, and muse on what was done;
Attentive list'ning in the moving scene,
And often wond'ring what the men could mean.

"To me the wives of seamen lov'd to tell
What storms endanger'd men esteem'd so well;
What wondrous things in foreign parts they saw,
Lands without bounds, and people without law.

"No ships were wreck'd upon that fatal beach,
But I could give the luckless tale of each;
Eager I look'd, till I beheld a face
Of one dispos'd to paint their dismal case;
Who gave the sad survivors' doleful tale,
From the first brushing of the mighty gale
Until they struck! and, suffering in their fate,
I long'd the more they should its horrors state;
While some, the fond of pity, would enjoy
The earnest sorrows of the feeling boy.

"There were fond girls, who took me to their side,
To tell the story how their lovers died!
They prais'd my tender heart, and bade me prove
Both kind and constant when I came to love!"

Once he saw a boat upset; and still recollects enough to give this spirited sketch of the scene.

"Then were those piercing shrieks, that frantic
All hurried: all in tumult and affright! [flight,
A gathering crowd from different streets drew near,
All ask, all answer—none attend, none hear!

"O! how impatient on the sands we tread,
And the winds roaring, and the women led!
They know not who in either boat is gone,
But think the father, husband, lover, one.

"And who is *she* apart! She dares not come
To join the crowd, yet cannot rest at home:
With what strong interest looks she at the waves,
Meeting and clashing o'er the seamen's graves!
'Tis a poor girl betroth'd—a few hours more,
And *he* will lie a corpse upon the shore!
One wretched hour had pass'd before we knew
Whom they had sav'd! Alas! they were but two!
An orphan'd lad and widow'd man—no more!
And they unnoticed stood upon the shore,
With scarce a friend to greet them—widows view'd
This man and boy, and then their cries renew'd."

He also pries into the haunts of the smugglers, and makes friends with the shepherds on the downs in summer; and then he becomes intimate with an old sailor's wife, to whom he reads sermons, and histories, and

jest books, and hymns, and indelicate ballads! The character of this woman is one of the many examples of talent and labour misapplied. It is very powerfully, and, we doubt not, very truly drawn—but it will attract few readers. Yet the story she is at last brought to tell of her daughter will command a more general interest.

"Ruth—I may tell, too oft had she been told!—
Was tall and fair, and comely to behold,
Gentle and simple; in her native place
Not one compared with her in form or face;
She was not merry, but she gave our hearth
A cheerful spirit that was more than mirth.

"There was a sailor boy, and people said
He was, as man, a likeness of the maid;
But not in this—for he was ever glad,
While Ruth was apprehensive, mild, and sad."—

They are betrothed—and something more than betrothed—when, on the eve of their wedding-day, the youth is carried relentlessly off by a press-gang; and soon after is slain in battle!—and a preaching weaver then woos, with nauseous perversions of scripture, the loathing and widowed bride. This picture, too, is strongly drawn;—but we hasten to a scene of far more power as well as pathos. Her father urges her to wed the missioned suitor; and she agrees to give her answer on Sunday.

"She left her infant on the Sunday morn,
A creature doom'd to shame! in sorrow born.
She came not home to share our humble meal,—
Her father thinking what his child would feel
From his hard sentence!—Still she came not home.
The night grew dark, and yet she was not come!
The east-wind roar'd, the sea return'd the sound,
And the rain fell as if the world were drown'd:
There were no lights without, and my good man,
To kindness frighten'd, with a groan began
To talk of Ruth, and pray! and then he took
The Bible down, and read the holy book;
For he had learning: and when that was done
We sat in silence—whither could we run,
We said—and then rush'd frighten'd from the door,
For we could bear our own conceit no more:
We call'd on neighbours—there she had not been;
We met some wanderers—ours they had not seen;
We hurried o'er the beach, both north and south,
Then join'd, and wander'd to our haven's mouth:
Where rush'd the falling waters wildly out,
I scarcely heard the good man's fearful shout,
Who saw a something on the billow ride,
And—Heaven have mercy on our sins! he cried,
It is my child!—and to the present hour
So he believes—and spirits have the power!

"And she was gone! the waters wide and deep
Roll'd o'er her body as she lay asleep!
She heard no more the angry waves and wind,
She heard no more the threat'ning of mankind;
Wrapt in dark weeds, the refuse of the storm,
To the hard rock was borne her comely form!

"But O! what storm was in that mind! what strife,
That could compel her to lay down her life!
For she was seen within the sea to wade,
By one at distance, when she first had pray'd;
Then to a rock within the hither shoal,
Softly, and with a fearful step, she stole;
Then, when she gain'd it, on the top she stood
A moment still—and dropt into the flood!
The man cried loudly, but he cried in vain,—
She heard not then—she never heard again!"—

Richard afterwards tells how he left the sea and entered the army, and fought and marched in the Peninsula; and how he came home and fell in love with a parson's daughter, and courted and married her;—and he tells it all very prettily,—and, moreover, that he is very happy, and very fond of his wife and children. But we must now take the Adelphi out of doors; and let them introduce some of their acquaintances. Among the first to whom we are presented are two sisters, still in the bloom of life, who had been cheated out of a handsome independence by the cunning of a speculating banker, and deserted by their lovers in consequence of this calamity. Their characters are drawn with infinite skill and minuteness, and their whole story told with great feeling and beauty;—but it is difficult to make extracts.

The prudent suitor of the milder and more serious sister, sneaks pitifully away when their fortune changes. The bolder lover of the more elate and gay, seeks to take a baser advantage.

"Then made he that attempt, in which to fail
Is shameful,—still more shameful to prevail.
Then was there lightning in that eye that shed
Its beams upon him,—and his frenzy fled;
Abject and trembling at her feet he laid,
Despis'd and scorn'd by the indignant maid,
Whose spirits in their agitation rose,
Him, and her own weak pity, to oppose:
As liquid silver in the tube mounts high,
Then shakes and settles as the storm goes by!"—

The effects of this double trial on their different tempers are also very finely described. The gentler Lucy is the most resigned and magnanimous. The more aspiring Jane suffers far keener anguish and fiercer impatience; and the task of soothing and cheering her devolves on her generous sister. Her fancy, too, is at times a little touched by her afflictions—and she writes wild and melancholy verses. The wanderings of her reason are represented in a very affecting manner;—but we rather choose to quote the following verses, which appear to us to be eminently beautiful, and makes us regret that Mr. Crabbe should have indulged us so seldom with those higher lyrical effusions.

"Let me not have this gloomy view,
About my room, around my bed!
But morning roses, wet with dew,
To cool my burning brows instead.
Like flow'rs that once in Eden grew,
Let them their fragrant spirits shed,
And every day the sweets renew,
Till I, a fading flower, am dead!

"I'll have my grave beneath a hill,
Where only Lucy's self shall know;
Where runs the pure pellucid rill
Upon its gravelly bed below;
There violets on the borders blow,
And insects their soft light display,
Till as the morning sunbeams glow,
The cold phosphoric fires decay.

"There will the lark, the lamb, in sport,
In air, on earth, securely play,
And Lucy to my grave resort,
As innocent, but not so gay.

"O! take me from a world I hate,
Men cruel, selfish, sensual, cold;
And, in some pure and blessed state,
Let me my sister minds behold:
From gross and sordid views refin'd,
Our heaven of spotless love to share,
For only generous souls design'd,
And not a Man to meet us there."
Vol. i. pp. 212—215.

"The Preceptor Husband" is exceedingly well managed—but is rather too facetious for our present mood. The old bachelor, who had been five times on the brink of matrimony, is mixed up of sorrow and mirth;—but we cannot make room for any extracts, except the following inimitable description of the first coming on of old age,—though we feel assured, somehow, that this malicious observer has mistaken the date of these ugly symptoms; and brought them into view nine or ten, or, at all events, six or seven years too early.

"Six years had pass'd, and forty ere the six,
When Time began to play his usual tricks!
The locks once comely in a virgin's sight, [white;
Locks of pure brown, display'd th' encroaching
The blood once fervid now to cool began,
And Time's strong pressure to subdue the man:
I rode or walk'd as I was wont before,
But now the bounding spirit was no more;
A moderate pace would now my body heat,
A walk of moderate length distress my feet.
I show'd my stranger-guest those hills sublime,
But said, 'the view is poor, we need not climb!'
At a friend's mansion I began to dread
The cold neat parlour, and the gay glazed bed;
At home I felt a more decided taste,
And must have all things in my order placed;
I ceas'd to hunt; my horses pleased me less,
My dinner more! I learn'd to play at chess;
I took my dog and gun, but saw the brute
Was disappointed that I did not shoot;
My morning walks I now could bear to lose,
And bless'd the shower that gave me not to choose:
In fact, I felt a langour stealing on;
The active arm, the agile hand were gone;
Small daily actions into habits grew,
And new dislike to forms and fashions new;
I lov'd my trees in order to dispose,
I number'd peaches, look'd how stocks arose,
Told the same story oft—in short, began to prose."
Vol. i. pp. 260, 261.

"The Maid's Story" is rather long—though it has many passages that must be favourites with Mr. Crabbe's admirers. "Sir Owen Dale" is too long also; but it is one of the best in the collection, and must not be discussed so shortly. Sir Owen, a proud, handsome man, is left a widower at forty-three, and is soon after jilted by a young lady of twenty; who, after amusing herself by encouraging his assiduities, at last meets his long-expected declaration with a very innocent surprise at finding her familiarity with "such an old friend of her father's" so strangely misconstrued! The knight, of course, is furious;—and, to revenge himself, looks out for a handsome young nephew, whom he engages to lay siege to her, and, after having won her affections, to leave her,—as *he* had been left. The lad rashly engages in the adventure; but soon finds his pretended passion turning into a real one—and entreats his uncle, on whom he is dependent, to release him from the unworthy part of his vow. Sir Owen, still mad for vengeance, rages at the proposal; and, to confirm his relentless purpose, makes a visit to one, who had better cause, and had formerly expressed equal thirst for revenge. This was one of the higher class of his tenantry—an intelligent, manly, good-humoured farmer, who had married the vicar's pretty niece, and lived in great comfort and comparative elegance, till an idle youth seduced her from his arms, and left him in rage and misery. It is here that the interesting part of the story begins; and few things can be more powerful or striking than the scenes that ensue. Sir Owen inquires whether he had found the objects of his just indignation. He at first evades the question; but at length opens his heart, and tells him all. We can afford to give but a small part of the dialogue.

"'Twice the year came round—
Years hateful now—ere I my victims found:
But *I did* find them, in the dungeon's gloom
Of a small garret—a precarious home;
The roof, unceil'd in patches, gave the snow
Entrance within, and there were heaps below;
I pass'd a narrow region dark and cold,
The strait of stairs to that infectious hold;
And, when I enter'd, misery met my view
In every shape she wears, in every hue,
And the bleak icy blast across the dungeon flew.
There frown'd the ruin'd walls that once were white
There gleam'd the panes that once admitted light,
There lay unsavory scraps of wretched food;
And there a measure, void of fuel, stood.
But who shall, part by part, describe the state
Of these, thus follow'd by relentless fate?
All, too, in winter, when the icy air
Breathed its black venom on the guilty pair.

"'And could you know the miseries they endur'd,
The poor, uncertain pittance they procur'd;
When, laid aside the needle and the pen,
Their sickness won the neighbours of their den,
Poor as they are, and they are passing poor,
To lend some aid to those who needed more!
Then, too, an ague with the winter came,
And in this state—that wife I cannot name!
Brought forth a famish'd child of suffering and of shame!

"'This had you known, and traced them to this [scene,
Where all was desolate, defiled, unclean,
A fireless room, and, where a fire had place,
The blast loud howling down the empty space,
You must have felt a part of the distress,
Forgot your wrongs, and made their suffering less!

"'In that vile garret—which I cannot paint—
The sight was loathsome, and the smell was faint;
And there that wife,—whom I had lov'd so well,
And thought so happy! was condemn'd to dwell;
The gay, the grateful wife, whom I was glad
To see in dress beyond our station clad,
And to behold among our neighbours, fine,
More than perhaps became a wife of mine:
And now among her neighbours to explore,
And see her poorest of the very poor!
There she reclin'd unmov'd, her bosom bare
To her companion's unimpassion'd stare,
And my wild wonder:—Seat of virtue! chaste
As lovely once! O! how wert thou disgrac'd!
Upon that breast, by sordid rags defil'd,
Lay the wan features of a famish'd child;—
That sin-born babe in utter misery laid,
Too feebly wretched even to cry for aid;
The ragged sheeting, o'er her person drawn,
Serv'd for the dress that hunger placed in pawn.

"'At the bed's feet the man reclin'd his frame:
Their chairs had perish'd to support the flame

That warm'd his agued limbs; and, sad to see,
That shook him fiercely as he gaz'd on me, &c.

"'She had not food, nor aught a mother needs,
Who for another life, and dearer, feeds:
I saw her speechless; on her wither'd breast
The wither'd child extended, but not prest,
Who sought, with moving lip and feeble cry,
Vain instinct! for the fount without supply.

"'Sure it was all a grievous, odious scene,
Where all was dismal, melancholy, mean,
Foul with compell'd neglect, unwholesome, and unclean;
That arm—that eye—the cold, the sunken cheek—
Spoke all!—Sir Owen—fiercely miseries speak!'

"'And you reliev'd?'

"'If hell's seducing crew
Had seen that sight, *they* must have pitied too.'

"'Revenge was thine—thou hadst the power—the right;
To give it up was Heav'n's own act to slight.'

"'Tell me not, Sir, of rights, and wrongs, or powers!
I felt it written—Vengeance is not ours!'—

"'Then did you freely from your soul forgive?'—

"'Sure as I hope before my Judge to live,
Sure as I trust his mercy to receive,
Sure as his word I honour and believe,
Sure as the Saviour died upon the tree
For all who sin—*for that dear wretch*, and me—
Whom, never more on earth, will I forsake—or see!'

"Sir Owen softly to his bed adjourn'd!
Sir Owen quickly to his home return'd;
And all the way he meditating dwelt
On what this man in his affliction felt;
How he, resenting first, forbore, forgave;
His passion's lord, and not his anger's slave."
Vol. ii. pp. 36—46.

We always quote too much of Mr. Crabbe:—perhaps because the pattern of his arabesque is so large, that there is no getting a fair specimen of it without taking in a good space. But we must take warning this time, and forbear—or at least pick out but a few little morsels as we pass hastily along. One of the best managed of all the tales is that entitled "Delay has Danger;"—which contains a very full, true, and particular account of the way in which a weakish, but well meaning young man, engaged on his own suit to a very amiable girl, may be seduced, during her unlucky absence, to entangle himself with a far inferior person, whose chief seduction is her apparent humility and devotion to him.

We cannot give any part of the long and finely converging details by which the catastrophe is brought about: But we are tempted to venture on the catastrophe itself, for the sake chiefly of the right English, melancholy, autumnal landscape, with which it concludes:—

"In that weak moment, when disdain and pride,
And fear and fondness, drew the man aside,
In that weak moment—'Wilt thou,' he began,
'Be mine?' and joy o'er all her features ran;
'I will!' she softly whisper'd; but the roar
Of cannon would not strike his spirit more!
Ev'n as his lips the lawless contract seal'd
He felt that conscience lost her seven-fold shield,
And honour fled; but still he spoke of love;
And all was joy in the consenting dove!

"That evening all in fond discourse was spent;
Till the sad lover to his chamber went, [pent!
To think on what had past,—to grieve and to re-
Early he rose, and look'd with many a sigh
On the red light that fill'd the eastern sky;
Oft had he stood before, alert and gay,
To hail the glories of the new-born day:
But now dejected, languid, listless, low,
He saw the wind upon the water blow,
And the cold stream curl'd onward, as the gale
From the pine-hill blew harshly down the dale;
On the right side the youth a wood survey'd,
With all its dark intensity of shade;
Where the rough wind alone was heard to move,
In this, the pause of nature and of love;
When now the young are rear'd, and when the old,
Lost to the tie, grow negligent and cold.
Far to the left he saw the huts of men,
Half hid in mist, that hung upon the fen;
Before him swallows, gathering for the sea,
Took their short flights, and twitter'd on the lea;
And near, the bean-sheaf stood, the harvest done,
And slowly blacken'd in the sickly sun!
All these were sad in nature; or they took
Sadness from him, the likeness of his look,
And of his mind—he ponder'd for a while,
Then met his Fanny with a borrow'd smile."
Vol. ii. pp. 84, 85.

The moral autumn is quite as gloomy, and far more hopeless.

"The Natural Death of Love" is perhaps the best written of all the pieces before us. It consists of a very spirited dialogue between a married pair, upon the causes of the difference between the days of marriage and those of courtship;—in which the errors and faults of both parties, and the petulance, impatience, and provoking acuteness of the lady, with the more reasonable and reflecting, but somewhat insulting manner of the gentleman, are all exhibited to the life; and with more uniform delicacy and *finesse* than is usual with the author.

"Lady Barbara, or the Ghost," is a long story, and not very pleasing. A fair widow had been warned, or supposed she had been warned, by the ghost of a beloved brother, that she would be miserable if she contracted a second marriage—and then, some fifteen years after, she is courted by the son of a reverend priest, to whose house she had retired—and upon whom, during all the years of his childhood, she had lavished the cares of a mother. She long resists his unnatural passion; but is at length subdued by his urgency and youthful beauty, and gives him her hand. There is something rather disgusting, we think, in this fiction—and certainly the worthy lady could not have taken no way so likely to save the ghost's credit, as by entering into *such* a marriage—and she confessed as much, it seems, on her deathbed.

"The Widow," with her three husbands, is not quite so lively as the wife of Bath with her five;—but it is a very amusing, as well as a very instructive legend; and exhibits a rich variety of those striking intellectual portraits which mark the hand of our poetical Rembrandt. The serene close of her eventful life is highly exemplary. After carefully collecting all her dowers and jointures—

"The widow'd lady to her cot retir'd:
And there she lives, delighted and admir'd!
Civil to all, compliant and polite,
Dispos'd to think, 'whatever is, is right.'
At home awhile—she in the autumn finds
The sea an object for reflecting minds,
And change for tender spirits: There she reads,
And weeps in comfort, in her graceful weeds!"
Vol. ii. p. 213.

The concluding tale is but the end of the visit to the Hall, and the settlement of the younger brother near his senior, in the way we have already mentioned. It contains no great matter; but there is so much good nature and goodness of heart about it, that we cannot resist the temptation of gracing our exit with a bit of it. After a little raillery, the elder brother says—

"'We part no more, dear Richard! Thou wilt need
Thy brother's help to teach thy boys to read;
And I should love to hear Matilda's psalm,
To keep my spirit in a morning calm,
And feel the soft devotion that prepares
The soul to rise above its earthly cares;
Then thou and I, an independent two,
May have our parties, and defend them too;
Thy liberal notions, and my loyal fears,
Will give us subjects for our future years;
We will for truth alone contend and read,
And our good Jaques shall o'ersee our creed.'"
Vol. ii. pp. 348, 349.

And then, after leading him up to his new purchase, he adds eagerly—

"'Alight, my friend, and come,
I do beseech thee, to that proper home!
Here, on this lawn, thy boys and girls shall run,
And play their gambols, when their tasks are done;
There, from that window, shall their mother view
The happy tribe, and smile at all they do;
While thou, more gravely, hiding thy delight,
Shalt cry, "O! childish!" and enjoy the sight!'"
Vol. ii. p. 352.

We shall be abused by our political and fastidious readers for the length of this article. But we cannot repent of it. It will give as much pleasure, we believe, and do as much good, as many of the articles that are meant for *their* gratification; and, if it appear absurd to quote so largely from a popular and accessible work, it should be remembered, that no work of this magnitude passes into circulation with half the rapidity of our Journal—and that Mr. Crabbe is so unequal a writer, and at times so unattractive, as to require, more than any other of his degree, some explanation of his system, and some specimens of his powers, from those experienced and intrepid readers whose business it is to pioneer for the lazier sort, and to give some account of what they are to meet with on their journey. To be sure, all this is less necessary now than it was on Mr. Crabbe's first re-appearance nine or ten years ago; and though it may not be altogether without its use even at present, it may be as well to confess, that we have rather consulted our own gratification than our readers' improvement, in what we have now said of him; and hope they will forgive us.

(August, 1820.)

1. *Endymion: a Poetic Romance.* By JOHN KEATS. 8vo. pp. 207. London: 1818.
2. *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems.* By JOHN KEATS, *author of "Endymion."* 12mo. pp. 200. London: 1820.*

WE had never happened to see either of these volumes till very lately—and have been exceedingly struck with the genius they display, and the spirit of poetry which breathes through all their extravagance. That imitation of our old writers, and especially of our older dramatists, to which we cannot help flattering ourselves that we have somewhat contributed, has brought on, as it were, a second spring in our poetry;—and few of its blossoms are either more profuse of sweetness, or richer in promise, than this which is now before us. Mr. Keats, we understand, is still a very young man; and his whole works, indeed, bear evidence enough of the fact. They are full of extravagance and irregularity, rash attempts at originality, interminable wanderings, and excessive obscurity. They manifestly require, therefore, all the indulgence that can be claimed for a first attempt:—But we think it no less plain that they deserve it: For they are flushed all over with the rich lights of fancy; and so coloured and bestrewn with the flowers of poetry, that even while perplexed and bewildered in their labyrinths, it is impossible to resist the intoxication of their sweetness, or to shut our hearts to the enchantments they so lavishly present. The models upon which he has formed himself, in the Endymion, the earliest and by much the most considerable of his poems, are obviously The Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher, and the Sad Shepherd of Ben Jonson;—the exquisite metres and inspired diction of which he has copied with great boldness and fidelity—and, like his great originals, has also contrived to impart to the whole piece that true rural and poetical air—which breathes only in them, and in Theocritus—which is at

* I still think that a poet of great power and promise was lost to us by the premature death of Keats, in the twenty-fifth year of his age; and regret that I did not go more largely into the exposition of his merits, in the slight notice of them, which I now venture to reprint. But though I cannot, with propriety, or without departing from the principle which must govern this republication, now supply this omission, I hope to be forgiven for having added a page or two to *the citations*,—by which my opinion of those merits was then illustrated, and is again left to the judgment of the reader.

once homely and majestic, luxurious and rude, and sets before us the genuine sights and sounds and smells of the country, with all the magic and grace of Elysium. His subject has the disadvantage of being Mythological; and in this respect, as well as on account of the raised and rapturous tone it consequently assumes, his poem, it may be thought, would be better compared to the Comus and the Arcades of Milton, of which, also, there are many traces of imitation. The great distinction, however, between him and these divine authors, is, that imagination in them is subordinate to reason and judgment, while, with him, it is paramount and supreme —that their ornaments and images are employed to embellish and recommend just sentiments, engaging incidents, and natural characters, while his are poured out without measure or restraint, and with no apparent design but to unburden the breast of the author, and give vent to the overflowing vein of his fancy. The thin and scanty tissue of his story is merely the light framework on which his florid wreaths are suspended; and while his imaginations go rambling and entangling themselves every where, like wild honeysuckles, all idea of sober reason, and plan, and consistency, is utterly forgotten, and "strangled in their waste fertility." A great part of the work, indeed, is written in the strangest and most fantastical manner that can be imagined. It seems as if the author had ventured every thing that occurred to him in the shape of a glittering image or striking expression—taken the first word that presented itself to make up a rhyme, and then made that word the germ of a new cluster of images—a hint for a new excursion of the fancy—and so wandered on, equally forgetful whence he came, and heedless whither he was going, till he had covered his pages with an interminable arabesque of connected and incongruous figures, that multiplied as they extended, and were only harmonised by the brightness of their tints, and the graces of their forms. In this rash and headlong career he has of course many lapses and failures. There is no work, accordingly, from which a malicious critic could cull more matter for ridicule, or select more obscure, unnatural, or absurd passages. But we do not take *that* to be our office;—and must beg leave, on the contrary, to say, that any one who, on this account, would represent the whole poem as despicable, must either have no notion of poetry, or no regard to truth.

It is, in truth, at least as full of genius as of absurdity; and he who does not find a great deal in it to admire and to give delight, cannot in his heart see much beauty in the two exquisite dramas to which we have already alluded; or find any great pleasure in some of the finest creations of Milton and Shakespeare. There are very many such persons, we verily believe, even among the reading and judicious part of the community—correct scholars, we have no doubt, many of them, and, it may be, very classical composers in prose and in verse—but utterly ignorant, on our view of the matter, of the true genius of English poetry, and incapable of estimating its appropriate and most exquisite beauties. With that spirit we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Keats is deeply imbued—and of those beauties he has presented us with many striking examples. We are very much inclined indeed to add, that we do not know any book which we would sooner employ as a test to ascertain whether any one had in him a native relish for poetry, and a genuine sensibility to its intrinsic charm. The greater and more distinguished poets of our country have so much else in them, to gratify other tastes and propensities, that they are pretty sure to captivate and amuse those to whom their poetry may be but an hinderance and obstruction, as well as those to whom it constitutes their chief attraction. The interest of the stories they tell—the vivacity of the characters they delineate—the weight and force of the maxims and sentiments in which they abound—the very pathos, and wit and humour they display, which may all and each of them exist apart from their poetry, and independent of it, are quite sufficient to account for their popularity, without referring much to that still higher gift, by which they subdue to their enchantments those whose souls are truly attuned to the finer impulses of poetry. It is only, therefore, where those other recommendations are wanting, or exist in a weaker degree, that the true force of the attraction, exercised by the pure poetry with which they are so often combined, can be fairly appreciated:—where, without much incident or many characters, and with little wit, wisdom, or arrangement, a number of bright pictures are presented to the imagination, and a fine feeling expressed of those mysterious relations by which visible external things are assimilated with inward thoughts and emotions, and become the images and exponents of all passions and affections. To an unpoetical reader such passages will generally appear mere raving and absurdity—and to this censure a very great part of the volumes before us will certainly be exposed, with this class of readers. Even in the judgment of a fitter audience, however, it must, we fear, be admitted, that, besides the riot and extravagance of his fancy the scope and substance of Mr. Keats' poetry is rather too dreamy and abstracted to excite the strongest interest, or to sustain the attention through a work of any great compass or extent. He deals too much with shadowy and incomprehensible beings, and is too constantly rapt into an extramundane Elysium, to command a lasting interest with ordinary mortals—and must employ the agency of more varied and coarser emotions, if he wishes to take rank with the enduring poets of this or of former generations. There is something very curious, too, we think, in the way in which he, and Mr. Barry Cornwall also, have dealt with the Pagan mythology, of which they have made so much use in their poetry. Instead of presenting its imaginary persons under the trite and vulgar traits that belong to them in the ordinary systems, little more

is borrowed from these than the general conception of their condition and relations; and an original character and distinct individuality is then bestowed upon them, which has all the merit of invention, and all the grace and attraction of the fictions on which it is engrafted. The ancients, though they probably did not stand in any great awe of their deities, have yet abstained very much from any minute or dramatic representation of their feelings and affections. In Hesiod and Homer, they are broadly delineated by some of their actions and adventures, and introduced to us merely as the agents in those particular transactions; while in the Hymns, from those ascribed to Orpheus and Homer, down to those of Callimachus, we have little but pompous epithets and invocations, with a flattering commemoration of their most famous exploits —and are never allowed to enter into their bosoms, or follow out the train of their feelings, with the presumption of our human sympathy. Except the love-song of the Cyclops to his Sea Nymph in Theocritus—the Lamentation of Venus for Adonis in Moschus —and the more recent Legend of Apuleius, we scarcely recollect a passage in all the writings of antiquity in which the passions of an immortal are fairly disclosed to the scrutiny and observation of men. The author before us, however, and some of his contemporaries, have dealt differently with the subject;—and, sheltering the violence of the fiction under the ancient traditionary fable, have in reality created and imagined an entire new set of characters; and brought closely and minutely before us the loves and sorrows and perplexities of beings, with whose names and supernatural attributes we had long been familiar, without any sense or feeling of their personal character. We have more than doubts of the fitness of such personages to maintain a permanent interest with the modern public;—but the way in which they are here managed certainly gives them the best chance that now remains for them; and, at all events, it cannot be denied that the effect is striking and graceful. But we must now proceed to our extracts.

The first of the volumes before us is occupied with the loves of Endymion and Diana—which it would not be very easy, and which we do not at all intend to analyse in detail. In the beginning of the poem, however, the Shepherd Prince is represented as having had strange visions and delirious interviews with an unknown and celestial beauty: Soon after which, he is called on to preside at a festival in honour of Pan; and his appearance in the procession is thus described:—

—"His youth was fully blown,
Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown;
And, for those simple times, his garments were
A chieftain king's: Beneath his breast, half bare,
Was hung a silver bugle; and between
His nervy knees there lay a boar-spear keen.
A smile was on his countenance: He seem'd,
To common lookers on, like one who dream'd
Of idleness in groves Elysian:
But there were some who feelingly could scan
A lurking trouble in his nether lip,
And see that oftentimes the reins would slip
Through his forgotten hands!"—pp. 11, 12.

There is then a choral hymn addressed to the sylvan deity, which appears to us to be full of beauty; and reminds us, in many places, of the finest strains of Sicilian—or of English poetry. A part of it is as follows:—

"'O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks; and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
Of unseen flowers, in heavy peacefulness!
Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress
Their ruffled locks, where meeting hazels darken;
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken
The dreary melody of bedded reeds—
In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds
The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth.—

"'O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles
Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,
What time thou wanderest at eventide
Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side
Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to whom
Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom
Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow girted bees
Their golden honeycombs; our village leas
Their fairest blossom'd beans and poppied corn;
The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,
To sing for thee; low creeping strawberries
Their summer coolness; pent up butterflies
Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh budding year
All its completions! be quickly near,
By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
O forester divine!

"'Thou, to whom every fawn and satyr flies
For willing service; whether to surprise
The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit;
Or upward ragged precipices flit
To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw;
Or by mysterious enticement draw
Bewilder'd shepherds to their path again;
Or to tread breathless round the frothy main,
And gather up all fancifullest shells
For thee to tumble into Naiad's cells,
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping!
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,
The while they pelt each other on the crown
With silv'ry oak apples, and fir cones brown—
By all the echoes that about thee ring!
Hear us, O satyr King!

"'O Hearkener to the loud clapping shears,
While ever and anon to his shorn peers
A ram goes bleating: Winder of the horn,
When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn
Anger our huntsmen! Breather round our farms,
To keep off mildews, and all weather harms:
Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,
That come a swooning over hollow grounds,
And wither drearily on barren moors!'"
pp. 114—117.

The enamoured youth sinks into insensibility in the midst of the solemnity, and is borne apart and revived by the care of his sister; and, opening his heavy eyes in her arms, says—

"'I feel this thine endearing love
All through my bosom! Thou art as a dove
Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings
About me; and the pearliest dew not brings
Such morning incense from the fields of May,
As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray
From those kind eyes. Then think not thou
That, any longer, I will pass my days
Alone and sad. No! I will once more raise
My voice upon the mountain heights; once more
Make my horn parley from their foreheads hoar!
Again my trooping hounds their tongues shall loll
Around the breathed boar: again I'll poll

The fair-grown yew tree, for a chosen bow:
And, when the pleasant sun is getting low,
Again I'll linger in a sloping mead
To hear the speckled thrushes, and see feed
Our idle sheep. So be thou cheered, sweet,
And, if thy lute is here, softly intreat
My soul to keep in its resolved course.'

"Hereat Peona, in their silver source
Shut her pure sorrow drops, with glad exclaim;
And took a lute, from which there pulsing came
A lively prelude, fashioning the way
In which her voice should wander. 'Twas a lay
More subtle cadenced, more forest wild
Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child;
And nothing since has floated in the air
So mournful strange."—pp. 25—27.

He then tells her all the story of his love and madness; and gives this airy sketch of the first vision he had, or fancied he had, of his descending Goddess. After some rapturous intimations of the glories of her gold-burnished hair, he says—

—— "She had,
Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad!
And they were simply gordian'd up and braided,
Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and orbed brow;
The which were blended in, I know not how,
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,
Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,
That when I think thereon, my spirit clings
And melts into the vision!"

"And then her hovering feet!
More bluely vein'd, more soft, more whitely sweet
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she rose
From out her cradle shell! The wind outblows
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion!—
'Tis blue; and overspangled with a million
Of little eyes; as though thou wert to shed
Over the darkest, lushest blue bell bed,
Handfuls of daisies."—

Overpowered by this "celestial colloquy sublime," he sinks at last into slumber—and on wakening finds the scene disenchanted; and the dull shades of evening deepening over his solitude:—

"Then up I started.—Ah! my sighs, my tears!
My clenched hands! For lo! the poppies hung
Dew dabbled on their stalks; the ouzel sung
A heavy ditty; and the sullen day
Had chidden herald Hesperus away,
With leaden looks. The solitary breeze
Bluster'd and slept; and its wild self did teaze
With wayward melancholy. And I thought,
Mark me, Peona! that sometimes it brought,
Faint Fare-thee-wells—and sigh-shrilled Adieus!"

Soon after this he is led away by butterflies to the haunts of Naiads; and by them sent down into enchanted caverns, where he sees Venus and Adonis, and great flights of Cupids; and wanders over diamond terraces among beautiful fountains and temples and statues, and all sorts of fine and strange things. All this is very fantastical: But there are splendid pieces of description, and a sort of wild richness in the whole. We cull a few little morsels. This is the picture of the sleeping Adonis:—

"In midst of all, there lay a sleeping youth
Of fondest beauty. Sideway his face repos'd
On one white arm, and tenderly unclos'd,
By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth
To slumbery pout; just as the morning south
Disparts a dew-lipp'd rose. Above his head,
Four lily stalks did their white honours wed
To make a coronal; and round him grew
All tendrils green, of every bloom and hue,
Together intertwin'd and trammel'd fresh:
The vine of glossy sprout; the ivy mesh,
Shading its Ethiop berries; and woodbine,
Of velvet leaves and bugle-blooms divine.

"Hard by,
Stood serene Cupids watching silently.
One kneeling to a lyre, touch'd the strings,
Muffling to death the pathos with his wings!
And, ever and anon, uprose to look
At the youth's slumber; while another took
A willow-bough, distilling odorous dew,
And shook it on his hair; another flew
In through the woven roof, and fluttering-wise
Rain violets upon his sleeping eyes."—pp. 72, 73

Here is another, and more classical sketch of Cybele—with a picture of lions that might excite the envy of Rubens, or Edwin Landseer!

"Forth from a rugged arch, in the dusk below,
Came mother Cybele! alone—alone!—
In sombre chariot: dark foldings thrown
About her majesty, and front death-pale
With turrets crown'd. Four maned lions hale
The sluggish wheels; solemn their toothed maws,
Their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws
Uplifted drowsily, and nervy tails
Cowering their tawny brushes. Silent sails
This shadowy queen athwart, and faints away
In another gloomy arch!"—p. 83.

The following picture of the fairy waterworks, which he unconsciously sets playing in these enchanted caverns, is, it must be confessed, "high fantastical;" but we venture to extract it, for the sake of the singular brilliancy and force of the execution.—

—— "So on he hies
Through caves and palaces of mottled ore,
Gold dome, and crystal wall, and turquoise floor,
Black polish'd porticos of awful shade,
Till, at the last, a diamond ballustrade
Leads sparkling just above the silvery heads
Of a thousand fountains; so that he could dash
The waters with his spear! But at that splash,
Done heedlessly, those spouting columns rose
Sudden a poplar's height, and 'gan to enclose
His diamond path with fretwork, streaming round,
Alive, and dazzling cool, and with a sound
Haply, like dolphin tumults, when sweet shells
Welcome the car of Thetis! Long he dwells
On this delight; for every minute's space,
The streams with changing magic interlace;
Sometimes like delicatest lattices,
Cover'd with crystal vines: then weeping trees
Moving about, as in a gentle wind;
Which, in a wink, to wat'ry gauze refin'd
Pour into shapes of curtain'd canopies,
Spangled, and rich with liquid broideries
Of Flowers, Peacocks, Swans, and Naiads fair!
Swifter than lightning went these wonders rare;
And then the water into stubborn streams
Collecting, mimick'd the wrought oaken beams,
Pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof
Of those dark places, in times far aloof
Cathedrals named!"

There are strange melodies too around him; and their effect on the fancy is thus poetically described:—

"Oh! when the airy stress
Of Music's kiss impregnates the free winds,
And with a sympathetic touch unbinds
Eolian magic from their lucid wombs,
Then old songs waken from forgotten tombs!
Old ditties sigh above their father's grave!
Ghosts of melodious prophesyings rave
Round every spot where trod Apollo's feet!
Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,
Where long ago, a Giant battle was!
And from the turf a lullaby doth pass,
In every place where infant Orpheus slept!"

In the midst of all these enchantments he has, we do not very well know how, another ravishing interview with his unknown goddess; and when she again melts away from him, he finds himself in a vast grotto, where he overhears the courtship of Alpheus and Arethusa; and as they elope together, discovers that the grotto has disappeared, and that he is at the bottom of the sea, under the transparent arches of its naked waters! The following is abundantly extravagant; but comes of no ignoble lineage—nor shames its high descent:—

"Far had he roam'd,
With nothing save the hollow vast, that foam'd
Above, around, and at his feet; save things
More dead than Morpheus' imaginings!
Old rusted anchors, helmets, breast-plates large
Of gone sea-warriors; brazen beaks and targe;
Rudders that for a thousand years had lost
The sway of human hand; gold vase emboss'd
With long-forgotten story, and wherein
No reveller had ever dipp'd a chin
But those of Saturn's vintage; mould'ring scrolls,
Writ in the tongue of heaven, by those souls
Who first were on the earth; and sculptures rude
In pond'rous stone, developing the mood
Of ancient Nox;—then skeletons of man,
Of beast, behemoth, and leviathan,
And elephant, and eagle—and huge jaw
Of nameless monster."—— p. 111.

There he finds ancient Glaucus enchanted by Circe—hears his wild story—and goes with him to the deliverance and restoration of thousands of drowned lovers, whose bodies were piled and stowed away in a large submarine palace. When this feat is happily performed, he finds himself again on dry ground, with woods and waters around him; and cannot help falling desperately in love with a beautiful damsel whom he finds there, pining for some such consolation; and who tells a long story of having come from India in the train of Bacchus, and having strayed away from him into that forest!—So they vow eternal fidelity; and are wafted up to heaven on flying horses; on which they sleep and dream among the stars;—and then the lady melts away, and he is again alone upon the earth; but soon rejoins his Indian love, and agrees to give up his goddess, and live only for her: But she refuses, and says she is resolved to devote herself to the service of Diana: But, when she goes to accomplish that dedication, she turns out to be the goddess herself in a new shape! and finally exalts her lover with her to a blessed immortality!

We have left ourselves room to say but little of the second volume; which is of a more miscellaneous character. Lamia is a Greek antique story, in the measure and taste of Endymion. Isabella is a paraphrase of the same tale of Boccacio which Mr. Cornwall has also imitated, under the title of "A Sicilian Story." It would be worth while to compare the two imitations; but we have no longer time for such a task. Mr. Keats has followed his original more closely, and has given a deep pathos to several of his stanzas. The widowed bride's discovery of the murdered body is very strikingly given.

"Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies!
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,
And put it in her bosom, where it dries.
Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd her care,
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

"That old nurse stood beside her, wondering,
Until her heart felt pity to the core,
At sight of such a dismal labouring;
And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,
And put her lean hands to the horrid thing:
Three hours they labour'd at this trivial sore;
At last they felt the kernel of the grave, &c.

"In anxious secrecy they took it home,
And then—the prize was all for Isabel!
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb;
And all around each eye's sepulchral cell
Pointed each fringed lash: The smeared loam
With tears, as chilly as a dripping well, [kept
She drench'd away:—and still she comb'd, and
Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd, and wept!

"Then in a silken scarf—sweet with the dews
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—
She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did choose
A garden pot, wherein she laid it by,
And cover'd it with mould; and o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

"And she forgot the stars, the moon, the sun!
And she forgot the blue above the trees;
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze!
She had no knowledge when the day was done;
And the new morn she saw not! But in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears, unto the core!"
pp. 72—75.

The following lines from an ode to a Nightingale are equally distinguished for harmony and high poetic feeling:—

"O for a beaker full of the warm South!
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth!
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim!
Fade far away! dissolve—and quite forget
What Thou among the leaves hast never known—
The weariness, the fever, and the fret, [groan;
Here,—where men sit and hear each other
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies!
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs.
The voice I hear, this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown!
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when *sick for home,*
She stood in tears amid the alien corn!
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam,
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."
pp. 108—111.

We know nothing at once so truly fresh, genuine, and English,—and, at the same

time, so full of poetical feeling, and Greek elegance and simplicity, as this address to Autumn:—

"Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness—
Close bosom-friend of the maturing Sun!
Conspiring with him now, to load and bless [run!
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease;
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

"Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes, whoever seeks abroad, may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half reap'd furrow sound asleep!
Drows'd with the fumes of poppies; while thy hook
Spares the next swarth, and all its twined flowers!
And sometimes like a gleaner, thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head, across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours!

"Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them! *Thou* hast thy music too;
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue!
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows; borne aloft
Or sinking, as the light wind lives or dies!
And full grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft,
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gath'ring swallows twitter in the skies!"

One of the sweetest of the smaller poems is that entitled "The Eve of St. Agnes:" though we can now afford but a scanty extract. The superstition is, that if a maiden goes to bed on that night without supper, and never looks up after saying her prayers till she falls asleep, she will see her destined husband by her bed-side the moment she opens her eyes. The fair Madeline, who was in love with the gentle Porphyro, but thwarted by an imperious guardian, resolves to try this spell:—and Porphyro, who has a suspicion of her purpose, naturally determines to do what he can to help it to a happy issue; and accordingly prevails on her ancient nurse to admit him to her virgin bower; where he watches reverently, till she sinks in slumber;—and then, arranging a most elegant dessert by her couch, and gently rousing her with a tender and favourite air, finally reveals himself, and persuades her to steal from the castle under his protection. The opening stanza is a fair specimen of the sweetness and force of the composition.

"St. Agnes Eve! Ah, bitter cold it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was acold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold!
Numb were the bedesman's fingers, while he told
His rosary; and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet virgin's picture, while his prayers he saith."

But the glory and charm of the poem is in the description of the fair maiden's antique chamber, and of all that passes in that sweet and angel-guarded sanctuary: every part of which is touched with colours at once rich and delicate—and the whole chastened and harmonised, in the midst of its gorgeous distinctness, by a pervading grace and purity, that indicate not less clearly the exaltation than the refinement of the author's fancy. We cannot resist adding a good part of this description.

"Out went the taper as she hurried in!
Its little smoke in pallid moonshine died:
The door she closed! She panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide!
No utter'd syllable—or woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble;
Paining with eloquence her balmy side!

"A casement high and treple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of fruits and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass;
And diamonded with panes of quaint device
Innumerable, of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger moth's deep-damask'd wings!

"Full on this casement shown the wintery moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon!
Rose bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross, soft amethyst;
And on her hair, a glory like a saint!
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest
Save wings, for heaven!—Porphyro grew faint,
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint!

"Anon his heart revives! Her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her *warmed* jewels, one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees!
Half hidden, like a Mermaid in sea weed,
Pensive a while she dreams awake, and sees
In fancy fair, St. Agnes on her bed!
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled!

"Soon, trembling, in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful dream, perplex'd she lay;
Until the poppied warmth of Sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away!
Haven'd alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a *bud* again!

"Stolen to this paradise, and so entranc'd,
Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing; if it chanc'd
To sink into a slumb'rous tenderness?
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself;—then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as Fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet silent stept.

"Then, by the bed-side, where the sinking moon
Made a dim silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet, &c.

"And still she slept—an azure-lidded sleep!
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd;
While he, from forth the closet, brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies smoother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spiced dainties every one,
From silken Samarcand, to cedar'd Lebanon.

"Those delicates he heap'd with glowing hand,
On golden dishes, and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver; sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.
'And now, my love! my Seraph fair! awake!
Ope thy sweet eyes! for dear St. Agnes' sake!"

It is difficult to break off in such a course of citation: But we must stop here; and shall close our extracts with the following lively lines:—

"O sweet Fancy! let her loose!
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the plough-boy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon,
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
—— Thou shalt hear
Distant harvest carols clear;
Rustle of the reaped corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn;
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plum'd lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celled sleep;
And the snake, all winter thin,
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing."
pp. 122—125.

There is a fragment of a projected Epic, entitled "Hyperion," on the expulsion of Saturn and the Titanian deities by Jupiter and his younger adherents, of which we cannot advise the completion: For, though there are passages of some force and grandeur, it is sufficiently obvious, from the specimen before us, that the subject is too far removed from all the sources of human interest, to be successfully treated by any modern author. Mr. Keats has unquestionably a very beautiful imagination, a perfect ear for harmony, and a great familiarity with the finest diction of English poetry; but he must learn not to misuse or misapply these advantages; and neither to waste the good gifts of nature and study on intractable themes, nor to luxuriate too recklessly on such as are more suitable.

(March, 1819.)

Human Life: a Poem. By Samuel Rogers. 4to. pp. 94. London: 1819.

These are very sweet verses. They do not, indeed, stir the spirit like the strong lines of Byron, nor make our hearts dance within us, like the inspiring strains of Scott; but they come over us with a bewitching softness that, in certain moods, is still more delightful—and soothe the troubled spirits with a refreshing sense of truth, purity, and elegance. They are pensive rather than passionate; and more full of wisdom and tenderness than of high flights of fancy, or overwhelming bursts of emotion—while they are moulded into grace, at least as much by the effect of the Moral beauties they disclose, as by the taste and judgment with which they are constructed.

The theme is Human Life!—not only "the subject of all verse"—but the great centre and source of all interest in the works of human beings—to which both verse and prose invariably bring us back, when they succeed in rivetting our attention, or rousing our emotions—and which turns every thing into poetry to which its sensibilities can be ascribed, or by which its vicissitudes can be suggested! Yet it is not by any means to that which, in ordinary language, is termed the poetry or the romance of human life, that the present work is directed. The life which it endeavours to set before us, is not life diversified with strange adventures, embodied in extraordinary characters, or agitated with turbulent passions—not the life of warlike paladins, or desperate lovers, or sublime ruffians—or piping shepherds or sentimental savages, or bloody bigots or preaching pedlars—or conquerors, poets, or any other species of madmen—but the ordinary, practical, and amiable life of social, intelligent, and affectionate men in the upper ranks of society—such, in short, as multitudes may be seen living every day in this country—for the picture is entirely English—and though not perhaps in the choice of every one, yet open to the judgment, and familiar to the sympathies, of all. It contains, of course, no story, and no individual characters. It is properly and peculiarly contemplative—and consists in a series of reflections on our mysterious nature and condition upon earth, and on the marvellous, though unnoticed changes which the ordinary course of our existence is continually bringing about in our being. Its marking peculiarity in this respect is, that it is free from the least alloy of acrimony or harsh judgment, and deals not at all indeed in any species of satirical or sarcastic remark. The poet looks here on man, and teaches us to look on him, not merely with love, but with reverence; and, mingling a sort of considerate pity for the

shortness of his busy little career, and the disappointments and weaknesses by which it is beset, with a genuine admiration of the great capacities he unfolds, and the high destiny to which he seems to be reserved, works out a very beautiful and engaging picture, both of the affections by which Life is endeared, the trials to which it is exposed, and the pure and peaceful enjoyments with which it may often be filled.

This, after all, we believe, is the tone of true wisdom and true virtue—and that to which all good natures draw nearer, as they approach the close of life, and come to act less, and to know and to meditate more, on the varying and crowded scene of human existence.—When the inordinate hopes of early youth, which provoke their own disappointment, have been sobered down by longer experience and more extended views—when the keen contentions, and eager rivalries, which employed our riper age, have expired or been abandoned—when we have seen, year after year, the objects of our fiercest hostility, and of our fondest affections, lie down together in the hallowed peace of the grave—when ordinary pleasures and amusements begin to be insipid, and the gay derision which seasoned them to appear flat and importunate—when we reflect how often we have mourned and been comforted—what opposite opinions we have successively maintained and abandoned—to what inconsistent habits we have gradually been formed—and how frequently the objects of our pride have proved the sources of our shame! we are naturally led to recur to the careless days of our childhood, and from that distant starting place, to retrace the whole of our career, and that of our contemporaries, with feelings of far greater humility and indulgence than those by which it had been actually accompanied:—to think all vain but affection and honour—the simplest and cheapest pleasures the truest and most precious—and generosity of sentiment the only mental superiority which ought either to be wished for or admired.

We are aware that we have said "something too much of this;" and that our readers would probably have been more edified, as well as more delighted, by Mr. Rogers' text, than with our preachment upon it. But we were anxious to convey to them our sense of the spirit in which this poem is written;—and conceive, indeed, that what we have now said falls more strictly within the line of our critical duty, than our general remarks can always be said to do;—because the true character and poetical effect of the work seems, in this instance, to depend much more on its moral expression, than on any of its merely literary qualities.

The author, perhaps, may not think it any compliment to be thus told, that his verses are likely to be greater favourites with the old than with the young;—and yet it is no small compliment, we think, to say, that they are likely to be more favourites with his readers every year they live:—And it is at all events true, whether it be a compliment or not, that as readers of all ages, if they are any way worth pleasing, have little glimpses and occasional visitations of those truths which longer experience only renders more familiar, so no works ever sink so deep into amiable minds, or recur so often to their remembrance, as those which embody simple, and solemn, and reconciling truths, in emphatic and elegant language—and anticipate, as it were, and bring out with effect, those salutary lessons which it seems to be the great end of our life to inculcate. The pictures of violent passion and terrible emotion—the breathing characters, the splendid imagery and bewitching fancy of Shakespeare himself, are less frequently recalled, than those great moral aphorisms in which he has so often

> Told us the fashion of our own estate
> The secrets of our bosoms—

and, in spite of all that may be said by grave persons, of the frivolousness of poetry, and of its admirers, we are persuaded that the most memorable, and the most generally admired of all its productions, are those which are chiefly recommended by their deep practical wisdom; and their coincidence with those salutary imitations with which nature herself seems to furnish us from the passing scenes of our existence.

The literary character of the work is akin to its moral character; and the diction is as soft, elegant, and simple, as the sentiments are generous and true. The whole piece, indeed, is throughout in admirable keeping, and its beauties, though of a delicate, rather than an obtrusive character, set off each other to an attentive observer, by the skill with which they are harmonised, and the sweetness with which they slide into each other. The outline, perhaps, is often rather timidly drawn, and there is an occasional want of force and brilliancy in the colouring; which we are rather inclined to ascribe to the refined and somewhat fastidious taste of the artist than to any defect of skill or of power. We have none of the broad and blazing tints of Scott—nor the startling contrasts of Byron—nor the anxious and endlessly repeated touches of Southey—but something which comes much nearer to the soft and tender manner of Campbell; with still more reserve and caution, perhaps, and more frequent sacrifices of strong and popular effect, to an abhorrence of glaring beauties, and a disdain of vulgar resources.

The work opens with a sort of epitome of its subject—and presents us with a brief abstract of man's (or at least Gentleman's) life as marked by the four great eras of—his birth—his coming of age—his marriage—and his death. This comprehensive picture, with its four compartments, is comprised in less than thirty lines.—We give the two latter scenes only.

> "And soon again shall music swell the breeze
> Soon, issuing forth, shall glitter through the trees
> Vestures of Nuptial white; and hymns be sung
> And violets scatter'd round; and old and young

> In every cottage-porch with garlands green,
> Stand still to gaze, and, gazing, bless the scene!
> While, her dark eyes declining, by his side
> Moves in her virgin-veil the gentle Bride.
> "And once, alas! nor in a distant hour,
> Another voice shall come from yonder tower!
> When in dim chambers long black weeds are seen,
> And weepings heard, where only joy had been;
> When by his children borne, and from his door
> Slowly departing to return no more,
> He rests in holy earth, with them that went before!
> "And such is Human Life! So gliding on,
> It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone!"—pp. 8—10.

After some general and very striking reflections upon the perpetual but unperceived gradations by which this mysterious being is carried through all the stages of its fleeting existence, the picture is resumed and expanded with more touching and discriminating details. Infancy, for example, is thus finely delineated:—

> "The hour arrives, the moment wish'd and fear'd;
> The child is born, by many a pang endear'd.
> And now the mother's ear has caught his cry;
> Oh grant the cherub to her asking eye!
> He comes!—she clasps him. To her bosom press'd,
> He drinks the balm of life, and drops to rest.
> "Her by her smile how soon the stranger knows;
> How soon, by his, the glad discovery shows!
> As to her lips she lifts the lovely boy,
> What answering looks of sympathy and joy!
> He walks, he speaks. In many a broken word
> His wants, his wishes, and his griefs are heard.
> And ever, ever to her lap he flies,
> When rosy Sleep comes on with sweet surprise.
> Lock'd in her arms, his arms across her flung
> (That name most dear for ever on his tongue),
> As with soft accents round her neck he clings,
> And, cheek to cheek, her lulling song she sings,
> How blest to feel the beatings of his heart,
> Breathe his sweet breath, and kiss for kiss impart;
> Watch o'er his slumbers like the brooding dove,
> And, if she can, exhaust a mother's love!"
> pp. 19, 20.

This is pursued in the same strain of tenderness and beauty through all its most interesting bearings;—and then we pass to the bolder kindlings and loftier aspirations of Youth.

> "Then is the Age of Admiration—then
> Gods walks the earth, or beings more than men!
> Ha! then come thronging many a wild desire,
> And high imaginings and thoughts of fire!
> Then from within a voice exclaims 'Aspire!'
> Phantoms, that upward point, before him pass,
> As in the Cave athwart the Wizard's glass," &c.
> p. 24.

We cut short this tablature, however, as well as the spirited sketches of impetuous courage and devoted love that belong to the same period, to come to the joys and duties of maturer life; which, we think, are described with still more touching and characteristic beauties. The Youth passes into this more tranquil and responsible state, of course, by Marriage; and we have great satisfaction in recurring, with our uxorious poet, to his representation of that engaging ceremony, upon which his thoughts seem to dwell with so much fondness and complacency.

> "Then are they blest indeed! and swift the hours
> Till her young Sisters wreathe her hair in flowers,
> Kindling her beauty—while, unseen, the least
> Twitches her robe, then runs behind the rest,
> Known by her laugh that will not be suppress'd.
> Then before All they stand! The holy vow
> And ring of gold, no fond illusions now,
> Bind her as his! Across the threshold led,
> And ev'ry tear kiss'd off as soon as shed,
> His house she enters; there to be a light
> Shining within, when all without is night!
> A guardian-angel o'er his life presiding,
> Doubling his pleasures, and his cares dividing!
> How oft her eyes read his; her gentle mind,
> To all his wishes, all his thoughts inclin'd;
> Still subject—even on the watch to borrow
> Mirth of his mirth, and sorrow of his sorrow."
> pp. 32, 33.

Beautiful as this is, we think it much inferior to what follows; when Parental affection comes to complete the picture of Connubial bliss.

> "And laughing eyes and laughing voices fill
> Their halls with gladness. She, when all are still,
> Comes and undraws the curtain as they lie
> In sleep, how beautiful! He, when the sky
> Gleams, and the wood sends up its harmony,
> When, gathering round his bed, they climb to share
> His kisses, and with gentle violence there
> Break in upon a dream not half so fair,
> Up to the hill top leads their little feet;
> Or by the forest-lodge; perchance to meet
> The stag-herd on its march, perchance to hear
> The otter rustling in the sedgy mere;
> Or to the echo near the Abbot's tree,
> That gave him back his words of pleasantry—
> When the House stood, no merrier man than he!
> And, as they wander with a keen delight,
> If but a leveret catch their quicker sight
> Down a green alley, or a squirrel then
> Climb the gnarled oak, and look and climb again,
> If but a moth flit by, an acorn fall,
> He turns their thoughts to Him who made them all."
> pp. 34—36.
> "But Man is born to suffer. On the door
> Sickness has set her mark; and now no more
> Laughter within we hear, or wood-notes wild
> As of a mother singing to her child.
> All now in anguish from that room retire,
> Where a young cheek glows with consuming fire,
> And innocence breathes contagion!—all but one,
> But she who gave it birth!—From her alone
> The medicine-cup is taken. Through the night,
> And through the day, that with its dreary light
> Comes unregarded, she sits silent by,
> Watching the changes with her anxious eye:
> While they without, listening below, above,
> (Who but in sorrow know how much they love?)
> From every little noise catch hope and fear,
> Exchanging still, still as they turn to hear,
> Whispers and sighs, and smiles all tenderness!
> That would in vain the starting tear repress."
> pp. 38, 39.

The scene, however, is not always purely domestic—though all its lasting enjoyments are of that origin, and look back to that consummation. His country requires the arm of a free man! and home and all its joys must be left, for the patriot battle. The sanguinary and tumultuous part is slightly touched; But the return is exquisite; nor do we know, any where, any verses more touching and full of heartfelt beauty, than some of those we are about to extract.

> "He goes, and Night comes as it never came!
> With shrieks of horror!—and a vault of flame!
> And lo! when morning mocks the desolate,
> Red runs the rivulet by; and at the gate
> Breathless a horse without his rider stands!
> But hush!... a shout from the victorious bands!
> And oh the smiles and tears! a sire restor'd!
> One wears his helm—one buckles on his sword

One hangs the wall with laurel-leaves, and all
Spring to prepare the soldier's festival;
While She best-lov'd, till then forsaken never,
Clings round his neck, as she would cling for ever!
"Such golden deeds lead on to golden days,
Days of domestic peace—by him who plays
On the great stage how uneventful thought;
Yet with a thousand busy projects fraught,
A thousand incidents that stir the mind
To pleasure, such as leaves no sting behind!
Such as the heart delights in—and records
Within how silently—in more than words!
A Holyday—the frugal banquet spread
On the fresh herbage near the fountain-head
With quips and cranks—what time the wood-lark there
Scatters her loose notes on the sultry air,
What time the king-fisher sits perch'd below,
Where, silver-bright, the water lilies blow:—
A Wake—the booths whit'ning the village-green,
Where Punch and Scaramouch aloft are seen;
Sign beyond sign in close array unfurl'd,
Picturing at large the wonders of the world;
And far and wide, over the vicar's pale,
Black hoods and scarlet crossing hill and dale,
All, all abroad, and music in the gale:—
A Wedding-dance—a dance into the night!
On the barn-floor when maiden-feet are light;
When the young bride receives the promis'd dower,
And flowers are flung, 'herself a fairer flower:'—
A morning-visit to the poor man's shed,
(Who would be rich while One was wanting bread?)
When all are emulous to bring relief,
And tears are falling fast—but not for grief:—
A Walk in Spring—Gr*tt*n, like those with thee,
By the heath-side (who had not envied me?)
When the sweet limes, so full of bees in June,
Led us to meet beneath their boughs at noon;
And thou didst say which of the Great and Wise,
Could they but hear and at thy bidding rise,
Thou wouldst call up and question."—pp. 42—46.

Other cares and trials and triumphs await him. He fights the good fight of freedom in the senate, as he had done before in the field—and with greater peril. The heavy hand of power weighs upon him, and he is arraigned of crimes against the State.

"Like Hampden struggling in his country's cause,
The first, the foremost to obey the laws,
The last to brook oppression! On he moves,
Careless of blame while his own heart approves,
Careless of ruin—("For the general good
'Tis not the first time I shall shed my blood.")
On through that gate misnamed,* through which before,
Went Sidney, Russel, Raleigh, Cranmer, More!
On into twilight within walls of stone,
Then to the place of trial; and alone,
Alone before his judges in array
Stands for his life! there, on that awful day,
Counsel of friends—all human help denied—
All but from her who sits the pen to guide.
Like that sweet saint who sat by Russel's side†
Under the judgment-seat!—But guilty men
Triumph not always. To his hearth again,
Again with honour to his hearth restor'd,
Lo, in the accustom'd chair and at the board,
Thrice greeting those that most withdraw their claim
(The humblest servant calling by his name),
He reads thanksgiving in the eyes of all,
All met as at a holy festival!
—On the day *destin'd* for his funeral!
Lo, there the Friend, who, entering where he lay,
Breath'd in his drowsy ear 'Away, away!
Take thou *my* cloak—Nay, start not, but obey—
Take it and leave me.' And the blushing Maid,
Who through the streets as through a desert stray'd,
And, when her dear, dear Father pass'd along,
Would not be held; but, bursting through the throng,
Halberd and battle-axe—kissed him o'er and o'er;
Then turn'd and went—then sought him as before,
Believing she should see his face no more!"
pp. 48—50.

What follows is sacred to still higher remembrances.

"And now once more where most he lov'd to be,
In his own fields—breathing tranquillity—
We hail him—not less happy, Fox, than thee!
Thee at St. Anne's, so soon of Care begnil'd,
Playful, sincere, and artless as a child!
Thee, who wouldst watch a bird's nest on the spray,
Through the green leaves exploring, day by day,
How oft from grove to grove, from seat to seat,
With thee conversing in thy lov'd retreat,
I saw the sun go down!—Ah, then 'twas thine
Ne'er to forget some volume half divine, [shade
Shakespeare's or Dryden's—thro' the chequer'd
Borne in thy hand behind thee as we stray'd:
And where we sate (and many a halt we made)
To read there with a fervour all thy own,
And in thy grand and melancholy tone,
Some splendid passage not to thee unknown,
Fit theme for long discourse.—Thy bell has toll'd!
—But in thy place among us we behold
One that resembles thee."—pp. 52, 53.

The scene of closing Age is not less beautiful and attractive—nor less true and exemplary.

"'Tis the sixth hour.
The village-clock strikes from the distant tower.
The ploughman leaves the field; the traveller hears,
And to the inn spurs forward. Nature wears
Her sweetest smile; the day-star in the west
Yet hovering, and the thistle's down at rest.

"And such, his labour done, the calm He knows,
Whose footsteps we have follow'd. Round him glows
An atmosphere that brightens to the last;
The light, that shines, reflected from the Past,
—And from the Future too! Active in Thought
Among old books, old friends; and not unsought
By the wise stranger. In his morning-hours,
When gentle airs stir the fresh-blowing flowers,
He muses, turning up the idle weed;
Or prunes or grafts, or in the yellow mead
Watches his bees at hiving-time; and now,
The ladder resting on the orchard-bough,
Culls the delicious fruit that hangs in air,
The purple plum, green fig, or golden pear,
Mid sparkling eyes, and hands uplifted there.

"At night, when all, assembling round the fire,
Closer and closer draw till they retire,
A tale is told of India or Japan,
Of merchants from Golcond or Astracan,
What time wild Nature revell'd unrestrain'd,
And Sinbad voyag'd and the Caliphs reign'd;—
Of some Norwegian, while the icy gale
Rings in the shrouds and beats the iron sail,
Among the snowy Alps of Polar seas
Immoveable—for ever there to freeze!
Or some great Caravan, from well to well
Winding as darkness on the desert fell," &c.

* Traitor's Gate, in the Tower.

† We know of nothing at once so pathetic and so sublime, as the few simple sentences here alluded to, in the account of Lord Russel's trial.

Lord Russel. May I have somebody write to help my memory?

Mr. Attorney General. Yes, a Servant.

Lord Chief Justice. Any of your Servants shall assist you in writing any thing you please for you.

Lord Russel. My Wife is here, my Lord, to do it?

——When we recollect who Russel and his wife were, and what a destiny was then impending, this one trait makes the heart swell, almost to bursting.

"Age has now
Stamp'd with its signet that ingenuous brow;
And, 'mid his old hereditary trees,
Trees he has climb'd so oft, he sits and sees
His children's children playing round his knees:
Envying no more the young their energies
Than they an old man when his words are wise;
His a delight how pure . . . without alloy;
Strong in their strength, rejoicing in their joy!

"Now in their turn assisting, they repay
The anxious cares of many and many a day;
And now by those he loves reliev'd, restor'd,
His very wants and weaknesses afford
A feeling of enjoyment. In his walks,
Leaning on them, how oft he stops and talks,
While they look up! Their questions, their replies,
Fresh as the welling waters, round him rise,
Gladdening his spirit."—pp. 53—61.

We have dwelt too long, perhaps, on a work more calculated to make a lasting, than a strong impression on the minds of its readers—and not, perhaps, very well calculated for being read at all in the pages of a Miscellaneous Journal. We have gratified ourselves, however, in again going over it; and hope we have not much wearied our readers. It is followed by a very striking copy of verses written at Pæstum in 1816—and more characteristic of that singular and most striking scene, than any thing we have ever read, in prose or verse, on the subject. The ruins of Pæstum, as they are somewhat improperly called, consist of three vast and massive Temples, of the most rich and magnificent architecture; which are not ruined at all, but as entire as on the day when they were built, while there is not a vestige left of the city to which they belonged! They stand in a desert and uninhabited plain, which stretches for many miles from the sea to the mountains—and, after the subversion of the Roman greatness, had fallen into such complete oblivion, that for nearly nine hundred years they had never been visited or heard of by any intelligent person, till they were accidentally discovered about the middle of the last century.—The whole district in which they are situated, though once the most fertile and flourishing part of the Tyrrhene shore, has been almost completely depopulated by the Mal'aria; and is now, in every sense of the word, a vast and dreary desert. The following lines seem to us to tell all that need be told, and to express all that can be felt of a scene so strange and so mournful.

"They stand between the mountains and the sea;
Awful memorials—but of whom we know not!
The seaman, passing, gazes from the deck.
The buffalo-driver, in his shaggy cloak,
Points to the work of magic, and moves on.
Time was they stood along the crowded street,
Temples of Gods! and on their ample steps
What various habits, various tongues beset
The brazen gates, for prayer and sacrifice!
"How many centuries did the sun go round
From Mount Alburnus to the Tyrrhene sea,
While, by some spell render'd invisible,
Or, if approach'd, approached by him alone
Who saw as though he saw not, they remain'd
As in the darkness of a sepulchre,
Waiting the appointed time! All, all within
Proclaims that Nature had resum'd her right,
And taken to herself what man renounc'd;
No cornice, triglyph, or worn abacus,
But with thick ivy hung or branching fern,
Their iron-brown o'erspread with brightest verdure!
"From my youth upward have I longed to tread
This classic ground.—And am I here at last?
Wandering at will through the long porticoes,
And catching, as through some majestic grove,
Now the blue ocean, and now, chaos-like,
Mountains and mountain-gulphs! and, half-way up,
Towns like the living rock from which they grew?
A cloudy region, black and desolate,
Where once a slave withstood a world in arms.
"The air is sweet with violets, running wild
Mid broken sculptures and fallen capitals!
Sweet as when Tully, writing down his thoughts,
Sail'd slowly by, two thousand years ago,
For Athens; when a ship, if north-east winds
Blew from the Pæstan gardens, slack'd her course.
The birds are hush'd awhile; and nothing stirs,
Save the shrill-voic'd cigala flitting round
On the rough pediment to sit and sing;
Or the green lizard rustling through the grass,
And up the fluted shaft, with short quick motion,
To vanish in the chinks that Time has made!
"In such an hour as this, the sun's broad disk
Seen at his setting, and a flood of light
Filling the courts of these old sanctuaries,
(Gigantic shadows, broken and confus'd,
Across the innumerable columns flung)
In such an hour he came, who saw and told,
Led by the mighty Genius of the Place!
Walls of some capital city first appear'd,
Half raz'd, half sunk, or scatter'd as in scorn;
—And what within them? what but in the midst
These Three, in more than their original grandeur,
And, round about, no stone upon another!
As if the spoiler had fallen back in fear,
And, turning, left them to the elements."

The volume ends with a little ballad, entitled "The Boy of Egremond"—which is well enough for a Lakish ditty, but not quite worthy of the place in which we meet it.

(June, 1815.)

Roderick The Last of the Goths. By Robert Southey, Esq., *Poet-Laureate, and Member of the Royal Spanish Academy.* 4to. pp. 477. London: 1814.*

This is the best, we think, and the most powerful of all Mr. Southey's poems. It abounds with lofty sentiments, and magnificent imagery; and contains more rich and comprehensive descriptions—more beautiful pictures of pure affection—and more impressive representations of mental agony and exultation than we have often met with in the compass of a single volume.

A work, of which all this can be said with justice, cannot be without great merit; and ought not, it may be presumed, to be without great popularity. Justice, however, has something more to say of it: and we are not quite sure either that it will be very popular, or that it deserves to be so. It is too monotonous—too wordy—and too uniformly stately, tragical, and emphatic. Above all, it is now and then a little absurd—and pretty frequently not a little affected.

The author is a poet undoubtedly; but not of the highest order. There is rather more of rhetoric than of inspiration about him—and we have oftener to admire his taste and industry in borrowing and adorning, than the boldness or felicity of his inventions. He has indisputably a great gift of amplifying and exalting; but uses it, we must say, rather unmercifully. He is never plain, concise, or unaffectedly simple, and is so much bent upon making the most of every thiug, that he is perpetually overdoing. His sentiments and situations are, of course, sometimes ordinary enough; but the tone of emphasis and pretension is never for a moment relaxed; and the most trivial occurrences, and fantastical distresses, are commemorated with the same vehemence and exaggeration of manner, as the most startling incidents, or the deepest and most heart-rending disasters. This want of relief and variety is sufficiently painful of itself in a work of such length; but its worst effect is, that it gives an air of falsetto and pretension to the whole strain of the composition, and makes us suspect the author of imposture and affectation, even when he has good enough cause for his agonies and raptures.

How is it possible, indeed, to commit our sympathies, without distrust, to the hands of a writer, who, after painting with infinite force the anguish of soul which pursued the fallen Roderick into the retreat to which his crimes had driven him, proceeds with redoubled emphasis to assure us, that neither his remorse nor his downfal were half so intolerable to him, as *the shocking tameness of the sea birds* who flew round about him in that utter solitude! and were sometimes so familiar as to brush his cheek with their wings!

> "For his lost crown
> And sceptre never had he felt a thought
> Of pain: Repentance had no pangs to spare
> For trifles such as these. The loss of these
> Was a cheap penalty: . . that he had fallen
> Down to the lowest depth of wretchedness,
> His hope and consolation. But to lose
> His human station in the scale of things, . .
> *To see brute Nature scorn him, and renounce*
> *Its homage to the human form divine!* . .
> Had then almighty vengeance thus reveal'd
> His punishment, and was he fallen indeed
> Below fallen man, . . below redemption's reach, . .
> Made lower than the beasts?"—p. 17.

This, if we were in bad humour, we should be tempted to say, was little better than driveling;—and certainly the folly of it is greatly aggravated by the tone of intense solemnity in which it is conveyed: But the worst fault by far, and the most injurious to the effect of the author's greatest beauties, is the extreme diffuseness and verbosity of his style, and his unrelenting anxiety to leave nothing to the fancy, the feeling, or even the plain understanding of his readers—but to have every thing set down, and impressed and hammered into them, which it may any how conduce to his glory that they should comprehend. There never was any author, we are persuaded, who had so great a distrust of his readers' capacity, or such an unwillingness to leave any opportunity of shining unimproved; and accordingly, we rather think there is no author who, with the same talents and attainments, has been so generally thought tedious—or acquired, on the whole, a popularity so inferior to his real deservings. On the present occasion, we have already said, his deservings appear to us unusually great, and his faults less than commonly conspicuous. For though there is less childishness and trifling in this, than in any of his other productions there is still, we are afraid, enough of tediousness and affected energy, very materially to obstruct the popularity which the force, and the tenderness and beauty of its better parts, might have otherwise commanded.

There is one blemish, however, which we think peculiar to the work before us; and that is, the outrageously religious, or rather fanatical, tone which pervades its whole structure;—the excessive horror and abuse with which the Mahometans are uniformly spoken of on account of their religion alone; and the offensive frequency and familiarity with which the name and the sufferings of our Saviour are referred to at every turn of the story. The spirit which is here evinced towards the Moors, not only by their valiant opponents, but by the author when speaking in his own person, is neither that of pious reprobation nor patriotic hatred, but of savage and bigotted persecution; and the heroic character and heroic deeds of his greatest favourites are debased and polluted by the paltry superstitions, and sanguinary fanaticism, which he is pleased to ascribe to them. This, which we are persuaded would be revolting in a nation of zealous Catholics, must be still more distasteful, we think, among sober Protestants; while, on the other hand, the constant introduction of the holiest persons, and most solemn rites of religion, for the purpose of helping on the flagging interest of a story devised for amusement, can scarcely fail to give scandal and offence to all persons of right feeling or just taste. This remark may be thought a little rigorous by those who have not looked into the work to which it is applied—For they can have no idea of the extreme frequency, and palpable extravagance, of the allusions and invocations to which we have referred.—One poor woman, for example, who merely appears to give alms to the fallen Roderick in the season of his humiliation, is very needlessly made to exclaim, as she offers her pittance,

> "Christ Jesus, for his Mother's sake,
> Have mercy on thee."

—and soon after, the King himself, when he hears one of his subjects uttering curses on his name, is pleased to say,

> "Oh, for the love of Jesus curse him not!
> O brother, do not curse that sinful soul,
> Which Jesus suffer'd on the cross to save!"

Whereupon, one of the more charitable auditors rejoins.

> "Christ bless thee, brother, for that Christian speech!"

—and so the talk goes on, through the greater part of the poem. Now, we must say we think this both indecent and ungraceful; and look upon it as almost as exceptionable a way of increasing the solemnity of poetry, as common swearing is of adding to the energy of discourse.

We are not quite sure whether we should reckon his choice of a subject, among Mr. Southey's errors on the present occasion;—but certainly no theme could well have been suggested, more utterly alien to all English prejudices, traditions, and habits of poetical contemplation, than the domestic history of the last Gothic King of Spain,—a history extremely remote and obscure in itself, and treating of persons and places and events, with which no visions or glories are associated in English imaginations. The subject, however, was selected, we suppose, during that period when a zeal for Spanish liberty, and a belief in Spanish virtue, spirit and talent, were extremely fashionable in this country; and before "the universal Spanish people" had made themselves the objects of mixed contempt and compassion, by rushing prone into the basest and most insulted servitude that was ever asserted over human beings. From this degradation we do not think they will be redeemed by all the heroic acts recorded in this poem,—the interest of which, we suspect, will be considerably lowered, by the late revolution in public opinion, as to the merits of the nation to whose fortunes it relates.—After all, however, we think it must be allowed, that any author who interests us in his story, has either the merit of choosing a good subject, or a still higher merit;—and Mr. Southey, in our opinion, has made his story very interesting. Nor should it be forgotten, that by the choice which he has made, he has secured immense squadrons of Moors, with their Asiatic gorgeousness, and their cymbals, turbans, and Paynim chivalry, to give a picturesque effect to his battles,—and bevies of veiled virgins and ladies in armour,—and hermits and bishops,—and mountain villagers,—and torrents and forests, and cork trees and sierras, to remind us of Don Quixote,—and store of sonorous names:—and altogether, he might have chosen worse among more familiar objects.

The scheme or mere outline of the fable is extremely short and simple. Roderick, the valiant and generous king of the Goths, being unhappily married, allows his affections to wander on the lovely daughter of Count Julian; and is so far overmastered by his passion, as, in a moment of frenzy, to offer violence to her person. Her father, in revenge of this cruel wrong, invites the Moors to seize on the kingdom of the guilty monarch;—and assuming their faith, guides them at last to a signal and sanguinary victory. Roderick, after performing prodigies of valour, in a seven-days fight, feels at length that Heaven has ordained all this misery as the penalty of his offences; and, overwhelmed with remorse and inward agony, falls from his battle horse in the midst of the carnage: Stripping off his rich armour, he then puts on the dress of a dead peasant; and, pursued by revengeful furies, rushes desperately on through his lost and desolated kingdom, till he is stopped by the sea; on the rocky and lonely shore of which he passes more than a year in constant agonies of penitence and humiliation,—till he is roused at length, by visions and impulses, to undertake something for the deliverance of his suffering people. Grief and abstinence have now so changed him, that he is recognised by no one;

* I have, in my time, said petulant and provoking things of Mr. Southey:—and such as I would not say now. But I am not conscious that I was ever unfair to his Poetry: and if I have noted what I thought its faults, in too arrogant and derisive a spirit, I think I have never failed to give hearty and cordial praise to its beauties—and generally dwelt much more largely on the latter than the former. Few things, at all events, would now grieve me more, than to think I might give pain to his many friends and admirers, by reprinting, so soon after his death, any thing which might appear derogatory either to his character or his genius; and therefore, though I cannot say that I have substantially changed any of the opinions I have formerly expressed as to his writings, I only insert in this publication my review of his last considerable poem: which may be taken as conveying my matured opinion of his merits—and will be felt, I trust, to have done no scanty or unwilling justice to his great and peculiar powers.

and being universally believed to have fallen in battle, he traverses great part of his former realm, witnessing innumerable scenes of wretchedness and valour, and rousing, by his holy adjurations, all the generous spirits in Spain, to unite against the invaders. After a variety of trials and adventures, he at last recovers his good war horse, on the eve of a great battle with the infidels; and, bestriding him in his penitential robes, rushes furiously into the heart of the fight, where, kindling with the scene and the cause, he instinctively raises his ancient war cry, as he deals his resistless blows on the heads of the misbelievers; and the thrilling words of "Roderick the Goth! Roderick and victory!" resounding over the astonished field, are taken up by his inspired followers, and animate them to the utter destruction of the enemy. At the close of the day, however, when the field is won, the battle horse is found without its rider! and the sword which he wielded lying at his feet. The poem closes with a brief intimation, that it was not known till many centuries thereafter, that the heroic penitent had again sought the concealment of a remote hermitage, and ended his days in solitary penances. The poem, however, both requires and deserves a more particular analysis.

The first book or canto opens with a slight sketch of the invasion, and proceeds to the fatal defeat and heart-struck flight of Roderick. The picture of the first descent of the Moorish invaders, is a good specimen of the author's broader and more impressive manner. He is addressing the rock of Gibraltar.

"Thou saw'st the dark blue waters flash before
Their ominous way, and whiten round their keels;
Their swarthy myriads darkening o'er thy sands.
There, on the beach, the misbelievers spread
Their banners, flaunting to the sun and breeze:
Fair shone the sun upon their proud array,
White turbans, glitt'ring armour, shields engrail'd
With gold, and scymitars of Syrian steel;
And gently did the breezes, as in sport,
Curl their long flags outrolling, and display
The blazon'd scrolls of blasphemy."—pp. 2, 3.

The agony of the distracted king, as he flies in vain from himself through his lost and ruined kingdom; and the spectacle which every where presented itself of devastation and terror, and miserable emigration, are represented with great force of colouring. At the end of the seventh day of that solitary and despairing flight, he arrives at the portal of an ancient convent, from which all its holy tenants had retired on the approach of the Moors, except one aged priest, who had staid to deck the altar, and earn his crown of martyrdom from the infidel host. By him Roderick is found grovelling at the foot of the cross, and drowned in bitter and penitential sorrows.—He leads him in with compassionate soothings, and supplicates him before the altar to be of comfort, and to trust in mercy. The result is told with great feeling and admirable effect: and the worthy father weeps and watches with his penitent through the night: and in the morning resolves to forego the glories of martyrdom for his sake, and to bear him company in the retreat to which he is hastening. They set out together, and fix themselves in a little rocky bay, opening out to the lonely roar of the Atlantic.

"Behind them was the desert, off'ring fruit
And water for their need; on either side
The white sand sparkling to the sun; in front,
Great Ocean with its everlasting voice,
As in perpetual jubilee, proclaim'd
The wonders of the Almighty, filling thus
The pauses of their fervent orisons.
Where better could the wanderers rest than here?"—p. 14.

The Second Book begins with stating, that Roderick passed twelve months in penance and austerities, in this romantic retreat.—At the end of that time, his ghostly father dies; and his agonies become more intolerable, in the utter desolation to which he is now left. The author, however, is here a little unlucky in two circumstances, which he imagines and describes at great length, as aggravating his unspeakable misery;—one is the tameness of the birds,—of which we have spoken already—the other is the reflection which he very innocently puts into the mouth of the lonely King, that all the trouble he has taken in digging his own grave, will now be thrown away, as there will probably be nobody to stretch him out, and cover him decently up in it!—However he is clearly made out to be very miserable; and prays for death, or for the imposition of some more active penance—

—— "any thing
But stillness, and this dreadful solitude!"

At length he is visited, in his sleep, by a vision of his tender mother; who gives him her blessing in a gentle voice, and says, "Jesus have mercy on thee." The air and countenance of this venerable shade, as she bent in sorrow over her unhappy son, are powerfully depicted in the following allusion to her domestic calamities. He traced there, it seems, not only the settled sadness of her widowhood—

"But a more mortal wretchedness than when
Witiza's ruffians and the red-hot brass
Had done their work, and in her arms she held
Her eyeless husband; wip'd away the sweat
Which still his tortures forc'd from every pore;
Cool'd his scorch'd lips with medicinal herbs,
And pray'd the while for patience for herself
And him,—and pray'd for vengeance too! and found
Best comfort in her curses."—pp. 23, 24.

While he gazes on this piteous countenance, the character of the vision is suddenly altered; and the verses describing the alteration afford a good specimen both of Mr. Southey's command of words, and of the profusion with which he sometimes pours them out on his readers.

—— "And lo! her form was chang'd!
Radiant in arms she stood! a bloody Cross
Gleam'd on her breastplate; in her shield display'd
Erect a Lion ramp'd; her helmed head
Rose like the Berecynthian Goddess crown'd
With towers, and in her dreadful hand the sword,
Red as a fire-brand blaz'd! Anon the tramp
Of horsemen, and the din of multitudes
Moving to mortal conflict, rung around;
The battle-song, the clang of sword and shield,
War-cries and tumult, strife and hate and rage,
Blasphemous prayers, confusion, agony,
Rout and pursuit, and death! and over all
The shout of Victory . . . of Spain and Victory!"
pp. 24, 25.

In awaking from this prophetic dream, he resolves to seek occasion of active service, in such humble capacity as becomes his fallen fortune; and turns from this first abode of his penitence and despair.

The Third Book sets him on his heroic pilgrimage; and opens with a fine picture.

"'Twas now the earliest morning; soon the Sun,
Rising above Albardos, pour'd his light
Amid the forest, and with ray aslant
Ent'ring its depth illum'd the branchless pines;
Brighten'd their bark, ting'd with a redder hue
Its rusty stains, and cast along the floor
Long lines of shadow, where they rose erect,
Like pillars of the temple. With slow foot
Roderick pursued his way."—p. 27.

We do not know that we could extract from the whole book a more characteristic passage than that which describes his emotion on his first return to the sight of man. and the altered aspect of his fallen people. He approaches to the walls of Leyria.

—— "The sounds, the sight
Of turban, girdle, robe, and scymitar,
And tawny skins, awoke contending thoughts
Of anger, shame, and anguish in the Goth!
The unaccustom'd face of human-kind
Confus'd him now, and through the streets he went
With hagged mien, and countenance like one
Craz'd or bewilder'd.
"One stopt him short,
Put alms into his hand, and then desir'd,
In broken Gothic speech, the moon-struck man
To bless him. With a look of vacancy
Roderick receiv'd the alms; his wand'ring eye
Fell on the money; and the fallen King,
Seeing his own royal impress on the piece,
Broke out into a quick convulsive voice,
That seem'd like laughter first, but ended soon
In hollow groans supprest!
A Christian woman spinning at her door
Beheld him, and with sudden pity touch'd,
She laid her spindle by, and running in
Took bread, and following after call'd him back,
And placing in his passive hands the loaf,
She said, Christ Jesus for his Mother's sake
Have mercy on thee! With a look that seem'd
Like idiotcy, he heard her, and stood still,
Staring awhile; then bursting into tears
Wept like a child!
"But when he reach'd
The open fields, and found himself alone
Beneath the starry canopy of Heaven,
The sense of solitude, so dreadful late,
Was then repose and comfort. There he stopt
Beside a little rill, and brake the loaf;
And shedding o'er that unaccustom'd food
Painful but quiet tears, with grateful soul
He breath'd thanksgiving forth; then made his bed
On heath and myrtle."—pp. 28—30.

After this, he journeys on through deserted hamlets and desolated towns, till, on entering the silent streets of Auria, yet black with conflagration, and stained with blood, the vestiges of a more heroic resistance appear before him.

"Helmet and turban, scymitar and sword,
Christian and Moor in death promiscuous lay
Each where they fell; and blood-flakes, parch'd and crack'd
Like the dry slime of some receding flood;
And half-burnt bodies, which allur'd from far
The wolf and raven, and to impious food
Tempted the houseless dog."—p. 36.

While he is gazing on this dreadful scene with all the sympathies of admiration and sorrow, a young and lovely woman rushes from the ruins, and implores him to assist her in burying the bodies of her child, husband, and parents, who all lie mangled at her feet. He sadly complies; and listens, with beating heart and kindling eyes, to the vehement narrative and lofty vow of revenge with which this heroine closes her story. The story itself is a little commonplace; turning mainly upon her midnight slaughter of the Moorish captain, who sought to make love to her after the sacrifice of all her family; but the expression of her patriotic devotedness and religious ardour of revenge, is given with great energy; as well as the effect which it produces on the waking spirit of the King. He repeats the solemn vow which she has just taken, and consults her as to the steps that may be taken for rousing the valiant of the land to their assistance. The high-minded Amazon then asks the name of her first proselyte.

—— "Ask any thing but that!
The fallen King replied. My name was lost
When from the Goths the sceptre past away!"

She rejoins, rather less felicitously, "Then be thy name *Maccabee;*" and sends him on an embassage to a worthy abbot among the mountains; to whom he forthwith reports what he had seen and witnessed. Upon hearing the story of her magnanimous devotion, the worthy priest instantly divines the name of the heroine.

"Oh none but Adosinda! . . none but she, . .
None but that noble heart, which was the heart
Of Auria while it stood—its life and strength,
More than her father's presence, or the arm
Of her brave lord, all valiant as he was.
Hers was the spirit which inspir'd old age,
Ambitious boyhood, girls in timid youth,
And virgins in the beauty of their spring,
And youthful mothers, doting like herself
With ever-anxious love: She breath'd through all
That zeal and that devoted faithfulness,
Which to the invader's threats and promises
Turn'd a deaf ear alike," &c.—pp. 53—54.

The King then communes on the affairs of Spain with this venerable Ecclesiastic and his associates; who are struck with wonder at the lofty mien which still shines through his sunk and mortified frame.

"They scann'd his countenance: But not a trace
Betray'd the royal Goth! sunk was that eye
Of sov'reignty; and on the emaciate cheek
Had penitence and anguish deeply drawn
Their furrows premature, . . forestalling time,
And shedding upon thirty's brow, more snows
Than threescore winters in their natural course
Might else have sprinkled there."—p. 57.

At length, the prelate lays his consecrating hands on him; and sends him to Pelayo, the heir-apparent of the sceptre, then a prisoner or hostage at the court of the Moorish prince, to say that the mountaineers are still unsub-

dued, and look to him to guide them to vengeance.

These scenes last through two books; and at the beginning of the Fifth, Roderick sets out on his mission. Here, while he reposes himself in a rustic inn, he hears the assembled guests at once lamenting the condition of Spain, and imprecating curses on the head of its guilty King. He says a few words vehemently for himself; and is supported by a venerable old man, in whom he soon recognises an ancient servant of his mother's house —the guardian and playmate of his infant days. Secure from discovering himself, he musters courage to ask if his mother be still alive; and is soothed to milder sorrow by learning that she is. At dawn he resumes his course; and kneeling at a broken crucifix on the road, is insulted by a Moor, who politely accosts him with a kick, and the dignified address of "God's curse confound thee!" for which Roderick knocks him down, and stabs him with his own dagger. The worthy old man, whose name is Siverian, comes up just as this feat is performed, and is requested to assist in "hiding the carrion;" after which they proceed lovingly together. On their approach to Cordoba, the old man calls sadly to mind the scene which he had witnessed at his last visit to that place, some ten years before, when Roderick, in the pride of his youthful triumph, had brought the haughty foe of his father to the grave where his ashes were interred, and his gentle mother came to see that expiation made. The King listens to this commemoration of his past glories with deep, but suppressed emotion; and entering the chapel, falls prostrate on the grave of his father. A majestic figure starts forward at that action, in the dress of penitence and mourning; and the pilgrims recognise Pelayo, to whom they both come commissioned. This closes the Sixth Book.

The Seventh contains their account of the state of affairs, and Pelayo's solemn acceptance of the dangerous service of leaving the meditated insurrection. The abdicated monarch then kneels down and hails him King of Spain! and Siverian, though with mournful remembrances, follows the high example.

The Eighth Book continues this midnight conversation; and introduces the young Alphonso, Pelayo's fellow-prisoner, at the Moorish court, who is then associated to their counsels, and enters with eager delight into their plans of escape. These two books are rather dull; though not without force and dignity. The worst thing in them is a bit of rhetoric of Alphonso, who complains that his delight in watching the moon setting over his native hills, was all spoiled, on looking up and seeing the Moorish crescent on the towers!

The Ninth Book introduces an important person—Florinda, the unhappy daughter of Count Julian. She sits muffled by Pelayo's way, as he returns from the chapel; and begs a boon of him in the name of Roderick, the chosen friend of his youth. He asks who it is that adjures him by that beloved but now unuttered name:—

"She bar'd her face, and, looking up, replied,
Florinda! . . Shrinking then, with both her hands
She hid herself, and bow'd her head abas'd
Upon her knee!——
Pelayo stood confus'd: He had not seen
Count Julian's daughter since, in Rod'rick's court,
Glittering in beauty and in innocence,
A radiant vision, in her joy she mov'd!
More like a poet's dream, or form divine,
Heaven's prototype of perfect womanhood,
So lovely was the presence, . . than a thing
Of earth and perishable elements."—p. 110.

She then tells him, that wretched as she is, the renegade Orpas seeks her hand; and begs his assistance to send her beyond his reach, to a Christian land. He promised that she shall share his own fate; and they part till evening.

The Tenth Book sends all the heroic party upon their night pilgrimage to the mountains of Asturia. Roderick and Siverian had gone before. Pelayo, with Alphonso and Florinda, follow in the disguise of peasants. Their midnight march, in that superb climate, is well described:—

——"The favouring moon arose,
To guide them on their flight through upland paths
Remote from frequentage, and dales retir'd,
Forest and mountain glen. Before their feet
The fire-flies, swarming in the woodland shade,
Sprung up like sparks, and twinkled round their way;
The timorous blackbird, starting at their step,
Fled from the thicket, with shrill note of fear;
And far below them in the peopled dell,
When all the soothing sounds of eve had ceas'd,
The distant watch-dog's voice at times was heard,
Answering the nearer wolf. All through the night
Among the hills they travell'd silently;
Till when the stars were setting, at what hour
The breath of Heaven is coldest, they beheld
Within a lonely grove the expected fire,
Where Rod'rick and his comrade anxiously
Look for the appointed meeting."

"Bright rose the flame replenish'd; it illum'd
The cork-tree's furrow'd rind, its rifts and swells
And redder scars, . . and where its aged boughs
O'erbower'd the travellers, cast upon the leaves
A floating, grey, unrealising gleam."—pp. 117, 118.

The rest soon sink in serene and untroubled sleep: But Roderick and Florinda, little dreaming of each other's presence, are kept awake by bitter recollections. At last she approaches him; and, awed by the sanctity of his air and raiment, kneels down before him, and asks if he knows who the wretch is who thus grovels before him. He answers that he does not:—

"Then said she, 'Here thou seest
One who is known too fatally for all, . .
The daughter of Count Julian!' . . . Well it was
For Rod'rick that no eye beheld him now!
From head to foot a sharper pang than death
Thrill'd him; his heart, as at a mortal stroke,
Ceas'd from its functions; his breath fail'd."—p. 120.

The darkness and her own emotions prevent her, however, from observing him, and she proceeds:—

"'Father! at length she said, all tongues amid
This general ruin shed their bitterness
On Rod'rick; load his memory with reproach,
And with their curses persecute his soul.' . . .
'Why shouldst thou tell me this?' exclaim'd the Goth,
From his cold forehead wiping as he spake [guilt
The death-like moisture: . . Why of Rod'rick's

Tell me? Or thinkest thou I know it not?
Alas! who hath not heard the hideous tale
Of Rod'rick's shame!"——

"'There! she cried,
Drawing her body backward where she knelt,
And stretching forth her arms with head uprais'd, . .
There! it pursues me still! . . I came to thee,
Father, for comfort—and thou heapest fire
Upon my head! But hear me patiently,
And let me undeceive thee! Self-abas'd,
Not to arraign another, do I come! . .
I come a self-accuser, self-condemn'd,
To take upon myself the pain deserv'd;
For I have drank the cup of bitterness,
And having drank therein of heavenly grace,
I must not put away the cup of shame.'

"Thus as she spake she falter'd at the close,
And in that dying fall her voice sent forth
Somewhat of its original sweetness. 'Thou! . .
Thou self-abas'd!' exclaim'd the astonish'd King; . .
'Thou self-condemn'd!' . . The cup of shame for thee!
Thee . . thee, Florinda!' . . But the very excess
Of passion check'd his speech."—pp. 121, 122.

Still utterly unconscious of her strange confessor, she goes on to explain herself:—

——"'I lov'd the King! . .
Tenderly, passionately, madly lov'd him!
Sinful it was to love a child of earth
With such entire devotion as I lov'd
Rod'rick, the heroic Prince, the glorious Goth!
He was the sunshine of my soul! and like
A flower, I liv'd and flourish'd in his light
Oh bear not with me thus impatiently!
No tale of weakness this, that in the act
Of penitence, indulgent to itself,
With garrulous palliation half repeats
The sin it ill repents. I will be brief.'"
pp. 123, 124.

She then describes the unconscious growth of their mutual passion—enlarges upon her own imprudence in affording him opportunities of declaring it—and expresses her conviction, that the wretched catastrophe was brought about, not by any premeditated guilt, but in a moment of delirium, which she had herself been instrumental in bringing on:—

"'Here then, O Father, at thy feet I own
Myself the guiltier; and full well I knew
These were his thoughts! But vengeance master'd
And in my agony I curst the man [me,
Whom I lov'd best.'
'Dost thou recall that curse?'
Cried Rod'rick, in a deep and inward voice,
Still with his head depress'd, and covering still
His countenance. 'Recall it?' she exclaim'd;
'Father! I came to thee because I gave
The reins to wrath too long . . because I wrought
His ruin, death, and infamy. . . O God,
Forgive the wicked vengeance thus indulg'd!
As I forgive the King!'"—p. 132.

Roderick again stops her enthusiastic self-accusation, and rejects her too generous vindication of the King; and turning to Siverian, adds—

——"'To that old man,' said he,
'And to the mother of the unhappy Goth,
Tell, if it please thee, not what thou hast pour'd
Into my secret ear, but that the child
For whom they mourn with anguish unallay'd
Sinn'd not from vicious will, or heart corrupt,
But fell by fatal circumstance betray'd!
And if, in charity to them, thou say'st
Something to palliate, something to excuse
An act of sudden frenzy, when the fiend
O'ercame him, thou wilt do for Roderick
All he could ask thee, all that can be done
On earth, and all his spirit could endure!'
Then, vent'ring towards her an imploring look,
'Wilt thou join with me for his soul in prayer?'
He said, and trembled as he spake. That voice
Of sympathy was like Heaven's influence,
Wounding at once and comforting the soul.
'O Father! Christ requite thee!' she exclaim'd;
'Thou hast set free the springs which with'ring griefs
Have clos'd too long.'"——
"Then in a firmer speech,
'For Rod'rick, for Count Julian, and myself,
Three wretchedest of all the human race!
Who have destroy'd each other and ourselves,
Mutually wrong'd and wronging—let us pray!'"
pp. 133, 134.

There is great power, we think, and great dramatic talent, in this part of the poem. The meeting of Roderick and Florinda was a touchstone for a poet who had ventured on such a subject; and Mr. Southey, we must say, has come out of the test, of standard weight and purity.

The Eleventh Book brings them in safety to the castle of Count Pedro, the Father of the young Alphonso, formerly the feudal foe, but now the loyal soldier of Pelayo. They find him arming in his courts, with all his vassals, to march instantly against the Moors: And their joyful welcome, and the parental delight of father and mother at the return of their noble boy, are very beautifully described.

The Twelfth Canto continues these preparations.—The best part of it is the hasty and hopeful investiture of the young Alphonso, with the honours of knighthood. The mixture of domestic affection with military ardour, and the youthful innocence, ingenuous modesty, and unclouded hopes of that blooming age, are feelingly combined in the following amiable picture, in which the classical reader will recognise many touches of true *Homeric* description:—

"Rejoicing in their task,
The servants of the house with emulous love
Dispute the charge. One brings the cuirass, one
The buckler; this exultingly displays
The sword, his comrade lifts the helm on high:
Greek artists in the imperial city forg'd
That splendid armour, perfect in their craft;
With curious skill they wrought it, fram'd alike
To shine amid the pageantry of war,
And for the proof of battle. Many a time
Alphonso from his nurse's lap had stretch'd
His infant hand toward it eagerly,
Where, gleaming to the central fire, it hung
High on the hall.——
No season this for old solemnities!
For wassailry and sport; . . the bath, the bed,
The vigil, . . all preparatory rites
Omitted now, . . here in the face of Heaven,
Before the vassals of his father's house,
With them in instant peril to partake
The chance of life or death, the heroic boy
Dons his first arms! the coated scales of steel
Which o'er the tunic to his knees depend;
The hose, the sleeves of mail: bareheaded then
He stood. But when Count Pedro took the spurs,
And bent his knee, in service to his son,
Alphonso from that gesture half drew back,
Starting in rev'rence, and a deeper hue
Spread o'er the glow of joy which flush'd his cheeks.
Do *thou* the rest, Pelayo! said the Count
So shall the ceremony of this hour
Exceed in honour what in form it lacks."
pp. 147—149.

The ceremony is followed by a solemn vow of fidelity to Spain, and eternal war with the Infidel, administered by Roderick, and devoutly taken by the young Knight, and all his assembled followers.

The Thirteenth Book contains a brief account of the defeat of a Moorish detachment by this faithful troop; and of the cowardice and rebuke of Count Eudon, who had tamely yielded to the invaders, and is dismissed with scorn to the castle which his brave countrymen had redeemed. They then proceed to guard or recover the castle of Pelayo.

The Fourteenth Book describes their happy arrival at that fortress, at the fall of evening; where, though they do not find his wife and daughters, who had retired for safety, to a sacred cave in the mountains, they meet a joyful and triumphant band of his retainers, returning from a glorious repulse of the Moors, and headed by the inspiring heroine Adosinda; who speedily recognises in Roderick her mournful assistant and first proselyte at Auria, while he at the same moment discovers, among the ladies of her train, the calm and venerable aspect of his beloved mother, Rusilla.

The Fifteenth Book contains the history of his appearance before that venerated parent. Unable to sleep, he had wandered forth before dawn—

——"that morn
With its cold dews might bathe his throbbing brow,
And with its breath allay the fev'rish heat
That burnt within. Alas! the gales of morn
Reach not the fever of a wounded heart!
How shall he meet his mother's eye, how make
His secret known, and from that voice rever'd
Obtain forgiveness!—p. 179.

While he is meditating under what pretext to introduce himself, the good Siverian comes to say, that his lady wishes to see the holy father who had spoken so charitably of her unhappy son.—The succeeding scene is very finely conceived, and supported with great judgment and feeling.

"Count Julian's daughter with Rusilla sate;
Both had been weeping, both were pale, but calm.
With head as for humility abas'd
Rod'rick approach'd, and bending, on his breast
He cross'd his humble arms. Rusilla rose
In reverence to the priestly character,
And with a mournful eye regarding him,
Thus she began. 'Good Father, I have heard
From my old faithful servant and true friend,
Thou didst reprove the inconsiderate tongue,
That in the anguish of its spirit pour'd
A curse upon my poor unhappy child!
O Father Maccabee, this is a hard world,
And hasty in its judgments! Time has been,
When not a tongue within the Pyrenees
Dar'd whisper in dispraise of Rod'rick's name.
Now, if a voice be rais'd in his behalf,
'Tis noted for a wonder; and the man
Who utters the strange speech shall be admir'd
For such excess of Christian charity.
Thy Christian charity hath not been lost; . .
Father, I feel its virtue: . . it hath been
Balm to my heart! . . . With words and grateful
All that is left me now for gratitude, . . [tears, . .
I thank thee! and beseech thee in thy prayers
That thou wilt still remember Rod'rick's name.'"
pp. 180, 181.

The all-enduring King shudders at these words of kindness;—but repressing his emotion—

"'O venerable Lady, he replied,
If aught may comfort that unhappy soul
It must be thy compassion, and thy prayers.
She whom he most hath wrong'd, she who alone
On earth can grant forgiveness for his crime
She hath forgiven him! and thy blessing now
Were all that he could ask, . . all that could bring
Profit or consolation to his soul,
If he hath been, as sure we may believe,
A penitent sincere.'"—p. 182.

Florinda then asks his prayers for her unhappy and apostate father; and his advice as to the means of rejoining him.

"While thus Florinda spake, the dog who lay
Before Rusilla's feet, eyeing him long
And wistfully, had recognis'd at length,
Chang'd as he was, and in those sordid weeds,
His royal master! And he rose and lick'd
His wither'd hand; and earnestly look'd up
With eyes whose human meaning did not need
The aid of speech; and moan'd, as if at once
To court and chide the long-withheld caress!
A feeling uncommix'd with sense of guilt
Or shame, yet painfullest, thrill'd through the King:
But he, to self-control now long inured,
Represt his rising heart," &c.—p. 186.

He makes a short and pious answer to the desolate Florinda;—and then—

"Deliberately, in self-possession, still,
Himself from that most painful interview
Dispeeding, he withdrew. The watchful dog
Follow'd his footsteps close. But he retir'd
Into the thickest grove; there giving way
To his o'erburthen'd nature, from all eyes
Apart, he cast himself upon the ground,
And threw his arms around the dog! and cried,
While tears stream'd down, 'Thou, Theron, then
hast known
Thy poor lost master, . . Theron, none but thou!'"
p. 187.

The Sixteenth Book contains the re-union of Pelayo's family in the cave of Covadonga. His morning journey to the place of this glad meeting, through the enchanting scenery of his native hills, and with the joyous company of self-approving thoughts, is well described.

Arrived at last upon the lonely platform which masks the cave in which the springs burst out, and his children are concealed, he sounds his bugle note; and the rock gives up its inhabitants! There is something animating and impressive, but withal a little too classical and rapturous, in the full-length picture of this delightful scene.

"But when a third and broader blast
Rung in the echoing archway, ne'er did wand,
With magic power endued, call up a sight
So strange, as sure in that wild solitude
It seem'd when from the bowels of the rock,
The mother and her children hasten'd forth!
She in the sober charms and dignity
Of womanhood mature, nor verging yet
Upon decay; in gesture like a queen,
Such inborn and habitual majesty
Ennobled all her steps: . . Favila such
In form and stature, as the Sea Nymph's son,
When that wise Centaur, from his cave, well-
Beheld the boy divine his growing strength [pleas'd
Against some shaggy lionet essay!
And fixing in the half-grown mane his hands,
Roll with him in fierce dalliance intertwin'd!

But like a creature of some higher sphere
His sister came. She scarcely touch'd the rock,
So light was Hermesind's aerial speed.
Beauty and grace and innocence in her
In heavenly union shone. One who had held
The faith of elder Greece, would sure have thought
She was some glorious nymph of seed divine,
Oread or Dryad, of Diana's train
The youngest and the loveliest! yea she seem'd
Angel, or soul beatified, from realms
Of bliss, on errand of parental love
To earth re-sent."—pp. 197, 198.

"Many a slow century, since that day, hath fill'd
Its course, and countless multitudes have trod
With pilgrim feet that consecrated cave;
Yet not in all those ages, amid all
The untold concourse, hath one breast been swoln
With such emotions as Pelayo felt
That hour."—p. 201.

The Seventeenth Book brings back the story to Roderick; who, with feelings more reconciled, but purposes of penitence and mortification as deep as ever, and as resolved, muses by the side of the stream, on past and future fortunes.

"Upon a smooth grey stone sate Rod'rick there;
The wind above him stirr'd the hazel boughs,
And murm'ring at his feet the river ran.
He sate with folded arms and head declin'd
Upon his breast, feeding on bitter thoughts,
Till Nature gave him in the exhausted sense
Of woe, a respite something like repose!
And then the quiet sound of gentle winds
And waters with their lulling consonance
Beguil'd him of himself. Of all within
Oblivious there he sate; sentient alone
Of outward nature, . . of the whisp'ring leaves
That sooth'd his ear, . . the genial breath of heaven
That fann'd his cheek, . . the stream's perpetual
flow,
That, with its shadows and its glancing lights,
Dimples and thread-like motions infinite,
For ever varying and yet still the same,
Like time toward eternity, ran by.
Resting his head upon his Master's knees,
Upon the bank beside him Theron lay."
pp. 205, 206.

In this quiet mood, he is accosted by Siverian, who entertains him with a long account of Pelayo's belief in the innocence, or comparative innocence, of their beloved Roderick; and of his own eager and anxious surmises that he may still be alive.

The Eighteenth Book, which is rather long and heavy, contains the account of Pelayo's coronation. The best part of it, perhaps, is the short sketch of his lady's affectionate exultation in his glory. When she saw the preparations that announced this great event—

——"her eyes
Brighten'd. The quicken'd action of the blood
Ting'd with a deeper hue her glowing cheek;
And on her lips there sate a smile, which spake
The honourable pride of perfect love;
Rejoicing, for her husband's sake, to share
The lot he chose, the perils he defied,
The lofty fortune which their faith foresaw."
p. 218.

Roderick bears a solemn part in the lofty ceremonies of this important day; and, with a calm and resolute heart, beholds the allegiance of his subjects transferred to his heroic kinsman.

The Nineteenth Book is occupied with an interview between Roderick and his mother, who has at last recognised him; and even while she approves of his penitential abandonment of the world, tempts him with bewitching visions of recovered fame and glory, and of atonement made to Florinda, by placing her in the rank of his queen. He continues firm, however, in his lofty purpose, and the pious Princess soon acquiesces in those pious resolutions; and, engaging to keep his secret, gives him her blessing, and retires.

The Twentieth Book conducts us to the Moorish camp and the presence of Count Julian. Orpas, a baser apostate, claims the promised hand of Florinda; and Julian appeals to the Moorish Prince, whether the law of Mahomet admits of a forced marriage. The Prince attests that it does not; and then Julian, who has just learned that his daughter was in the approaching host of Pelayo, obtains leave to despatch a messenger to invite her to his arms.

The Twenty-first Book contains the meeting of Julian with his daughter and Roderick; under whose protection she comes at evening to the Moorish camp, and finds her father at his ablutions at the door of his tent, by the side of a clear mountain spring. On her approach, he clasps her in his arms with overflowing love.

"'Thou hast not then forsaken me, my child.
Howe'er the inexorable will of Fate
May in the world which is to come divide
Our everlasting destinies, in this
Thou wilt not, O my child, abandon me!'
And then with deep and interrupted voice,
Nor seeking to restrain his copious tears,
'My blessing be upon thy head!' he cried,
A father's blessing! though all faiths were false,
It should not lose its worth! . . . She lock'd her
Around his neck, and gazing in his face [hands
Through streaming tears, exclaim'd, 'Oh never
more,
Here or hereafter, never let us part!'"—p. 258.

He is at first offended with the attendance and priestly habit of Roderick, and breaks out into some infidel taunts upon creeds and churchmen; but is forced at length to honour the firmness, the humility, and candour of this devoted Christian. He poses him, however, in the course of their discussion, by rather an unlucky question.

"'Thou preachest that all sins may be effac'd:
Is there forgiveness, Christian, in thy creed [thee,
For Rod'rick's crime? . . For Rod'rick, and for
Count Julian!' said the Goth; and as he spake
Trembled through every fibre of his frame,
'The gate of Heaven is open!' Julian threw
His wrathful hand aloft, and cried, 'Away!
Earth could not hold us both; nor can one Heaven
Contain my deadliest enemy and me!'"—p. 269.

This ethical dialogue is full of lofty sentiment and strong images; but is, on the whole rather tedious and heavy. One of the newest pictures is the following; and the sweetest scene, perhaps, that which closes the book immediately after:—

"'Methinks if ye would know
How visitations of calamity
Affect the pious soul, 'tis shown ye there!
Look yonder at that cloud, which through the sky
Sailing alone, doth cross in her career
The rolling moon! I watch'd it as it came

And deem'd the deep opaque would blot her beams;
But, melting like a wreath of snow, it hangs
In folds of wavy silver round, and clothes
The orb with richer beauties than her own,
Then passing, leaves her in her light serene.'—
" Thus having said, the pious suff'rer sate,
Beholding with fix'd eyes that lovely orb,
Which through the azure depth alone pursues
Her course appointed; with indiff'rent beams
Shining upon the silent hills around,
And the dark tents of that unholy host,
Who, all unconscious of impending fate,
Take their last slumber there. The camp is still!
The fires have moulder'd; and the breeze which
The soft and snowy embers, just lays bare [stirs
At times a red and evanescent light,
Or for a moment wakes a feeble flame.
They by the fountain hear the stream below,
Whose murmurs, as the wind arose or fell,
Fuller or fainter reach the ear attun'd.
And now the nightingale, not distant far,
Began her solitary song; and pour'd
To the cold moon a richer, stronger strain
Than that with which the lyric lark salutes
The new-born day. Her deep and thrilling song
Seem'd with its piercing melody to reach
The soul; and in mysterious unison
Blend with all thoughts of gentleness and love.
Their hearts were open to the healing power
Of nature; and the splendour of the night,
The flow of waters, and that sweetest lay
Came to them like a copious evening dew,
Falling on vernal herbs which thirst for rain."
pp. 274—276.

The Twenty-second Book is fuller of business than of poetry. The vindictive Orpas persuades the Moorish leader, that Julian meditates a defection from his cause; and, by working on his suspicious spirit, obtains his consent to his assassination on the first convenient opportunity.

The Twenty-third Book recounts the carnage and overthrow of the Moors in the Strait of Covadonga. Deceived by false intelligence, and drunk with deceitful hope, they advance up the long and precipitous defile, along the cliffs and ridges of which Pelayo had not only stationed his men in ambush, but had piled huge stones and trunks of trees, ready to be pushed over upon the ranks of the enemy in the lower pass. A soft summer mist hanging upon the side of the cliffs helps to conceal these preparations; and the whole line of the Infidel is irretrievably engaged in the gulf, when Adosinda appears on a rock in the van, and, with her proud defiance, gives the word, which is the signal for the assault. The whole description is, as usual, a little overworked, but is unquestionably striking and impressive.

—— " As the Moors
Advanc'd, the Chieftain in the van was seen,
Known by his arms, and from the crag a voice
Pronounc'd his name, . . . 'Alcahman, hoa! look
Alcahman!' As the floating mist drew up [up!
It had divided there, and open'd round
The Cross; part clinging to the rock beneath,
Hov'ring and waving part in fleecy folds,
A canopy of silver, light condens'd
To shape and substance. In the midst there stood
A female form, one hand upon the Cross,
The other rais'd in menacing act. Below
Loose flow'd her raiment, but her breast was arm'd,
And helmeted her head The Moor turn'd pale,
For on the walls of Auria he had seen
That well-known figure, and had well believ'd
She rested with the dead. 'What, hoa!' she cried,
Alcahman! In the name of all who fell
At Auria in the massacre, this hour
I summon thee before the throne of God,
To answer for the innocent blood! This hour!
Moor, Miscreant, Murderer, Child of Hell! this hour
I summon thee to judgment! . . . In the name
Of God! for Spain and Vengeance.
From voice to voice on either side it past
With rapid repetition, . . 'In the name
Of God! for Spain and Vengeance!' and forthwith
On either side, along the whole defile,
The Asturians shouting, in the name of God,
Set the whole ruin loose; huge trunks and stones,
And loosen'd crags! Down, down they roll'd with rush,
And bound, and thund'ring force. Such was the fall
As when some city by the labouring earth
Heav'd from its strong foundations is cast down,
And all its dwellings, towers, and palaces,
In one wide desolation prostrated.
From end to end of that long strait, the crash
Was heard continuous, and commixt with sounds
More dreadful, shrieks of horror and despair,
And death, . . the wild and agonising cry
Of that whole host, in one destruction whelm'd."
pp. 298, 299.

The Twenty-fourth Book is full of tragical matter, and is perhaps the most interesting of the whole piece. A Moor, on the instigation of Orpas and Abulcacem, pierces Julian with a mortal wound; who thereupon exhorts his captains, already disgusted with the jealous tyranny of the Infidel, to rejoin the standard and the faith of their country; and then requests to be borne into a neighbouring church, where Florinda has been praying for his conversion.

—— " They rais'd him from the earth;
He, knitting as they lifted him his brow,
Drew in through open lips and teeth firm-clos'd
His painful breath, and on his lance laid hand,
Lest its long shaft should shake the mortal wound.
Gently his men with slow and steady step
Their suff'ring burthen bore; and in the Church,
Before the altar, laid him down, his head
Upon Florinda's knees."—pp. 307, 308.

He then, on the solemn adjuration of Roderick, renounces the bloody faith to which he had so long adhered; and reverently receives at his hand the sacrament of reconciliation and peace. There is great feeling and energy we think in what follows:—

" That dread office done,
Count Julian with amazement saw the Priest
Kneel down before him. 'By the sacrament,
Which we have here partaken!' Roderick cried,
'In this most awful moment.' By that hope, . .
That holy faith which comforts thee in death,
Grant thy forgiveness, Julian, ere thou diest!
Behold the man who most hath injur'd thee!
Rod'rick! the wretched Goth, the guilty cause
Of all thy guilt, . . the unworthy instrument
Of thy redemption, . . kneels before thee here,
And prays to be forgiven!'
'Roderick!' exclaim'd
The dying Count, . . 'Roderick!' . . and from the floor,
With violent effort, half he rais'd himself;
The spear hung heavy in his side; and pain
And weakness overcame him, that he fell
Back on his daughter's lap. 'O Death,' cried he, .
Passing his hand across his cold damp brow, . .
'Thou tamest the strong limb, and conquerest
The stubborn heart! But yesterday I said
One Heaven could not contain mine enemy
And me; and now I lift my dying voice
To say, Forgive me, Lord! as I forgive [eyes
Him who hath done the wrong!' . . He clos'd his
A moment; then with sudden impulse cried,

'Rod'rick, thy wife is dead!—the Church hath power
To free thee from thy vows! The broken heart
Might yet be heal'd, the wrong redress'd, the throne
Rebuilt by that same hand which pull'd it down!
And these curst Africans . . . Oh for a month
Of that waste life which millions misbestow! . . '"
pp. 311, 312.

Returning weakness then admonishes him, however, of the near approach of death; and he begs the friendly hand of Roderick to cut short his pangs, by drawing forth the weapon which clogs the wound in his side. He then gives him his hand in kindness—blesses and kisses his heroic daughter, and expires. The concluding lines are full of force and tenderness.

" When from her father's body she arose,
Her cheek was flush'd, and in her eyes there beam'd
A wilder brightness. On the Goth she gaz'd!
While underneath the emotions of that hour
Exhausted life gave way! 'O God!' she said,
Lifting her hands, 'thou hast restor'd me all, . .
All . . in one hour!' . . . and around his neck she threw [ven!'
Her arms and cried, 'My Roderick! mine in Hea-
Groaning, he claspt her close! and in that act
And agony her happy spirit fled!'"—p. 313.

The Last Book describes the recognition and exploits of Roderick in the last of his battles. After the revolt of Julian's army, Orpas, by whose counsels it had been chiefly occasioned, is sent forward by the Moorish leader, to try to win them back; and advances in front of the line, demanding a parley, mounted on the beautiful Orelio, the famous war horse of Roderick, who, roused at that sight, obtains leave from Pelayo to give the renegade his answer; and after pouring out upon him some words of abuse and scorn, seizes the reins of his trusty steed; and

—— " 'How now,' he cried,
'Orelio! old companion, . . my good horse!' . .
Off with this recreant burthen!' . . . And with that
He rais'd his hand, and rear'd, and back'd the steed,
To that remember'd voice and arm of power
Obedient. Down the helpless traitor fell,
Violently thrown; and Roderick over him,
Thrice led, with just and unrelenting hand,
The trampling hoofs. 'Go, join Witiza now,
Where he lies howling,' the avenger cried,
'And tell him Roderick sent thee!' "—pp. 318, 319.

He then vaults upon the noble horse; and fitting Count Julian's sword to his grasp, rushes in the van of the Christian army into the thick array of the Infidel,—where, unarmed as he is, and clothed in his penitential robes of waving black, he scatters death and terror around him, and cuts his way clean through the whole host of his opponents. He there descries the army of Pelayo advancing to cooperate; and as he rides up to them with his wonted royal air and gesture, and on his well-known steed of royalty, both the King and Siverian are instantaneously struck with the apparition; and marvel that the weeds of penitence should so long have concealed their sovereign. Roderick, unconscious of this recognition, briefly informs them of what has befallen, and requests the honourable rites of Christian sepulture for the unfortunate Julian and his daughter.

" 'In this,—*and all things else*,'—
Pelayo answer'd, looking wistfully
Upon the Goth, 'thy pleasure shall be done!'
Then Rod'rick saw that he was known—and turn'd
His head away in silence. But the old man
Laid hold upon his bridle, and look'd up
In his master's face—weeping and silently!
Thereat the Goth with fervent pressure took
His hand, and bending down towards him, said,
'My good Siverian, go not thou this day
To war! I charge thee keep thyself from harm!
Thou art past the age for combats; and with whom
Hereafter should thy mistress talk of me,
If thou wert gone?' "—p. 330.

He then borrows the defensive armour of this faithful servant; and taking a touching and affectionate leave of him, vaults again on the back of Orelio; and placing himself without explanation in the van of the army, leads them on to the instant assault. The renegade leaders fall on all sides beneath his resistless blows.

——" And in the heat of fight,
Rejoicing and forgetful of all else,
Set up his cry as he was wont in youth, [well!
'Rod'rick the Goth!' . . . his war-cry, known so
Pelayo eagerly took up the word,
And shouted out his kinsman's name belov'd,
'Rod'rick the Goth! Rod'rick and Victory!
Rod'rick and Vengeance!' Odoar gave it forth;
Urban repeated it; and through his ranks
Count Pedro sent the cry. Not from the field
Of his great victory, when Witiza fell,
With louder acclamations had that name
Been borne abroad upon the winds of heaven."

——" O'er the field it spread,
All hearts and tongues uniting in the cry;
Mountains, and rocks, and vales re-echo'd round;
And he rejoicing in his strength rode on, [smote,
Laying on the Moors with that good sword; and
And overthrew, and scatter'd, and destroy'd,
And trampled down! and still at every blow
Exultingly he sent the war-cry forth,
'Rod'rick the Goth! Rod'rick and Victory!
Rod'rick and Vengeance!' "—pp. 334, 335.

The carnage at length is over, and the field is won!—but where is he to whose name and example the victory is owing?

——" Upon the banks
Of Sella was Orelio found; his legs
And flanks incarnadin'd, his poitral smear'd
With froth, and foam, and gore, his silver mane
Sprinkled with blood, which hung on every hair,
Aspers'd like dew-drops: trembling there he stood
From the toil of battle; and at times sent forth
His tremulous voice far-echoing loud and shrill;
A frequent anxious cry, with which he seem'd
To call the master whom he lov'd so well,
And who had thus again forsaken him.
Siverian's helm and cuirass on the grass
Lay near; and Julian's sword, its hilt and chain
Clotted with blood! But where was he whose hand
Had wielded it so well that glorious day? . . .
Days, months, and years, and generations pass'd,
And centuries held their course, before, far off
Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls,
A humble Tomb was found, which bore inscrib'd
In ancient characters, King Rod'rick's name!"
pp. 339, 340.

These copious extracts must have settled our readers' opinion of this poem; and though they are certainly taken from the better parts of it, we have no wish to disturb the forcible impression which they must have been the means of producing. Its chief fault undoubtedly is the monotony of its tragic and solemn

tone—the perpetual gloom with which all its scenes are overcast—and the tediousness with which some of them are developed. There are many dull passages, in short, and a considerable quantity of heavy reading—some silliness, and a good deal of affectation. But the beauties, upon the whole, preponderate;—and these, we hope, speak for themselves in the passages we have already extracted.

The versification is smooth and melodious, though too uniformly drawn out into long and linked sweetness. The diction is as usual more remarkable for copiousness than force;—and though less defaced than formerly with phrases of affected simplicity and infantine pathos, is still too much speckled with strange words; which, whether they are old or new, are not English at the present day—and we hope never will become so. What use or ornament does Mr. Southey expect to derive for his poetry from such words as *avid* and *aureate*, and *auriphrygiate*? or *leman* and *weedery*, *frequentage* and *youthhead*, and twenty more as pedantic and affected? What good is there either, we should like to know, in talking of "oaken galilees," or "incarnadined poitrals," or "all-able Providence," and such other points of learning?—If poetry is intended for general delight, ought not its language to be generally intelligible?

(December, 1816.)

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto the Third. By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 79. London: 1816.
The Prisoner of Chillon, and other Poems. By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 60. London: 1816.*

If the finest poetry be that which leaves the deepest impression on the minds of its readers—and this is not the worst test of its excellence—Lord Byron, we think, must be allowed to take precedence of all his distinguished contemporaries. He has not the variety of Scott—nor the delicacy of Campbell—nor the absolute truth of Crabbe—nor the polished sparkling of Moore; but in force of diction, and inextinguishable energy of sentiment, he clearly surpasses them all. "Words that breathe, and thoughts that burn," are not merely the ornaments, but the common staple of his poetry; and he is not inspired or impressive only in some happy passages, but through the whole body and tissue of his composition. It was an unavoidable condition, perhaps, of this higher excellence, that his scene should be narrow, and his persons few. To compass such ends as he had in view, it was necessary to reject all ordinary agents, and all trivial combinations. He could not possibly be amusing, or ingenious, or playful; or hope to maintain the requisite pitch of interest by the recitation of sprightly adventures, or the opposition of common characters. To produce great effects, in short, he felt that it was necessary to deal only with the greater passions—with the exaltations of a daring fancy, and the errors of a lofty intellect—with the pride, the terrors, and the agonies of strong emotion—the fire and air alone of our human elements.

In this respect, and in his general notion of the end and the means of poetry, we have sometimes thought that his views fell more in with those of the Lake poets, than of any other existing party in the poetical commonwealth: And, in some of his later productions especially, it is impossible not to be struck with his occasional approaches to the style and manner of this class of writers. Lord Byron, however, it should be observed, like all other persons of a quick sense of beauty, and sure enough of their own originality to be in no fear of paltry imputations, is a great mimic of styles and manners, and a great borrower of external character. He and Scott, accordingly, are full of imitations of all the writers from whom they have ever derived gratification; and the two most original writers of the age might appear, to superficial observers, to be the most deepiy indebted to their predecessors. In this particular instance, we have no fault to find with Lord Byron: For undoubtedly the finer passages of Wordsworth and Southey have in them wherewithal to lend an impulse to the utmost ambition of rival genius; and their diction and manner of writing is frequently both striking and original. But we must say, that it would afford us still greater pleasure to find these tuneful gentlemen returning the compliment which Lord Byron has here paid to their talents; and forming themselves on the model rather of his imitations, than of their own originals.—In those imitations they will find that, though he is sometimes abundantly mystical, he never, or at least very rarely, indulges in absolute nonsense—never takes his lofty flights upon mean or ridiculous occasions—and, above all, never dilutes his strong conceptions, and magnificent imaginations, with a flood of oppressive verbosity. On the contrary, he is, of all living writers, the most concise and condensed; and, we would fain

* I have already said so much of Lord Byron with reference to his Dramatic productions, that I cannot now afford to republish more than one other paper on the subject of his poetry in general: And I select this, rather because it refers to a greater variety of these compositions, than because it deals with such as are either absolutely the best, or the most characteristic of his genius. The truth is, however, that all his writings are characteristic; and lead, pretty much alike, to those views of the dark and the bright parts of his nature, which have led me, I fear (though almost irresistibly) into observations more personal to the character of the author, than should generally be permitted to a mere literary censor.

hope, may go far, by his example, to redeem the great reproach of our modern literature—its intolerable prolixity and redundance. In his nervous and manly lines, we find no elaborate amplification of common sentiments—no ostentatious polishing of pretty expressions; and we really think that the brilliant success which has rewarded his disdain of those paltry artifices, should put to shame for ever that puling and self-admiring race, who can live through half a volume on the stock of a single thought, and expatiate over divers fair quarto pages with the details of one tedious description. In Lord Byron, on the contrary, we have a perpetual stream of thick-coming fancies—an eternal spring of fresh-blown images, which seem called into existence by the sudden flash of those glowing thoughts and overwhelming emotions, that struggle for expression through the whole flow of his poetry—and impart to a diction that is often abrupt and irregular, a force and a charm which frequently realise all that is said of inspiration.

With all these undoubted claims to our admiration, however, it is impossible to deny that the noble author before us has still something to learn, and a good deal to correct. He is frequently abrupt and careless, and sometimes obscure. There are marks, occasionally, of effort and straining after an emphasis, which is generally spontaneous; and, above all, there is far too great a monotony in the moral colouring of his pictures, and too much repetition of the same sentiments and maxims. He delights too exclusively in the delineation of a certain morbid exaltation of character and feeling—a sort of demoniacal sublimity, not without some traits of the ruined Archangel. He is haunted almost perpetually with the image of a being feeding and fed upon by violent passions, and the recollections of the catastrophes they have occasioned: And, though worn out by their past indulgence, unable to sustain the burden of an existence which they do not continue to animate:—full of pride, and revenge, and obduracy—disdaining life and death, and mankind and himself—and trampling, in his scorn, not only upon the falsehood and formality of polished life, but upon its tame virtues and slavish devotion: Yet envying, by fits, the very beings he despises, and melting into mere softness and compassion, when the helplessness of childhood or the frailty of woman make an appeal to his generosity. Such is the person with whom we are called upon almost exclusively to sympathise in all the greater productions of this distinguished writer:—In Childe Harold—in the Corsair—in Lara—in the Siege of Corinth—in Parisina, and in most of the smaller pieces.

It is impossible to represent such a character better than Lord Byron has done in all these productions—or indeed to represent any thing more terrible in its anger, or more attractive in its relenting. In point of effect, we readily admit, that no one character can be more poetical or impressive:—But it is really too much to find the scene perpetually filled by one character—not only in all the acts of each several drama, but in all the different dramas of the series;—and, grand and impressive as it is, we feel at last that these very qualities make some relief more indispensable, and oppress the spirits of ordinary mortals with too deep an impression of awe and repulsion. There is too much guilt in short, and too much gloom, in the leading character;—and though it be a fine thing to gaze, now and then, on stormy seas, and thunder-shaken mountains, we should prefer passing our days in sheltered valleys, and by the murmur of calmer waters.

We are aware that these metaphors may be turned against us—and that, without metaphor, it may be said that men do not *pass their days* in reading poetry—and that, as they may look into Lord Byron only about as often as they look abroad upon tempests, they have no more reason to complain of him for being grand and gloomy, than to complain of the same qualities in the glaciers and volcanoes which they go so far to visit. Painters, too, it may be said, have often gained great reputation by their representations of tigers and others ferocious animals, or of caverns and banditti—and poets should be allowed, without reproach, to indulge in analogous exercises. We are far from thinking that there is no weight in these considerations; and feel how plausibly it may be said, that we have no better reason for a great part of our complaint, than that an author, to whom we are already very greatly indebted, has chosen rather to please himself, than us, in the use he makes of his talents.

This, no doubt, seems both unreasonable and ungrateful: But it is nevertheless true, that a public benefactor becomes a debtor to the public; and is, in some degree, responsible for the employment of those gifts which seem to be conferred upon him, not merely for his own delight, but for the delight and improvement of his fellows through all generations. Independent of this, however, we think there is a reply to the apology. A great living poet is not like a distant volcano, or an occasional tempest. He is a volcano in the heart of our land, and a cloud that hangs over our dwellings; and we have some reason to complain, if, instead of genial warmth and grateful shade, he voluntarily darkens and inflames our atmosphere with perpetual fiery explosions and pitchy vapours. Lord Byron's poetry, in short, is too attractive and too famous to lie dormant or inoperative; and, therefore, if it produce any painful or pernicious effects, there will be murmurs, and ought to be suggestions of alteration. Now, though an artist may draw fighting tigers and hungry lions in as lively and natural a way as he can, without giving any encouragement to human ferocity, or even much alarm to human fear, the case is somewhat different, when a poet represents men with tiger-like dispositions:—and yet more so, when he exhausts the resources of his genius to make this terrible being interesting and attractive, and to represent all the lofty virtues as the natural

allies of his ferocity. It is still worse when he proceeds to show, that all these precious gifts of dauntless courage, strong affection, and high imagination, are not only akin to guilt, but the parents of misery;—and that those only have any chance of tranquillity or happiness in this world, whom it is the object of his poetry to make us shun and despise.

These, it appears to us, are not merely errors in taste, but perversions of morality; and, as a great poet is necessarily a moral teacher, and gives forth his ethical lessons, in general with far more effect and authority than any of his graver brethren, he is peculiarly liable to the censures reserved for those who turn the means of improvement to purposes of corruption.

It may no doubt be said, that poetry in general tends less to the useful than the splendid qualities of our nature—that a character poetically good has long been distinguished from one that is morally so—and that, ever since the time of Achilles, our sympathies, on such occasions, have been chiefly engrossed by persons whose deportment is by no means exemplary; and who in many points approach to the temperament of Lord Byron's ideal hero. There is some truth in this suggestion also. But other poets, in the *first* place, do not allow their favourites so outrageous a monopoly of the glory and interest of the piece—and sin less therefore against the laws either of poetical or distributive justice. In the *second* place, their heroes are not, generally, either so bad or so good as Lord Byron's—and do not indeed very much exceed the standard of truth and nature, in either of the extremes. His, however, are as monstrous and unnatural as centaurs, and hippogriffs—and must ever figure in the eye of sober reason as so many bright and hateful impossibilities. But the most important distinction is, that the other poets who deal in peccant heroes, neither feel nor express that ardent affection for them, which is visible in the whole of this author's delineations; but merely make use of them as necessary agents in the extraordinary adventures they have to detail, and persons whose mingled vices and virtues are requisite to bring about the catastrophe of their story. In Lord Byron, however, the interest of the story, where there happens to be one, which is not always the case, is uniformly postponed to that of the character itself—into which he enters so deeply, and with so extraordinary a fondness, that he generally continues to speak in its language, after it has been dismissed from the stage; and to inculcate, on his own authority, the same sentiments which had been previously recommended by its example. We do not consider it as unfair, therefore, to say that Lord Byron appears to us to be the zealous apostle of a certain fierce and magnificent misanthropy; which has already saddened his poetry with too deep a shade, and not only led to a great misapplication of great talents, but contributed to render popular some very false estimates of the constituents of human happiness and merit. It is irksome, however, to dwell upon observations so general—and we shall probably have better means of illustrating these remarks, if they are really well founded, when we come to speak of the particular publications by which they have now been suggested.

We had the good fortune, we believe, to be among the first who proclaimed the rising of a new luminary, on the appearance of Childe Harold on the poetical horizon,—and we pursued his course with due attention through several of the constellations. If we have lately omitted to record his progress with the same accuracy, it is by no means because we have regarded it with more indifference, or supposed that it would be less interesting to the public—but because it was so extremely conspicuous as no longer to require the notices of an official observer. In general, we do not think it necessary, nor indeed quite fair, to oppress our readers with an account of works, which are as well known to them as to ourselves; or with a repetition of sentiments in which all the world is agreed. Wherever, a work, therefore, is very popular, and where the general opinion of its merits appears to be substantially right, we think ourselves at liberty to leave it out of our chronicle, without incurring the censure of neglect or inattention. A very rigorous application of this maxim might have saved our readers the trouble of reading what we now write—and, to confess the truth, we write it rather to gratify ourselves, than with the hope of giving them much information. At the same time, some short notice of the progress of such a writer ought, perhaps, to appear in his contemporary journals, as a tribute due to his eminence;—and a zealous critic can scarcely set about examining the merits of any work, or the nature of its reception by the public, without speedily discovering very urgent cause for his admonitions, both to the author and his admirers.

Our last particular account was of the Corsair;—and though from that time to the publication of the pieces, the titles of which we have prefixed, the noble author has produced as much poetry as would have made the fortune of any other person, we can afford to take but little notice of those intermediate performances; which have already passed their ordeal with this generation, and are fairly committed to the final judgment of posterity. Some slight reference to them, however, may be proper, both to mark the progress of the author's views, and the history of his fame.

LARA was obviously the sequel of the *Corsair*—and maintained, in general, the same tone of deep interest, and lofty feeling;—though the disappearance of Medora from the scene deprives it of the enchanting sweetness, by which its terrors were there redeemed, and make the hero on the whole less captivating. The character of Lara, too, is rather too laboriously finished, and his nocturnal encounter with the apparition is worked up too ostentatiously. There is infinite beauty in the sketch of the dark page—and in many of

the moral or general reflections which are interspersed with the narrative. The death of Lara, however, is by far the finest passage in the poem, and is fully equal to any thing else which the author has ever written. Though it is not under our immediate cognisance, we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing the greater part of the passage—in which the physical horror of the event, though described with a terrible force and fidelity, is both relieved and enhanced by the beautiful pictures of mental energy and redeeming affection with which it is combined. Our readers will recollect, that this gloomy and daring chief was mortally wounded in battle, and led out of it, almost insensible, by that sad and lovely page, whom no danger could ever separate from his side. On his retreat, slaughter and desolation falls on his disheartened followers; and the poet turns from the scene of disorder—

"Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been,
A breathing but devoted warrior lay:
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away!
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,
And with his scarf would staunch the tides that rush,
With each convulsion, in a blacker gush;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow:
He scarce can speak; but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees;
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him!

"The foe arrives, who long had search'd the field,
Their triumph nought till Lara too should yield;
They would remove him; but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate:
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state: He answers not;
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled:—each remaining word,
They understood not, if distinctly heard;
His dying tones are in that other tongue, [&c.
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung,"

Their words though faint were many—from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone;
From this, you might have deem'd young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's, by his voice and breath;
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murm'ring death gasp'd hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once as Kaled's answ'ring accents ceast,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East.—

"But gasping heav'd the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew; [o'er
His limbs stretch'd flutt'ring, and his head dropp'd
The weak, yet still untiring knee that bore!
He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more! but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp! but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
'It beats!' Away, thou dreamer! he is gone!
It once *was* Lara which thou look'st upon.

"He gaz'd, as if not yet had pass'd away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have rous'd him from his trance,
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;
And when, in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down, like earth to earth, upon the plain!
He did not dash himself thereby; nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze; but reel'd and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he lov'd so well!
Than that *He* lov'd! Oh! never yet beneath
The breast of *Man* such trusty love may breathe!
That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret, long and yet but half-conceal'd;
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex confest!
And life return'd, and Kaled felt no shame—
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame?"

We must stop here;—but the whole sequel of the poem is written with equal vigour and feeling; and may be put in competition with any thing that poetry has ever produced, in point either of pathos or energy.

The SIEGE OF CORINTH is next in the order of time; and though written, perhaps, with too visible a striving after effect, and not very well harmonised in all its parts, we cannot help regarding it as a magnificent composition. There is less misanthropy in it than in any of the rest; and the interest is made up of alternate representations of soft and solemn scenes and emotions—and of the tumult, and terrors, and intoxication of war. These opposite pictures are perhaps too violently contrasted, and, in some parts, too harshly coloured; but they are in general exquisitely designed, and executed with the utmost spirit and energy. What, for instance, can be finer than the following night-piece? The renegade had left his tent in moody musing, the night before the final assault on the Christian walls.

"'Tis midnight! On the mountain's brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down;
Blue roll the waters; blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gaz'd upon them shining,
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there,
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer."—

The transition to the bustle and fury of the morning muster, as well as the moving picture of the barbaric host, is equally admirable.

"The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle grey,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day!
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barb'rous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
And the clash, and the shout, 'They come, they come!'
The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground, and the sword
From its sheath! and they form—and but wait for the word.
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curv'd is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before!
Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare;
So is the blade of his scimitar!
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fir'd, then on!
Leave not in Corinth a living one—
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls!
God and the Prophet!—Alla Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!

"As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent!
Many a bosom, sheath'd in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they mov'd no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain!
As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,—
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreath'd and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long, and oft renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude!
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd, by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory!
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after-carnage done.
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plunder'd dome:
Hark to the haste of flying feet!
That splash in the blood of the slippery street!"

Parisina is of a different character. There is no tumult or stir in this piece. It is all sadness, and pity, and terror. The story is told in half a sentence. The Prince of Esté has married a lady who was originally destined for his favourite natural son. He discovers a criminal attachment between them; and puts the issue and the invader of his bed to death, before the face of his unhappy paramour. There is too much of horror, perhaps, in the circumstances; but the writing is beautiful throughout; and the whole wrapped in a rich and redundant veil of poetry, where every thing breathes the pure essence of genius and sensibility. The opening verses, though soft and voluptuous, are tinged with the same shade of sorrow which gives its character and harmony to the whole poem.

"It is the hour when from the boughs,
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word;
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear!
Each flower the dews have lightly wet;
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.
But it is not to list to the waterfall
That Parisina leaves her hall, &c.

"With many a ling'ring look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past!
And though they hope and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last.
The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
The lip that there would cling for ever,
While gleams on Parisina's face
The Heaven she fears will not forgive her!
As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar."

The arraignment and condemnation of the guilty pair, with the bold, high-toned, and yet temperate defence of the son, are managed with admirable talent; and yet are less touching than the mute despair of the fallen beauty, who stands in speechless agony beside him.

"Those lids o'er which the violet vein—
Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
Shining through the smoothest white
That e'er did softest kiss invite—
Now seem'd with hot and livid glow
To press, not shade, the orbs below;
Which glance so heavily, and fill,
As tear on tear grows gath'ring still.—

"Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew—
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood;
But every now and then a tear
So large and slowly gather'd, slid
From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
To speak she thought—the imperfect note
Was chok'd within her swelling throat,
Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
It ceas'd—again she thought to speak
Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
And to the earth she fell, like stone
Or statue from its base o'erthrown."

The grand part of this poem, however, is that which describes the execution of the rival son; and in which, though there is no pomp, either of language or of sentiment, and every thing, on the contrary, is conceived and expressed with studied simplicity and directness, there is a spirit of pathos and poetry to

which it would not be easy to find many parallels.

"The Convent bells are ringing!
But mournfully and slow;
In the grey square turret swinging,
With a deep sound, to and fro!
Heavily to the heart they go!
Hark! the hymn is singing!—
The song for the dead below,
Or the living who shortly shall be so!
For a departing Being's soul [knoll:
The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells
He is near his mortal goal;
Kneeling at the Friar's knee;
Sad to hear—and piteous to see!—
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around—
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father!
"It is a lovely hour as yet
Before the summer sun shall set,
Which rose upon that heavy day,
And mock'd it with his steadiest ray;
And his evening beams are shed
Full on Hugo's fated head!
As his last confession pouring
To the monk, his doom deploring
In penitential holiness,
He bends to hear his accents bliss
With absolution such as may
Wipe our mortal stains away!
That high sun on his head did glisten
As he there did bow and listen!
And the rings of chesnut hair
Curled half-down his neck so bare;
But brighter still the beam was thrown
Upon the axe which near him shone
With a clear and ghastly glitter!——
Oh! that parting hour was bitter!
Even the stern stood chill'd with awe:
Dark the crime, and just the law·—
Yet they shudder'd as they saw.
"The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son—and daring lover!
His beads and sins are all recounted;
His hours to their last minute mounted—
His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd!
'Tis done—all closely are they shorn—
The vest which till this moment worn—
The scarf which Parisina gave—
Must not adorn him to the grave.
Even that must now be thrown aside,
And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied;
But no—that last indignity
Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
'No!—yours my forfeit blood and breath—
These hands are chain'd—but let me die
At least with an unshackled eye—
Strike!'—and, as the word he said,
Upon the block he bow'd his head;
These the last accents Hugo spoke:
'Strike!'—and flashing fell the stroke!—
Roll'd the head—and, gushing, sunk
Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
In the dust,—which each deep vein
Slak'd with its ensanguin'd rain!
His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
Convuls'd and quick—then fix for ever."

Of the Hebrew melodies—the Ode to Napoleon, and some other smaller pieces that appeared about the same time, we shall not now stop to say anything. They are obviously inferior to the works we have been noticing, and are about to notice, both in general interest, and in power of poetry—though some of them, and the Hebrew melodies especially, display a skill in versification, and a mastery in diction, which would have raised an inferior artist to the very summit of distinction.

Of the verses entitled, "Fare thee well,"—and some others of a similar character, we shall say nothing but that, in spite of their beauty, it is painful to read them—and infinitely to be regretted that they should have been given to the public. It would be a piece of idle affectation to consider them as mere effusions of fancy, or to pretend ignorance of the subjects to which they relate—and with the knowledge which all the world has of these subjects, we must say, that not even the example of Lord Byron, himself, can persuade us that they are fit for public discussion. We come, therefore, to the consideration of the noble author's most recent publications.

The most considerable of these, is the Third Canto of Childe Harold; a work which has the disadvantage of all continuations, in admitting of little absolute novelty in the plan of the work or the cast of its character, and must, besides, remind all Lord Byron's readers of the extraordinary effect produced by the sudden blazing forth of his genius, upon their first introduction to that title. In spite of all this, however, we are persuaded that this Third Part of the poem will not be pronounced inferior to either of the former; and, we think, will probably be ranked above them by those who have been most delighted with the whole. The great success of this singular production, indeed, has always appeared to us an extraordinary proof of its merits; for, with all its genius, it does not belong to a sort of poetry that rises easily to popularity.—It has no story or action—very little variety of character—and a great deal of reasoning and reflection of no very attractive tenor. It is substantially a contemplative and ethical work, diversified with fine description, and adorned or overshaded by the perpetual presence of one emphatic person, who is sometimes the author, and sometimes the object, of the reflections on which the interest is chiefly rested. It required, no doubt, great force of writing, and a decided tone of originality to recommend a performance of this sort so powerfully as this has been recommended to public notice and admiration—and those high characteristics belong perhaps still more eminently to the part that is now before us, than to any of the former. There is the same stern and lofty disdain of mankind, and their ordinary pursuits and enjoyments; with the same bright gaze on nature, and the same magic power of giving interest and effect to her delineations—but mixed up, we think, with deeper and more matured reflections, and a more intense sensibility to all that is grand or lovely in the external world.—Harold, in short, is somewhat older since he last appeared upon the scene—and while the vigour of his intellect has been confirmed, and his confidence in his own opinions increased, his mind has also become more sensitive; and his misanthropy, thus softened over by habits of calmer contemplation, appears less active and impatient, even although more deeply rooted than

before. Undoubtedly the finest parts of the poem before us, are those which thus embody the weight of his moral sentiments; or disclose the lofty sympathy which binds the despiser of Man to the glorious aspects of Nature. It is in these, we think, that the great attractions of the work consist, and the strength of the author's genius is seen. The narrative and mere description are of far inferior interest. With reference to the sentiments and opinions, however, which thus give its distinguishing character to the piece, we must say, that it seems no longer possible to ascribe them to the ideal person whose name it bears, or to any other than the author himself.—Lord Byron, we think, has formerly complained of those who identified him with his hero, or supposed that Harold was but the expositor of his own feelings and opinions;—and in noticing the former portions of the work, we thought it unbecoming to give any countenance to such a supposition.—In this last part, however, it is really impracticable to distinguish them.—Not only do the author and his hero travel and reflect together,—but, in truth, we scarcely ever have any distinct intimation to which of them the sentiments so energetically expressed are to be ascribed; and in those which are unequivocally given as those of the noble author himself, there is the very same tone of misanthropy, sadness, and scorn, which we were formerly willing to regard as a part of the assumed costume of the Childe. We are far from supposing, indeed, that Lord Byron would disavow any of these sentiments; and though there are some which we must ever think it most unfortunate to entertain, and others which it appears improper to have published, the greater part are admirable, and cannot be perused without emotion, even by those to whom they may appear erroneous.

The poem opens with a burst of grand poetry, and lofty and impetuous feeling, in which the author speaks undisguisedly in his own person.

"Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me, as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome, to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvass fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam, to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

"In my youth's summer, I did sing of One,
The wand'ring outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards. In that tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

"Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar. It may be, that in vain
I would essay, as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness!—so it fling
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem,
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme."

After a good deal more in the same strain, he proceeds,

"Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have* thought
Too long and darkly; till my brain became
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd."—
"Something too much of this:—but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal!
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last."

The character and feelings of this unjoyous personage are then depicted with great force and fondness;—and at last he is placed upon the plain of Waterloo.

"In 'pride of place' where late the Eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierc'd by the shaft of banded nations through!"—
"Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
What! shall reviving Thraldom again be
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage?"——
"If not, o'er *one* fall'n despot boast no more!"

There can be no more remarkable proof of the greatness of Lord Byron's genius than the spirit and interest he has contrived to communicate to his picture of the often-drawn and difficult scene of the breaking up from Brussels before the great battle. It is a trite remark, that poets generally fail in the representation of great events, when the interest is recent, and the particulars are consequently clearly and commonly known: and the reason is obvious: For as it is the object of poetry to make us feel for distant or imaginary occurrences nearly as strongly as if they were present and real, it is plain that there is no scope for her enchantments, where the impressive reality, with all its vast preponderance of interest, is already before us, and where the concern we take in the gazette far outgoes any emotion that can be conjured up in us by the help of fine descriptions. It is natural, however, for the sensitive tribe of poets, to mistake the common interest which they then share with the unpoetical part of their countrymen, for a vocation to versify; and so they proceed to pour out the lukewarm distillations of their phantasies upon the unchecked effervescence of public feeling! All our bards, accordingly, great and small, and of all sexes, ages, and professions, from Scott and Southey down to hundreds without names or additions, have adventured upon this theme—and failed in the management of it! And while they yielded to the patriotic impulse, as if they had all caught the inspiring summons—

"Let those rhyme now who never rhym'd before,
And those who always rhyme, rhyme now the more—"

The result has been, that scarcely a line to be remembered had been produced on a subject which probably was thought, of itself, a secure passport to immortality. It required some courage to venture on a theme beset with so many dangers, and deformed with the wrecks of so many former adventurers;—and a theme, too, which, in its general conception, appeared alien to the prevailing tone of Lord Byron's poetry. See, however, with what easy strength he enters upon it, and with how much grace he gradually finds his way back to his own peculiar vein of sentiment and diction.

"There was a sound of revelry by night;
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her beauty and her chivalry; and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men.
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!"

"Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gath'ring tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings; such as press
The life from out young hearts; and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated:—who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon nights so sweet such awful morn could rise?

"And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The must'ring squadron, and the clatt'ring car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder, peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Rous'd up the soldier ere the morning star.

"And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass!
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but *above* shall grow
In its next verdure! when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe [and low."
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold

After some brief commemoration of the worth and valour that fell in that bloody field, the author turns to the many hopeless mourners that survive to lament their extinction; the many broken-hearted families, whose incurable sorrow is enhanced by the national exultation that still points, with importunate joy, to the scene of their destruction. There is a richness and energy in the following passage which is peculiar to Lord Byron, among all modern poets,—a throng of glowing images, poured forth at once, with a facility and profusion which must appear mere wastefulness to more economical writers, and a certain negligence and harshness of diction, which can belong only to an author who is oppressed with the exuberance and rapidity of his conceptions.

"The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for! though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing; and the name
So honour'd but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.
"They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn!
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn!
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthral;
The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

"Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old, [told."
Showing no visible sign,—for such things are un-

There is next an apostrophe to Napoleon, graduating into a series of general reflections, expressed with infinite beauty and earnestness, and illustrated by another cluster of magical images;—but breathing the very essence of misanthropical disdain, and embodying opinions which we conceive not to be less erroneous than revolting. After noticing the strange combination of grandeur and littleness which seemed to form the character of that greatest of all captains and conquerors, the author proceeds,

"Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast
With a sedate and all-enduring eye;— [smil'd
When fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him pil'd.

Sager than in thy fortunes: For in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn which could contemn
Men and their thoughts. 'Twas wise to feel; not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow:
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose!—
So hath it prov'd to thee, and all such lot who choose.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane! There is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure; nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

This makes the madmen, who have made men
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings, [mad
Founders of sects and systems,—to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things,
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

Their breath is agitation; and their life,
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last;
And yet so nurs'd and bigotted to strife
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die!
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering; or a sword laid by
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
He who *surpasses* or *subdues* mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks; and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head, [led."
And thus reward the toils which to those summits

This is splendidly written, no doubt—but we trust it is not true; and as it is delivered with much more than poetical earnestness, and recurs, indeed, in other forms in various parts of the volume, we must really be allowed to enter our dissent somewhat at large. With regard to conquerors, we wish with all our hearts that the case were as the noble author represents it: but we greatly fear they are neither half so unhappy, nor half so much hated as they should be. On the contrary, it seems plain enough that they are very commonly idolised and admired, even by those on whom they trample; and we suspect, moreover, that in general they actually pass their time rather agreeably, and derive considerable satisfaction from the ruin and desolation of the world. From Macedonia's madman to the Swede—from Nimrod to Bonaparte, the hunters of men have pursued their sport with as much gaiety, and as little remorse, as the hunters of other animals—and have lived as cheerily in their days of action, and as comfortably in their repose, as the followers of better pursuits. For this, and for the fame which they have generally enjoyed, they are obviously indebted to the great interests connected with their employment, and the mental excitement which belongs to its hopes and hazards. It would be strange, therefore, if the other active, but more innocent spirits, whom Lord Byron has here placed in the same predicament, and who share all *their* sources of enjoyment, without the guilt and the hardness which they cannot fail of contracting, should be more miserable or more unfriended than those splendid curses of their kind:—And it would be *passing strange*, and pitiful, if the most precious gifts of Providence should produce only unhappiness, and mankind regard with hostility their greatest benefactors.

We do not believe in any such prodigies. Great vanity and ambition may indeed lead to feverish and restless efforts—to jealousies, to hate, and to mortification—but these are only their effects when united to inferior abilities. It is not those, in short, who actually surpass mankind, that are unhappy; but those who struggle in vain to surpass them: And this moody temper, which eats into itself from within, and provokes fair and unfair opposition from without, is generally the result of pretensions which outgo the merits by which they are supported—and disappointments, that may be clearly traced, not to the excess of genius, but its defect.

It will be found, we believe, accordingly, that the master spirits of their age have always escaped the unhappiness which is here supposed to be the inevitable lot of extraordinary talents; and that this strange tax upon genius has only been levied from those who held the secondary shares of it. Men of truly great powers of mind have generally been cheerful, social, and indulgent; while a tendency to sentimental whining, or fierce intolerance, may be ranked among the surest symptoms of little souls and inferior intellects. In the whole list of our English poets, we can only remember Shenstone and Savage—two, certainly, of the lowest—who were querulous and discontented. Cowley, indeed, used to call himself melancholy;—but he was not in earnest; and, at any rate, was full of conceits and affectations; and has nothing to make us proud of him. Shakespeare, the greatest of them all, was evidently of a free and joyous temperament;—and so was Chaucer, their common master. The same disposition appears to have predominated in Fletcher, Jonson, and their great contemporaries. The genius of Milton partook something of the austerity of the party to which he belonged, and of the controversies in which he was involved; but even when fallen on evil days and evil tongues, his spirit seems to have retained its serenity as well as its dignity; and in his private life, as well as in his poetry, the majesty of a high character is tempered with great sweetness, genial indulgences, and practical wisdom. In the succeeding age our poets were but too gay; and though we forbear to speak of living authors, we know enough of them to say with confidence, that to be miserable or to be hated is not now, any more than heretofore, the common lot of those who excel.

If this, however, be the case with poets, confessedly the most irritable and fantastic of all men of genius—and of poets, too, bred and born in the gloomy climate of England, it is not likely that those who have surpassed their fellows in other ways, or in other regions, have been more distinguished for unhappiness. Were Socrates and Plato, the greatest philosophers of antiquity, remarkable for unsocial or gloomy tempers?—was Bacon, the greatest in modern times?—was Sir Thomas More—or Erasmus—or Hume—or Voltaire?—was Newton—or Fenelon?—was Francis I., or Henry IV., the paragon of kings and conquerors?—was Fox, the most ardent, and, in the vulgar sense, the least successful of statesmen? These, and men like these, are undoubtedly the lights and the boast of the world. Yet there was no alloy of misanthropy or gloom in their genius. They did not disdain the men they had surpassed; and neither feared nor experienced their hostility. Some detractors they might have, from envy or misapprehension; but, beyond all doubt, the prevailing sentiments in respect to them have always been those of gratitude and admiration; and the error of public judgment, where it has erred, has much oftener been to overrate than to undervalue the merits of those who had claims on their good opinion. On the whole, we are far from thinking that eminent men are actually happier than those who glide through life in peaceful obscurity: But it is their eminence, and the consequences

of it, rather than the mental superiority by which it is obtained, that interferes with their enjoyment. Distinction, however won, usually leads to a passion for more distinction; and is apt to engage us in laborious efforts and anxious undertakings: and those, even when successful, seldom repay, in our judgment at least, the ease, the leisure, and tranquillity, of which they require the sacrifice: but it really passes our imagination to conceive, that the very highest degrees of intellectual vigour, or fancy, or sensibility, should of themselves be productive either of unhappiness or general dislike.

Harold and his poet next move along the lovely banks of the Rhine, to which, and all their associated emotions, due honour is paid in various powerful stanzas. We pass on, however, to the still more attractive scenes of Switzerland. The opening is of suitable grandeur.

"But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls,
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below."

On this magnificent threshold, the poet pauses, to honour the patriot field of Morat, and the shrine of the priestess of Aventicum; and then, in congratulating himself on his solitude, once more moralises his song with something of an apology for its more bitter misanthropies.

"To fly from, need not be to hate mankind;
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng," &c.

"The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness; on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite,
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity [shall be.
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er
Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake."

The cliffs of Meillerie, and the groves of Clarens of course, conjure up the shade of Rousseau; whom he characterises very strongly, but charitably, in several enchanting stanzas;—one or two of which we shall cite as a specimen of the kindred rapture with which the Poet here honours the Apostle of Love.

"His love was passion's essence! As a tree
On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty; which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems [seems.
Along his burning page, distemper'd though it
This breath'd itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet," &c.

"Clarens! sweet Clarens, birth-place of deep Love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought!
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above
The very Glaciers have his colours caught,
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly! The rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love; who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

"All things are here of *him;* from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him and his, a populous solitude."

Our readers may think, perhaps, that there is too much sentiment and reflection in these extracts; and wish for the relief of a little narrative or description: but the truth is, that there is no narrative in the poem, and that all the descriptions are blended with the expression of deep emotion. The following picture, however, of an evening calm on the lake of Geneva, we think, must please even the lovers of pure description—

"Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wide world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction! Once I lov'd
Torn ocean's roar; but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet, as if a sister's voice reprov'd,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so mov'd.

"It is the hush of night; and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep! and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar, [more!
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol

"At intervals, some bird from out the brakes,
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill;
But that is fancy!—for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her hues."

The following sketch of a Midsummer night's thunder storm in the same sublime region, is still more striking and original—

"The sky is chang'd!—and such a change! Oh night, [strong!
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud.

"And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea!
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shake with its mountain-mirth."

In passing Ferney and Lausanne, there is a fine account of Voltaire and Gibbon; but we have room for but one more extract, and must take it from the characteristic reflections with which the piece is concluded. These, like most of the preceding, may be thought to savour too much of egotism: But this is of the essence of such poetry; and if Lord Byron had only been happier, or in better humour with the world, we should have been delighted with the confidence he has here reposed in his readers:—as it is, it sounds too like the last disdainful address of a man who is about to quit a world which has ceased to have any attractions—like the resolute speech of Pierre—

"For this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now."—

The reckoning, however, is steadily and sternly made; and though he does not spare himself, we must say that the world comes off much the worst in the comparison. The passage is very singular, and written with much force and dignity.

"Thus far I have proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices.—To feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be;—and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught,—
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or zeal,—
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul!—No matter!—it is taught.

"I have not lov'd the world—nor the world me!
I have not flatter'd its rank breath; nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee,—
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles,—nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo. In the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I stood
Among them, but not of them," &c.

"I have not lov'd the world, nor the world me'
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things,—hopes which will not de-
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave [ceive
Snares for the failing! I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;
That two or one, are almost what they seem,—
That goodness is no name, and happiness no
dream."

The closing stanzas of the poem are extremely beautiful;—but we are immoveable in the resolution, that no statement of ours shall ever give additional publicity to the subjects of which they treat.

We come now to "The Prisoner of Chillon." It is very sweet and touching—though we can afford but a short account of it. Chillon is a ruined castle on the Lake of Geneva, in the dungeon of which three gallant brothers were confined, each chained to a separate pillar, till, after long years of anguish, the two younger died, and were buried under the cold floor of the prison. The eldest was at length liberated, when worn out with age and misery—and is supposed, in his joyless liberty, to tell, in this poem, the sad story of his imprisonment. The picture of their first feelings, when bound apart in this living tomb, and of the gradual sinking of their cheery fortitude, is full of pity and agony.

"We could not move a single pace;
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, and pin'd in heart;
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each,
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold!
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
A grating sound—not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be.
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own."

The return to the condition of the younger brother, the blooming Benjamin of the family, is extremely natural and affecting.

"I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest,
I ought to do—and did my best;
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father lov'd,
Because our mother's brow was giv'n
To him—with eyes as blue as heav'n,
For him my soul was sorely mov'd;
And truly might it be distrest
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but other's ills;
And then they flow'd like mountain rills.

The gentle decay and gradual extinction of this youngest life, is the most tender and beautiful passage in the poem.

"But he, the favorite and the flow'r,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free!
He, too, who yet had held unfir'd
A spirit natural or inspir'd—
He, too, was struck! and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
He faded; and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And griev'd for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur! not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;

And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less!
I listen'd, but I could not hear!—
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him!—I found *him* not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only liv'd—*I* only drew
Th' accursed breath of dungeon-dew."

After this last calamity, he is allowed to be at large in the dungeon.

"And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod.'

He climbs up at last to the high chink that admitted the light to his prison; and looks out once more on the long-remembered face of nature, and the lofty forms of the eternal mountains.

"I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not chang'd like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle; it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flow'rs growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous, each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast;
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly."

The rest of the poems in this little volume, are less amiable—and most of them, we fear, have a personal and not very charitable application. One, entitled "Darkness," is free at least from this imputation. It is a grand and gloomy sketch of the supposed consequences of the final extinction of the Sun and the Heavenly bodies—executed, undoubtedly, with great and fearful force—but with something of German exaggeration, and a fantastical selection of incidents. The very conception is terrible, above all conception of known calamity—and is too oppressive to the imagination, to be contemplated with pleasure, even in the faint reflection of poetry.

"The icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air."

Cities and forests are burnt, for light and warmth.

"The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them! Some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smil'd;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world! and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth, and howl'd!"

Then they eat each other: and are extinguished!

"——— The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay!
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea, [dropp'd
And their masts fell down piecemeal: As they
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The moon their mistress had expir'd before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them—She was the universe."

There is a poem entitled "The Dream," full of living pictures, and written with great beauty and genius—but extremely painful—and abounding with mysteries into which we have no desire to penetrate. "The Incantation" and "Titan" have the same distressing character—though without the sweetness of the other. Some stanzas to a nameless friend, are in a tone of more open misanthropy. This is a favourable specimen of their tone and temper.

"Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though lov'd, thou foreborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie."

Beautiful as this poetry is, it is a relief at last to close the volume. We cannot maintain our accustomed tone of levity, or even speak like calm literary judges, in the midst of these agonising traces of a wounded and distempered spirit. Even our admiration is at last swallowed up in a most painful feeling of pity and of wonder. It is impossible to mistake these for fictitious sorrows, conjured up for the purpose of poetical effect. There is a dreadful tone of sincerity, and an energy that cannot be counterfeited, in the expression of wretchedness and alienation from human kind, which occurs in every page of this publication; and as the author has at last spoken out in his own person, and unbosomed his griefs a great deal too freely to his readers, the offence now would be to entertain a doubt of their reality. We certainly have no hope of preaching him into philanthropy and cheerfulness; but it is impossible not to mourn over such a catastrophe of such a mind; or to see the prodigal gifts of Nature, Fortune, and Fame, thus turned to bitterness, without an oppressive feeling of impatience, mortification, and surprise. Where there are such elements, however, it is equally impossible to despair that they may yet enter into happier combinations,—or not to hope this "that puissant spirit"

"yet shall reascend
Self-rais'd, and repossess its native seat."

(November, 1817.)

Lalla Rookh; an Oriental Romance. By Thomas Moore. 4to. pp. 405.: London: 1817.

There is a great deal of our recent poetry derived from the East: But this is the finest Orientalism we have had yet. The land of the Sun has never shone out so brightly on the children of the North—nor the sweets of Asia been poured forth, nor her gorgeousness displayed so profusely to the delighted senses of Europe. The beauteous forms, the dazzling splendours, the breathing odours of the East, seem at last to have found a kindred poet in that green isle of the West; whose Genius has long been suspected to be derived from a warmer clime, and now wantons and luxuriates in those voluptuous regions, as if it felt that it had at length regained its native element. It is amazing, indeed, how much at home Mr. Moore seems to be in India, Persia, and Arabia; and how purely and strictly Asiatic all the colouring and imagery of his book appears. He is thoroughly embued with the character of the scenes to which he transports us; and yet the extent of his knowledge is less wonderful than the dexterity and apparent facility with which he has turned it to account, in the elucidation and embellishment of his poetry. There is not, in the volume now before us, a simile or description, a name, a trait of history, or allusion of romance which belongs to European experience; or does not indicate an entire familiarity with the life, the dead nature, and the learning of the East. Nor are these barbaric ornaments thinly scattered to make up a show. They are showered lavishly over all the work; and form, perhaps too much, the staple of the poetry—and the riches of that which is chiefly distinguished for its richness.

We would confine this remark, however, to the descriptions of external objects, and the allusions to literature and history—or to what may be termed the *materiel* of the poetry before us. The Characters and Sentiments are of a different order. They cannot, indeed, be said to be copies of European nature; but they are still less like that of any other region. They are, in truth, poetical imaginations;—but it is to the poetry of rational, honourable, considerate, and humane Europe, that they belong—and not to the childishness, cruelty, and profligacy of Asia. It may seem a harsh and presumptuous sentence, to some of our Cosmopolite readers: But from all we have been able to gather from history or recent observation, we should be inclined to say that there was no sound sense, firmness of purpose, or principled goodness, except among the natives of Europe, and their genuine descendants.

There is something very extraordinary, we think, in the work before us—and something which indicates in the author, not only a great exuberance of talent, but a very singular constitution of genius. While it is more splendid in imagery—(and for the most part in very good taste)—more rich in sparkling thoughts and original conceptions, and more full indeed of exquisite pictures, both of all sorts of beauties and virtues, and all sorts of sufferings and crimes, than any other poem that has yet come before us; we rather think we speak the sense of most readers, when we add, that the effect of the whole is to mingle a certain feeling of disappointment with that of admiration! to excite admiration rather than any warmer sentiment of delight—to dazzle, more than to enchant—and, in the end, more frequently to startle the fancy, and fatigue the attention, by the constant succession of glittering images and high-strained emotions, than to maintain a rising interest, or win a growing sympathy, by a less profuse or more systematic display of attractions.

The style is, on the whole, rather diffuse, and too unvaried in its character. But its greatest fault, in our eyes, is the uniformity of its brilliancy—the want of plainness, simplicity, and repose. We have heard it observed by some very zealous admirers of Mr. Moore's genius, that you cannot open this book without finding a cluster of beauties in every page. Now, this is only another way of expressing what we think its greatest defect. No work, consisting of many pages, should have detached and distinguishable beauties in every one of them. No great work, indeed, should have *many* beauties: If it were perfect, it would have but *one;* and that but faintly perceptible, except on a view of *the whole*. Look, for example, at what is perhaps the most finished and exquisite production of human art—the design and elevation of a Grecian temple, in its old severe simplicity. What penury of ornament—what rejection of beauties of detail!—what masses of plain surface—what rigid economical limitation to the useful and the necessary! The cottage of a peasant is scarcely more simple in its structure, and has not fewer parts that are superfluous. Yet what grandeur—what elegance—what grace and completeness in the effect! The whole is beautiful—because the beauty is in the whole: But there is little merit in any of the parts, except that of fitness and careful finishing. Contrast this, now, with a Dutch pleasure-house, or a Chinese—where every part is meant to be separately beautiful—and the result is deformity!—where there is not an inch of the surface that is not brilliant with varied colour, and rough with curves and angles.—and where the effect of the whole is monstrous and offensive. We are as far as possible from meaning to insinuate that Mr. Moore's poetry is of *this* description. On the contrary, we think his ornaments are, for the most part, truly and exquisitely beautiful; and the general design of his pieces very elegant and ingenious: All that we mean to say is, that there is too much ornament—too many insulated and independent beauties—and that the notice, and the very admiration they excite, hurt the interest of the general design; and not only withdraw our attention too importunately from it, but at last weary it out with their perpetual recurrence.

It seems to be a law of our intellectual constitution, that the powers of taste cannot be permanently gratified, except by some *sustained* or continuous emotion; and that a series, even of the most agreeable excitements, soon ceases, if broken and disconnected, to give any pleasure. No conversation fatigues so soon as that which is made up of points and epigrams; and the accomplished rhetorician, who

> "——— could not ope
> His mouth, but out there flew a trope,"

must have been a most intolerable companion. There are some things, too, that seem so plainly intended for ornaments and seasonings only, that they are only agreeable, when sprinkled in moderation over a plainer medium. No one would like to make an entire meal on *sauce piquante;* or to appear in a dress crusted over with diamonds; or to pass a day in a steam of rich distilled perfumes. It is the same with the glittering ornaments of poetry—with splendid metaphors and ingenious allusions, and all the figures of speech and of thought that constitute its outward pomp and glory. Now, Mr. Moore, it appears to us, is decidedly too lavish of his gems and sweets;—he labours under a plethora of wit and imagination—impairs his credit by the palpable exuberance of his possessions, and would be richer with half his wealth. His works are not only of costly material and graceful design, but they are everywhere glistening with small beauties and transitory inspirations—sudden flashes of fancy, that blaze out and perish; like earth-born meteors that crackle in the lower sky, and unseasonably divert our eyes from the great and lofty bodies which pursue their harmonious courses in a serener region.

We have spoken of these as faults of style: But they could scarcely have existed in the style, without going deeper; and though they first strike us as qualities of the composition only, we find, upon a little reflection, that the same general character belongs to the fable, the characters, and the sentiments,—that they all sin alike in the excess of their means of attraction,—and fail to interest, chiefly by being too interesting.

In order to avoid the debasement of ordinary or familiar life, the author has soared to a region beyond the comprehension of most of his readers. All his personages are so very beautiful, and brave, and agonising—so totally wrapt up in the exaltation of their vehement emotions, and withal so lofty in rank, and so sumptuous and magnificent in all that relates to their external condition, that the herd of ordinary mortals can scarcely venture to conceive of their proceedings, or to sympathise freely with their fortunes. The disasters to which they are exposed, and the designs in which they are engaged, are of the same ambitious and exaggerated character; and all are involved in so much pomp, and splendour, and luxury, and the description of their extreme grandeur and elegance forms so considerable a part of the whole work, that the less sublime portion of the species can with difficulty presume to judge of them, or to enter into the concernments of such very exquisite persons. The incidents, in like manner, are so prodigiously moving, so excessively improbable, and so terribly critical, that we have the same difficulty of raising our sentiments to the proper pitch for them;—and, finding it impossible to sympathise as we ought to do with such portentous occurrences, are sometimes tempted to withhold our sympathy altogether, and to seek for its objects among more familiar adventures. Scenes of voluptuous splendour and ecstasy alternate suddenly with agonising separations, atrocious crimes, and tremendous sufferings;—battles, incredibly fierce and sanguinary, follow close on entertainments incredibly sumptuous and elegant;—terrific tempests are succeeded by delicious calms at sea: and the land scenes are divided between horrible chasms and precipices, and vales and gardens rich in eternal blooms, and glittering with palaces and temples—while the interest of the story is maintained by instruments and agents of no less potency than insanity, blasphemy, poisonings, religious hatred, national antipathy, demoniacal misanthropy, and devoted love.

We are aware that, in objecting to a work like this, that it is made up of such materials, we may seem to be objecting that it is made of the elements of poetry,—since it is no doubt true, that it is by the use of such materials that poetry is substantially distinguished from prose, and that it is to them it is indebted for all that is peculiar in the delight and the interest it inspires: and it may seem a little unreasonable to complain of a poet, that he treats us with the essence of poetry. We have already hinted, however, that it is not advisable to live entirely on essences; and our objection goes not only to the excessive strength of the emotions that are sought to be raised, but to the violence of their transitions, and the want of continuity in the train of feeling that is produced. It may not be amiss, however, to add a word or two more of explanation.

In the *first* place, then, if we consider how *the fact* stands, we shall find that all the great poets, and, in an especial manner, all the poets who chain down the attention of their readers, and maintain a growing interest through a long series of narrations, have been remarkable for the occasional familiarity, and even homeliness, of many of their incidents, characters and sentiments. This is the distinguishing feature in Homer, Chaucer, Ariosto, Shakespeare, Dryden, Scott—and will be found to occur, we believe, in all poetry that has been long and extensively popular; or that is capable of pleasing very strongly, or stirring

very deeply, the common sensibilities of our nature. We need scarcely make an exception for the lofty Lyric, which is so far from being generally attractive, that it is not even intelligible, except to a studious few—or for those solemn and devotional strains which derive their interest from a still higher principle: But in all narrative poetry—in all long pieces made up of descriptions and adventures, it seems hitherto to have been an indispensable condition of their success, that most of the persons and events should bear a considerable resemblance to those which we meet with in ordinary life; and, though more animated and important than to be of daily occurrence, should not be immeasurably exalted above the common standard of human fortune and character.

It should be almost enough to settle the question, that such is the fact—and that no narrative poetry has ever excited a great interest, where the persons were too much purified from the vulgar infirmities of our nature, or the incidents too thoroughly purged of all that is ordinary or familiar. But the slightest reflection upon the feelings with which we read such poetry, must satisfy us as *to the reason* of our disappointment. It may be told in two words. Writings of this kind revolt by their improbability; and fatigue, by offering no points upon which our sympathies can readily attach.—Two things are necessary to give a fictitious narrative a deep and commanding interest; *first*, that we should believe that such things might have happened; and *secondly*, that they might have happened to ourselves, or to such persons as ourselves. But, in reading the ambitious and overwrought poetry of which we have been speaking, we feel perpetually, that there could have been no such people, and no such occurrences as we are there called upon to feel for; and that it is impossible for us, at all events, to have much concern about beings whose principles of action are so remote from our own, and who are placed in situations to which we have never known any parallel. It is no doubt true, that all stories that interest us must represent passions of a higher pitch, and events of a more extraordinary nature than occur in common life; and that it is in consequence of rising thus sensibly above its level, that they become objects of interest and attention. But, in order that this very elevation may be felt, and produce its effect, the story must itself, in other places, give us the known and ordinary level, and, by a thousand adaptations and traits of *universal* nature, make us feel, that the characters which become every now and then the objects of our intense sympathy and admiration, in great emergencies, and under the influence of rare but conceivable excitements, are, after all, our fellow creatures—made of the same flesh and blood with ourselves, and acting, and acted upon, by the common principles of our nature. Without this, indeed, the effect of their sufferings and exploits would be entirely lost upon us; as we should be without any scale by which to estimate the magnitude of the temptations they had to resist, or the energies they had exerted. To make us aware of the altitude of a mountain, it is absolutely necessary to show us the plain from which it ascends. If we are allowed to see nothing but *the table land* at the top, the effect will be no greater than if we had remained on the humble level of the shore—except that it will be more lonely, bleak, and inhospitable. And thus it is, that by exaggerating the heroic qualities of heroes, they become as uninteresting as if they had no such qualities—that by striking out those weaknesses and vulgar infirmities which identify them with ordinary mortals, they not only cease to interest ordinary mortals, but even to excite their admiration or surprise; and appear merely as strange inconceivable beings, in whom superhuman energy and refinement are no more to be wondered at, than the power of flying in an eagle, or of fasting in a snake.

The wise ancient who observed, that being a man himself, he could not but take an interest in every thing that related to man—might have confirmed his character for wisdom, by adding, that for the same reason he could take no interest in any thing else. There is nothing, after all, that we ever truly care for, but the feelings of creatures like ourselves:—and we are obliged to lend them to the flowers and the brooks of the valley, and the stars and airs of heaven, before we can take any delight in them. With sentient beings the case is more obviously the same. By whatever names we may call them, or with whatever fantastic attributes we may please to invest them, still we comprehend, and concern ourselves about them, only in so far as they resemble ourselves. All the deities of the classic mythology—and all the devils and angels of later poets, are nothing but human creatures—or at least only interest us so long as they are so. Let any one try to imagine what kind of story he could make of the adventures of a set of beings who differed from our own species in any of its general attributes—who were incapable, for instance, of the debasing feelings of fear, pain, or anxiety—and he will find, that instead of becoming more imposing and attractive by getting rid of those infirmities, they become utterly insignificant, and indeed in a great degree inconceivable. Or, to come a little closer to the matter before us, and not to go beyond the bounds of common experience—Suppose a tale, founded on refined notions of delicate love and punctilious integrity, to be told to a race of obscene, brutal and plundering savages—or, even within the limits of the same country, if a poem, turning upon the jealousies of court intrigue, the pride of rank, and the cabals of sovereigns and statesmen, were put into the hands of village maidens or clownish labourers, is it not obvious that the remoteness of the manners, characters and feelings from their own, would first surprise, and then revolt them—and that the moral, intellectual and adventitious Superiority of the personages concerned, would, instead of enhancing the interest, entirely destroy it, and very speedily extinguish all sympathy with their passions,

and all curiosity about their fate?—Now, what gentlemen and ladies are to a ferocious savage, or politicians and princesses to an ordinary rustic, the exaggerated persons of such poetry as we are now considering, are to the ordinary readers of poetry. They do not believe in the possibility of their existence, or of their adventures. They do not comprehend the principles of their conduct; and have no thorough sympathy with the feelings that are ascribed to them.

We have carried this speculation, we believe, a little too far—and, with reference to the volume before us, it would be more correct perhaps to say, that it had suggested these observations, than that they are strictly applicable to it. For though its faults are certainly of the kind we have been endeavouring to describe, it would be quite unjust to characterise it by its faults—which are beyond all doubt less conspicuous than its beauties. There is not only a richness and brilliancy of diction and imagery spread over the whole work, that indicate the greatest activity and elegance of fancy in the author; but it is everywhere pervaded, still more strikingly, by a strain of tender and noble feeling, poured out with such warmth and abundance, as to steal insensibly on the heart of the reader, and gradually to overflow it with a tide of sympathetic emotion. There are passages indeed, and these neither few nor brief, over which the very Genius of Poetry seems to have breathed his richest enchantment—where the melody of the verse and the beauty of the images conspire so harmoniously with the force and tenderness of the emotion, that the whole is blended into one deep and bright stream of sweetness and feeling, along which the spirit of the reader is borne passively away, through long reaches of delight. Mr. Moore's poetry, indeed, where his happiest vein is opened, realises more exactly than that of any other writer, the splendid account which is given by Comus of the song of

> "His mother Circe, and the Sirens three,
> Amid the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
> Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
> And lap it in Elysium!"

And though it is certainly to be regretted that he should so often have broken the measure with more frivolous strains, or filled up its intervals with a sort of brilliant *falsetto*, it should never be forgotten, that his excellences are at least as peculiar to himself as his faults, and, on the whole, perhaps more characteristic of his genius.

The volume before us contains four separate and distinct poems—connected, however, and held together "like orient pearls at random strung," by the slender thread of a slight prose story, on which they are all suspended, and to the simple catastrophe of which they in some measure contribute. This airy and elegant legend is to the following effect. Lalla Rookh, the daughter of the great Aurengzebe, is betrothed to the young king of Bucharia; and sets forth, with a splendid train of Indian and Bucharian attendants, to meet her enamoured bridegroom in the delightful valley of Cashmere. The progress of this gorgeous cavalcade, and the beauty of the country which it traverses, are exhibited with great richness of colouring and picturesque effect; though in this, as well as in the other parts of the prose narrative, a certain tone of levity, and even derision, is frequently assumed—not very much in keeping, we think, with the tender and tragic strain of poetry of which it is the accompaniment—certain breakings out, in short, of that mocking European wit, which has made itself merry with Asiatic solemnity, ever since the time of the facetious Count Hamilton—but seems a little out of place in a miscellany, the prevailing character of which is of so opposite a temper. To amuse the languor, or divert the impatience of the royal bride, in the noon-tide and night-halts of her luxurious progress, a young Cashmerian poet had been sent by the gallantry of the bridegroom; and recites, on those occasions, the several poems that form the bulk of the volume now before us. Such is the witchery of his voice and look, and such the sympathetic effect of the tender tales which he recounts, that the poor princess, as was naturally to be expected, falls desperately in love with him before the end of the journey; and by the time she enters the lovely vale of Cashmere, and sees the glittering palaces and towers prepared for her reception, she feels that she would joyfully forego all this pomp and splendour, and fly to the desert with her adored Feramorz. The youthful bard, however, has now disappeared from her side; and she is supported, with fainting heart and downcast eyes, into the hated presence of her tyrant! when the voice of Feramorz himself bids her be of good cheer—and, looking up, she sees her beloved poet in the Prince himself! who had assumed this gallant disguise, and won her young affections, without deriving any aid from his rank or her engagements.

The whole story is very sweetly and gaily told; and is adorned with many tender as well as lively passages—without reckoning among the latter the occasional criticisms of the omniscient Fadladeen, the magnificent and most infallible grand chamberlain of the Haram—whose sayings and remarks, we cannot help observing, do not agree very well with the character which is assigned him—being for the most part very smart, sententious, and acute, and by no means solemn, stupid, and pompous, as was to have been expected. Mr. Moore's genius, however, we suppose, is too inveterately lively, to make it possible for him even to counterfeit dulness We come at last, however, to the poetry.

The first piece, which is entitled "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan," is the longest, we think, and certainly not the best, of the series. It has all the faults which we have, somewhat too sweepingly, imputed to the volume at large; and it was chiefly, indeed, with a reference to it, that we made those introductory remarks, which the author will probably think too much in the spirit of the

sage Chamberlain. The story, which is not in all its parts extremely intelligible, is founded on a notice, in D'Herbelot, of a daring impostor of the early ages of Islamism, who pretended to have received a later and more authoritative mission than that of the prophet, and to be destined to overturn all tyrannies and superstitions on the earth, and to rescue all souls that believed in him. To shade the celestial radiance of his brow, he always wore a veil of silver gauze, and was at last attacked by the Caliph, and exterminated, with all his adherents. On this story, Mr. Moore has engrafted a romantic and not very probable tale of two young lovers, Azim and Zelica; the former of whom having been supposed to perish in battle, the grief of the latter unsettles her understanding; and her distempered imagination is easily inflamed by the mystic promises of the Veiled Prophet, which at length prevail on her to join the troop of lovely priestesses who earn a blissful immortality in another world, by sharing his embraces upon earth. By what artful illusions the poor distracted maid was thus betrayed to her ruin, is not very satisfactorily explained; only we are informed that she and the Veiled Apostle descended into a charnel-house, and took a mutual oath, and drank blood together, in pledge of their eternal union. At length Azim, who had not been slain, but made captive in battle, and had wandered in Greece till he had imbibed the love of liberty that inspired her famous heroes of old—hears of the proud promises of emancipation which Mokanna (for that was the prophet's name) had held out to all nations, and comes to be enrolled among the champions of freedom and virtue. On the day of his presentment, he is introduced into a scene of voluptuous splendour, where all the seducive influences of art and nature are in vain exerted to divert his thoughts from the love of Zelica and of liberty. He breaks proudly away from these soft enchantments, and finds a mournful female figure before him, in whom he almost immediately recognises his long-lost and ever-loved Zelica. The first moment of their meeting is ecstasy on both sides; but the unhappy girl soon calls to mind the unutterable condition to which she is reduced—and, in agony, reveals to him the sad story of her derangement, and of the base advantages that had been taken of it. Azim at first throws her from him in abhorrence, but soon turns, in relenting pity, and offers at last to rescue her from this seat of pollution. She listens with eager joy to his proposal, and is about to fly with him in the instant, when the dread voice of Mokanna thunders in her ear her oath of eternal fidelity. That terrible sound brings back her frenzy. She throws her lover wildly from her, and vanishes at once, amidst the dazzling lights of that unholy palace. Azim then joins the approaching army of the Caliph, and leads on his forces against the impious usurper. Mokanna performs prodigies of valour—but is always borne back by the superior force and enthusiasm of Azim: and after a long course of horrors and illusions, he poisons the remnant of his adherents, and himself plunges into a bath, of such corrosive quality, as instantly to extinguish life, and dissolve all the elements of the mortal frame. Zelica then covers herself with his fatal veil, and totters out to the ramparts, where, being mistaken for Mokanna, she rushes upon the spear of her Azim, and receives his forgiveness in death! while he survives, to pass the rest of his life in continual prayer and supplication for her erring spirit, and dies at last upon her grave, in the full assurance of rejoining her in purity and bliss.

It is needless to enlarge on the particular faults of this story, after the general observations we hazarded at the outset. The character of Mokanna, as well as his power and influence, is a mere distortion and extravagance: But the great blemish is the corruption of Zelica; and the insanity so gratuitously alleged by the poet in excuse of it. Nothing less, indeed, could in any way account for such a catastrophe; and, after all, it is painful and offensive to the imagination. The bridal oath, pledged with blood among the festering bodies of the dead, is one of the overstrained theatrical horrors of the German school; and a great deal of the theorising and argumentation which is intended to palliate or conceal those defects, is obscure and incomprehensible. Rich as it is, in short, in fancy and expression, and powerful in some of the scenes of passion, we should have had great doubts of the success of this volume, if it had all been of the same texture with the poem of which we are now speaking. Yet, even there, there is a charm, almost irresistible, in the volume of sweet sounds and beautiful images, which are heaped together with luxurious profusion in the general texture of the style, and invest even the absurdities of the story with the graceful amplitude of their rich and figured veil. What, for instance, can be sweeter than this account of Azim's entry into this earthly paradise of temptations!

"Meanwhile, through vast illuminated halls,
Silent and bright, where nothing but the falls
Of fragrant waters, gushing with cool sound
From many a jasper fount, is heard around,
Young Azim roams bewilder'd; nor can guess
What means this maze of light and loneliness!
Here, the way leads, o'er tesselated floors
Or mats of Cairo, through long corridors,
Where, rang'd in cassolets and silver urns,
Sweet wood of aloe or of sandal burns;
And here, at once, the glittering saloon
Bursts on his sight, boundless and bright as noon!
Where, in the midst, reflecting back the rays
In broken rainbows, a fresh fountain plays
High as th' enamell'd cupola; which towers
All rich with Arabesques of gold and flowers:
And the mosaic floor beneath shines through
The sprinkling of that fountain's silvery dew,
Like the wet, glist'ning shells, of ev'ry dye;
That on the margin of the Red Sea lie.

"Here too he traces the kind visitings
Of woman's love, in those fair, living things
Of land and wave, whose fate—in bondage thrown
For their weak loveliness—is like her own!
On one side gleaming with a sudden grace
Through water, brilliant as the crystal vase
In which it undulates, small fishes shine,
Like golden ingots from a fairy mine!—
While, on the other, lattic'd lightly in
With odorif'rous woods of Comorin,
Each brilliant bird that wings the air is seen;—
Gay, sparkling loories, such as gleam between
The crimson blossoms of the coral tree
In the warm isles of India's sunny sea:
Mecca's blue sacred pigeon; and the thrush
Of Hindostan, whose holy warblings gush,
At evening, from the tall pagoda's top;—
Those golden birds that, in the spice-time, drop
About the gardens, drunk with that sweet food
Whose scent hath lur'd them o'er the summer flood;—
And those that under Araby's soft sun
Build their high nests of budding cinnamon."
pp. 53—56.

The warrior youth looks round at first with disdain upon those seductions, with which he supposes the sage prophet wishes to try the firmness of his votaries.

"While thus he thinks, still nearer on the breeze
Come those delicious, dream-like harmonies,
Each note of which but adds new, downy links
To the soft chain in which his spirit sinks.
He turns him tow'rd the sound; and, far away
Through a long vista, sparkling with the play
Of countless lamps—like the rich track which Day
Leaves on the waters, when he sinks from us;
So long the path, its light so tremulous;—
He sees a group of female forms advance,
Some chain'd together in the mazy dance
By fetters, forg'd in the green sunny bowers,
As they were captives to the King of Flowers," &c.

"Awhile they dance before him; then divide,
Breaking, like rosy clouds at even-tide
Around the rich pavilion of the sun—
Till silently dispersing, one by one,
Through many a path that from the chamber leads
To gardens, terraces, and moonlight meads,
Their distant laughter comes upon the wind,
And but one trembling nymph remains behind,
Beck'ning them back in vain,—for they are gone,
And she is left in all that light, alone!
No veil to curtain o'er her beauteous brow,
In its young bashfulness more beauteous now;
But a light, golden chain-work round her hair
Such as the maids of Yezd and Shiraz wear,
While her left hand, as shrinkingly she stood,
Held a small lute of gold and sandal wood,
Which, once or twice, she touch'd with hurried strain,
Then took her trembling fingers off again.
But when at length a timid glance she stole
At Azim, the sweet gravity of soul
She saw through all his features, calm'd her fear;
And, like a half-tam'd antelope, more near,
Though shrinking still, she came;—then sat her down
Upon a musnud's edge, and bolder grown,
In the pathetic mode of Ispahan
Touch'd a preluding strain, and thus began:—"

The following picture of the grand armament of the Caliph shows the same luxuriance of diction and imagination, directed to different objects:—

"Whose are the gilded tents that crowd the way,
Where all was waste and silent yesterday?
This City of War which, in a few short hours,
Hath sprung up here, as if the magic powers
Of Him who, in the twinkling of a star,
Built the high pillar'd halls of Chilminar,
Had conjur'd up, far as the eye can see,
This world of tents and domes and sun-bright armory!—
Princely pavilions, screen'd by many a fold
Of crimson cloth, and topp'd with balls of gold;—
Steeds, with their housings of rich silver spun,
Their chains and poitrels glitt'ring in the sun;
And camels, tufted o'er with Yemen's shells,
Shaking in every breeze their light-ton'd bells!
"Ne'er did the march of Mahadi display
Such pomp before;—not ev'n when on his way
To Mecca's Temple, when both land and sea
Were spoil'd to feed the Pilgrim's luxury;
When round him, mid the burning sands, he saw
Fruits of the North in icy freshness thaw,
And cool'd his thirsty lip, beneath the glow
Of Mecca's sun, with urns of Persian snow:—
Nor e'er did armament more grand than that
Pour from the kingdoms of the Caliphat.
First, in the van, the People of the Rock,
On their light mountain steeds, of royal stock;
Then, Chieftains of Damascus, proud to see
The flashing of their swords' rich marquetry," &c.
pp. 86—89.

We can afford room now only for the conclusion—the last words of the dying Zelica; which remind us of those of Campbell's Gertrude—and the catastrophe of Azim, which is imaged in that of Southey's Roderick.

"'But live, my Azim;—oh! to call thee mine
Thus once again!—*my* Azim—dream divine!
Live, if thou ever lov'dst me, if to meet
Thy Zelica hereafter would be sweet,
Oh live to pray for her!—to bend the knee
Morning and night before that Deity,
To whom pure lips and hearts without a stain,
As thine are, Azim, never breath'd in vain—
And pray that He may pardon her—may take
Compassion on her soul for thy dear sake,
And, nought rememb'ring but her love to thee,
Make her all thine, all His, eternally!
Go to those happy fields where first we twin'd
Our youthful hearts together—every wind
That meets thee there, fresh from the well-known flowers,
Will bring the sweetness of those innocent hours
Back to thy soul, and thou may'st feel again
For thy poor Zelica as thou didst then.
So shall thy orisons, like dew that flies
To heav'n upon the morning's sunshine, rise
With all love's earliest ardour to the skies!'

Time fleeted! Years on years had pass'd away,
And few of those who, on that mournful day
Had stood, with pity in their eyes, to see
The maiden's death, and the youth's agony,
Were living still—when, by a rustic grave
Beside the swift Amoo's transparent wave,
An aged man, who had grown aged there
By one lone grave, morning and night in prayer,
For the last time knelt down! And, though the shade
Of death hung dark'ning over him, there play'd
A gleam of rapture on his eye and cheek,
That brighten'd even death—like the last streak
Of intense glory on th' horizon's brim,
When night o'er all the rest hangs chill and dim!—
His soul had seen a Vision, while he slept;
She, for whose spirit he had pray'd and wept
So many years, had come to him, all drest
In angel smiles, and told him she was blest!
For this the old man breath'd his thanks,—and died!—
And there, upon the banks of that lov'd tide,
He and his Zelica sleep side by side."
pp. 121—123.

The next piece, which is entitled "Paradise and the Peri," has none of the faults of the preceding. It is full of spirit, elegance, and beauty; and, though slight enough in its structure, breathes throughout a most pure and engaging morality. It is, in truth, little more than a moral apologue, expanded and adorned by the exuberant fancy of the poet who recites it. The Peris are a sort of half-fallen female angels, who dwell in air, and live on perfumes; and, though banished for a time from Para-

dise, go about in this lower world doing good. One of these—But it is as short, and much more agreeable, to give the author's own introduction.

" One morn a Peri at the gate
Of Eden stood, disconsolate;
And as she listen'd to the Springs
Of Life within, like music flowing;
And caught the light upon her wings
Through the half-open portal glowing!
She wept to think her recreant race
Should e'er have lost that glorious place!"
p. 133.

The Angel of the Gate sees her weeping, and—

" 'Nymph of a fair, but erring line!'
Gently he said—'One hope is thine.
'Tis written in the Book of Fate,
The Peri yet may be forgiven
Who brings to this Eternal Gate
The gift that is most dear to Heaven!
Go, seek it, and redeem thy sin;—
'Tis sweet to let the Pardon'd in!'"—p. 135.

Full of hope and gratitude, she goes eagerly in search of this precious gift. Her first quest is on the plains of India—the luxuriant beauty of which is put in fine contrast with the havoc and carnage which the march of a bloody conqueror had then spread over them. The Peri comes to witness the heroic death of a youthful patriot, who disdains to survive the overthrow of his country's independence.—She catches the last drop which flows from his breaking heart, and bears *that* to heaven's gate, as the acceptable propitiation that was required. For

" 'Oh! if there be, on this earthly sphere,
A boon, an offering Heaven holds dear,
'Tis the last libation Liberty draws
From the heart that bleeds and breaks in her cause!'"—p. 140.

The angel accepts the tribute with respect: But the crystal bar of the portal does not move! and she is told that something holier even than this, will be required as the price of her admission. She now flies to the source of the Nile, and makes a delightful but pensive survey of the splendid regions which it waters; till she finds the inhabitants of the lovely gardens of Rosetta dying by thousands of the plague—the selfish deserting their friends and benefactors, and the generous, when struck with the fatal malady, seeking some solitude where they may die without bringing death upon others. Among the latter is a noble youth, who consoles himself, in the hour of his agony, with the thought, that his beloved and betrothed bride is safe from this mortal visitation. In the stillness of his midnight retreat, however, he hears a light step approaching.

" 'Tis she!—far off, through moonlight dim,
He knew his own betrothed bride,
She, who would rather die with him,
Than live to gain the world beside!—
Her arms are round her lover now!
His livid cheek to hers she presses,
And dips, to bind his burning brow,
In the cold lake her loosen'd tresses,
Ah! once how little did he think
An hour would come, when he should shrink
With horror from that dear embrace," &c.

" 'Oh! let me only breathe the air,
The blessed air, that's breath'd by thee!
And, whether on its wings it bear
Healing or death, 'tis sweet to me!
There—drink my tears, while yet they fall
Would that my bosom's blood were balm,
And, well thou know'st, I'd shed it all
To give thy brow one minute's calm.
Nay, turn not from me that dear face—
Am I not thine—thy own lov'd bride—
The one, the chosen one, whose place,
In life or death, is by thy side!
When the stem dies, the leaf that grew
Out of its heart must perish too!
Then turn to me, my own love! turn
Before like thee I fade and burn;
Cling to these yet cool lips, and share
The last pure life that lingers there!'
She fails—she sinks!—as dies the lamp
In charnel airs or cavern-damp,
So quickly do his baleful sighs
Quench all the sweet light of her eyes!
One struggle—and his pain is past—
Her lover is no longer living!
One kiss the maiden gives,—one last,
Long kiss—which she expires in giving."
pp. 146–148.

The gentle Peri bids them sleep in peace, and bears again to the gates of heaven the farewell sign of pure, self-sacrificing love. The worth of the gift is again admitted by the pitying angel; but the crystal bar still remains immovable; and she is sent once more to seek a still holier offering. In passing over the romantic vales of Syria, she sees a lovely child at play among dews and flowers, and opposite to him a stern wayfaring man, resting from some unhallowed toil, with the stamp of all evil passions and evil deeds on his face.

" But hark! the vesper-call to prayer,
As slow the orb of daylight sets,
Is rising sweetly on the air,
From Syria's thousand minarets!
The boy has started from the bed
Of flowers, where he had laid his head,
And down upon the fragrant sod
Kneels, with his forehead to the south
Lisping th' eternal name of God
From purity's own cherub mouth,
And looking, while his hands and eyes
Are lifted to the glowing skies,
Like a stray babe of Paradise,
Just lighted on that flowery plain,
And seeking for its home again!

" And how felt *he*, the wretched Man
Reclining there—while mem'ry ran
O'er many a year of guilt and strife?
Flew o'er the dark flood of his life,
Nor found one sunny resting place,
Nor brought him back one branch of grace!
'There *was* a time,' he said, in mild,
Heart-humbled tones—'thou blessed child!
When young and haply pure as thou,
I look'd and pray'd like thee!—but now!'—
He hung his head—each nobler aim
And hope and feeling, which had slept
From boyhood's hour, that instant came
Fresh o'er him, and he wept—he wept!"
pp. 156, 157.

This tear of repentance is the acceptable gift for the Peri's redemption. The gates of heaven fly open, and she rushes into the joy of immortality.

"The Fire Worshippers" is the next in the series, and appears to us to be indisputably the finest and most powerful. With all the richness and beauty of diction that belong to

the best parts of Mokanna, it has a far more interesting story; and is not liable to any of the objections we have been obliged to bring against the contrivance and structure of that leading poem. The outline of the story is short and simple.—Al Hassan, the bigotted and sanguinary Emir of Persia, had long waged a furious and exterminating war against the votaries of the ancient religion of the land—the worshippers of Mithra, or his emblem, Fire—then and since designated by the name of Ghebers. The superior numbers of the invader had overcome the heroic resistance of the patriots, and driven them to take refuge in a precipitous peninsula, cut off from the land by what was understood to be an impassable ravine, and exposing nothing but bare rocks to the sea. In this fastness the scanty remnant of the Ghebers maintain themselves, under the command of their dauntless leader, Hafed, who is still enabled, by sudden and daring incursions, to harass and annoy their enemy. In one of those desperate enterprises, this adventurous leader climbs to the summit of a lofty cliff, near the Emir's palace, where a small pleasure-house had been built, in which he hoped to surprise this bigotted foe of his country; but found only his fair daughter Hinda, the loveliest and gentlest of all Arabian maids—as he himself expresses it.

" He climb'd the gory Vulture's nest,
And found a trembling Dove within!"

This romantic meeting gives rise to a mutual passion—and the love of the fair Hinda is inevitably engaged, before she knows the name or quality of her nightly visitant. In the noble heart of Hafed, however, love was but a secondary feeling, to devotion to the freedom and the faith of his country. His little band had lately suffered further reverses, and saw nothing now before them but a glorious self-sacrifice. He resolves, therefore, to tear all gentler feelings from his breast, and in one last interview to take an eternal farewell of the maid who had captivated his soul. In his melancholy aspect she reads at once, with the instinctive sagacity of love, the tidings of their approaching separation; and breaks out into the following sweet and girlish repinings:—

" 'I knew, I knew it *could* not last—
'Twas bright, 'twas heavenly—but 'tis past!
Oh! ever thus, from childhood's hour,
I've seen my fondest hopes decay;
I never lov'd a tree or flower,
But 'twas the first to fade away.
I never nurs'd a dear gazelle,
To glad me with its soft black eye,
But when it came to know me well,
And love me, it was sure to die!
Now too—the joy most like divine
Of all I ever dreamt or knew,
To see thee, hear thee, call thee mine,—
Oh mis'ry! must I lose *that* too?
Yet go!—on peril's brink we meet;—
Those frightful rocks—that treach'rous sea—
No, never come again—though sweet,
Though heav'n, it may be death to thee.'"
pp. 187, 188.

When he smiles sternly at the idea of danger, she urges him to join her father's forces, and earn her hand by helping him to root out those impious Ghebers whom he so much abhors. The spirit of the patriot bursts forth at this; and, without revealing his name or quality, he proudly avows and justifies the conduct of that luckless sect; and then, relenting, falls into a gentler and more pathetic strain.

" 'Oh! had we never, never met!
Or could this heart e'en now forget!
How link'd, how bless'd we might have been,
Had fate not frown'd so dark between!
Hadst thou been born a Persian maid;
In neighb'ring valleys had we dwelt,
Through the same fields in childhood play'd,
At the same kindling altar knelt—
Then, then, while all those nameless ties,
In which the charm of Country lies,
Had round our hearts been hourly spun,
Till Iran's cause and thine were one;
While in thy lute's awak'ning sigh
I heard the voice of days gone by,
And saw in ev'ry smile of thine
Returning hours of glory shine!—
While the wrong'd Spirit of our Land [thee!—
Liv'd, look'd, and spoke her wrongs through
God! who could then this sword withstand?
Its very flash were victory!
But now! Estrang'd, divorc'd for ever,
Far as the grasp of Fate can sever;
Our only ties what love has wove—
Faith, friends, and country, sunder'd wide;—
And then, then only, true to love,
When false to all that's dear beside!
Thy father Iran's deadliest foe—
Thyself, perhaps, ev'n now—but no—
Hate never look'd so lovely yet!
No!—sacred to thy soul will be
The land of him who could forget
All but that bleeding land for thee!
When other eyes shall see, unmov'd,
Her widows mourn, her warriors fall,
Thou'lt think how well one Gheber lov'd,
And for *his* sake thou'lt weep for all!"
pp. 193, 194.

He then starts desperately away; regains his skiff at the foot of the precipice, and leaves her in agony and consternation. The poet now proceeds to detail, a little more particularly, the history of his hero; and recounts some of the absurd legends and miraculous attributes with which the fears of his enemies had invested his name.

" Such were the tales, that won belief,
And such the colouring fancy gave
To a young, warm, and dauntless Chief,—
One who, no more than mortal brave,
Fought for the land his soul ador'd,
For happy homes and altars free;
His only talisman, the sword,—
His only spell-word, Liberty!
'Twas not for him to crouch the knee
Tamely to Moslem tyranny;—
'Twas not for him, whose soul was cast
In the bright mould of ages past,
Whose melancholy spirit, fed
With all the glories of the dead;—
'Twas not for him, to swell the crowd
Of slavish heads, that shrinking bow'd
Before the Moslem, as he pass'd,
Like shrubs beneath the poison-blast—
No—far he fled—indignant fled
The pageant of his country's shame;
While every tear her children shed
Fell on his soul, like drops of flame;
And, as a lover hails the dawn
Of a first smile, so welcom'd he

The sparkle of the first sword drawn
For vengeance and for liberty !"—pp. 206, 207.

The song then returns to Hinda—

"Whose life, as free from thought as sin,
Slept like a lake, till Love threw in
His talisman, and woke the tide,
And spread its trembling circles wide.
Once, Emir ! thy unheeding child,
Mid all this havoc, bloom'd and smil'd,—
Tranquil as on some battle-plain
The Persian lily shines and towers,
Before the combat's reddening stain
Has fall'n upon her golden flowers.
Far other feelings Love has brought—
Her soul all flame, her brow all sadness," &c.

"Ah ! not the Love, that should have bless'd
So young, so innocent a breast !
Not the pure, open, prosp'rous Love,
That, pledg'd on earth and seal'd above,
Grows in the world's approving eyes,
In friendship's smile, and home's caress,
Collecting all the hearts sweet ties
—Into one knot of happiness !"—pp. 215—217.

The Emir now learns, from a recreant prisoner, the secret of the pass to the Gheber's retreat; and when he sees his daughter faint with horror at his eager anticipation of their final extirpation, sends her, in a solitary galley, away from the scene of vengeance, to the quiet of her own Arabian home.

"And does the long-left home she seeks
Light up no gladness on her cheeks ?
The flowers she nurs'd—the well-known groves,
Where oft in dreams her spirit roves—
Once more to see her dear gazelles
Come bounding with their silver bells ;
Her birds' new plumage to behold,
And the gay, gleaming fishes count,
She left, all filleted with gold,
Shooting around their jasper fount—
Her little garden mosque to see,
And once again, at ev'ning hour,
To tell her ruby rosary,
In her own sweet acacia bower.—
Can these delights, that wait her now,
Call up no sunshine on her brow ?
No—silent, from her train apart—
As if ev'n now she felt at heart
The chill of her approaching doom—
She sits, all lovely in her gloom
As a pale Angel of the Grave."—pp. 227, 228.

Her vessel is first assailed by a violent tempest, and, in the height of its fury, by a hostile bark; and her senses are extinguished with terror in the midst of the double conflict. At last, both are appeased—and her recollection is slowly restored. The following passage appears to us extremely beautiful and characteristic :—

"How calm, how beautiful comes on
The stilly hour, when storms are gone ;
When warring winds have died away,
And clouds, beneath the glancing ray,
Melt off, and leave the land and sea
Sleeping in bright tranquillity—
Fresh as if Day again were born,
Again upon the lap of Morn !
When, 'stead of one unchanging breeze,
There blow a thousand gentle airs,
And each a different perfume bears—
As if the loveliest plants and trees
Had vassal breezes of their own
To watch and wait on them alone,
And waft no other breath than theirs !
When the blue waters rise and fall,
In sleepy sunshine mantling all ;
And ev'n that swell the tempest leaves
Is like the full and silent heaves
Of lover's hearts, when newly blest ;
Too newly to be quite at rest !—
"Such was the golden hour that broke
Upon the world, when Hinda woke
From her long trance ; and heard around
No motion but the water's sound
Rippling against the vessel's side,
As slow it mounted o'er the tide.—
But where is she ?—Her eyes are dark,
Are wilder'd still—is this the bark,
The same, that from Harmozia's bay
Bore her at morn—whose bloody way
The sea-dog tracks ?—No !—Strange and new
Is all that meets her wond'ring view
Upon a galliot's deck she lies,
Beneath no rich pavilion's shade,
No plumes to fan her sleeping eyes,
Nor jasmin on her pillow laid.
But the rude litter, roughly spread
With war-cloaks, is her homely bed,
And shawl and sash, on javelins hung,
For awning o'er her head are flung."—p. 233-236

She soon discovers, in short, that she is a captive in the hands of the Ghebers! and shrinks with horror, when she finds that she is to be carried to their rocky citadel, and to the presence of the terrible Hafed. The galley is rowed by torchlight through frightful rocks and foaming tides, into a black abyss of the promontory, where her eyes are bandaged—and she is borne up a long and rugged ascent, till at last she is desired to look up, and receive her doom from the formidable chieftain. Before she has raised her eyes, the well known voice of her lover pronounces her name; and she finds herself alone in the arms of her adoring Hafed! The first emotion is ecstasy.—But the recollection of her father's vow and means of vengeance comes like a thundercloud on her joy;—she tells her lover of the treachery by which he has been sacrificed; and urges him, with passionate eagerness, to fly with her to some place of safety.

"'Hafed, my own beloved Lord,'
She kneeling cries—'first, last ador'd !
If in that soul thou'st ever felt
Half what thy lips impassion'd swore,
Here, on my knees, that never knelt
To any but their God before !
I pray thee, as thou lov'st me, fly—
Now, now—ere yet their blades are nigh.
Oh haste !—the bark that bore me hither
Can waft us o'er yon dark'ning sea
East—west—alas ! I care not whither,
So thou art safe,—and I with thee !
Go where we will, this hand in thine,
Those eyes before me beaming thus,
Through good and ill, through storm and shine,
The world's a world of love for us !
On some calm, blessed shore we'll dwell,
Where 'tis no crime to love too well !—
Where thus to worship tenderly
An erring child of light like thee
Will not be sin—or, if it be,
Where we may weep our faults away,
Together kneeling, night and day,—
Thou, for *my* sake, at Alla's shrine,
And I—at *any* god's, for thine !'
Wildly these passionate words she spoke—
Then hung her head, and wept for shame ;
Sobbing, as if a heart-string broke
With ev'ry deep-heav'd sob that came.
pp. 261, 262.

Hafed is more shocked with the treachery to which he is sacrificed than with the fate to which it consigns him :—One moment he gives up to softness and pity—assures Hinda, with compassionate equivocation, that they shall soon meet on some more peaceful shore —places her sadly in a litter, and sees her borne down the steep to the galley she had lately quitted, and to which she still expects that he is to follow her. He then assembles his brave and devoted companions—warns them of the fate that is approaching—and exhorts them to meet the host of the invaders in the ravine, and sell their lives dearly to their steel. After a fierce, and somewhat too sanguinary combat, the Ghebers are at last borne down by numbers; and Hafed finds himself left alone, with one brave associate, mortally wounded like himself. They make a desperate effort to reach and die beside the consecrated fire which burns for ever on the summit of the cliff.

"The crags are red they've clamber'd o'er,
The rock-weed's dripping with their gore—
Thy blade too, Hafed, false at length,
Now breaks beneath thy tott'ring strength—
Haste, haste !—the voices of the Foe
Come near and nearer from below—
One effort more—thank Heav'n ! 'tis past,
They've gain'd the topmost steep at last,
And now they touch the temple's walls,
Now Hafed sees the Fire divine—
When, lo !—his weak, worn comrade falls
Dead, on the threshold of the Shrine.
'Alas ! brave soul, too quickly fled !
'And must I leave thee with'ring here,
'The sport of every ruffian's tread,
'The mark for every coward's spear ?
'No, by yon altar's sacred beams !'
He cries, and, with a strength that seems
Not of this world, uplifts the frame
Of the fall'n chief, and tow'rds the flame
Bears him along !—With death-damp hand
The corpse upon the pyre he lays ;
Then lights the consecrated brand,
And fires the pile, whose sudden blaze
Like lightning bursts o'er Oman's Sea —
'Now Freedom's God ! I come to Thee !'
The youth exclaims, and with a smile
Of triumph, vaulting on the pile,
In that last effort, ere the fires
Have harm'd one glorious limb, expires !"
pp. 278, 279.

The unfortunate Hinda, whose galley had been detained close under the cliff by the noise of the first onset, had heard with agony the sounds which marked the progress and catastrophe of the fight, and is at last a spectatress of the lofty fate of her lover.

"But see—what moves upon the height ?
Some signal !—'tis a torch's light.
What bodes its solitary glare ?
In gasping silence tow'rd the shrine
All eyes are turn'd—thine, Hinda, thine
Fix their last failing life-beams there !
'Twas but a moment—fierce and high
The death-pile blaz'd into the sky,
And far away o'er the rock and flood
Its melancholy radiance sent ;
While Hafed, like a vision, stood
Reveal'd before the burning pyre !
Tall, shadowy, like a Spirit of Fire
Shrin'd in its own grand element !
'Tis he !'—the shudd'ring maid exclaims,
But, while she speaks, he's seen no more !
High burst in air the fun'ral flames,
And Iran's hopes and hers are o'er !
One wild, heart-broken shriek she gave—
Then sprung, as if to reach that blaze,
Where still she fix'd her dying gaze,
And, gazing, sunk into the wave !—
Deep, deep !—where never care or pain
Shall reach her innocent heart again !"
pp. 283, 284.

This sad story is closed by a sort of choral dirge, of great elegance and beauty, of which we can only afford to give the first stanza.

"Farewell—farewell to thee, Araby's daughter !
(Thus warbled a Peri beneath the dark sea)
No pearl ever lay, under Oman's green water,
More pure in its shell than thy Spirit in thee."
p. 284.

The general tone of this poem is certainly too much strained. It is overwrought throughout, and is too entirely made up of agonies and raptures;—but, in spite of all this, it is a work of great genius and beauty; and not only delights the fancy by its general brilliancy and spirit, but moves all the tender and noble feelings with a deep and powerful agitation.

The last piece, entitled "The Light of the Haram," is the gayest of the whole; and is of a very slender fabric as to fable or invention. In truth, it has scarcely any story at all; but is made up almost entirely of beautiful songs and descriptions. During the summer months, when the court is resident in the Vale of Cashmere, there is, it seems, a sort of oriental carnival, called the Feast of Roses, during which every body is bound to be happy and in good humour. At this critical period, the Emperor Selim had unfortunately a little love-quarrel with his favourite Sultana Nourmahal,—which signifies, it seems, the Light of the Haram. The lady is rather unhappy while the sullen fit is on her; and applies to a sort of enchantress, who invokes a musical spirit to teach her an irresistible song, which she sings in a mask to the offended monarch; and when his heart is subdued by its sweetness, throws off her mask, and springs with fonder welcome than ever into his repentant arms. The whole piece is written in a kind of rapture,—as if the author had breathed nothing but intoxicating gas during its composition. It is accordingly quite filled with lively images and splendid expressions, and all sorts of beauties,—except those of reserve or simplicity. We must give a few specimens, to revive the spirits of our readers after the tragic catastrophe of Hafed; and we may begin with this portion of the description of the Happy Valley.

"Oh ! to see it by moonlight,—when mellowly shines
The light o'er its palaces, gardens and shrines ;
When the waterfalls gleam like a quick fall of stars,
And the nightingale's hymn from the Isle of Chenars
Is broken by laughs and light echoes of feet,
From the cool shining walks where the young people meet.—
Or at morn, when the magic of daylight awakes
A new wonder each minute, as slowly it breaks,
Hills, cupolas, fountains, call'd forth every one
Out of darkness, as they were just born of the Sun

When the Spirit of Fragrance is up with the day,
From his Haram of night-flowers stealing away;
And the wind, full of wantonness, woes like a lover
The young aspen-trees till they tremble all over.
When the East is as warm as the light of first hopes,
And Day, with his banner of radiance unfurl'd,
Shines in through the mountainous portal that opes,
Sublime, from that Valley of bliss to the world!"
p. 296.

The character of Nourmahal's beauty is much in the same taste: though the diction is rather more loose and careless.

"There's a beauty, for ever unchangingly bright,
Like the long sunny lapse of a summers day's light,
Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender,
Till Love falls asleep in its sameness of splendour.
This *was not* the beauty—oh! nothing like this,
That to young Nourmahal gave such magic of bliss;
But that loveliness, ever in motion, which plays
Like the light upon autumn's soft shadowy days,
Now here and now there, giving warmth as it flies
From the lips to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes,
Now melting in mist and now breaking in gleams,
Like the glimpses a saint has of Heav'n in his dreams!
When pensive, it seem'd as if that very grace,
That charm of all others, was born with her face.
Then her mirth—oh! 'twas sportive as ever took wing [spring;—
From the heart with a burst, like the wild-bird in
Illum'd by a wit that would fascinate sages,
Yet playful as Peris just loos'd from their cages.
While her laugh, full of life, without any controul
But the sweet one of gracefulness, rung from her soul; [cover,
And where it most sparkl'd no glance could dis-
In lip, cheek or eyes, for she brighten'd all over,—
Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon,
When it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun."
pp. 302, 303.

We can give but a little morsel of the enchanting Song of the Spirit of Music.

"'For mine is the lay that lightly floats,
And mine are the murm'ring dying notes,
That fall as soft as snow on the sea,
And melt in the heart as instantly!
And the passionate strain that, deeply going,
Refines the bosom it trembles through,
As the musk-wind, over the water blowing,
Ruffles the wave, but sweetens it too!

'The warrior's heart, when touch'd by me,
Can as downy soft and as yielding be
As his own white plume, that high amid death
Through the field has shone—yet moves with a breath.
And, oh, how the eyes of Beauty glisten,
When Music has reach'd her inward soul,
Like the silent stars that wink and glisten,
While Heav'n's eternal melodies roll!'"
pp. 318, 319.

Nourmahal herself, however, in her Arabian disguise, sings a still more prevailing ditty—of which we can only insert a few stanzas.

"'Fly to the desert, fly with me!
Our Arab tents are rude for thee;
But oh! the choice what heart can doubt
Of tents with love, or thrones without?

'Our rocks are rough; but smiling there
Th' acacia waves her yellow hair,
Lonely and sweet—nor lov'd the less
For flow'ring in a wilderness!

'Our sands are bare; but down their slope
The silv'ry-footed antelope
As gracefully and gaily springs
As o'er the marble courts of Kings.

'Then come! thy Arab maid will be
The lov'd and lone acacia-tree,
The antelope, whose feet shall bless
With their light sound thy loneliness!

'Come! if the love thou hast for me
Is pure and fresh as mine for thee,—
Fresh as the fountain under ground,
When first 'tis by the lapwing found.

'But if for me thou dost forsake
Some other maid,—and rudely break
Her worshipp'd image from its base,
To give to me the ruin'd place:—

'Then, fare thee well!—I'd rather make
My bow'r upon some icy lake
When thawing suns begin to shine,
Than trust to love so false as thine!'"
p. 394.

This strain, and the sentiment which it embodies, reminded the offended monarch of his charming Nourmahal; and he names her name in accents of tenderness and regret.

"The mask is off—the charm is wrought!—
And Selim to his heart has caught,
In blushes more than ever bright,
His Nourmahal, his Haram's Light!"
p. 394.

We have now said enough, and shown enough, of this book, to let our readers understand both what it is, and what we think of it. Its great fault certainly is its excessive finery, and its great charm the inexhaustible copiousness of its imagery—the sweetness and ease of its diction—and the beauty of the objects and sentiments with which it is concerned. Its finery, it should also be observed, is not the vulgar ostentation which so often disguises poverty or meanness—but the extravagance of excessive wealth. We have said this, however, we believe before—and suspect we have little more to say.

All poets, who really love poetry, and live in a poetical age, are great imitators; and the character of their writings may often be as correctly ascertained by observing whom they imitate and whom they abstain from imitating, as from any thing else. Mr. Moore, in the volume before us, reminds us oftener of Mr. Southey and Lord Byron, than of any other of his contemporaries. The resemblance is sometimes to the Roderick of the first-mentioned author, but most frequently to his Kehama. This may be partly owing to the nature of the subject; but, in many passages, the coincidence seems to be more radical—and to indicate a considerable conformity, in taste and habits of conception. Mr. Southey's tone, indeed, is more assuming, his manner more solemn, and his diction weaker. Mr. Moore is more lively—his figures and images come more thickly; and his language is at once more familiar, and more strengthened with points and antitheses. In other respects, the descriptive passages in Kehama bear a remarkable affinity to many in the work before us—in the brightness of the colouring, and the amplitude and beauty of the details. It is in his descriptions of love, and of female loveliness, that there is the strongest resemblance to Lord Byron—at least to the larger poems of that noble author. In the powerful and condensed expression of

strong emotion, Mr. Moore seems to us rather to have imitated the tone of his Lordship's smaller pieces—but imitated them as only an original genius could imitate—as Lord Byron himself may be said, in his later pieces, to have imitated those of an earlier date. There is less to remind us of Scott than we can very well account for, when we consider the great range and variety of that most fascinating and powerful writer; and we must say, that if Mr. Moore could bring the resemblance a little closer, and exchange a portion of his superfluous images and ecstasies for an equivalent share of Mr. Scott's gift of interesting and delighting us with pictures of familiar nature, and of the spirit and energy which never rises to extravagance, we think he would be a gainer by the exchange. To Mr. Crabbe there is no resemblance at all; and we only mention his name to observe, that he and Mr. Moore seem to be the antipodies of our present poetical sphere; and to occupy the extreme points of refinement and homeliness that can be said to fall within the legitimate dominion of poetry. They could not meet in the middle, we are aware, without changing their nature, and losing their specific character; but each might approach a few degrees, we think, with great mutual advantage. The outposts of all empires are posts of peril:—though we do not dispute that there is great honour in maintaining them with success.

There is one other topic upon which we are not quite sure we should say any thing. On a former occasion, we reproved Mr. Moore, perhaps with unnecessary severity, for what appeared to us the licentiousness of some of his youthful productions. We think it a duty to say, that he has long ago redeemed that error; and that in all his latter works that have come under our observation, he appears as the eloquent champion of purity, fidelity, and delicacy, not less than of justice, liberty, and honour. Like most other poets, indeed, he speaks much of beauty and love; and we doubt not that many mature virgins and careful matrons may think his lucubrations on those themes too rapturous and glowing to be safely admitted among the private studies of youth. We really think, however, that there is not much need for such apprehensions: And, at all events, if we look to the moral design and scope of the works themselves, we can see no reason to censure the author. All his favourites, without exception, are dutiful, faithful, and self-denying; and no other example is ever set up for imitation. There is nothing approaching to indelicacy even in his description of the seductions by which they are tried; and they who object to his enchanting pictures of the beauty and pure attachment of the more prominent characters would find fault, we suppose, with the loveliness and the embraces of angels.

(November, 1814.)

The Excursion; being a Portion of the Recluse, a Poem. By William Wordsworth. 4to. pp. 447. London: 1814.*

This will never do! It bears no doubt the stamp of the author's heart and fancy: But unfortunately not half so visibly as that of his peculiar system. His former poems were

* I have spoken in many places rather too bitterly and confidently of the faults of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry: And forgetting that, even on my own view of them, they were but faults of taste, or venial self-partiality, have sometimes visited them, I fear, with an asperity which should be reserved for objects of Moral reprobation. If I were now to deal with the whole question of his poetical merits, though my judgment might not be substantially different, I hope I should repress the greater part of these *vivacités* of expression: And indeed so strong has been my feeling in this way, that, considering how much I have always loved many of the attributes of his Genius, and how entirely I respect his Character, it did at first occur to me whether it was quite fitting that, in my old age and his, I should include in this publication any of those critiques which may have formerly given pain or offence, to him or his admirers. But, when I reflected that the mischief, if there really ever was any, was long ago done, and that I still retain, in substance, the opinions which I should now like to have seen more gently expressed, I felt that to omit all notice of them on the present occasion, might be held to import a retractation which I am as far as possible from intending; or even be represented as a very shabby way of backing out of sentiments which should either be manfully persisted in, or openly renounced, and abandoned as untenable.

I finally resolved, therefore, to reprint my review of "The Excursion;" which contains a pretty full view of my griefs and charges against Mr. Wordsworth; set forth too, I believe, in a more temperate strain than most of my other inculpations,—and of which I think I may now venture to say farther, that if the faults are unsparingly noted, the beauties are not penuriously or grudgingly allowed; but commended to the admiration of the reader with at least as much heartiness and good-will.

But I have also reprinted a short paper on the same author's "White Doe of Rylstone,"—in which there certainly is no praise, or notice of beauties, to set against the very unqualified censures of which it is wholly made up. I have done this, however, not merely because I adhere to these censures, but chiefly because it seemed necessary to bring me fairly to issue with those who may not concur in them. I can easily understand that many whose admiration of the Excursion, or the Lyrical Ballads, rests substantially on the passages which I too should join in admiring, may view with greater indulgence than I can do, the tedious and flat passages with which they are interspersed, and may consequently think my censure of these works a great deal too harsh and uncharitable. Between such persons and me, therefore, there may be no radical difference of opinion, or contrariety as to principles of judgment. But if there be any who actually admire this White Doe of Rylstone, or

intended to recommend that system, and to bespeak favour for it by their individual merit;—but this, we suspect, must be recommended by the system—and can only expect to succeed where it has been previously established. It is longer, weaker, and tamer, than any of Mr. Wordsworth's other productions; with less boldness of originality, and less even of that extreme simplicity and lowliness of tone which wavered so prettily, in the Lyrical Ballads, between silliness and pathos. We have imitations of Cowper, and even of Milton here; engrafted on the natural drawl of the Lakers—and all diluted into harmony by that profuse and irrepressible wordiness which deluges all the blank verse of this school of poetry, and lubricates and weakens the whole structure of their style.

Though it fairly fills four hundred and twenty good quarto pages, without note, vignette, or any sort of extraneous assistance, it is stated in the title—with something of an imprudent candour—to be but "a portion" of a larger work; and in the preface, where an attempt is rather unsuccessfully made to explain the whole design, it is still more rashly disclosed, that it is but "*a part of the second part*, of a *long* and laborious work"—which is to consist of three parts!

What Mr. Wordsworth's ideas of length are, we have no means of accurately judging: But we cannot help suspecting that they are liberal, to a degree that will alarm the weakness of most modern readers. As far as we can gather from the preface, the entire poem—or one of them, (for we really are not sure whether there is to be one or two,) is of a biographical nature; and is to contain the history of the author's mind, and of the origin and progress of his poetical powers, up to the period when they were sufficiently matured to qualify him for the great work on which he has been so long employed. Now, the quarto before us contains an account of one of his youthful rambles in the vales of Cumberland, and occupies precisely the period of three days! So that, by the use of a very powerful *calculus*, some estimate may be formed of the probable extent of the entire biography.

This small specimen, however, and the statements with which it is prefaced, have been sufficient to set our minds at rest in one particular. The case of Mr. Wordsworth, we perceive, is now manifestly hopeless; and we give him up as altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism. We cannot indeed altogether omit taking precautions now and then against the spreading of the malady;—but for himself, though we shall watch the progress of his symptoms as a matter of professional curiosity and instruction, we really think it right not to harass him any longer with nauseous remedies,—but rather to throw in cordials and lenitives, and wait in patience for the natural termination of the disorder. In order to justify this desertion of our patient, however, it is proper to state why we despair of the success of a more active practice.

A man who has been for twenty years at work on such matter as is now before us, and who comes complacently forward with a whole quarto of it, after all the admonitions he has received, cannot reasonably be expected to "change his hand, or check his pride," upon the suggestion of far weightier monitors than we can pretend to be. Inveterate habit must now have given a kind of sanctity to the errors of early taste; and the very powers of which we lament the perversion, have probably become incapable of any other application. The very quantity, too, that he has written, and is at this moment working up for publication upon the old pattern, makes it almost hopeless to look for any change of it. All this is so much capital already sunk in the concern; which must be sacrificed if that be abandoned; and no man likes to give up for lost the time and talent and labour which he has embodied in any permanent production. We were not previously aware of these obstacles to Mr. Wordsworth's conversion; and, considering the peculiarities of his former writings merely as the result of certain wanton and capricious experiments on public taste and indulgence, conceived it to be our duty to discourage their repetition by all the means in our power. We now see clearly, however, how the case stands;—and, making up our minds, though with the most sincere pain and reluctance, to consider him as finally lost to the good cause of poetry, shall endeavour to be thankful for the occasional gleams of tenderness and beauty which the natural force of his imagination and affections must still shed over all his productions,—and to which we shall ever turn with delight, in spite of the affectation and mysticism and prolixity, with which they are so abundantly contrasted.

Long habits of seclusion, and an excessive ambition of originality, can alone account for the disproportion which seems to exist between this author's taste and his genius; or for the devotion with which he has sacrificed so many precious gifts at the shrine of those paltry idols which he has set up for himself among his lakes and his mountains. Solitary musings, amidst such scenes, might no doubt be expected to nurse up the mind to the majesty of poetical conception,—(though it is remarkable, that all the greater poets lived, or had lived, in the full current of society;—

Peter Bell the Waggoner, or the Lamentations of Martha Rae, or the Sonnets on the Punishment of Death, there can be no such ambiguity, or means of reconcilement. Now I have been assured not only that there are such persons, but that almost all those who seek to exalt Mr. Wordsworth as the founder of a new school of poetry, consider these as by far his best and most characteristic productions; and would at once reject from their communion any one who did not acknowledge in them the traces of a high inspiration. Now I wish it to be understood, that when I speak with general intolerance of impatience of the school of Mr. Wordsworth, it is to the school holding these tenets, and applying these tests, that I refer: and I really do not see how I could better explain the grounds of my dissent from their doctrines, than by republishing my remarks on this "White Doe."

But the collision of equal minds,—the admonition of prevailing impressions—seems necessary to reduce its redundancies, and repress that tendency to extravagance or puerility, into which the self-indulgence and self-admiration of genius is so apt to be betrayed, when it is allowed to wanton, without awe or restraint, in the triumph and delight of its own intoxication. That its flight should be graceful and glorious in the eyes of men, it seems almost to be necessary that they should be made in the consciousness that men's eyes are to behold them,—and that the inward transport and vigour by which they are inspired, should be tempered by an occasional reference to what will be thought of them by those ultimate dispensers of glory. An habitual and general knowledge of the few settled and permanent maxims, which form the canon of general taste in all large and polished societies—a certain tact, which informs us at once that many things, which we still love and are moved by in secret, must necessarily be despised as childish, or derided as absurd, in all such societies—though it will not stand in the place of genius, seems necessary to the success of its exertions; and though it will never enable any one to produce the higher beauties of art, can alone secure the talent which does produce them from errors that must render it useless. Those who have most of the talent, however, commonly acquire this knowledge with the greatest facility;—and if Mr. Wordsworth, instead of confining himself almost entirely to the society of the dalesmen and cottagers, and little children, who form the subjects of his book, had condescended to mingle a little more with the people that were to read and judge of it, we cannot help thinking that its texture might have been considerably improved: At least it appears to us to be absolutely impossible, that any one who had lived or mixed familiarly with men of literature and ordinary judgment in poetry, (of course we exclude the coadjutors and disciples of his own school,) could ever have fallen into such gross faults, or so long mistaken them for beauties. His first essays we looked upon in a good degree as poetical paradoxes,—maintained experimentally, in order to display talent, and court notoriety;—and so maintained, with no more serious belief in their truth, than is usually generated by an ingenious and animated defence of other paradoxes. But when we find that he has been for twenty years exclusively employed upon articles of this very fabric, and that he has still enough of raw material on hand to keep him so employed for twenty years to come, we cannot refuse him the justice of believing that he is a sincere convert to his own system, and must ascribe the peculiarities of his composition, not to any transient affectation, or accidental caprice of imagination, but to a settled perversity of taste or understanding, which has been fostered, if not altogether created, by the circumstances to which we have alluded.

The volume before us, if we were to describe it very shortly, we should characterise as a tissue of moral and devotional ravings, in which innumerable changes are rung upon a few very simple and familiar ideas:—But with such an accompaniment of long words, long sentences, and unwieldy phrases—and such a hubbub of strained raptures and fantastical sublimities, that it is often difficult for the most skilful and attentive student to obtain a glimpse of the author's meaning—and altogether impossible for an ordinary reader to conjecture what he is about. Moral and religious enthusiasm, though undoubtedly poetical emotions, are at the same time but dangerous inspirers of poetry; nothing being so apt to run into interminable dulness or mellifluous extravagance, without giving the unfortunate author the slightest intimation of his danger. His laudable zeal for the efficacy of his preachments, he very naturally mistakes for the ardour of poetical inspiration;—and, while dealing out the high words and glowing phrases which are so readily supplied by themes of this description, can scarcely avoid believing that he is eminently original and impressive:—All sorts of commonplace notions and expressions are sanctified in his eyes, by the sublime ends for which they are employed; and the mystical verbiage of the Methodist pulpit is repeated, till the speaker entertains no doubt that he is the chosen organ of divine truth and persuasion. But if such be the common hazards of seeking inspiration from those potent fountains, it may easily be conceived what chance Mr. Wordsworth had of escaping their enchantment,—with his natural propensities to wordiness, and his unlucky habit of debasing pathos with vulgarity. The fact accordingly is, that in this production he is more obscure than a Pindaric poet of the seventeenth century; and more verbose "than even himself of yore;" while the wilfulness with which he persists in choosing his examples of intellectual dignity and tenderness exclusively from the lowest ranks of society, will be sufficiently apparent, from the circumstance of his having thought fit to make his chief prolocutor in this poetical dialogue, and chief advocate of Providence and Virtue, *an old Scotch Pedlar*—retired indeed from business—but still rambling about in his former haunts, and gossiping among his old customers, without his pack on his shoulders. The other persons of the drama are, a retired military chaplain, who has grown half an atheist and half a misanthrope—the wife of an unprosperous weaver—a servant girl with her natural child—a parish pauper, and one or two other personages of equal rank and dignity.

The character of the work is decidedly didactic; and more than nine tenths of it are occupied with a species of dialogue, or rather a series of long sermons or harangues which pass between the pedlar, the author, the old chaplain, and a worthy vicar, who entertains the whole party at dinner on the last day of their excursion. The incidents which occur in the course of it are as few and trifling as can well be imagined;—and those which the different speakers narrate in the course of

their discourses, are introduced rather to illustrate their arguments or opinions, than for any interest they are supposed to possess of their own,—The doctrine which the work is intended to enforce, we are by no means certain that we have discovered. In so far as we can collect, however, it seems to be neither more nor less than the old familiar one, that a firm belief in the providence of a wise and beneficent Being must be our great stay and support under all afflictions and perplexities upon earth—and that there are indications of his power and goodness in all the aspects of the visible universe, whether living or inanimate—every part of which should therefore be regarded with love and reverence, as exponents of those great attributes. We can testify, at least, that these salutary and important truths are inculcated at far greater length, and with more repetitions, than in any ten volumes of sermons that we ever perused. It is also maintained, with equal conciseness and originality, that there is frequently much good sense, as well as much enjoyment, in the humbler conditions of life; and that, in spite of great vices and abuses, there is a reasonable allowance both of happiness and goodness in society at large. If there be any deeper or more recondite doctrines in Mr. Wordsworth's book, we must confess that they have escaped us;—and, convinced as we are of the truth and soundness of those to which we have alluded, we cannot help thinking that they might have been better enforced with less parade and prolixity. His effusions on what may be called the physiognomy of external nature, or its moral and theological expression, are eminently fantastic, obscure, and affected.—It is quite time, however, that we should give the reader a more particular account of this singular performance.

It opens with a picture of the author toiling across a bare common in a hot summer day, and reaching at last a ruined hut surrounded with tall trees, where he meets by appointment with a hale old man, with an iron-pointed staff lying beside him. Then follows a retrospective account of their first acquaintance—formed, it seems, when the author was at a village school; and his aged friend occupied "one room,—the fifth part of a house" in the neighbourhood. After this, we have the history of this reverend person at no small length. He was born, we are happy to find, in Scotland—among the hills of Athol; and his mother, after his father's death, married the parish schoolmaster—so that he was taught his letters betimes: But then, as it is here set forth with much solemnity,

> "From his sixth year, the boy of whom I speak,
> In summer, tended cattle on the hills!"

And again, a few pages after, that there may be no risk of mistake as to a point of such essential importance—

> "From early childhood, even, as hath been said,
> From his *sixth year*, he had been sent abroad,
> *In summer*—to tend herds! Such was his task!"

In the course of this occupation it is next recorded, that he acquired such a taste for rural scenery and open air, that when he was sent to teach a school in a neighbouring village, he found it "a misery to him;" and determined to embrace the more romantic occupation of a Pedlar—or, as Mr. Wordsworth more musically expresses it,

> "A vagrant merchant, bent beneath his load;"

—and in the course of his peregrinations had acquired a very large acquaintance, which, after he had given up dealing, he frequently took a summer ramble to visit.

The author, on coming up to this interesting personage, finds him sitting with his eyes half shut;—and, not being quite sure whether he is asleep or awake, stands "some minutes' space" in silence beside him.—"At length," says he, with his own delightful simplicity—

> "At length I hail'd him—*seeing that his hat*
> *Was moist* with water-drops, as if the brim
> Had newly scoop'd a running stream!—
> ——'Tis,' said I, 'a burning day!
> My lips are parch'd with thirst;—but you, I guess,
> Have somewhere found relief.'"

Upon this, the benevolent old man points him out, not a running stream, but a well in a corner, to which the author repairs; and, after minutely describing its situation, beyond a broken wall, and between two alders that "grew in a cold damp nook," he thus faithfully chronicles the process of his return:—

> "My thirst I slak'd; and from the cheerless spot
> Withdrawing, straightway to the shade return'd,
> Where sate the old man on the cottage bench."

The Pedlar then gives an account of the last inhabitants of the deserted cottage beside them. These were, a good industrious weaver and his wife and children. They were very happy for a while; till sickness and want of work came upon them; and then the father enlisted as a soldier, and the wife pined in that lonely cottage—growing every year more careless and desponding, as her anxiety and fears for her absent husband, of whom no tidings ever reached her, accumulated. Her children died, and left her cheerless and alone; and at last she died also; and the cottage fell to decay. We must say, that there is very considerable pathos in the telling of this simple story; and that they who can get over the repugnance excited by the triteness of its incidents, and the lowness of its objects, will not fail to be struck with the author's knowledge of the human heart, and the power he possesses of stirring up its deepest and gentlest sympathies. His prolixity, indeed, is not so easy to get over. This little story fills about twenty-five quarto pages; and abounds, of course, with mawkish sentiment, and details of preposterous minuteness. When the tale is told, the travellers take their staffs, and end their first day's journey, without further adventure, at a little inn.

The Second Book sets them forward betimes in the morning. They pass by a Village Wake; and as they approach a more solitary part of the mountains, the old man tells the author that he is taking him to see an old friend of his, who had formerly been chaplain

to a Highland regiment—had lost a beloved wife—been roused from his dejection by the first enthusiasm of the French Revolution—had emigrated on its miscarriage, to America—and returned disgusted to hide himself in the retreat to which they were now ascending. That retreat is then most tediously described—a smooth green valley in the heart of the mountain, without trees, and with only one dwelling. Just as they get sight of it from the ridge above, they see a funeral train proceeding from the solitary abode, and hurry on with some apprehension for the fate of the amiable misanthrope—whom they find, however, in very tolerable condition at the door, and learn that the funeral was that of an aged pauper who had been boarded out by the parish in that cheap farm-house, and had died in consequence of long exposure to heavy rain. The old chaplain, or, as Mr. Wordsworth is pleased to call him, the Solitary, tells this dull story at prodigious length; and after giving an inflated description of an effect of mountain mists in the evening sun, treats his visitors with a rustic dinner—and they walk out to the fields at the close of the second book.

The Third makes no progress in the excursion. It is entirely filled with moral and religious conversation and debate, and with a more ample detail of the Solitary's past life than had been given in the sketch of his friend. The conversation is, in our judgment, exceedingly dull and mystical; and the Solitary's confessions insufferably diffuse. Yet there is occasionally very considerable force of writing and tenderness of sentiment in this part of the work.

The Fourth Book is also filled with dialogues, ethical, and theological; and, with the exception of some brilliant and forcible expressions here and there, consists of an exposition of truisms, more cloudy, wordy, and inconceivably prolix, than any thing we ever met with.

In the beginning of the Fifth Book, they leave the solitary valley, taking its pensive inhabitant along with them, and stray on to where the landscape sinks down into milder features, till they arrive at a church, which stands on a moderate elevation in the centre of a wide and fertile vale. Here they meditate for a while among the monuments, till the Vicar comes out and joins them;—and recognising the Pedlar for an old acquaintance, mixes graciously in the conversation, which proceeds in a very edifying manner till the close of the book.

The Sixth contains a choice obituary, or characteristic account of several of the persons who lie buried before this group of moralisers;—an unsuccessful lover, who had found consolation in natural history—a miner, who worked on for twenty years, in despite of universal ridicule, and at last found the vein he had expected—two political enemies reconciled in old age to each other—an old female miser—a seduced damsel—and two widowers, one who had devoted himself to the education of his daughters, and one who had preferred marrying a prudent middle-aged woman to take care of them.

In the beginning of the Eighth Book, the worthy Vicar expresses, in the words of Mr. Wordsworth's own epitome, "his apprehensions that he had detained his auditors too long—invites them to his house—Solitary, disinclined to comply, rallies the Wanderer, and somewhat playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of a knight-errant—which leads to the Wanderer giving an account of changes in the country, from the manufacturing spirit—Its favourable effects—The other side of the picture," &c. &c. After these very poetical themes are exhausted, they all go into the house, where they are introduced to the Vicar's wife and daughter; and while they sit chatting in the parlour over a family dinner, his son and one of his companions come in with a fine dish of trouts piled on a blue slate; and after being caressed by the company, are sent to dinner in the nursery.—This ends the eighth book.

The Ninth and last is chiefly occupied with a mystical discourse of the Pedlar; who maintains, that the whole universe is animated by an active principle, the noblest seat of which is in the human soul; and moreover, that the final end of old age is to train and enable us

> "To hear the mighty stream of *Tendency*
> Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
> A clear sonorous voice, inaudible
> To the vast multitude whose doom it is
> To run the giddy round of vain delight—"

with other matters as luminous and emphatic. The hostess at length breaks off the harangue, by proposing that they should all make a little excursion on the lake,—and they embark accordingly; and, after navigating for some time along its shores, and drinking tea on a little island, land at last on a remote promontory, from which they see the sun go down,—and listen to a solemn and pious, but rather long prayer from the Vicar. They then walk back to the parsonage door, where the author and his friend propose to spend the evening;—but the Solitary prefers walking back in the moonshine to his own valley, after promising to take another ramble with them—

> "If time, with free consent, be yours to give,
> And season favours."

—And here the publication somewhat abruptly closes.

Our abstract of the story has been so extremely concise, that it is more than usually necessary for us to lay some specimens of the work itself before our readers. Its grand staple, as we have already said, consists of a kind of mystical morality: and the chief characteristics of the style are, that it is prolix, and very frequently unintelligible: and though we are sensible that no great gratification is to be expected from the exhibition of those qualities, yet it is necessary to give our readers a taste of them, both to justify the sentence we have passed, and to satisfy them that it was really beyond our power to present them with any abstract or intelligible account of those long conversations which we have had so

much occasion to notice in our brief sketch of its contents. We need give ourselves no trouble, however, to select passages for this purpose. Here is the first that presents itself to us on opening the volume; and if our readers can form the slightest guess at its meaning, we must give them credit for a sagacity to which we have no pretension.

"But, by the storms *of circumstance* unshaken,
And subject neither to eclipse or wane,
Duty exists;—immutably survive,
For our support, the measures and the forms,
Which an abstract Intelligence supplies; [not:
Whose kingdom is, where Time and Space are
Of other converse, which mind, soul, and heart,
Do, with united urgency, require,
What more, that may not perish?"

"'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise; but to converse with Heav'n,
This is not easy:—to relinquish all
We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,—
And stand in freedom loosen'd from this world;
I deem not arduous!—but must needs confess
That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
Conceptions equal to the Soul's desires."
pp. 144—147.

This is a fair sample of that rapturous mysticism which eludes all comprehension, and fills the despairing reader with painful giddiness and terror. The following, which we meet with on the very next page, is in the same general strain:—though the first part of it affords a good specimen of the author's talent for enveloping a plain and trite observation in all the mock majesty of solemn verbosity. A reader of plain understanding, we suspect, could hardly recognise the familiar remark, that excessive grief for our departed friends is not very consistent with a firm belief in their immortal felicity, in the first twenty lines of the following passage:—In the succeeding lines we do not ourselves pretend to recognise any thing.

"From this infirmity of mortal kind
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not;—at least,
If Grief be something hallow'd and ordain'd,
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
Through this, 'tis able to maintain its hold,
In that excess which Conscience disapproves.
For who could sink and settle to that point
Of selfishness; so senseless who could be
In framing estimates of loss and gain,
As long and perseveringly to mourn
For any object of his love, remov'd
From this unstable world, if he could fix
A satisfying view upon that state
Of pure, imperishable blessedness,
Which Reason promises, and Holy Writ
Ensures to all Believers?—Yet mistrust
Is of such incapacity, methinks,
No natural branch; despondency far less.
—And, if there be whose tender frames have
droop'd
Ev'n to the dust; apparently, through weight
Of anguish unreliev'd, and lack of power
An agonising sorrow to *transmute;*
Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
When wanted most; a confidence impair'd
So pitiably, that, having ceas'd to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret!
Oh! no, full oft the innocent Suff'rer sees
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
To realize the Vision with intense
And overconstant yearning—There—there lies
The excess, by which the balance is destroy'd.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To ecstasy! and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires.
I, speaking now from such disorder free,
Nor sleep, nor craving, but in settled peace,
I cannot doubt that They whom you deplore
Are glorified."—pp. 148, 149.

If any farther specimen be wanted of the learned author's propensity to deal out the most familiar truths as the oracles of his own inspired understanding, the following wordy paraphrase of the ordinary remark, that the best consolation in distress is to be found in the exercises of piety, and the testimony of a good conscience, may be found on turning the leaf.

"What then remains?—To seek
Those helps, for his occasions ever near,
Who lacks not will to use them; vows, renew'd
On the first motion of a holy thought;
Vigils of contemplation; praise; and pray'r,
A Stream, which, from the fountain of the heart,
Issuing however feebly, no where flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For Him who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of Conscience; Conscience reverenc'd and obey'd
As God's most intimate Presence in the soul,
And his most perfect Image in the world."
p. 151.

We have kept the book too long open, however, at one place, and shall now take a dip in it nearer the beginning. The following account of the Pedlar's early training, and lonely meditations among the mountains, is a good example of the forced and affected ecstasies in which this author abounds.

—— "Nor did he fail,
While yet a Child, with a Child's eagerness
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
On all things which the moving seasons brought
To feed such appetite: nor this alone
Appeas'd his yearning:—in the after day
Of Boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,
And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags,
He sate, and even in their fix'd lineaments,
Or from the pow'r of a peculiar eye,
Or by creative feeling overborne,
Or by predominance of thought oppress'd,
Ev'n in their fix'd and steady lineaments
He trac'd an ebbing and a flowing mind."-p. 11.

We should like extremely to know what is meant by tracing an ebbing and flowing mind in the fixed lineaments of naked crags?—but this is but the beginning of the raving fit.

In these majestic solitudes, he used also to read his Bible;—and we are told that—

"There did he see *the writing!*—All things there
Breath'd immortality, *revolving life*
And greatness still revolving; infinite!
There littleness was not; the least of things
Seem'd infinite; and there his spirit shap'd
Her prospects; nor did he believe,—he *saw!*
What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive! Low desires,
Low thoughts had there no place; yet was his heart
Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude."-pp. 14, 15.

What follows about nature, triangles, stars,

and the laws of light, is still more incomprehensible.

—— "Yet still uppermost
Nature was at his heart, as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, *a wasting pow'r*
In all things which from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues,
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He cloth'd the nakedness of austere truth.
While yet he linger'd in the rudiments
Of science, and among her simplest laws,
His *triangles*—they were the *stars* of heav'n,
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure th' altitude of some tall crag
Which is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows
Inscrib'd, as with the silence of the thought,
Upon its bleak and visionary sides;—
—— and I have heard him say
That often, failing at this time to gain
The peace requir'd, *he scann'd the laws of light*
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
A cloud of mist, which in the sunshine frames
A lasting tablet—for the observer's eye
Varying its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,
And vainly by all other means, he strove
To mitigate the fever of his heart."—pp. 16—18.

The whole book, indeed, is full of such stuff. The following is the author's own sublime aspiration after the delight of becoming *a Motion*, or *a Presence*, or *an Energy* among multitudinous streams.

"Oh! what a joy it were, in vig'rous health,
To have a Body (this our vital Frame
With shrinking sensibility endu'd,
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
And to the elements surrender it,
As if it were a Spirit!—How divine
The liberty, for frail, for mortal man,
To roam at large among unpeopled glens
And mountainous retirements, only trod
By devious footsteps; regions consecrate
To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
Be as *a Presence* or *a Motion!*—one
Among the many there; and, while the Mists
Flying, and rainy Vapours, call out Shapes
And Phantoms from the crags and solid earth
As fast as a Musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument; and, while the Streams—
(As at a first creation and in haste
To exercise their untried faculties)
Descending from the regions of the clouds,
And starting from the hollows of the earth
More multitudinous every moment—rend
Their way before them, what a joy to roam
An equal among mightiest Energies!
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
Amid the deaf'ning tumult, scarcely heard
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud
Be this continu'd so from day to day,
Nor let it have an end from month to month!"
pp. 164, 165.

We suppose the reader is now satisfied with Mr. Wordsworth's sublimities—which occupy rather more than half the volume:—Of his tamer and more creeping prolixity, we have not the heart to load him with many specimens. The following amplification of the vulgar comparison of human life to a stream, has the merit of adding much obscurity to wordiness; at least, *we* have not ingenuity enough to refer the conglobated bubbles and murmurs, and floating islands, to their Vital prototypes.

—— "The tenor
Which my life holds, he readily may conceive
Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain Brook
In some still passage of its course, and seen,
Within the depths of its capacious breast,
Inverted trees, and rocks, and azure sky;
And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,
And conglobated bubbles undissolv'd,
Numerous as stars; that, by their onward lapse,
Betray to sight the motion of the stream,
Else imperceptible; meanwhile, is heard
Perchance a roar or murmur; and the sound
Though soothing, and the little floating isles
Though beautiful, are both by Nature charg'd
With the same pensive office; and make known
Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt
Precipitations, and untoward straits,
The earth-born wanderer hath pass'd; and quickly,
That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
Must be again encounter'd.—Such a stream
Is Human Life."—pp. 139, 140.

The following, however, is a better example of the useless and most tedious minuteness with which the author so frequently details circumstances of no interest in themselves,—of no importance to the story,—and possessing no graphical merit whatsoever as pieces of description. On their approach to the old chaplain's cottage, the author gets before his companion,

—— "when behold
An object that entic'd my steps aside!
It was an Entry, narrow as a door;
A passage whose brief windings open'd out
Into a platform; that lay, *sheepfold-wise,*
Enclos'd between a single mass of rock
And one old moss-grown wall;—a cool Recess,
And fanciful! For, where the rock and wall
Met in an angle, hung a tiny roof,
Or penthouse, *which most quaintly had been fram'd,*
By thrusting two rude sticks into the wall
And overlaying them with mountain sods!
To weather-fend a little turf-built seat
Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor dread
The burning sunshine, or a transient shower;
But the whole plainly wrought by Children's hands!
Whose simple skill had throng'd the grassy floor
With work of frame less solid; *a proud show*
Of baby-houses, curiously arrang'd!
Nor wanting ornament of walks between,
With mimic trees inserted in the turf,
And gardens interpos'd. *Pleas'd with the sight,*
I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,
Who, having enter'd, carelessly look'd round,
And now would have pass'd on; when I exclaim'd,
'Lo! what is here?' and, stooping down, drew
A Book," &c.—pp. 71, 72. [forth

And this book, which he

—— "found to be a work
In the French Tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,"

leads to no incident or remark of any value or importance, to apologise for this long story of its finding. There is no beauty, we think, it must be admitted, in these passages; and so little either of interest or curiosity in the incidents they disclose, that we can scarcely conceive that any man to whom they had actually occurred, should take the trouble to recount them to his wife and children by his idle fireside:—but, that man or child should think them worth writing down in blank verse, and printing in magnificent quarto, we should certainly have supposed altogether impossible, had it not been for the ample proofs which Mr. Wordsworth has afforded to the contrary

Sometimes their silliness is enhanced by a paltry attempt at effect and emphasis:—as in the following account of that very touching and extraordinary occurrence of a lamb bleating among the mountains. The poet would actually persuade us that he thought the mountains themselves were bleating;—and that nothing could be so grand or impressive. "List!" cries the old Pedlar, suddenly breaking off in the middle of one of his daintiest ravings—

——"'List!—I heard,
From yon huge breast of rock, *a solemn bleat!*
Sent forth as if it were the Mountain's voice!
As if the visible Mountain made the cry!
Again!'—The effect upon the soul was such
As he express'd; for, from the Mountain's heart
The solemn bleat appear'd to come! There was
No other—and the region all around
Stood silent, empty of all shape of life.
—*It was a Lamb*—left somewhere to itself!"
p. 159.

What we have now quoted will give the reader a notion of the taste and spirit in which this volume is composed: And yet, if it had not contained something a good deal better, we do not know how we should have been justified in troubling him with any account of it. But the truth is, that Mr Wordsworth, with all his perversities, is a person of great powers; and has frequently a force in his moral declamations, and a tenderness in his pathetic narratives, which neither his prolixity nor his affectation can altogether deprive of their effect. We shall venture to give some extracts from the simple tale of the Weaver's solitary Cottage. Its heroine is the deserted wife; and its chief interest consists in the picture of her despairing despondence and anxiety, after his disappearance. The Pedlar, recurring to the well to which he had directed his companion, observes,

——"As I stoop'd to drink,
Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied
The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
Green with the moss of years; a pensive sight
That mov'd my heart!—recalling former days,
When I could never pass that road but She
Who liv'd within these walls, at my approach,
A Daughter's welcome gave me; and I lov'd her
As my own child! O Sir! the good die first!
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket."

——"By some especial care
Her temper had been fram'd, as if to make
A Being—who by adding love to peace
Might live on earth a life of happiness."
pp. 27, 28.

The bliss and tranquillity of these prosperous years is well and copiously described;—but at last came sickness, and want of employment;—and the effect on the kind-hearted and industrious mechanic is strikingly delineated.

——"At his door he stood,
And whistl'd many a snatch of merry tunes
That had no mirth in them! or with his knife
Carv'd uncouth figures on the heads of sticks—
Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook
In house or garden, any casual work
Of use or ornament."—
"One while he would speak lightly of his Babes,
And with a cruel tongue: at other times
He toss'd them with a false unnat'ral joy:
And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
Of the poor innocent children."—p. 31.

At last, he steals from his cottage, and enlists as a soldier; and when the benevolent Pedlar comes, in his rounds, in hope of a cheerful welcome, he meets with a scene of despair.

——"Having reach'd the door
I knock'd,—and, when I enter'd with the hope
Of usual greeting, Margaret look'd at me
A little while; then turn'd her head away
Speechless,—and sitting down upon a chair
Wept bitterly! I wist not what to do,
Or how to speak to her. Poor Wretch! at last
She rose from off her seat, and then,—O Sir!
I cannot *tell* how she pronounc'd my name,—
With fervent love, and with a face of grief
Unutterably helpless!"—pp. 34, 35.

Hope, however, and native cheerfulness, were not yet subdued; and her spirit still bore up against the pressure of this desertion.

——"Long we had not talk'd
Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
And with a brighter eye she look'd around
As if she had been shedding tears of joy."

"We parted.—'Twas the time of early spring;
I left her busy with her garden tools;
And well remember, o'er that fence she look'd,
And, while I paced along the footway path,
Called out, and sent a blessing after me,
With tender cheerfulness; and with a voice
That seem'd the very sound of happy thoughts."
pp. 36, 37.

The gradual sinking of the spirit under the load of continued anxiety, and the destruction of all the finer springs of the soul by a course of unvarying sadness, are very feelingly represented in the sequel of this simple narrative.

——"I journey'd back this way
Towards the wane of Summer; when the wheat
Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass
Springing afresh had o'er the hay-field spread
Its tender verdure. At the door arriv'd,
I found that she was absent. In the shade,
Where now we sit, I waited her return.
Her Cottage, then a cheerful Object, wore
Its customary look,—only, I thought,
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
Hung down in heavier tufts: and that bright weed,
The yellow stone-crop, suffer'd to take root
Along the window's edge, profusely grew,
Blinding the lower panes. I turn'd aside,
And stroll'd into her garden. It appear'd
To lag behind the season, and had lost
Its pride of neatness."—

"The sun was sinking in the west; and now
I sate with sad impatience. From within
Her solitary Infant cried aloud;
Then, like a blast that dies away self-still'd,
The voice was silent."—pp. 37—39.

The desolate woman had now an air of sad and listless, though patient sorrow.

——"Evermore
Her eyelids droop'd, her eyes were downward cast;
And, when she at her table gave me food,
She did not look at me! Her voice was low,
Her body was subdu'd. In ev'ry act
Pertaining to her house affairs, appear'd
The careless stillness of a thinking mind
Self-occupied; to which all outward things
Are like an idle matter. Still she sigh'd,

But yet no motion of the breast was seen,
No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
I know not how, and hardly whence they came.
——I return'd,
And took my rounds along this road again,
Ere on its sunny bank the primrose flow'r
Peep'd forth, to give an earnest of the Spring,
I found her sad and drooping; she had learn'd
No tidings of her Husband; if he liv'd
She knew not that he lived; if he were dead
She knew not he was dead. She seem'd the same
In person and appearance; but her House
Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence
——Her Infant Babe
Had from its Mother caught the trick of grief,
And sigh'd among its playthings!"—pp. 41—43.

Returning seasons only deepened this gloom, and confirmed this neglect. Her child died; and she spent her weary days in roaming over the country, and repeating her fond and vain inquiries to every passer by.

"Meantime her House by frost, and thaw, and rain,
Was sapp'd; and while she slept the nightly damps
Did chill her breast; and in the stormy day
Her tatter'd clothes were ruffl'd by the wind,
Ev'n at the side of her own fire. Yet still
She lov'd this wretched spot; and here, my Friend,
In sickness she remain'd; and here she died!
Last Human Tenant of these ruin'd Walls."—p. 46.

The story of the old Chaplain, though a little less lowly, is of the same mournful cast, and almost equally destitute of incidents;—for Mr. Wordsworth delineates only feelings—and all his adventures are of the heart. The narrative which is given by the sufferer himself is, in our opinion, the most spirited and interesting part of the poem. He begins thus, and addressing himself, after a long pause, to his ancient countryman and friend the Pedlar—

"You never saw, your eyes did never look
On the bright Form of Her whom once I lov'd!—
Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,
A sound unknown to you; else, honour'd Friend,
Your heart had borne a pitiable share
Of what I suffer'd, when I wept that loss!
And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought
That I remember—and can weep no more!"
p. 117.

The following account of his marriage and early felicity is written with great sweetness—a sweetness like that of Massinger, in his softer and more mellifluous passages.

——"This fair Bride—
In the devotedness of youthful love,
Preferring me to Parents, and the choir
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
And all known places and familiar sights,
(Resign'd with sadness gently weighing down
Her trembling expectations, but no more
Than did to her due honour, and to me
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
In what I had to build upon)—this Bride,
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led
To a low Cottage in a sunny Bay,
Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,
And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,
On Devon's leafy shores;—a shelter'd Hold,
In a soft clime, encouraging the soil
To a luxuriant bounty!—As our steps
Approach the embower'd Abode, our chosen Seat,
See, rooted in the earth, its kindly bed,
The unendanger'd Myrtle, deck'd with flowers,' &c.
"—Wild were our walks upon those lonely Downs,
Whence, unmolested Wanderers, we beheld
The shining Giver of the Day diffuse
His brightness, o'er a tract of sea and land
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires,
As our enjoyments boundless.—From these Heights
We dropp'd, at pleasure, into sylvan Combs;
Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
And mossy seats detain'd us, side by side,
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts
'That all the grove and all the day was ours.'"
pp. 118—120.

There, seven years of unmolested happiness were blessed with two lovely children.

"And on these pillars rested, as on air,
Our solitude."

Suddenly a contagious malady swept off both the infants.

"Calm as a frozen Lake when ruthless Winds
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
The Mother now remain'd."
——"Yet, stealing slow,
Dimness o'er this clear Luminary crept
Insensibly!—The immortal and divine
Yielded to mortal reflux, her pure Glory,
As from the pinnacle of worldly state
Wretched Ambition drops astounded, fell
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,
And keen heart-anguish—of itself asham'd,
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:
And, so consum'd, She melted from my arms!
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate."
pp. 125, 126.

The agony of mind into which the survivor was thrown, is described with a powerful eloquence; as well as the doubts and distracting fears which the sceptical speculations of his careless days had raised in his spirit. There is something peculiarly grand and terrible to our feelings in the imagery of these three lines—

"By pain of heart, now check'd, and now impell'd,
The Intellectual Power, through words and things,
Went sounding on,—a dim and perilous way!"

At last he is roused from this dejected mood, by the glorious promises which seemed held out to human nature by the first dawn of the French Revolution;—and it indicates a fine perception of the secret springs of character and emotion, to choose a being so circumstanced as the most ardent votary of that far-spread enthusiasm.

"Thus was I reconverted to the world!
Society became my glitt'ring Bride,
And airy hopes my Children!—If busy Men
In sober conclave met, to weave a web
Of amity, whose living threads should stretch
Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise
And acclamation, crowds in open air
Express'd the tumult of their minds, my voice
There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song
I left not uninvok'd; and, in still groves,
Where mild Enthusiasts tun'd a pensive lay
Of thanks and expectation, in accord
With their belief, I sang Saturnian Rule
Return'd.—a progeny of golden years
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind!"
pp. 128, 129

On the disappearance of that bright vision, he was inclined to take part with the desperate party who still aimed at establishing

universal regeneration, though by more questionable instruments than they had originally assumed. But the military despotism which ensued soon closed the scene against all such exertions; and, disgusted with men and Europe, he sought for shelter in the wilds of America. In the calm of the voyage, Memory and Conscience awoke him to a sense of his misery.

——"Feebly must They have felt
Who, in old time, attir'd with snakes and whips
The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turn'd on me—the face of her I lov'd!
The Wife and Mother, pitifully fixing
Tender reproaches, insupportable!"—pp. 133, 134.

His disappointment, and ultimate seclusion in England, have been already sufficiently detailed.

We must trespass upon our readers with the fragments of yet another story. It is that of a simple, seduced, and deserted girl, told with great sweetness, pathos, and indulgence, by the Vicar of the parish, by the side of her untimely grave. Looking down on the turf, he says—

"As, on a sunny bank, a tender Lamb,
Lurks in safe shelter, from the winds of March
Screen'd by its Parent, so that little mound
Lies guarded by its neighbour. The small heap
Speaks for itself;—an Infant there doth rest;
The shelt'ring Hillock is the Mother's grave!—
There, by her innocent Baby's precious grave,
Yea, doubtless, on the turf that roofs her own,
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel,
In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
Now she is not! The swelling turf reports
Of the fresh show'r, but of poor Ellen's tears
Is silent; nor is any vestige left
Upon the pathway of her mournful tread;
Nor of that pace with which she once had mov'd
In virgin fearlessness—a step that seem'd
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
Upon the mountains wet with morning dew,
In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs."
pp. 285—287.

Her virgin graces and gentleness are then very beautifully described, and her seduction and lonely anguish passed over very tenderly.

"'Ah why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge;
And nature that is kind in Woman's breast,
And reason that in Man is kind and good,
And fear of Him who is a righteous Judge,
Why do not these prevail for human life,
To keep two hearts together, that began
Their spring-time with one love, and that have need
Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
To grant, or be receiv'd?'"—p. 289.

"A kindlier passion open'd on her soul
When that poor Child was born. Upon its face
She look'd as on a pure and spotless gift
Of unexpected promise, where a grief
Or dread was all that had been thought of.
——'Till this hour,'
Thus in her Mother's hearing Ellen spake,
'There was a stony region in my heart!
But He at whose command the parched rock
Was smitten, and pour'd forth a quenching stream,
Hath soften'd that obduracy, and made
Unlook'd-for gladness in the desert place,
To save the perishing; and, henceforth, I look
Upon the light with cheerfulness, for thee
My Infant! and for that good Mother dear,
Who bore me,—and ha[illegible] pray'd for me in vain!—
Yet not in vain, it shall not be in vain.'
—Through four months' space the Infant drew [Food
From the maternal breast. Then scruples rose;
Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and cross'd
The sweet affection. She no more could bear
By her offence to lay a twofold weight
On a kind parent, willing to forget
Their slender means! So, to that parent's care
Trusting her child, she left their common home,
And with contented spirit undertook
A Foster-Mother's office."—pp. 291—293.

Here the parents of her new nursling soon forbade her all intercourse with her own most precious child;—and a sudden malady carried it off, in this period of forced desertion.

——"Once, only once,
She saw it in that mortal malady:
And, on the burial day, could scarcely gain
Permission to attend its obsequies!
She reach'd the house—last of the fun'ral train;
And some One, as she enter'd, having chanc'd
To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,
'Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit
Of anger never seen in her before,
'Nay ye must wait *my* time!' and down she sate.
And by the unclos'd coffin kept her seat;
Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping
Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child!
Until at length her soul was satisfied.
You see the Infant's Grave!—and to this Spot,
The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
And whatsoe'er the errand, urg'd her steps:
Hither she came; and here she stood, or knelt,
In the broad day—a rueful Magdalene!"—p. 294.

Overwhelmed with this calamity, she was at last obliged to leave her service.

"But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapp'd,
And the flower droop'd; as every eye might see.

"Her fond maternal Heart had built a Nest
In blindness all too near the river's edge;
That Work a summer flood with hasty swell
Had swept away! and now her spirit long'd
For its last flight to Heaven's security."

"—Meek Saint! through patience glorified in earth!
In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,
The ghastly face of cold decay put on
A sun-like beauty, and appear'd divine;
So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit past
Into that pure and unknown world of love,
Where injury cannot come:—and here is laid
The mortal Body by her Infant's side!"
pp. 296, 297.

These passages, we think, are among the most touching with which the volume presents us; though there are many in a more lofty and impassioned style. The following commemoration of a beautiful and glorious youth, the love and the pride of the humble valley, is full of warmth and poetry.

——"The mountain Ash,
Deck'd with autumnal berries that outshine
Spring's richest blossoms, yields a splendid show
Amid the leafy woods; and ye have seen,
By a brook side or solitary tarn,
How she her station doth adorn,—the pool
Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
Are brighten'd round her! In his native Vale
Such and so glorious did this Youth appear;
A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts,
By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
By all the graces with which nature's hand
Had bounteously array'd him. As old Bards

Tell in their idle songs of wand'ring Gods,
Pan or Apollo, veil'd in human form;
Yet, like the sweet-breath'd violet of the shade,
Discover'd in their own despite, to sense
Of Mortals, (if such fables without blame
May find chance-mention on this sacred ground,)
So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise,
In him reveal'd a Scholar's genius shone!
And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,
In him the spirit of a Hero walk'd
Our unpretending valley!"—pp. 342, 343.

This is lofty and energetic;—but Mr. Wordsworth descends, we cannot think very gracefully, when he proceeds to describe how the quoit *whizzed* when his arm launched it—and how the football mounted as high as a lark, at the touch of his toe;—neither is it a suitable catastrophe, for one so nobly endowed, to catch cold by standing too long in the river washing sheep, and die of spasms in consequence.

The general reflections on the indiscriminating rapacity of death, though by no means original in themselves, and expressed with too bold a rivalry of the seven ages of Shakespeare, have yet a character of vigour and truth about them that entitles them to notice.

"This file of Infants; some that never breathed,
And the besprinkl'd Nursling, unrequir'd
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him; and the tott'ring Little-one
Taken from air and sunshine, when the rose
Of Infancy first blooms upon his cheek; [Youth
The thinking, thoughtless Schoolboy; the bold
Of soul impetuous; and the bashful Maid
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are op'ning round her; those of middle age,
Cast down while confident in strength they stand,
Like pillars fix'd more firmly, as might seem,
And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them; the decay'd
And burthensome; and, lastly, that poor few
Whose light of reason is with age extinct;
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,
The earliest summon'd and the longest spar'd,
Are here deposited; with tribute paid
Various, but unto each *some* tribute paid;
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,
Society were touch'd with kind concern,
And gentle "Nature griev'd that One should die!"
pp. 244, 245.

There is a lively and impressive appeal on the injury done to the health, happiness, and morality of the lower orders, by the unceasing and premature labours of our crowded manufactories. The description of night-working is picturesque. In lonely and romantic regions, he says, when silence and darkness incline all to repose—

——"An unnatural light
Prepar'd for never-resting Labour's eyes,
Breaks from a many-window'd Fabric huge;
And at the appointed hour a Bell is heard—
Of harsher import than the Curfew-knoll
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest.
A local summons to unceasing toil!
Disgorg'd are now the Ministers of day;
And, as they issue from the illumin'd Pile,
A fresh Band meets them, at the crowded door,—
And in the Courts;—and where the rumbling
That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels, [Stream,
Glares, like a troubl'd Spirit, in its bed
Among the rocks below. Men, Maidens, Youths,
Mother and little Children, Boys and Girls,
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
Within this Temple—where is offer'd up
To Gain—the master Idol of the Realm,
Perpetual sacrifice."—p. 367.

The effects on the ordinary life of the poor are delineated in graver colours.

——"Domestic bliss,
(Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)
How art thou blighted for the poor Man's heart!
Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve,
The Habitations empty! or perchance
The Mother left alone,—no helping hand
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,
Or in despatch of each day's little growth
Of household occupation; no nice arts
Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,
Where once the dinner was prepared with pride;
Nothing to speed the day or cheer the mind;
Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command!
—The Father, if perchance he still retain
His old employments, goes to field or wood,
No longer led or followed by his Sons;
Idlers perchance they were,—but in *his* sight;
Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth;
Till their short holiday of childhood ceas'd,
Ne'er to return! That birth-right now is lost."
pp. 371, 372.

The dissertation is closed with an ardent hope, that the farther improvement and the universal diffusion of these arts may take away the temptation for us to embark so largely in their cultivation; and that we may once more hold out inducements for the return of old manners and domestic charities.

"Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,
All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
Upon the Moral law. Egyptian Thebes;
Tyre by the margin of the sounding waves;
Palmyra, central in the Desert, fell!
And the Arts died by which they had been raised.
—Call Archimedes from his buried Tomb
Upon the plain of vanish'd Syracuse,
And feelingly the Sage shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is that Philosophy, whose sway is fram'd
For mere material instruments:—How weak
Those Arts, and high Inventions, if unpropp'd
By Virtue."—p. 369.

There is also a very animated exhortation to the more general diffusion of education among the lower orders; and a glowing and eloquent assertion of their capacity for all virtues and enjoyments.

——"Believe it not!
The primal Duties shine aloft—like stars;
The Charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scatter'd at the feet of Man—like flow'rs.
The gen'rous inclination, the just rule,
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—
No mystery is here; no special boon
For high and not for low, for proudly grac'd,
And not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
To heav'n as lightly from the Cottage hearth
As from the haughty palace."—p. 398.

The blessings and the necessities that now render this a peculiar duty in the rulers of this empire, are urged in a still loftier tone.

"Look! and behold, from Calpe's sunburnt cliffs
To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,
Long-reverenc'd Titles cast away as weeds;
Laws overturn'd,—and Territory split;
Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind,
And forc'd to join in less obnoxious shapes,
Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust
Of the same breath are shatter'd and destroy'd.
Meantime, the Sov'reignty of these fair Isles

Remains entire and indivisible;
And, if that ignorance were remov'd, which acts
Within the compass of their sev'ral shores
To breed commotion and disquietude,
Each might preserve the beautiful repose
Of heav'nly bodies shining in their spheres.
—The discipline of slavery is unknown
Amongst us,—hence the more do we require
The discipline of virtue; order else
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace."
pp. 402, 403.

There is a good deal of fine description in the course of this work; but we have left ourselves no room for any specimen. The following few lines, however, are a fine epitome of a lake voyage:—

——"Right across the Lake
Our pinnace moves: then, coasting creek and bay,
Glades we behold—and into thickets peep—
Where crouch the spotted deer; or raise our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls."—p. 412.

We add, also, the following more elaborate and fantastic picture—which, however, is not without its beauty:—

"Then having reach'd a bridge, that overarch'd
The hasty rivulet where it lay becalm'd
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
A twofold Image. On a grassy bank
A snow-white Ram, and in the crystal flood
Another and the same! Most beautiful,
On the green turf, with his imperial front
Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,
The breathing creature stood as beautiful,
Beneath him, show'd his shadowy Counterpart.
Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
And each seem'd centre of his own fair world:
Antipodes unconscious of each other,
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
Blended in perfect stillness to our sight!"—p. 407.

Besides those more extended passages of interest or beauty, which we have quoted, and omitted to quote, there are scattered up and down the book, and in the midst of its most repulsive portions, a very great number of single lines and images, that sparkle like gems in the desert, and startle us with an intimation of the great poetic powers that lie buried in the rubbish that has been heaped around them. It is difficult to pick up these, after we have once passed them by; but we shall endeavour to light upon one or two. The beneficial effect of intervals of relaxation and pastime on youthful minds, is finely expressed, we think, in a single line, when it is said to be—

"Like vernal ground to Sabbath sunshine left."

The following image of the bursting forth of a mountain-spring, seems to us also to be conceived with great elegance and beauty.

"And a few steps may bring us to the spot,
Where haply crown'd with flow'rets and green herbs,
The Mountain Infant to the Sun comes forth,
Like human light from darkness!"

The ameliorating effects of song and music on the minds which most delight in them, are likewise very poetically expressed.

——"And when the stream
Which overflow'd the soul was pass'd away,
A consciousness remain'd that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of Memory, images and precious thoughts,
That shall not die, and cannot be destroy'd."

Nor is any thing more elegant than the representation of the graceful tranquillity occasionally put on by one of the author's favourites; who, though gay and airy in general—

"Was graceful, when it pleas'd him, smooth and still
As the mute Swan that floats adown the stream,
Or on the waters of th' unruffled lake
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf
That flutters on the bough more light than he.
And not a flow'r that droops in the green shade
More willingly reserv'd."

Nor are there wanting morsels of a sterner and more majestic beauty; as when, assuming the weightier diction of Cowper, he says, in language which the hearts of all readers of modern history must have responded—

——"Earth is sick,
And Heav'n is weary of the hollow words
Which States and Kingdom utter when they speak
Of Truth and Justice."

These examples, we perceive, are not very well chosen—but we have not leisure to improve the selection; and, such as they are, they may serve to give the reader a notion of the sort of merit which we meant to illustrate by their citation. When we look back to them, indeed, and to the other passages which we have now extracted, we feel half inclined to rescind the severe sentence which we passed on the work at the beginning:—but when we look into the work itself, we perceive that it cannot be rescinded. Nobody can be more disposed to do justice to the great powers of Mr. Wordsworth than we are; and, from the first time that he came before us, down to the present moment, we have uniformly testified in their favour, and assigned indeed our high sense of their value as the chief ground of the bitterness with which we have resented their perversion. That perversion, however, is now far more visible than the original dignity; and while we collect the fragments, it is impossible not to mourn over the ruins from which we are condemned to pick them. If any one should doubt of the existence of such a perversion, or be disposed to dispute about the instances we have just brought forward, we would just beg leave to refer him to the general plan and character of the poem now before us. Why should Mr. Wordsworth have made his hero a supernaturated pedlar? What but the most wretched affectation, or provoking perversity of taste could induce any one to place his chosen advocate of wisdom and virtue in so absurd and fantastic a condition? Did Mr. Wordsworth really imagine, that his favourite doctrines were likely to gain any thing in point of effect or authority by being put into the mouth of a person accustomed to higgle about tape, and brass sleeve-buttons? Or is it not plain that independent of the ridicule and disgust which such a personification must excite in many of his readers, its adoption exposes his work throughout to the charge of revolting inco-

gruity, and utter disregard of probability or nature? For, after he has thus wilfully debased his moral teacher by a low occupation, is there one word that he puts into his mouth, or one sentiment of which he makes him the organ, that has the most remote reference to that occupation? Is there any thing in his learned, abstract, and logical harangues, that savours of the calling that is ascribed to him? Are any of their materials such as a pedlar could possibly have dealt in? Are the manners, the diction, the sentiments, in any, the very smallest degree, accommodated to a person in that condition? or are they not eminently and conspicuously such as could not by possibility belong to it? A man who went about selling flannel and pocket-handkerchiefs in this lofty diction, would soon frighten away all his customers; and would infallibly pass either for a madman, or for some learned and affected gentleman, who, in a frolic, had taken up a character which he was peculiarly ill qualified for supporting.

The absurdity in this case, we think, is palpable and glaring: but it is exactly of the same nature with that which infects the whole substance of the work—a puerile ambition of singularity engrafted on an unlucky predilection for truisms; and an affected passion for simplicity and humble life, most awkwardly combined with a taste for mystical refinements, and all the gorgeousness of obscure phraseology. His taste for simplicity is evinced by sprinkling up and down his interminable declamations a few descriptions of baby-houses, and of old hats with wet brims; and his amiable partiality for humble life, by assuring us that a wordy rhetorician, who talks about Thebes, and allegorizes all the heathen mythology, was once a pedlar—and making him break in upon his magnificent orations with two or three awkward notices of something that he had seen when selling winter raiment about the country—or of the changes in the state of society, which had almost annihilated his former calling.

(October, 1815.)

The White Doe of Rylstone; or the Fate of the Nortons: a Poem. By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. 4to. pp. 162. London: 1815.

THIS, we think, has the merit of being the very worst poem we ever saw imprinted in a quarto volume; and though it was scarcely to be expected, we confess, that Mr. Wordsworth, with all his ambition, should so soon have attained to that distinction, the wonder may perhaps be diminished when we state, that it seems to us to consist of a happy union of all the faults, without any of the beauties, which belong to his school of poetry. It is just such a work, in short, as some wicked enemy of that school might be supposed to have devised, on purpose to make it ridiculous; and when we first took it up, we could not help suspecting that some ill-natured critic had actually taken this harsh method of instructing Mr. Wordsworth, by example, in the nature of those errors, against which our precepts had been so often directed in vain. We had not gone far, however, till we felt intimately that nothing in the nature of a joke could be so insupportably dull;—and that this must be the work of one who earnestly believed it to be a pattern of pathetic simplicity, and gave it out as such to the admiration of all intelligent readers. In this point of view, the work may be regarded as curious at least, if not in some degree interesting; and, at all events, it must be instructive to be made aware of the excesses into which superior understandings may be betrayed, by long self-indulgence, and the strange extravagances into which they may run, when under the influence of that intoxication which is produced by unrestrained admiration of themselves. This poetical intoxication, indeed, to pursue the figure a little farther, seems capable of assuming as many forms as the vulgar one which arises from wine; and it appears to require as delicate a management to make a man a good poet by the help of the one, as to make him a good companion by means of the other. In both cases, a little mistake as to the dose or the quality of the inspiring fluid may make him absolutely outrageous, or lull him over into the most profound stupidity, instead of brightening up the hidden stores of his genius: and truly we are concerned to say, that Mr. Wordsworth seems hitherto to have been unlucky in the choice of his liquor—or of his bottle-holder. In some of his odes and ethic exhortations, he was exposed to the public in a state of incoherent rapture and glorious delirium, to which we think we have seen a parallel among the humbler lovers of jollity. In the Lyrical Ballads, he was exhibited, on the whole, in a vein of very pretty deliration; but in the poem before us, he appears in a state of low and maudlin imbecility, which would not have misbecome Master Silence himself, in the close of a social day. Whether this unhappy result is to be ascribed to any adulteration of his Castalian cups, or to the unlucky choice of his company over them, we cannot presume to say. It may be that he has dashed his Hippocrene with too large an infusion of lake water, or assisted its operation too exclusively by the study of the ancient historical ballads of "the north countrie." That there are palpable imitations of the style and manner of those venerable compositions in the work before us, is indeed undeniable; but it unfortunately happens, that while the

hobbling versification, the mean diction, and flat stupidity of these models are very exactly copied, and even improved upon, in this imitation, their rude energy, manly simplicity, and occasional felicity of expression, have totally disappeared; and, instead of them, a large allowance of the author's own metaphysical sensibility, and mystical wordiness, is forced into an unnatural combination with the borrowed beauties which have just been mentioned.

The story of the poem, though not capable of furnishing out matter for a quarto volume, might yet have made an interesting ballad; and, in the hands of Mr. Scott or Lord Byron, would probably have supplied many images to be loved, and descriptions to be remembered. The incidents arise out of the short-lived Catholic insurrection of the Northern counties, in the reign of Elizabeth, which was supposed to be connected with the project of marrying the Queen of Scots to the Duke of Norfolk; and terminated in the ruin of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, by whom it was chiefly abetted. Among the victims of this rash enterprise was Richard Norton of Rylstone, who comes to the array with a splendid banner, at the head of eight tall sons, but against the will and advice of a ninth, who, though he refused to join the host, yet follows unarmed in its rear, out of anxiety for the fate of his family; and, when the father and his gallant progeny are made prisoners, and led to execution at York, recovers the fatal banner, and is slain by a party of the Queen's horse near Bolton Priory, in which place he had been ordered to deposit it by the dying voice of his father. The stately halls and pleasant bowers of Rylstone are then wasted, and fall into desolation; while the heroic daughter, and only survivor of the house, is sheltered among its faithful retainers, and wanders about for many years in its neighbourhood, accompanied by a beautiful white doe, which had formerly been a pet in the family; and continues, long after the death of this sad survivor, to repair every Sunday to the churchyard of Bolton Priory, and there to feed and wander among the graves, to the wonder and delight of the rustic congregation that came there to worship.

This, we think, is a pretty subject for a ballad; and, in the author's better day, might have made a lyrical one of considerable interest. Let us see, however, how he deals with it, since he has bethought him of publishing in quarto.

The First Canto merely contains the description of the Doe coming into the churchyard on Sunday, and of the congregation wondering at her. She is described as being as white as a lily—or the moon—or a ship in the sunshine; and this is the style in which Mr. Wordsworth marvels and moralises about her through ten quarto pages.

"What harmonious, pensive changes,
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and through this Pile of State,
Overthrown and desolate!"

"The presence of this wand'ring Doe
Fills many a damp obscure recess
With lustre of a saintly show;
And, re-appearing, she no less
To the open day gives blessedness."

The mothers point out this pretty creature to their children; and tell them in sweet nursery phrases—

"Now you have seen the famous Doe!
From Rylstone she hath found her way
Over the hills this Sabbath-day;
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
And she will depart when we are gone."

The poet knows why she comes there, and thinks the people may know it too: But some of them think she is a new incarnation of some of the illustrious dead that lie buried around them; and one, who it seems is an Oxford scholar, conjectures that she may be the fairy who instructed Lord Clifford in astrology! an ingenious fancy, which the poet thus gently reproveth—

"Ah, pensive scholar! think not so!
But look again at the radiant Doe!"

And then closes the Canto with this natural and luminous apostrophe to his harp.

"But, harp! thy murmurs may not cease,—
Thou hast breeze-like visitings;
For a Spirit with angel-wings
Hath touch'd thee, and a Spirit's hand:
A voice is with us—a command
To chant, in *strains of heavenly glory*,
A tale of tears, a mortal story!"

The Second Canto is more full of business, and affords us more insight into the author's manner of conducting a story. The opening, however, which goes back to the bright and original conception of the harp, is not quite so intelligible as might have been desired.

"The Harp in lowliness obey'd:
And first we sang of the green-wood shade;
And a solitary Maid!
Beginning, *where the song must end*,
With her, and with her sylvan Friend;
The friend, who stood before her sight,
Her only unextinguish'd light,—
Her last companion in a dearth
Of love, upon a hopeless earth."

This solitary maid, we are then told, had wrought, at the request of her father, "an unblessed work"—

"A Banner—one that did fulfil
Too perfectly his headstrong will:
For on this Banner had her hand
Embroider'd (such was the command)
The Sacred Cross; and figur'd there
The five dear wounds our Lord did bear."

The song then proceeds to describe the rising of Northumberland and Westmoreland, in the following lofty and spirited strains:—

"Two earls fast leagu'd in discontent,
Who gave their wishes open vent;
And boldly urg'd a general plea,
The rites of ancient piety
To be by force of arms renew'd;
Glad prospect for the multitude!
And that same Banner, on whose breast
The blameless Lady had exprest,
Memorials chosen to give life,
And sunshine to a dangerous strife;
This Banner," &c.

The poet, however, puts out all his strength in the dehortation which he makes Francis Norton address to his father, when the preparations are completed, and the household is ready to take the field.

——"Francis Norton said,
'O Father! rise not in this fray—
The hairs are white upon your head;
Dear Father, hear me when I say
It is for you too late a day!
Bethink you of your own good name;
A just and gracious queen have we,
A pure religion, and the claim
Of peace on our humanity.
'Tis meet that I endure your scorn,—
I am your son, your eldest born;
The Banner touch not, stay your hand,—
This multitude of men disband,
And live at home in blissful ease.'"

The warlike father makes no answer to this exquisite address, but turns in silent scorn to the banner,

"And his wet eyes are glorified;"

and forthwith he marches out, at the head of his sons and retainers.

Francis is very sad when thus left alone in the mansion—and still worse when he sees his sister sitting under a tree near the door. However, though "he cannot choose but shrink and sigh," he goes up to her and says,

"'Gone are they,—they have their desire;
And I with thee one hour will stay,
To give thee comfort if I may.'
He paused, her silence to partake,
And long it was before he spake:
Then, all at once, *his thoughts turn'd round*,
And fervent words a passage found.
'Gone are they, bravely, though misled,
With a dear Father at their head!
The Sons obey a natural lord;
The Father had given solemn word
To noble Percy,—and a force
Still stronger bends him to his course.
This said, our tears to-day may fall
As at an innocent funeral.
In deep and awful channel runs
This sympathy of Sire and Sons;
Untried our Brothers were belov'd,
And now their faithfulness is prov'd;
For faithful we must call them, bearing
That soul of conscientious daring.'"

After a great deal more, as touching and sensible, he applies himself more directly to the unhappy case of his hearer—whom he thus judiciously comforts and flatters:

"Hope nothing, if I thus may speak
To thee a woman, and thence weak;
Hope nothing, I repeat; for we
Are doom'd to perish utterly;
'Tis meet that thou with me divide
The thought while I am by thy side.
Acknowledging a grace in this,
A comfort in the dark abyss:
But look not for me when I am gone,
And be no farther wrought upon.
Farewell all wishes, all debate,
All prayers for this cause, or for that!
Weep, if that aid thee; but depend
Upon no help of outward friend;
Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave
To fortitude without reprieve."

It is impossible, however, to go regularly on with this goodly matter.—The Third Canto brings the Nortons and their banner to the head quarters of the insurgent Earls; and describes the first exploits of those conscientious warriors; who took possession of the Cathedral of Durham,

"Sang Mass,—and tore the book of Prayer,—
And trod the Bible beneath their feet."

Elated by this triumph, they turn to the south.

"To London were the Chieftains bent:
But what avails the bold intent?
A Royal army is gone forth
To quell the Rising of the North;
They march with Dudley at their head,
And in seven days' space, will to York be led!—
And Neville was opprest with fear;
For, though he bore a valiant name,
His heart was of a timid frame."

So they agree to march back again; at which old Norton is sorely afflicted—and Francis takes the opportnity to renew his dehortations—but is again repulsed with scorn, and falls back to his station in the rear.

The Fourth Canto shows Emily walking by the fish ponds and arbours of Rylstone, in a fine moonshiny night, with her favourite white Doe not far off.

"Yet the meek Creature was not free,
Erewhile, *from some perplexity:*
For thrice hath she approach'd, this day,
The thought-bewilder'd Emily."

However, they are tolerably reconciled that evening; and by and by, just a few minutes after nine, an old retainer of the house comes to comfort her, and is sent to follow the host and bring back tidings of their success.—The worthy yeoman sets out with great alacrity; but not having much hope, it would appear, of the cause, says to himself as he goes,

"'Grant that the moon which shines this night,
May guide them in a prudent flight!'"—p. 75.

Things however had already come to a still worse issue—as the poet very briefly and ingeniously intimates in the following fine lines:

"Their flight the fair moon may not see;
For, from mid-heaven, already she
Hath witness'd their captivity!"—p. 75.

They had made a rash assault, it seems, on Barnard Castle, and had been all made prisoners, and forwarded to York for trial.

The Fifth Canto shows us Emily watching on a commanding height for the return of her faithful messenger; who accordingly arrives forthwith, and tells, 'as gently as could be,' the unhappy catastrophe which he had come soon enough to witness. The only comfort he can offer is, that Francis is still alive.

"To take his life they have not dar'd.
On him and on his high endeavour
The light of praise shall shine for ever!
Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain
His solitary course maintain;
Nor vainly struggled in the might
Of duty seeing with clear sight."—p 85.

He then tells how the father and his eight sons were led out to execution; and how Francis, at his father's request, took their banner, and promised to bring it back to Bolton Priory.

The Sixth Canto opens with the homeward pilgrimage of this unhappy youth; and there is something so truly forlorn and tragical in his situation, that we should really have thought it difficult to have given an account of it without exciting some degree of interest or emotion. Mr. Wordsworth, however, reserves all his pathos for describing the whiteness of the pet doe, and disserting about her perplexities, and her high communion, and participation of Heaven's grace;—and deals in this sort with the orphan son, turning from the bloody scaffold of all his line, with their luckless banner in his hand.

"He look'd about like one betray'd;
What hath he done? what promise made?
Oh weak, weak moment! to what end
Can such a vain oblation tend,
And he the Bearer?—Can he go
Carrying this instrument of woe,
And find, find any where, a right
To excuse him in his Country's sight?
No, will not all Men deem the change
A downward course? perverse and strange?
Here is it,—but how, when? must she,
The unoffending Emily
Again this piteous object see?
Such conflict long did he maintain
Within himself, and found no rest;
Calm liberty he could not gain;
And yet the service was unblest.
His own life into danger brought
By this sad burden—even that thought
Rais'd self-suspicion, which was strong,
Swaying the brave Man to his wrong:
And how, unless it were the sense
Of all-disposing Providence,
Its will intelligibly shown,
Finds he the Banner in his hand,
Without a thought to such intent?"
pp. 99, 100.

His death is not much less pathetic. A troop of the Queen's horse surround him, and reproach him, we must confess with some plausibility, with having kept his hands unarmed, only from dread of death and forfeiture, while he was all the while a traitor in his heart. The sage Francis answers the insolent troopers as follows:—

"'I am no traitor,' Francis said,
'Though this unhappy freight I bear;
It weakens me; my heart hath bled
Till it is weak—but you beware,
Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,
Whose self-reproaches are too strong!"
p. 103.

This virtuous and reasonable person, however, has ill luck in all his dissuasories; for one of the horsemen puts a pike into him without more ado—and

"There did he lie of breath forsaken!"

And after some time the neighbouring peasants take him up, and bury him in the churchyard of Bolton Priory.

The Seventh and last Canto contains the history of the desolated Emily and her faithful doe; but so very discreetly and cautiously written, that we will engage that the most tender-hearted reader shall peruse it without the least risk of any excessive emotion. The poor lady runs about indeed for some years in a very disconsolate way, in a worsted gown and flannel nightcap: But at last the old white doe finds her out, and takes again to following her—whereupon Mr. Wordsworth breaks out into this fine and natural rapture.

"Oh, moment ever blest! O Pair!
Belov'd of Heaven, Heaven's choicest care!
This was for you a precious greeting,—
For both a bounteous, fruitful meeting.
Join'd are they; and the sylvan Doe
Can she depart? can she forego
The Lady, once her playful Peer?

"That day, the first of a reunion
Which was to teem with high communion,
That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together."
pp. 117, 118.

What follows is not quite so intelligible.

"When Emily by morning light
Went forth, the Doe was there in sight.
She shrunk:—with one frail shock of pain,
Received and followed by a prayer,
Did she behold—saw once again;
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear;—
But wheresoever she look'd round
All now was trouble-haunted ground."—p.119.

It certainly is not easy to guess what could be in the mind of the author, when he penned these four last inconceivable lines; but we are willing to infer that the lady's loneliness was cheered by this mute associate; and that the doe, in return, found a certain comfort in the lady's company—

"Communication, like the ray
Of a new morning, to the nature
And prospects of the inferior Creature!"
p. 126.

In due time the poor lady dies, and is buried beside her mother; and the doe continues to haunt the places which they had frequented together, and especially to come and pasture every Sunday upon the fine grass in Bolton churchyard, the gate of which is never opened but on occasion of the weekly service.—In consequence of all which, we are assured by Mr. Wordsworth, that she 'is approved by Earth and Sky, in their benignity;' and moreover, that the old Priory itself takes her for a daughter of the Eternal Prime—which we have no doubt is a very great compliment, though we have not the good luck to understand what it means.

"And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say,
'Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime!'

(October, 1829.)

1. *Records of Women: with other Poems.* By Felicia Hemans. 2d Edition. 12mo. pp. 323. Edinburgh: 1828.
2. *The Forest Sanctuary: with other Poems.* By Felicia Hemans. 2d Edition, with Additions. 12mo. pp. 325. Edinburgh: 1829.

Women, we fear, cannot do every thing; nor even every thing they attempt. But what they can do, they do, for the most part, excellently—and much more frequently with an absolute and perfect success, than the aspirants of our rougher and more ambitious sex. They cannot, we think, represent naturally the fierce and sullen passions of men—nor their coarser vices—nor even scenes of actual business or contention—nor the mixed motives, and strong and faulty characters, by which affairs of moment are usually conducted on the great theatre of the world. For much of this they are disqualified by the delicacy of their training and habits, and the still more disabling delicacy which pervades their conceptions and feelings; and from much they are excluded by their necessary inexperience of the realities they might wish to describe—by their substantial and incurable ignorance of business—of the way in which serious affairs are actually managed—and the true nature of the agents and impulses that give movement and direction to the stronger currents of ordinary life. Perhaps they are also incapable of long moral or political investigations, where many complex and indeterminate elements are to be taken into account, and a variety of opposite probabilities to be weighed before coming to a conclusion. They are generally too impatient to get at the ultimate results, to go well through with such discussions; and either stop short at some imperfect view of the truth, or turn aside to repose in the shade of some plausible error. This, however, we are persuaded, arises entirely from their being seldom set on such tedious tasks. Their proper and natural business is the practical regulation of private life, in all its bearings, affections, and concerns; and the questions with which they have to deal in that most important department, though often of the utmost difficulty and nicety, involve, for the most part, but few elements; and may generally be better described as delicate than intricate;—requiring for their solution rather a quick tact and fine perception, than a patient or laborious examination. For the same reason, they rarely succeed in long works, even on subjects the best suited to their genius; their natural training rendering them equally averse to long doubt and long labour.

For all other intellectual efforts, however, either of the understanding or the fancy, and requiring a thorough knowledge either of man's strength or his weakness, we apprehend them to be, in all respects, as well qualified as their brethren of the stronger sex: While, in their perceptions of grace, propriety, ridicule—their power of detecting artifice, hypocrisy, and affectation—the force and promptitude of their sympathy, and their capacity of noble and devoted attachment, and of the efforts and sacrifices it may require, they are, beyond all doubt, our Superiors.

Their business being, as we have said, with actual or social life, and the colours it receives from the conduct and dispositions of individuals, they unconsciously acquire, at a very early age, the finest perception of character and manners, and are almost as soon instinctively schooled in the deep and more dangerous learning of feeling and emotion; while the very minuteness with which they make and meditate on these interesting observations, and the finer shades and variations of sentiment which are thus treasured and recorded, trains their whole faculties to a nicety and precision of operation, which often discloses itself to advantage in their application to studies of a different character. When women, accordingly, have turned their minds—as they have done but too seldom—to the exposition or arrangement of any branch of knowledge, they have commonly exhibited, we think, a more beautiful accuracy, and a more uniform and complete justness of thinking, than their less discriminating brethren. There is a finish and completeness, in short, about every thing they put out of their hands, which indicates not only an inherent taste for elegance and neatness, but a habit of nice observation, and singular exactness of judgment.

It has been so little the fashion, at any time, to encourage women to write for publication, that it is more difficult than it should be, to prove these truths by examples. Yet there are enough, within the reach of a very careless and superficial glance over the open field of literature, to enable us to explain, at least, and illustrate, if not entirely to verify, our assertions. No *Man*, we will venture to say, could have written the Letters of Madame de Sevigné, or the Novels of Miss Austin, or the Hymns and Early Lessons of Mrs. Barbauld, or the Conversations of Mrs. Marcet. Those performances, too, are not only essentially and intensely feminine; but they are, in our judgment, decidedly more perfect than any masculine productions with which they can be brought into comparison. They accomplish more completely all the ends at which they aim; and are worked out with a gracefulness and felicity of execution which excludes all idea of failure, and entirely satis-

fies the expectations they may have raised. We might easily have added to these instances. There are many parts of Miss Edgeworth's earlier stories, and of Miss Mitford's sketches and descriptions, and not a little of Mrs. Opie's, that exhibit the same fine and penetrating spirit of observation, the same softness and delicacy of hand, and unerring truth of delineation, to which we have alluded as characterising the purer specimens of female art. The same distinguishing traits of woman's spirit are visible through the grief and piety of Lady Russel, and the gaiety, the spite, and the venturesomeness of Lady Mary Wortley. We have not as yet much female poetry; but there is a truly feminine tenderness, purity, and elegance, in the Psyche of Mrs. Tighe, and in some of the smaller pieces of Lady Craven. On some of the works of Madame de Staël—her Corinne especially—there is a still deeper stamp of the genius of her sex. Her pictures of its boundless devotedness—its depth and capacity of suffering—its high aspirations—its painful irritability, and inextinguishable thirst for emotion, are powerful specimens of that morbid anatomy of the heart, which no hand but that of a woman's was fine enough to have laid open, or skilful enough to have recommended to our sympathy and love. There is the same exquisite and inimitable delicacy, if not the same power, in many of the happier passages of Madame de Souza and Madame Cottin—to say nothing of the more lively and yet melancholy records of Madame de Staël, during her long penance in the court of the Duchesse de Maine.

But we are preluding too largely; and must come at once to the point, to which the very heading of this article has already admonished the most careless of our readers that we are tending. We think the poetry of Mrs. Hemans a fine exemplification of Female Poetry—and we think it has much of the perfection which we have ventured to ascribe to the happier productions of female genius.

It may not be the best imaginable poetry, and may not indicate the very highest or most commanding genius; but it embraces a great deal of that which gives the very best poetry its chief power of pleasing; and would strike us, perhaps, as more impassioned and exalted, if it were not regulated and harmonised by the most beautiful taste. It is singularly sweet, elegant, and tender—touching, perhaps, and contemplative, rather than vehement and overpowering; and not only finished throughout with an exquisite delicacy, and even severity of execution, but informed with a purity and loftiness of feeling, and a certain sober and humble tone of indulgence and piety, which must satisfy all judgments, and allay the apprehensions of those who are most afraid of the passionate exaggerations of poetry. The diction is always beautiful, harmonious, and free—and the themes, though of great variety, uniformly treated with a grace, originality and judgment, which mark the same master hand. These themes she has occasionally borrowed, with the peculiar imagery that belongs to them, from the legends of different nations, and the most opposite states of society; and has contrived to retain much of what is interesting and peculiar in each of them, without adopting, along with it, any of the revolting or extravagant excesses which may characterise the taste or manners of the people or the age from which it has been derived. She has transfused into her German or Scandinavian legends the imaginative and daring tone of the originals, without the mystical exaggerations of the one, or the painful fierceness and coarseness of the other—she has preserved the clearness and elegance of the French, without their coldness or affectation—and the tenderness and simplicity of the early Italians, without their diffuseness or langour. Though occasionally expatiating, somewhat fondly and at large, among the sweets of her own planting, there is, on the whole, a great condensation and brevity in most of her pieces, and, almost without exception, a most judicious and vigorous conclusion. The great merit, however, of her poetry, is undoubtedly in its tenderness and its beautiful imagery. The first requires no explanation; but we must be allowed to add a word as to the peculiar charm and character of the latter.

It has always been our opinion, that the very essence of poetry—apart from the pathos, the wit, or the brilliant description which may be embodied in it, but may exist equally in prose—consists in the fine perception and vivid expression of that subtle and mysterious Analogy which exists between the physical and the moral world—which makes outward things and qualities the natural types and emblems of inward gifts and emotions, or leads us to ascribe life and sentiment to every thing that interests us in the aspects of external nature. The feeling of this analogy, obscure and inexplicable as the theory of it may be, is so deep and universal in our nature, that it has stamped itself on the ordinary language of men of every kindred and speech: and that to such an extent, that one half of the epithets by which we familiarly designate moral and physical qualities, are in reality so many metaphors, borrowed reciprocally, upon this analogy, from those opposite forms of existence. The very familiarity, however, of the expression, in these instances, takes away its poetical effect—and indeed, in substance, its metaphorical character. The original sense of the word is entirely forgotten in the derivative one to which it has succeeded; and it requires some etymological recollection to convince us that it was originally nothing else than a typical or analogical illustration. Thus we talk of a sparkling wit, and a furious blast—a weighty argument, and a gentle stream—without being at all aware that we are speaking in the language of poetry, and transferring qualities from one extremity of the sphere of being to another. In these cases, accordingly, the metaphor, by ceasing to be felt, in reality ceases to exist, and the analogy being no longer intimated, of course can produce no effect. But whenever it is intimated, it does produce an effect; and that effect we think is poetry.

It has substantially two functions, and operates in two directions. In the *first* place, when material qualities are ascribed to mind, it strikes vividly out, and brings at once before us, the conception of an inward feeling or emotion, which it might otherwise have been difficult to convey, by the presentment of some bodily form or quality, which is instantly felt to be its true representative, and enables us to fix and comprehend it with a force and clearness not otherwise attainable; and, in the *second* place, it vivifies dead and inanimate matter with the attributes of living and sentient mind, and fills the whole visible universe around us with objects of interest and sympathy, by tinting them with the hues of life, and associating them with our own passions and affections. This magical operation the poet too performs, for the most part, in one of two ways—either by the direct agency of similies and metaphors, more or less condensed or developed, or by the mere graceful presentment of such visible objects on the scene of his passionate dialogues or adventures, as partake of the character of the emotion he wishes to excite, and thus form an appropriate accompaniment or preparation for its direct indulgence or display. The former of those methods has perhaps been most frequently employed, and certainly has most attracted attention. But the latter, though less obtrusive, and perhaps less frequently resorted to of set purpose, is, we are inclined to think, the most natural and efficacious of the two; and it is often adopted, we believe unconsciously, by poets of the highest order;—the predominant emotion of their minds overflowing spontaneously on all the objects which present themselves to their fancy, and calling out from them, and colouring with their own hues, those that are naturally emblematic of its character, and in accordance with its general expression. It would be easy to show how habitually this is done, by Shakespeare and Milton especially, and how much many of their finest passages are indebted, both for force and richness of effect, to this general and diffusive harmony of the external character of their scenes with the passions of their living agents—this harmonising and appropriate glow with which they kindle the whole surrounding atmosphere, and bring all that strikes the sense into unison with all that touches the heart.

But it is more to our present purpose to say, that we think the fair writer before us is eminently a mistress of this poetical secret; and, in truth, it was solely for the purpose of illustrating this great charm and excellence in her imagery, that we have ventured upon this little dissertation. Almost all her poems are rich with fine descriptions, and studded over with images of visible beauty. But these are never idle ornaments: all her pomps have a meaning; and her flowers and her gems are arranged, as they are said to be among Eastern lovers, so as to speak the language of truth and of passion. This is peculiarly remarkable in some little pieces, which seem at first sight to be purely descriptive—but are soon found to tell upon the heart, with a deep moral and pathetic impression. But it is in truth nearly as conspicuous in the greater part of her productions; where we scarcely meet with any striking sentiment that is not ushered in by some such symphony of external nature—and scarcely a lovely picture that does not serve as an appropriate foreground to some deep or lofty emotion. We may illustrate this proposition, we think, by opening either of these little volumes at random, and taking what they first present to us.—The following exquisite lines, for example, on a Palm-tree in an English garden:

"It wav'd not thro' an Eastern sky,
Beside a fount of Araby;
It was not fann'd by southern breeze
In some green isle of Indian seas,
Nor did its graceful shadow sleep
O'er stream of Afric, lone and deep.

"But far the exil'd Palm-tree grew
'Midst foliage of no kindred hue;
Thro' the laburnum's dropping gold
Rose the light shaft of orient mould,
And Europe's violets, faintly sweet,
Purpled the moss-beds at his feet.

"There came an eve of festal hours—
Rich music fill'd that garden's bowers:
Lamps, that from flowering branches hung,
On sparks of dew soft colours flung,
And bright forms glanc'd—a fairy show—
Under the blossoms, to and fro.

"But one, a lone one, 'midst the throng,
Seem'd reckless all of dance or song:
He was a youth of dusky mien,
Whereon the Indian sun had been—
Of crested brow, and long black hair—
A stranger, like the Palm-tree, there!

"And slowly, sadly mov'd his plumes,
Glittering athwart the leafy glooms:
He pass'd the pale green olives by,
Nor won the chesnut flowers his eye;
But, when to that sole Palm he came,
Then shot a rapture through his frame!

"To him, to him its rustling spoke!
The silence of his soul it broke!
It whisper'd of his own bright isle,
That lit the ocean with a smile;
Aye, to his ear that native tone
Had something of the sea-wave's moan!

"His mother's cabin home, that lay
Where feathery cocoas fring'd the bay;
The dashing of his brethren's oar;
The conch-note heard along the shore;—
All thro' his wakening bosom swept;
He clasp'd his country's Tree—and wept!

"Oh! scorn him not!—The strength, whereby
The patriot girds himself to die,
Th' unconquerable power, which fills
The freeman battling on his hills—
These have one fountain, deep and clear.—
The same whence gush'd that child-like tear!"

The following, which the author has named, "Graves of a Household," has rather less of external scenery, but serves, like the others, to show how well the graphic and pathetic may be made to set off each other:

"They grew in beauty, side by side,
They fill'd one home with glee;
Their graves are sever'd, far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea!

" The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight,—
Where are those dreamers now?

" One, midst the forests of the West,
By a dark stream is laid,—
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.

" The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one!
He lies where pearls lie deep:
He was the lov'd of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

" One sleeps where southern vines are drest
Above the noble slain:
He wrapt his colours round his breast,
On a blood-red field of Spain.

" And one—o'er *her* the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fann'd;
She faded 'midst Italian flowers,—
The last of that bright band!

" And parted thus they rest, who play'd
Beneath the same green tree!
Whose voices mingled as they pray'd
Around one parent knee!

" They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheer'd with song the hearth,—
Alas! for Love, if *thou* wert all,
And nought beyond, oh earth!"

We have taken these pieces chiefly on account of their shortness: But it would not be fair to Mrs. Hemans not to present our readers with one longer specimen—and to give a portion of her graceful narrative along with her pathetic descriptions. This story of "The Lady of the Castle," is told, we think, with great force and sweetness:—

" Thou seest her pictur'd with her shining hair,
(Fam'd were those tresses in Provençal song)
Half braided, half o'er cheek and bosom fair
Let loose, and pouring sunny waves along
Her gorgeous vest. A child's right hand is roving
'Midst the rich curls, and, oh! how meekly loving
Its earnest looks are lifted to the face,
Which bends to meet its lip in laughing grace!
Yet that bright lady's eye methinks hath less
Of deep, and still, and pensive tenderness,
Than might beseem a mother's: On her brow
Something too much there sits of native scorn,
And her smile kindles with a conscious glow. [tell
—These may be dreams! But how shall Woman
Of woman's shame, and not with tears?—She fell!
That mother left that child!—went hurrying by
Its cradle—haply not without a sigh;
Haply one moment o'er its rest serene
She hung—But no! it could not thus have been,
For *she went on!*—forsook her home, her hearth,
All pure affection, all sweet household mirth,
To live a gaudy and dishonour'd thing,
Sharing in guilt the splendours of a king.

" Her lord, in very weariness of life,
Girt on his sword for scenes of distant strife;
He reck'd no more of Glory:—Grief and shame
Crush'd out his fiery nature, and his name
Died silently. A shadow o'er his halls
Crept year by year; the minstrel pass'd their walls;
The warder's horn hung mute:—Meantime the child,
On whose first flow'ring thoughts no parent smil'd,
A gentle girl, and yet deep-hearted, grew
Into sad youth: for well, too well she knew
Her mother's tale! Its memory made the sky
Seem all too joyous for her shrinking eye;
Check'd on her lip the flow of song, which fain
Would there have linger'd; flush'd her cheek to pain,
If met by sudden glance; and gave a tone
Of sorrow, as for something lovely gone,
Even to the spring's glad voice. Her own was low
And plaintive!—Oh! there lie such depth of woes
In a *young* anointed spirit! Manhood rears
A haughty brow; and Age has done with tears;
But Youth bows down to mis'ry, in amaze
At the dark cloud o'ermantling its fresh days,—
And thus it was with her. A mournful sight
In one so fair—for she indeed was fair—
Not with her mother's dazzling eyes of light.
Hers were more shadowy, full of thought and pray'r;
And with long lashes o'er a white-rose cheek,
Drooping in gloom, yet tender still and meek.

" One sunny morn,
With alms before her castle gate she stood,
'Midst peasant-groups; when, breathless and o'erworn,
And shrouded in long robes of widowhood,
A stranger through them broke:—The orphan maid
With her sweet voice, and proffer'd hand of aid,
Turn'd to give welcome: But a wild sad look
Met hers; a gaze that all her spirit shook;
And that pale woman, suddenly subdued
By some strong passion in its gushing mood,
Knelt at her feet, and bath'd them with such tears
As rain the hoarded agonies of years [press'd
From the heart's urn; and with her white lips
The ground they trode; then, burying in her vest
Her brow's deep flush, sobb'd out—'Oh! undefil'd!
I am thy Mother—spurn me not, my child!'
" Isaure had pray'd for that lost mother; wept
O'er her stain'd memory, while the happy slept
In the hush'd midnight; stood with mournful gaze
Before yon picture's smile of other days,
But never breath'd in human ear the name
Which weigh'd her being to the earth with shame.
What marvel if the anguish, the surprise,
The dark remembrances, the alter'd guise,
Awhile o'erpower'd her?—from the weeper's touch
She shrank!—'Twas but a moment—yet too much
For that all-humbled one; its mortal stroke
Came down like lightning, and her full heart broke
At once in silence. Heavily and prone
She sank, while, o'er her castle's threshold-stone,
Those long fair tresses—*they* still brightly wore
Their early pride, though bound with pearls no more—
Bursting their fillet, in sad beauty roll'd,
And swept the dust with coils of wavy gold.
" Her child bent o'er her—call'd her—'Twas too late—
Dead lay the wanderer at her own proud gate!
The joy of courts, the star of *knight* and bard,—
How didst thou fall, O bright-hair'd Ermengarde!"

The following sketch of "Joan of Arc in Rheims," is in a loftier and more ambitious vein; but sustained with equal grace, and as touching in its solemn tenderness. We can afford to extract but a part of it:—

—" Within, the light,
Through the rich gloom of pictur'd windows flowing,
Tinged with soft awfulness a stately sight,
The chivalry of France, their proud heads bowing
In martial vassalage!—while 'midst the ring,
And shadow'd by ancestral tombs, a king
Received his birthright's crown. For this, the hymn
Swell'd out like rushing waters, and the day
With the sweet censer's misty breath grew dim,
As through long aisles it floated, o'er th' array
Of arms and sweeping stoles. But who, alone
And unapproach'd, beside the altar stone, [ing,
With the white banner, forth like sunshine stream-
And the gold helm, through clouds of fragrance gleaming,
Silent and radiant stood?—The helm was rais'd,
And the fair face reveal'd, that upward gaz'd,
Intensely worshipping;—a still, clear face,
Youthful but brightly solemn!—Woman's cheek
And brow were there, in deep devotion meek,
Yet glorified with inspiration's trace!

. . . . . " A triumphant strain,
A proud rich stream of warlike melodies,
Gush'd through the portals of the antique fane,
And forth she came." . . . . . .

" The shouts that fill'd
The hollow heaven tempestuously, were still'd
One moment; and in that brief pause, the tone,
As of a breeze that o'er her home had blown,
Sank on the bright maid's heart!—'Joanne!'—
Who spoke?
Like those whose childhood with *her* childhood grew
Under one roof?—'Joanne!'—*that* murmur broke
With sounds of weeping forth!—She turn'd—she knew
Beside her, mark'd from all the thousands there,
In the calm beauty of his silver hair,
The stately shepherd! and the youth, whose joy
From his dark eye flash'd proudly; and the boy,
The youngest-born, that ever lov'd her best!
'Father! and ye my brothers!'—On the breast
Of that grey sire she sank—and swiftly back,
Even in an instant, to the native track [more!
Her free thoughts flow'd.—She saw the pomp no
The plumes, the banners!—To her cabin door,
And to the Fairy's Fountain in the glade,
Where her young sisters by her side had play'd,
And to the hamlet's chapel, where it rose
Hallowing the forest into deep repose,
Her spirit turn'd.—The very wood-note, sung
In early spring-time by the bird, which dwelt
Where o'er her father's roof the beech-leaves hung,
Was in her heart; a music heard and felt.
Winning her back to nature!—She unbound
The helm of many battles from her head,
And, with her bright locks bow'd to sweep the ground,
Lifting her voice up, wept for joy, and said,—
'Bless me, my father, bless me! and with thee,
To the still cabin and the beechen-tree,
Let me return!'"

There are several strains of a more passionate character; especially in the two poetical epistles from Lady Arabella Stuart and Properzia Rossi. We shall venture to give a few lines from the former. The Lady Arabella was of royal descent; and having excited the fears of our pusillanimous James by a secret union with the Lord Seymour, was detained in a cruel captivity, by that heartless monarch, till the close of her life—during which she is supposed to have indited this letter to her lover from her prison house:—

" My friend, my friend! where art thou? Day by day,
Gliding, like some dark mournful stream, away,
My silent youth flows from me! Spring, the while,
Comes, and rains beauty on the kindling boughs
Round hall and hamlet: Summer, with her smile,
Fills the green forest;—young hearts breathe their vows;
Brothers, long parted, meet; fair children rise
Round the glad board: Hope laughs from loving eyes.

" Ye are from dingle and fresh glade, ye flowers!
By some kind hand to cheer my dungeon sent;
O'er you the oak shed down the summer showers,
And the lark's nest was where your bright cups bent,
Quivering to breeze and rain-drop, like the sheen
Of twilight stars. On you Heaven's eye hath been,
Through the leaves pouring its dark sultry blue
Into your glowing hearts; the bee to you
Hath murmur'd, and the rill.—My soul grows faint
With passionate yearning, as its quick dreams paint
Your haunts by dell and stream,—the green, the free,
The full of all sweet sound,—the shut from me!
" There went a swift bird singing past my cell—
O Love and Freedom! ye are lovely things!
With you the peasant on the hills may dwell,
And by the streams; But I—the blood of kings.
A proud unmingling river, through my veins
Flows in lone brightness,—and its gifts are chains!
—Kings!—I had silent visions of deep bliss,
Leaving *their* thrones far distant! and for this
I am cast under their triumphal car,
An insect to be crush'd!

" Thou hast forsaken me! I feel, I know!
There would be rescue if this were not so.
Thou'rt at the chase, thou'rt at the festive board,
Thou'rt where the red wine free and high is pour'd,
Thou'rt where the dancers meet!—a magic glass
Is set within my soul, and proud shapes pass,
Flushing it o'er with pomp from bower and hall!
I see one shadow, stateliest there of all,—
Thine!—What dost *Thou* amidst the bright and fair,
Whisp'ring light words, and mocking my despair?"

The following, though it has no very distinct object or moral, breathes, we think, the very spirit of poetry, in its bright and vague picturings, and is well entitled to the name it bears—" An Hour of Romance:"—

" There were thick leaves above me and around,
And low sweet sighs, like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound [deep
As of soft showers on water! Dark and
Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still
They seem'd but pictur'd glooms: a hidden rill
Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
Under the fern-tufts: and a tender gleam
Of soft green light, as by the glow-worm shed,
Came pouring thro' the woven beech-boughs down,
And steep'd the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown;
A tale of Palestine.—Meanwhile the bee
Swept past me with a tone of summer hours,
A drowsy bugle, wafting thoughts of flowers,
Blue skies and amber sunshine: brightly free,
On filmy wings the purple dragon-fly
Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by;
And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
Where sat the lone wood-pigeon:
But ere long,
All sense of these things faded, as the spell
Breathing from that high gorgeous tale grew strong
On my chain'd soul!—'Twas not the leaves I heard—
A Syrian wind the Lion-banner stirr'd,
Thro' its proud, floating folds!—'twas not the brook,
Singing in secret thro' its grassy glen;—
A wild shrill trumpet of the Saracen
Peal'd from the desert's lonely heart, and shook
The burning air!—Like clouds when winds are high,
O'er glitt'ring sands flew steeds of Araby;
And tents rose up, and sudden lance and spear
Flash'd where a fountain's diamond wave lay clear,
Shadow'd by graceful palm-trees! Then the shout
Of merry England's joy swell'd freely out,
Sent thro' an Eastern heaven, whose glorious hue
Made shields dark mirrors to its depth of blue!
And harps were there;—I heard their sounding strings,
As the waste echo'd to the mirth of kings.—
The bright masque faded!—Unto life's worn track,
What call'd me from its flood of glory back?
A voice of happy childhood!—and they pass'd,
Banner, and harp, and Paynim trumpet's blast
Yet might I scarce bewail the splendours gone,
My heart so leap'd to that sweet laughter's tone."

There is great sweetness in the following portion of a little poem on a "Girl's School:"—

" Oh! joyous creatures! that will sink to rest,
Lightly, when those pure orisons are done,
As birds with slumber's honey-dew opprest,
'Midst the dim folded leaves, at set of sun—

Yet in those flute-like voices, mingling low,
Is Woman's tenderness—how soon her woe!

"Her look is on you—silent tears to weep, [hour;
And patient smiles to wear, through suff'ring's
And sumless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds—a wasted show'r!
And to make idols,—and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship!—therefore pray!

Her lot is on you! to be found untir'd,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain,
With a pale cheek, and yet a brow inspir'd,
And a true heart of hope, though hope be vain;
Meekly to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,
And, oh! to Love through all things!—therefore pray!"

There is a fine and stately solemnity, too, in these lines on "The Lost Pleiad:"—

"Hath the night lost a gem, the regal night?
She wears her crown of old magnificence,
Though thou art exiled thence—
No desert seems to part those urns of light,
'Midst the far depths of purple gloom intense.

"They rise in joy, the starry myriads, burning—
The shepherd greets them on his mountains
And from the silvery sea [free;
To them the sailor's wakeful eye is turning—
Unchang'd they rise; they have not mourn'd
for thee!

"Couldst thou be shaken from thy radiant place,
E'en as a dew-drop from the myrtle spray,
Swept by the wind away?
Wert thou not peopled by some glorious race?
And was there power to smite them with decay?

"Then who shall talk of thrones, of sceptres riv'n?
Bow'd be our hearts to think on what *we* are!
When from its height afar
A World sinks thus—and yon majestic heav'n
Shines not the less for that one vanish'd star!"

The following, on "The Dying Improvisatore," have a rich lyrical cadence, and glow of deep feeling:—

"Never, oh! never more,
On thy Rome's purple heaven mine eye shall dwell,
Or watch the bright waves melt along thy shore—
My Italy, farewell!

"Alas!—thy hills among,
Had I but left a memory of my name,
Of love and grief one deep, true, fervent song,
Unto immortal fame!

"But like a lute's brief tone,
Like a rose-odour on the breezes cast,
Like a swift flush of dayspring, seen and gone,
So hath my spirit pass'd!

"Yet, yet remember me!
Friends! that upon its murmurs oft have hung,
When from my bosom, joyously and free,
The fiery fountain sprung!

"Under the dark rich blue
Of midnight heav'ns, and on the star-lit sea,
And when woods kindle into spring's first hue,
Sweet friends! remember me!

"And in the marble halls,
Where life's full glow the dreams of beauty wear,
And poet-thoughts embodied light the walls,
Let me be with you there!

"Fain would I bind, for you,
My memory with all glorious things to dwell;
Fain bid all lovely sounds my name renew—
Sweet friends! bright land! farewell!"

But we must stop here. There would be no end of our extracts, if we were to yield to the temptation of noting down every beautiful passage which arrests us in turning over the leaves of the volumes before us. We ought to recollect, too, that there are few to whom our pages are likely to come, who are not already familiar with their beauties; and, in fact, we have made these extracts, less with the presumptuous belief that we are introducing Mrs. Hemans for the first time to the knowledge or admiration of our readers, than from a desire of illustrating, by means of them, that singular felicity in the choice and employment of her imagery, of which we have already spoken so much at large;—that fine accord she has established between the world of sense and of soul—that delicate blending of our deep inward emotions with their splendid symbols and emblems without.

We have seen too much of the perishable nature of modern literary fame, to venture to predict to Mrs. Hemans that hers will be immortal, or even of very long duration. Since the beginning of our critical career we have seen a vast deal of beautiful poetry pass into oblivion, in spite of our feeble efforts to recall or retain it in remembrance. The tuneful quartos of Southey are already little better than lumber:—and the rich melodies of Keats and Shelley,—and the fantastical emphasis of Wordsworth,—and the plebeian pathos of Crabbe, are melting fast from the field of our vision. The novels of Scott have put out his poetry. Even the splendid strains of Moore are fading into distance and dimness, except where they have been married to immortal music; and the blazing star of Byron himself is receding from its place of pride. We need say nothing of Milman, and Croly, and Atherstone, and Hood, and a legion of others, who, with no ordinary gifts of taste and fancy, have not so properly survived their fame, as been excluded by some hard fatality, from what seemed their just inheritance. The two who have the longest withstood this rapid withering of the laurel, and with the least marks of decay on their branches, are Rogers and Campbell; neither of them, it may be remarked, voluminous writers, and both distinguished rather for the fine taste and consummate elegance of their writings, than for that fiery passion, and disdainful vehemence, which seemed for a time to be so much more in favour with the public.

If taste and elegance, however, be titles to enduring fame, we might venture securely to promise that rich boon to the author before us; who adds to those great merits a tenderness and loftiness of feeling, and an ethereal purity of sentiment, which could only emanate from the soul of a woman. She must beware, however, of becoming too voluminous; and must not venture again on any thing so long as the "Forest Sanctuary." But, if the next generation inherits our taste for short poems, we are persuaded it will not readily allow her to be forgotten. For we do not hesitate to say, that she is, beyond all comparison, the most touching and accomplished writer of occasional verses that our literature has yet to boast of.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MIND, METAPHYSICS, AND JURISPRUDENCE.

I AM aware that the title prefixed to this head or Division of the present publication, is not likely to attract many readers; and, for this reason, I have put much less under it, than under any of the other divisions. But, having been at one time more addicted to the studies to which it relates than to any other—and still confessing to a certain partiality for them—I could not think of letting this collection of old speculations go forth to the world, without *some* specimen of those which once found so much favour in my eyes.

I will confess, too, that I am not unwilling to have it known that, so long ago as 1804, I adventured to break a spear (and I trust not quite ingloriously) in these perilous lists, with two such redoubted champions as Jeremy Bentham and Dugald Stewart, then in the maturity of their fame; and also to assail, with equal gallantry, what appeared to me the opposite errors of the two great Dogmatical schools of Priestley and of Reid.

I will venture also to add, that on looking back on what I have now reprinted of these early lucubrations, I cannot help indulging a fond, though probably delusive expectation, that the brief and familiar exposition I have there attempted, both of the fallacy of the Materialist theory, and of the very moderate practical value that can be assigned to Metaphysical discussions generally, and especially of the real shallowness and utter insignificance of the thorough-going Scepticism (even if unanswerable) to which they have been supposed to lead, may be found neither so tedious, nor so devoid of interest even to the general reader, as the mere announcement of the subjects might lead him to apprehend.

(April, 1804.)

Traités de Législation Civile et Pénale; précédés de Principes Généraux de Législation, et d'une Vue d'un Corps complet de Droit; terminés par un Essai sur l'influence des Tems et des Lieux relativement aux Lois. Par M. JÉRÉMIE BENTHAM, Jurisconsulte Anglois. Publiés en François par M. DUMONT de Genève, d'après les Manuscrits confiés par l'Auteur. 8vo. 3 tom. Paris, an X. 1802.

THE title-page of this work exhibits a curious instance of the division of labour; and of the combinations that hold together the literary commonwealth of Europe. A living author consents to give his productions to the world in the language of a foreign editor; and the speculations of an English philosopher are published at Paris, under the direction of a *redacteur* from Geneva. This arrangement is not the most obvious or natural in the world; nor is it very flattering to the literature of this country; but we have no doubt that it was adopted for sufficient reasons.

It is now about fifteen years since Mr. Bentham first announced to the world his design of composing a great work on the Principles of morals and legislation. The specimen which he then gave of his plan, and of his abilities, was calculated, we think, to excite considerable expectation, and considerable alarm, in the reading part of the community. While the author displayed, in many places, great originality and accuracy of thinking, and gave proofs throughout of a very uncommon degree of courage, acuteness, and impartiality, it was easy to perceive that he was encumbered with the magnitude of his subject, and that his habits of discussion were but ill adapted to render it popular with the greater part of his readers. Though fully possessed of his subject, he scarcely ever appeared to be properly the master of it; and seemed evidently to move in his new career with great anxiety and great exertion. In the subordinate details of his work, he is often extremely ingenious, clear, and satisfactory; but in the grouping and distribution of its several parts, he is apparently irresolute or capricious; and has multiplied and distinguished them by such a profusion of divisions and subdivisions, that the understanding is nearly as much bewildered from the excessive labour and com-

plexity of the arrangement, as it could have been from its absolute omission. In following out the discussions into which he is tempted by every incidental suggestion, he is so anxious to fix a precise and appropriate principle of judgment, that he not only loses sight of the general scope of his performance, but pushes his metaphysical analysis to a degree of subtlety and minuteness that must prove repulsive to the greater part of his readers. In the extent and the fineness of those speculations, he sometimes appears to lose all recollection of his subject, and often seems to have tasked his ingenuity to weave snares for his understanding.

The powers and the peculiarities which were thus indicated by the preliminary treatise, were certainly such as to justify some solicitude as to the execution of the principal work. While it was clear that it would be well worth reading, it was doubtful if it would be very fit for being read: and while it was certain that it would contain many admirable remarks, and much original reasoning, there was room for apprehending that the author's love of method and metaphysics might place his discoveries beyond the reach of ordinary students, and repel the curiosity which the importance of the subject was so likely to excite. Actuated probably, in part, by the consciousness of those propensities (which nearly disqualified him from being the editor of his own speculations), and still too busily occupied with the prosecution of his great work to attend to the nice finishing of its parts, Mr. Bentham, about six years ago, put into the hands of M. Dumont a large collection of manuscripts, containing the greater part of the reasonings and observations which he proposed to embody into his projected system. These materials, M. Dumont assures us, though neither arranged nor completed, were rather redundant than defective in quantity; and left nothing to the *redacteur*, but the occasional labour of selection, arrangement, and compression. This task he has performed, as to a considerable part of the papers entrusted to him, in the work now before us; and has certainly given a very fair specimen both of the merit of the original speculations, and of his own powers of expression and distribution. There are some passages, perhaps, into which a degree of levity has been introduced that does not harmonise with the general tone of the composition; and others in which we miss something of that richness of illustration and homely vigour of reasoning which delighted us in Mr. Bentham's original publications; but, in point of neatness and perspicuity, conciseness and precision, we have no sort of doubt that M. Dumont has been of the most essential service to his principal; and are inclined to suspect that, without this assistance, we should never have been able to give any account of his labours.*

The principle upon which the whole of Mr. Bentham's system depends is, that *Utility*, and utility alone, is the criterion of right and wrong, and ought to be the sole object of the legislator. This principle, he admits, has often been suggested, and is familiarly recurred to both in action and deliberation; but he maintains that it has never been followed out with sufficient steadiness and resolution, and that the necessity of assuming it as the exclusive test of our proceedings has never been sufficiently understood. There are two principles, he alleges, that have been admitted to a share of that moral authority which belongs of right to utility alone, and have exercised a control over the conduct and opinions of society, by which legislators have been very frequently misled. One of these he denominates the *Ascetic principle*, or that which enjoins the mortification of the senses as a duty, and proscribes their gratification as a sin; and the other, which has had a much more extensive influence, he calls *the principle of Sympathy or Antipathy;* under which name he comprehends all those systems which place the basis of morality in the indications of a moral Sense, or in the maxims of a rule of Right; or which, under any other form of expression, decide upon the propriety of human actions by any reference to internal feelings, and not solely on a consideration of their consequences.

As utility is thus assumed as the test and standard of action and approbation, and as it consists in procuring pleasure and avoiding pain, Mr. Bentham has thought it necessary, in this place, to introduce a catalogue of all the pleasures and pains of which he conceives man to be susceptible; since these, he alleges, are the elements of that moral calculation in which the wisdom and the duty of legislators and individuals must ultimately be found to consist. The simple pleasures of which man is susceptible are fourteen, it seems, in number; and are thus enumerated—1. pleasures of sense: 2. of wealth: 3. of dexterity: 4. of good character: 5. of friendship: 6. of power: 7. of piety: 8. of benevolence: 9. of malevolence: 10. of memory: 11. of imagination: 12. of hope: 13. of association: 14. of relief from pain. The pains, our readers will be happy to hear, are only eleven; and are almost exactly the counterpart of the pleasures that have now been enumerated. The construction of these catalogues, M. Dumont considers as by far the greatest improvement that has yet been made in the philosophy of human nature!

It is chiefly by the fear of pain that men are regulated in the choice of their deliberate actions; and Mr. Bentham finds that pain may be attached to particular actions in four different ways: 1. by nature: 2. by public opinion: 3. by positive enactment: and 4. by the doctrines of religion. Our institutions will be perfect when all these different sanctions are in harmony with each other.

But the most difficult part of our author's task remains. In order to make any use of those "elements of moral arithmetic," which are constituted, by the lists of our pleasures and pains, it was evidently necessary to ascertain *their relative Value*,—to enable him to proceed in his legislative calculations with any degree of assurance. Under this head, however, we are only told that the value of a pleasure or a pain, considered in itself, depends, 1. upon its intensity, 2. upon its proximity, 3. upon its duration, and 4. upon its certainty; and that, considered with a view to its consequences, its value is further affected, 1. by its *fecundity, i. e.* its tendency to produce other pleasures or pains; 2. by its *purity, i. e.* its being unmixed with other sensations; and, 3. by the number of persons to whom it may extend. These considerations, however, the author justly admits to be still inadequate for his purpose; for, by what means is the *Intensity* of any pain or pleasure to be measured, and how, without a knowledge of this, are we to proportion punishments to temptations, or adjust the measures of recompense or indemnification? To solve this problem, Mr. Bentham seems to have thought it sufficient to recur to his favourite system of Enumeration; and to have held nothing else necessary than to make out a fair catalogue of "the circumstances by which the sensibility is affected." These he divides into two branches—the primary and the secondary. The first he determines to be exactly fifteen, viz. temperament—health—strength—bodily imperfection—intelligence—strength of understanding—fortitude—perseverance—dispositions—notions of honour—notions of religion—sympathies—antipathies—folly or derangement—fortune. The secondary are only nine, viz. sex—age—rank—education—profession—climate—creed—government—religious creed. By carefully attending to these twenty-four circumstances, Mr. Bentham is of opinion that we may be able to estimate the value of any particular pleasure or pain to an individual, with sufficient exactness; and to judge of the comparative magnitude of crimes, and of the proportionate amount of pains and compensations.

Now the first remark that suggests itself is, that if there is little that is false or pernicious in this system, there is little that is either new or important. That laws were made to promote the general welfare of society, and that nothing should be enacted which has a different tendency, are truths that can scarcely claim the merit of novelty, or mark an epoch by the date of their promulgation; and we have not yet been able to discover that the vast technical apparatus here provided by Mr. Bentham can be of the smallest service in improving their practical application.

The basis of the whole system is the undivided sovereignty of the principle of Utility, and the necessity which there is for recurring strictly to it in every question of legislation. Moral feelings, it is admitted, will frequently be found to coincide with it; but they are on no account to be trusted to, till this coincidence has been verified. They are no better, in short, than sympathies and antipathies, mere private and unaccountable feelings, that may vary in the case of every individual; and therefore can afford no fixed standard for general approbation or enjoyment. Now we cannot help thinking, that this fundamental proposition is very defective, both in logical consistency, and in substantial truth. In the first place, it seems very obvious that the principle of utility is liable to the very same objections, on the force of which the authority of moral impressions has been so positively denied. For how shall utility itself be recognised, but by a *feeling* exactly similar to that which is stigmatised as capricious and unaccountable? How are pleasures and pains, and the degrees and relative magnitude of pleasures and pains, to be distinguished, but by the feeling and experience of every individual? And what greater certainty can there be in the accuracy of such determinations, than in the results of other feelings no less general and distinguishable? If *right and wrong*, in short, be not precisely the same to every individual, neither are *pleasure and pain;* and if there be despotism and absurdity in imposing upon another, one's own impressions of wisdom and propriety, it cannot be just and reasonable to erect a standard of enjoyment, and a consequent rule of conduct, upon the narrow basis of our own measure of sensibility. It is evident, therefore, that by assuming the principle of utility, we do not get rid of the risk of variable feeling; and that we are still liable to all the uncertainty that may be produced by this cause, under the influence of any other principle.

The truth is, however, that this uncertainty is in all cases of a very limited nature; and that the common impressions of morality, the vulgar distinctions of right and wrong, virtue and vice, are perfectly sufficient to direct the conduct of the individual, and the judgment of the legislator, for all useful purposes, without any reference to the nature or origin of those distinctions. In many respects, indeed, we conceive them to be much fitter for this purpose than Mr. Bentham's oracles of utility. In the first place, it is necessary to observe, that it is a very gross and unpardonable mistake to represent the notions of right and wrong, which are here in question, as depending altogether upon the private and capricious feelings of an individual. Certainly no man was ever so arrogant or so foolish, as to insist upon establishing his own individual persuasion as an infallible test of duty and wisdom for all the rest of the world. The moral feelings, of which Mr. Bentham would make so small account, are the feelings which observation has taught us to impute to *all* men; those in which, under every variety of circumstances, they are found pretty constantly to agree, and as to which the uniformity of their conclusions may be reasoned and reckoned upon, with almost as much security as in the case of their external perceptions. The existence of such feelings, and the uniformity with which they are excited in all men on the same occasions, are *facts*, in short, that admit of no dispute; and, in point of certainty and precision, are exactly on a footing with those perceptions of utility that can only

* A considerable portion of the original paper is here omitted; and those parts only retained, which relate to the general principle and scope of the system.

be relied on after they also have been verified by a similar process of observation. Now, we are inclined to think, in opposition to Mr. Bentham, that a legislator will proceed more safely by following the indications of those moral distinctions as to which all men are agreed, than by setting them altogether at defiance, and attending exclusively to those perceptions of utility which, after all, he must collect from the same general agreement.

It is now, we believe, universally admitted, that nothing can be generally the object of moral approbation, which does not tend, upon the whole, to the good of mankind; and we are not even disposed to dispute with Mr. Bentham, that the true source of this moral approbation is in all cases a perception or experience of what may be called utility in the action or object which excites it. The difference between us, however, is considerable; and it is precisely this—Mr. Bentham maintains, that in all cases we ought to disregard the presumptions arising from moral approbation, and, by a resolute and scrupulous analysis, to get at the actual, naked utility upon which it is founded; and then, by the application of his new moral arithmetic, to determine its quantity, its composition, and its value; and, according to the result of this investigation, to regulate our moral approbation for the future. We, on the other hand, are inclined to hold, that those feelings, where they are uniform and decided, are by far the surest tests of the quantity and value of the utility by which they are suggested; and that if we discredit their report, and attempt to ascertain this value by any formal process of calculation or analysis, we desert a safe and natural standard, in pursuit of one for the construction of which we neither have, nor ever can have, any rules or materials. A very few observations, we trust, will set this in a clear light.

The amount, degree, or intensity of any pleasure or pain, is ascertained by feeling; and not determined by reason or reflection. These feelings however are transitory in their own nature, and, when they occur separately, and, as it were, individually, are not easily recalled with such precision as to enable us, upon recollection, to adjust their relative values. But when they present themselves in combinations, or in rapid succession, their relative magnitude or intensity is generally perceived by the mind without any exertion, and rather by a sort of immediate feeling, than in consequence of any intentional comparison: And when a particular combination or succession of such feelings is repeatedly or frequently suggested to the memory, the relative value of all its parts is perceived with great readiness and rapidity, and the general result is fixed in the mind, without our being conscious of any act of reflection. In this way, moral maxims and impressions arise in the minds of all men, from an instinctive and involuntary valuation of the good and the evil which they have perceived to be connected with certain actions or habits; and those impressions may safely be taken for the just result of that valuation, which we may afterwards attempt, unsuccessfully, though with great labour, to repeat. They may be compared, on this view of the matter, to those *acquired perceptions of sight* by which the eye is enabled to judge of distances; of the process of acquiring which we are equally unconscious, and yet by which it is certain that we are much more safely and commodiously guided, within the range of our ordinary occupations, than we ever could be by any formal scientific calculations, founded on the faintness of the colouring, and the magnitude of the angle of vision, compared with the average tangible bulk of the kind of object in question.

The comparative value of such good and evil, we have already observed, can obviously be determined by feeling alone; so that the interference of technical and elaborate reasoning, though it may well be supposed to disturb those perceptions upon the accuracy of which the determination must depend, cannot in any case be of the smallest assistance. Where the preponderance of good or evil is distinctly felt by all persons to whom a certain combination of feelings has been thus suggested, we have all the evidence for the reality of this preponderance that the nature of the subject will admit; and must try in vain to traverse that judgment, by any subsequent exertion of a faculty that has no jurisdiction in the cause. The established rules and impressions of morality, therefore, we consider as the grand recorded result of an infinite multitude of experiments upon human feeling and fortune, under every variety of circumstances; and as affording, therefore, by far the nearest approximation to a just standard of the good and the evil that human conduct is concerned with, which the nature of our faculties will allow. In endeavouring to correct or amend this general verdict of mankind, in any particular instance, we not only substitute our own individual feelings for that large average which is implied in those moral impressions, which are universally prevalent, but obviously run the risk of omitting or mistaking some of the most important elements of the calculation. Every one at all accustomed to reflect upon the operations of his mind, must be conscious how difficult it is to retrace exactly those trains of thought which pass through the understanding almost without giving us any intimation of their existence, and how impossible it frequently is to repeat any process of thought, when we purpose to make it the subject of observation. The reason of this is, that our feelings are not in their natural state when we would thus make them the objects of study or analysis; and their force and direction are far better estimated, therefore, from the traces which they leave in their spontaneous visitations, than from any forced revocation of them for the purpose of being measured or compared. When the object itself is inaccessible, it is wisest to compute its magnitude from its shadow; where the cause cannot be directly examined, its qualities are most securely inferred from its effects.

One of the most obvious consequences of

disregarding the general impressions of morality, and determining every individual question upon a rigorous estimate of the utility it might appear to involve, would be, to give an additional force to the causes by which our judgments are most apt to be perverted, and entirely to abrogate the authority of those *General rules* by which alone men are commonly enabled to judge of their own conduct with any tolerable impartiality. If we were to dismiss altogether from our consideration those authoritative maxims, which have been sanctioned by the general approbation of mankind, and to regulate our conduct entirely by a view of the good and the evil that promises to be the consequence of every particular action, there is reason to fear, not only that inclination might occasionally slip a false weight into the scale, but that many of the most important consequences of our actions might be overlooked. Those actions are bad, according to Mr. Bentham, that produce more evil than good: But actions are performed by individuals; and all the good may be to the individual, and all the evil to the community. There are innumerable cases, in which the advantages to be gained by the commission of a crime are incalculably greater (looking only to this world) than the evils to which it may expose the criminal. This holds in almost every instance where unlawful passions may be gratified with very little risk of detection. A mere calculation of utilities would never prevent such actions; and the truth undoubtedly is, that the greater part of men are only withheld from committing them by those general impressions of morality, which it is the object of Mr. Bentham's system to supersede. Even admitting, what might well be denied, that, in all cases, the utility of the individual is inseparably connected with that of society, it will not be disputed, at least, that this connection is of a nature not very striking or obvious, and that it may frequently be overlooked by an individual deliberating on the consequences of his projected actions. It is in aid of this oversight, of this omission, of this partiality, that we refer to the *General rules* of morality; rules, which have been suggested by a larger observation, and a longer experience, than any individual can dream of pretending to, and which have been accommodated, by the joint action of our sympathies with delinquents and with sufferers, to the actual condition of human fortitude and infirmity. If they be founded on utility, it is on an utility that cannot always be discovered; and that can never be correctly estimated, in deliberating upon a particular measure, or with a view to a specific course of conduct: It is on an utility that does not discover itself till it is accumulated; and only becomes apparent after a large collection of examples have been embodied in proof of it. Such summaries of utility, such records of uniform observation, we conceive to be the *General rules of Morality*, by which, and by which alone, legislators or individuals can be safely directed in determining on the propriety of any course of conduct. They are observations taken in the calm, by which we must be guided in the darkness and the terror of the tempest; they are beacons and strongholds erected in the day of peace, round which we must rally, and to which we must betake ourselves, in the hour of contest and alarm.

For these reasons, and for others which our limits will not now permit us to hint at, we are of opinion, that the old established morality of mankind ought upon no account to give place to a bold and rigid investigation into the *utility* of any particular act, or any course of action that may be made the subject of deliberation; and that the safest and the shortest way to the good which we all desire, is the beaten highway of morality, which was formed at first by the experience of good and of evil.

But our objections do not apply merely to the foundation of Mr. Bentham's new system of morality: We think the plan and execution of the superstructure itself defective in many particulars. Even if we could be persuaded that it would be wiser in general to follow the dictates of utility than the impressions of moral duty, we should still say that the system contained in these volumes does not enable us to adopt that substitute: and that it really presents us with no means of measuring or comparing utilities. After perusing M. Dumont's eloquent observations on the incalculable benefits which his author's discoveries were to confer on the science of legislation, and on the genius and good fortune by which he had been enabled to reduce morality to the precision of a science, by fixing a precise standard for the good and evil of our lives, we proceeded with the perusal of Mr. Bentham's endless tables and divisions, with a mixture of impatience, expectation, and disappointment. Now that we have finished our task, the latter sentiment alone remains; for we perceive very clearly that M. Dumont's zeal and partiality have imposed upon his natural sagacity, and that Mr. Bentham has just left the science of morality in the same imperfect condition in which it was left by his predecessors. The whole of Mr. Bentham's catalogues and distinctions tend merely to point out the *Number* of the causes that produce our happiness or misery, but by no means to ascertain their *relative Magnitude or force*; and the only effect of their introduction into the science of morality seems to be, to embarrass a popular subject with a technical nomenclature, and to perplex familiar truths with an unnecessary intricacy of arrangement.

Of the justice of this remark any one may satisfy himself, by turning back to the tables and classifications which we have exhibited in the former part of this analysis, and trying if he can find there any rules for estimating the comparative *value* of pleasures and pains, that are not perfectly familiar to the most uninstructed of the species. In the table of simple pleasures, for instance, what satisfaction can it afford to find the pleasure of riches set down as a distinct genus from the pleasure of power, and the pleasure of the senses—unless some scale were annexed by which the

respective value of these several pleasures might be ascertained? If a man is balancing between the pain of privation and the pain of shame, how is he relieved by merely finding these arranged under separate titles? or, in either case, will it give him any information, to be told that the value of a pain or pleasure depends upon its intensity, its duration, or its certainty? If a legislator is desirous to learn what degree of punishment is suitable to a particular offence, will he be greatly edified to read that the same punishment may be more or less severe according to the temperament, the intelligence, the rank, or the fortune of the delinquent; and that the circumstances that influence sensibility, though commonly reckoned to be only nine, may fairly be set down at fifteen? Is there any thing, in short, in this whole book, that realises the triumphant Introduction of the editor, or that can enable us in any one instance to decide upon the *relative magnitude* of an evil, otherwise than by a reference to the common feelings of mankind? It is true, *we* are perfectly persuaded, that by the help of these feelings, we can form a pretty correct judgment in most cases that occur; but Mr. Bentham is not persuaded of this; and insists upon our renouncing all faith in so incorrect a standard, while he promises to furnish us with another that is liable to no sort of inaccuracy. This promise we do not think he has in any degree fulfilled; because he has given us no rule by which the intensity of any pain or pleasure can be determined; and furnished us with no instrument by which we may take the altitude of enjoyment, or fathom the depths of pain. It is no apology for having made this promise, that its fulfilment was evidently impossible.

In multiplying these distinctions and divisions which form the basis of his system, Mr. Bentham appears to us to bear less resemblance to a philosopher of the present times, than to one of the old scholastic doctors, who substituted classification for reasoning, and looked upon the ten categories as the most useful of all human inventions. Their distinctions were generally real, as well as his, and could not have been made without the misapplication of much labour and ingenuity: But it is now generally admitted that they are of no use whatever, either for the promotion of truth, or the detection of error; and that they only serve to point out differences that cannot be overlooked, or need not be remembered. There are many differences and many points of resemblance in all actions, and in all substances, that are absolutely indifferent in any serious reasoning that may be entered into with regard to them; and though much industry and much acuteness may be displayed in finding them out, the discovery is just as unprofitable to science, as the enumeration of the adverbs in the creed, or the dissyllables in the decalogue, would be to theology. The greater number of Mr. Bentham's distinctions, however, are liable to objection, because they state, under an intricate and technical arrangement, those facts and circumstances only that are necessarily familiar to all mankind, and cannot possibly be forgotten on any occasion where it is of importance to remember them. If bad laws have been enacted, it certainly is not from having forgotten that the good of society is the ultimate object of all law, or that it is absurd to repress one evil by the creation of a greater. Legislators have often bewildered themselves in the choice of means; but they have never so grossly mistaken the *ends* of their institution, as to need to be reminded of these obvious and elementary truths.

If there be any part of Mr. Bentham's classification that might be supposed to assist us in appreciating the comparative value of pleasures and pains, it must certainly be his enumeration of the circumstances that affect the sensibility of individuals. Even if this table were to fulfil all that it promises, however, it would still leave the system fundamentally deficient, as it does not enable us to compare the relative amount of any two pleasures or pains, to individuals in *the same* circumstances. In its particular application, however, it is truly no less defective; for though we are told that temperament, intelligence, &c. should vary the degree of punishment or reward, we are not told to what extent, or in what proportions, it should be varied by these circumstances. Till this be done, however, it is evident that the elements of Mr. Bentham's moral arithmetic have no determinate value; and that it would be perfectly impossible to work any practical problem in legislation by the help of them. It is scarcely necessary to add, that even if this were accomplished, and the cognisance of all these particulars distinctly enjoined by the law, the only effect would be, to introduce a puerile and fantastic complexity into our systems of jurisprudence, and to encumber judicial procedure with a multitude of frivolous or impracticable observances. The circumstances, in consideration of which Mr. Bentham would have the laws vary the punishment, are so numerous and so indefinite, that it would require a vast deal more labour to ascertain their existence in any particular case, than to establish the principal offence. The first is Temperament; and in a case of flogging, we suppose Mr. Bentham would remit a few lashes to a sanguine and irritable delinquent, and lay a few additional stripes on a phlegmatic or pituitous one. But how is the temperament to be given in evidence? or are the judges to aggravate or alleviate a punishment upon a mere inspection of the prisoner's complexion. Another circumstance that should affect the pain, is the offender's firmness of mind; and another his strength of understanding. How is a court to take cognisance of these qualities? or in what degree are they to affect their proceedings? If we are to admit such considerations into our law at all, they ought to be carried a great deal farther than Mr. Bentham has indicated; and it should be expressed in the statutes, what alleviation of punishment should be awarded to a culprit on account of his wife's pregnancy, or the colour of his children's hair. We cannot help thinking that the undistinguishing grossness of our actual practice is better than such foppery. We fix a punishment which is calculated for the common, average condition of those to whom it is to be applied; and, in almost all cases, we leave with the judge a discretionary power of accommodating it to any peculiarities that may seem to require an exception. After all, this is the most plausible part of Mr. Bentham's arrangements.

In what he has said of the false notions which legislators have frequently followed in preference to the polar light of utility, we think we discover a good deal of inaccuracy, and some little want of candour. Mr. Bentham must certainly be conscious that no one ever pretended that the mere antiquity of a law was a sufficient reason for retaining it, in spite of its evident inutility: But when the utility of parting with it is doubtful, its antiquity may fairly be urged as affording a presumption in its favour, and as a reason for being cautious at least in the removal of what must be incorporated with so many other institutions. We plead the antiquity of our Constitution as an additional reason for not yielding it up to innovators: but nobody ever thought, we believe, of advancing this plea in support of the statutes against Witchcraft. In the same way, we think, there is more wit than reason in ascribing the errors of many legislators to their being misled by a metaphor. The metaphor, we are inclined to think, has generally arisen from the principle or practice to which Mr. Bentham would give effect independent of it. The law of England respects the sanctity of a free citizen's dwelling so much, as to yield it some privilege; and *therefore* an Englishman's house is called his Castle. The piety or superstition of some nations has determined that a criminal cannot be arrested in a place of worship. This is the whole fact; the usage is neither explained nor convicted of absurdity, by saying that such people call a church the House of God. If it were the house of God, does Mr. Bentham conceive that it *ought* to be a sanctuary for criminals? In what is said of the Fictions of law, there is much of the same misapprehension. Men neither are, nor ever were, misguided by these fictions; but the fictions are merely certain quaint and striking methods of expressing a rule that has been adopted in an apprehension of its utility. To deter men from committing treason, their offspring is associated to a certain extent in their punishment. The motive and object of this law is plain enough; and calling the effect "Corruption of blood," will neither aggravate nor hide its injustice. When it is said that the heir is the same person with the deceased, it is but a pithy way of intimating that he is bound in all the obligations, and entitled to all the rights of his predecessor. That the King never dies, is only another phrase for expressing that the office is never vacant; and that he is every where, is true, if it be lawful to say that a person can act by deputy. In all these observations, and in many that are scattered through the subsequent part of his book, Mr. Bentham seems to forget that there is such a thing as common sense in the world; and to take it for granted, that if there be an opening in the letter of the law for folly, misapprehension, or abuse, its ministers will eagerly take advantage of it, and throw the whole frame of society into disorder and wretchedness. A very slight observation of the actual business of life might have taught him, that expediency may, for the most part, be readily and certainly discovered by those who are interested in finding it; and that in a certain stage of civilisation there is generated such a quantity of intelligence and good sense, as to disarm absurd institutions of their power to do mischief, and to administer defective laws into a system of practical equity. This indeed is the grand corrective which remedies all the errors of legislators, and retrenches all that is pernicious in prejudice. It makes us independent of technical systems, and indifferent to speculative irregularities; and he who could increase its quantity, or confirm its power, would do more service to mankind than all the philosophers that ever speculated on the means of their reformation.

In the following chapter we meet with a perplexity which, though very ingeniously produced, appears to us to be wholly gratuitous. Mr. Bentham for a long time can see no distinction between Civil and Criminal jurisprudence; and insists upon it, that *rights* and *crimes* necessarily and virtually imply each other. If I have a right to get your horse, it is only because it would be a crime for you to keep him from me; and if it be a crime for me to take your horse, it is only because you have a right to keep him. This we think is very pretty reasoning: But the distinction between the civil and the criminal law is not the less substantial and apparent. The civil law is that which directs and enjoins—the criminal law is that which Punishes. This is enough for the legislator; and for those who are to obey him. It is a curious inquiry, no doubt, how far all rights may be considered as the counterpart of crimes; and whether every regulation of the civil code necessarily implies a delict in the event of its violation. On this head there is room for a good deal of speculation; but in our opinion Mr. Bentham pushes the principle much too far. There seems to be nothing gained, for instance, either in the way of clearness or consistency, by arranging under the head of criminal law, those cases of refusal to fulfil contracts, or to perform obligations, for which no other punishment is or ought to be provided, but a compulsory fulfilment or performance. This is merely following out the injunction of the civil code, and cannot, either in law or in logic, be correctly regarded as a punishment. The proper practical test of a crime, is where, over and above the restitution of the violated right (where that is possible), the violator is subjected to a direct pain, in order to deter from the repetition of such offences.

In passing to the code of criminal law, Mr. Bentham does not forget the necessity of class

ifying and dividing. Delicts, according to him, are either, 1. Private, or against one or a few individuals; 2. Reflective, or against the delinquent himself; 3. Semipublic, or against some particular class or description of persons; and, finally, Public, or against the whole community. Private delicts, again, relate either to the person, the property, the reputation or the condition; and they are distributed into complex and simple, principal and accessory, positive and negative, &c. &c. The chief evil of a crime is the alarm which it excites in the community; and the degree of this alarm, Mr. Bentham assumes, depends upon *eight* circumstances, the particular situation of the delinquent, his motives, his notoriety, his character, the difficulties or facilities of the attempt, &c. But here again, we see no sense in the enumeration; the plain fact being, that the alarm is increased by every thing which renders it probable that such acts may be frequently repeated. In one case, and one of considerable atrocity, there is no alarm at all; because the only beings who can be affected by it, are incapable of fear or suspicion—this is the case of infanticide: and Mr. Bentham ingeniously observes, that it is probably owing to this circumstance that the laws of many nations have been so extremely indifferent on that subject. In modern Europe, however, he conceives that they are barbarously severe. In the case of certain crimes against the community, such as misgovernment of all kinds, the danger again is always infinitely greater than the alarm.

The remedies which law has provided against the mischief of crimes, Mr. Bentham says, are of four orders; preventive—repressive—compensatory—or simply penal. Upon the subject of compensation or satisfaction, Mr. Bentham is most copious and most original; and under the title of satisfaction in honour, he presents us with a very calm, acute, and judicious inquiry into the effects of duelling; which he represents as the only remedy which the impolicy or impotence of our legislators has left for such offences. We do not think, however, that the same good sense prevails in what he subjoins, as to the means that might be employed to punish insults and attacks upon the honour of individuals. According to the enormity of the offence, he is for making the delinquent pronounce a discourse of humiliation, either standing, or on his knees, before the offended party, and clothed in emblematical robes, with a mask of a characteristic nature on his head, &c. There possibly may be countries where such contrivances might answer; but, with us, they would not only be ineffectual, but ridiculous.

In the choice of punishments, Mr. Bentham wishes legislators to recollect, that punishment is itself an evil; and that it consists of five parts;—the evil of restraint—the evil of suffering—the evil of apprehension—the evil of groundless persecution—and the evils that extend to the innocent connections of the delinquent. For these reasons, he is anxious that no punishment should be inflicted without a real cause, or without being likely to influence the will; or where other remedies might have been employed; or in cases where the crime produces less evil than the punishment. These admonitions are all very proper, and, we dare say, sincere; but we cannot think that they are in any way recommended by their novelty.

In the section upon the indirect means of preventing crimes, there is a great deal of genius and strong reasoning; though there are many things set down in too rash and peremptory a manner, and some that are supported with a degree of flippancy not very suitable to the occasion. The five main sources of offence he thinks are, want of occupation, the angry passions, the passion of the sexes, the love of intoxication, and the love of gain. As society advances, all these lose a good deal of their mischievous tendency, excepting the last; against which, of course, the legislature should be more vigilant than ever. In the gradual predominance of the avaricious passions over all the rest, however, Mr. Bentham sees many topics of consolation; and concludes this part of his work with declaring, that it should be the great object of the criminal law to reduce all offences to that species which can be completely atoned for and repaired by payment of a sum of money. It is a part of his system, which we have forgotten to mention, that persons so injured should in all cases be entitled to reparation out of the public purse.

(January, 1804.)

Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Reid, D. D. F. R. S., Edinburgh, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. By Dugald Stewart, F. R. S. Edinburgh: Read at different Meetings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. 8vo. pp. 225. Edinburgh and London: 1803.

Although it is impossible to entertain greater respect for any names than we do for those that are united in the title of this work, we must be permitted to say, that there are many things with which we cannot agree, both in the system of Dr. Reid, and in Mr. Stewart's elucidation and defence of it. That elucidation begins, indeed, with a remark, which we are not at all disposed to controvert; that the distinguishing feature of Dr. Reid's philosophy is the systematical steadiness with which he has adhered to the course

of correct observation, and the admirable self-command by which he has confined himself to the clear statement of the facts he has collected: But then Mr. Stewart immediately follows up this observation with a warm encomium on the inductive philosophy of Lord Bacon, and a copious and eloquent exposition of the vast advantage that may be expected from applying to the science of Mind those sound rules of experimental philosophy that have undoubtedly guided us to all the splendid improvements in modern physics. From the time indeed that Mr. Hume published his treatise of human nature, down to the latest speculations of Condorcet and Mr. Stewart himself, we have observed this to be a favourite topic with all metaphysical writers; and that those who have differed in almost every thing else, have agreed in magnifying the importance of such inquiries, and in predicting the approach of some striking improvement in the manner of conducting them.

Now, in these speculations we cannot help suspecting that those philosophers have been misled in a considerable degree by a false analogy; and that their zeal for the promotion of their favourite studies has led them to form expectations somewhat sanguine and extravagant, both as to their substantial utility and as to the possibility of their ultimate improvement. In reality, it does not appear to us that any great advancement in the knowledge of the operations of mind is to be expected from any improvement in the plan of investigation; or that the condition of mankind is likely to derive any great benefit from the cultivation of this interesting but abstracted study.

Inductive philosophy, or that which proceeds upon the careful observation of facts, may be applied to two different classes of phenomena. The first are those that can be made the subject of proper Experiment: where the substances are actually in our power, and the judgment and artifice of the inquirer can be effectually employed to arrange and combine them in such a way as to disclose their most hidden properties and relations. The other class of phenomena are those that occur in substances that are placed altogether beyond our reach; the order and succession of which we are generally unable to control; and as to which we can do little more than collect and record the laws by which they appear to be governed. Those substances are not the subject of *Experiment*, but of *Observation*; and the knowledge we may obtain, by carefully watching their variations, is of a kind that does not directly increase the power which we might otherwise have had over them. It seems evident, however, that it is principally in the former of these departments, or the strict *experimental philosophy*, that those splendid improvements have been made, which have erected so vast a trophy to the prospective genius of Bacon. The astronomy of Sir Isaac Newton is no exception to this general remark: All that mere *Observation* could do to determine the movements of the heavenly bodies, had been accomplished by the star-gazers who preceded him; and the law of gravitation, which he afterwards applied to the planetary system, was first calculated and ascertained by *experiments* performed upon substances which were entirely at his disposal.

It will scarcely be denied, either, that it is almost exclusively to this department of proper Experiment, that Lord Bacon has directed the attention of his followers. His fundamental maxim is, that knowledge is power; and the great problem which he constantly aims at resolving is, in what manner the nature of any substance or quality may, by experiment, be so detected and ascertained as to enable us to manage it at our pleasure. The greater part of the *Novum Organum* accordingly is taken up with rules and examples for contriving and conducting experiments; and the chief advantage which he seems to have expected from the progress of those inquiries, appears to be centered in the enlargement of man's dominion over the material universe which he inhabits. To the mere Observer, therefore, his laws of philosophising, except where they are prohibitory laws, have but little application; and to such an inquirer, the rewards of his philosophy scarcely appear to have been promised. It is evident indeed that no *direct* utility can result from the most accurate observation of occurrences which we cannot control; and that for the uses to which such observations may afterwards be turned, we are indebted not so much to the observer, as to the person who discovered the application. It also appears to be pretty evident that in the art of observation itself, no very great or fundamental improvement can be expected. Vigilance and attention are all that can ever be required in an observer; and though a talent for methodical arrangement may facilitate to others the study of the facts that have been collected, it does not appear how our actual knowledge of those facts can be increased by any new method of describing them. Facts that we are unable to modify or direct, in short, can only be the objects of observation; and observation can only inform us that they exist, and that their succession appears to be governed by certain general laws.

In the proper Experimental philosophy, every acquisition of knowledge is an increase of power; because the knowledge is necessarily derived from some intentional disposition of materials which we may always command in the same manner. In the philosophy of observation, it is merely a gratification of our curiosity. By experiment, too, we generally acquire a pretty correct knowledge of the causes of the phenomena we produce; as we ourselves have distributed and arranged the circumstances upon which they depend; while, in matters of mere observation, the assignment of causes must always be in a good degree conjectural, inasmuch as we have no means of separating the preceding phenomena, or deciding otherwise than by analogy, to which of them the succeeding event is to be attributed.

Now, it appears to us to be pretty evident that the phenomena of the Human Mind are almost all of the latter description. We feel, and perceive, and remember, without any purpose or contrivance of ours, and have evidently no power over the mechanism by which those functions are performed. We may observe and distinguish those operations of mind, indeed, with more or less attention or exactness; but we cannot subject them to experiment, or alter their nature by any process of investigation. We cannot decompose our perceptions in a crucible, nor divide our sensations with a prism; nor can we, by art and contrivance, produce any combination of thoughts or emotions, besides those with which all men have been provided by nature. No metaphysician expects by analysis to discover a new power, or to excite a new sensation in the mind, as a chemist discovers a new earth or a new metal; nor can he hope, by any process of synthesis, to exhibit a mental combination different from any that nature has produced in the minds of other persons. The science of metaphysics, therefore, depends upon observation, and not upon experiment: And all reasonings upon mind proceed accordingly upon a reference to that general observation which all men are supposed to have made, and not to any particular experiments, which are known only to the inventor. —The province of philosophy in this department, therefore, is the province of observation only; and in this department the greater part of that code of laws which Bacon has provided for the regulation of experimental induction is plainly without authority. In metaphysics, certainly, knowledge is not power; and instead of producing new phenomena to elucidate the old, by well-contrived and well-conducted experiments, the most diligent inquirer can do no more than register and arrange the appearances, which he can neither account for nor control.

But though our power can in no case be directly increased by the most vigilant and correct observation alone, our knowledge may often be very greatly extended by it. In the science of mind, however, we are inclined to suspect that this is not the case. From the very nature of the subject, it seems necessarily to follow, that all men must be practically familiar with all the functions and qualities of their minds; and with almost all the laws by which they appear to be governed. Every one knows exactly what it is to perceive and to feel, to remember, imagine, and believe; and though he may not always apply the words that denote these operations with perfect propriety, it is not possible to suppose that any one is ignorant of the things. Even those laws of thought, or connections of mental operation, that are not so commonly stated in words, appear to be universally known; and are found to regulate the practice of those who never thought of enouncing them in precise or abstract propositions. A man who never heard it asserted that memory depends upon attention, yet attends with uncommon care to any thing that he wishes to remember; and accounts for his forgetfulness, by acknowledging that he had paid no attention. A groom, who never heard of the association of ideas, feeds the young war-horse to the sound of a drum; and the unphilosophical artists who tame elephants and train dancing dogs, proceed upon the same obvious and admitted principle. The truth is, that as we only know the existence of mind by the exercise of its functions according to certain laws, it is impossible that any one should ever discover or bring to light any functions or any laws of which men would admit the existence, unless they were previously convinced of their operation on themselves. A philosopher may be the first to state these laws, and to describe their operation distinctly in words; but men must be already familiarly acquainted with them in reality, before they can assent to the justice of his descriptions.

For these reasons, we cannot help thinking that the labours of the metaphysician, instead of being assimilated to those of the chemist or experimental philosopher, might, with less impropriety, be compared to those of the grammarian who arranges into technical order the words of a language which is spoken familiarly by all his readers; or of the artist who exhibits to them a correct map of a district with every part of which they were previously acquainted. We acquire a perfect knowledge of our own minds without study or exertion, just as we acquire a perfect knowledge of our native language or our native parish; yet we cannot, without much study and reflection, compose a grammar of the one, or a map of the other. To arrange in correct order all the particulars of our practical knowledge, and to set down, without omission and without distortion, every thing that we actually know upon a subject, requires a power of abstraction, recollection, and disposition, that falls to the lot of but few. In the science of mind, perhaps, more of those qualities are required than in any other; but it is not the less true of this, than of all the rest, that the materials of the description must always be derived from a previous acquaintance with the subject—that nothing can be set down technically that was not practically known—and that no substantial addition is made to our knowledge by a scientific distribution of its particulars. After such a systematic arrangement has been introduced, and a correct nomenclature applied, we may indeed conceive more clearly, and will certainly describe more justly, the nature and extent of our information; but our information itself is not really increased, and the consciousness by which we are supplied with all the materials of our reflections, does not become more productive, by this disposition of its contributions.

But though we have been induced in this way to express our scepticism, both as to the probable improvement and practical utility of metaphysical speculations, we would by no means be understood as having asserted that these studies are absolutely without interest or importance. With regard to Perception, indeed, and some of the other primary

functions of mind, it seems now to be admitted, that philosophy can be of no use to us, and that the profoundest reasonings lead us back to the creed, and the ignorance, of the vulgar. As to the laws of Association, however, the case is somewhat different. Instances of the application of such laws are indeed familiar to every one, and there are few who do not of themselves arrive at some imperfect conception of their general limits and application: But that they are sooner learned, and may be more steadily and extensively applied, when our observations are assisted by the lessons of a judicious instructor, seems scarcely to admit of doubt; and though there are no errors of opinion perhaps that may not be corrected without the help of metaphysical principles, it cannot be disputed, that an habitual acquaintance with those principles leads us more directly to the source of such errors, and enables us more readily to explain and correct some of the most formidable aberrations of the human understanding. After all, perhaps, the chief value of such speculations will be found to consist in the wholesome exercise which they afford to the faculties, and the delight which is produced by the consciousness of intellectual exertion. Upon this subject, we gladly borrow from Mr. Stewart the following admirable quotations:—

"An author well qualified to judge, from his own experience, of whatever conduces to invigorate or to embellish the understanding, has beautifully remarked, that, 'by turning the soul inward on itself, its forces are concentrated, and are fitted for stronger and bolder flights of science; and that, in such pursuits, whether we take, or whether we lose the game, the Chase is certainly of service.' In this respect, the philosophy of the mind (abstracting entirely from that pre-eminence which belongs to it in consequence of its practical applications) may claim a distinguished rank among those preparatory disciplines, which another writer of equal talents has happily compared to 'the crops which are raised, not for the sake of the harvest, but to be ploughed in as a dressing to the land.'"

pp. 166, 167.

In following out his observations on the scope and spirit of Dr. Reid's philosophy, Mr. Stewart does not present his readers with any general outline or summary of the peculiar doctrines by which it is principally distinguished. This part of the book indeed appears to be addressed almost exclusively to those who are in some degree initiated in the studies of which it treats, and consists of a vindication of Dr. Reid's philosophy from the most important objections that had been made to it by his antagonists. The first is proposed by the materialist, and is directed against the gratuitous assumption of the existence of mind. To this Mr. Stewart answers with irresistible force, that the philosophy of Dr. Reid has in reality no concern with the theories that may be formed as to the *causes* of our mental operations, but is entirely confined to the investigation of those phenomena which are known to us by internal consciousness, and not by external perception. On the theory of Materialism itself, he makes some admirable observations: and, after having stated the perceptible improvement that has lately taken place in the method of considering those intellectual phenomena, he concludes with the following judicious and eloquent observations:—

"The authors who form the most conspicuous exceptions to this gradual progress, consist chiefly of men, whose errors may be easily accounted for, by the prejudices connected with their circumscribed habits of observation and inquiry;—of Physiologists, accustomed to attend to that part alone of the human frame, which the knife of the Anatomist can lay open; or of Chemists, who enter on the analysis of Thought, fresh from the decompositions of the laboratory; carrying into the Theory of Mind itself (what Bacon expressly calls) 'the smoke and tarnish of the furnace.' Of the value of such pursuits, none can think more highly than myself; but I must be allowed to observe, that the most distinguished pre-eminence in them does not necessarily imply a capacity of collected and abstracted reflection; or an understanding superior to the prejudices of early association, and the illusions of popular language. I will not go so far as Cicero, when he ascribes to those who possess these advantages, a more than ordinary vigour of intellect: '*Magni est ingenii revocare mentem a sensibus, et cogitationem a consuetudine abducere.*' I would only claim for them, the merit of patient and cautious research; and would exact from their antagonists the same qualifications."—pp. 110, 111.

The second great objection that has been made to the doctrines of Dr. Reid, is, that they tend to damp the ardour of philosophical curiosity, by stating as ultimate facts many phenomena which might be resolved into simpler principles; and perplex the science of mind with an unnecessary multitude of internal and unaccountable properties. As to the first of these objections, we agree entirely with Mr. Stewart. It is certainly better to damp the ardour of philosophers, by exposing their errors and convincing them of their ignorance, than to gratify it by subscribing to their blunders. It is one step towards a true explanation of any phenomenon, to expose the fallacy of an erroneous one; and though the contemplation of such errors may render us more diffident of our own success, it will probably teach us some lessons that are far from diminishing our chance of obtaining it. But to the charge of multiplying unnecessarily the original and instinctive principles of our nature, Mr. Stewart, we think, has not made by any means so satisfactory an answer. The greater part of what he says indeed upon this subject, is rather an apology for Dr. Reid, than a complete justification of him. In his classification of the active powers, he admits that Dr. Reid has multiplied, without necessity, the number of our original affections; and that, in the other parts of his doctrine, he has manifested a leaning to the same extreme. It would have been better if he had rested the defence of his author upon those concessions; and upon the general reasoning with which they are very skilfully associated, to prove the superior safety and prudence of a tardiness to generalise and assimilate: For, with all our deference for the talents of the author, we find it impossible to agree with him in those particular instances in which he has endeav

oured to expose the injustice of the accusation. After all that Mr. Stewart has said, we can still see no reason for admitting a principle of credulity, or a principle of veracity, in human nature; nor can we discover any sort of evidence for the existence of an instinctive power of interpreting natural signs.

Dr. Reid's only reason for maintaining that the belief we commonly give to the testimony of others is not derived from reasoning and experience, is, that this credulity is more apparent and excessive in children, than in those whose experience and reason is mature. Now, to this it seems obvious to answer, that the experience of children, though not extensive, is almost always entirely *uniform* in favour of the veracity of those about them. There can scarcely be any temptation to utter serious falsehood to an infant; and even if that should happen, they have seldom such a degree of memory or attention as would be necessary for its detection. In all cases, besides, it is admitted that children learn the general rule, before they begin to attend to the exceptions; and it will not be denied that the general rule is, that there is a connection between the assertions of mankind and the realities of which they are speaking. Falsehood is like those irregularities in the construction of a language, which children always overlook for the sake of the general analogy.

The principle of *veracity* is in the same situation. Men speak and assert, in order to accomplish some purpose: But if they did not *generally* speak truth, their assertions would answer no purpose at all—not even that of deception. To speak falsehood, too, even if we could suppose it to be done without a motive, requires a certain exercise of imagination and of the inventive faculties, which is not without labour: While truth is suggested spontaneously—not by the principle of veracity, but by our consciousness and memory. Even if we were not rational creatures, therefore, but spoke merely as a consequence of our sensations, we would speak truth much oftener than falsehood; but being rational, and addressing ourselves to other beings with a view of influencing their conduct or opinions, it follows, as a matter of necessity, that we must almost always speak truth: Even the principle of credulity would not otherwise be sufficient to render it worth while for us to speak at all.

With regard to the principle by which we are enabled to interpret the natural signs of the passions, and of other connected events, we cannot help entertaining a similar scepticism. There is no evidence, we think, for the existence of such a principle; and all the phenomena may be solved with the help of memory and the association of ideas. The "inductive principle" is very nearly in the same predicament; though the full discussion of the argument that might be maintained upon that subject would occupy more room than we can now spare.

After some very excellent observations on the nature and the functions of instinct, Mr. Stewart proceeds to consider, as the last great objection to Dr. Reid's philosophy, the alleged tendency of his doctrines on the subject of *common sense*, to sanction an appeal from the decisions of the learned to the voice of the multitude. Mr. Stewart, with great candour, admits that the phrase was unluckily chosen; and that it has not always been employed with perfect accuracy, either by Dr. Reid or his followers: But he maintains, that the greater part of the truths which Dr. Reid has referred to this authority, are in reality originally and unaccountably impressed on the human understanding, and are necessarily implied in the greater part of its operations. These, he says, may be better denominated, "Fundamental laws of belief;" and he exemplifies them by such propositions as the following: "I am the same person to-day that I was yesterday.—The material world has a real existence.—The future course of nature will resemble the past." We shall have occasion immediately to offer a few observations on some of those propositions.

With these observations Mr. Stewart concludes his defence of Dr. Reid's philosophy: but we cannot help thinking that there was room for a farther vindication, and that some objections may be stated to the system in question, as formidable as any of those which Mr. Stewart has endeavoured to obviate. We shall allude very shortly to those that appear the most obvious and important. Dr. Reid's great achievement was undoubtedly the subversion of the Ideal system, or the confutation of that hypothesis which represents the immediate objects of the mind in perception, as certain *images* or *pictures* of external objects conveyed by the senses to the sensorium. This part of his task, it is now generally admitted that he has performed with exemplary diligence and complete success: But we are by no means so entirely satisfied with the uses he has attempted to make of his victory. After considering the subject with some attention, we must confess that we have not been able to perceive how the destruction of the Ideal theory can be held as a demonstration of the real existence of matter, or a confutation of the most ingenious reasonings which have brought into question the popular faith upon this subject. The theory of images and pictures, in fact, was in its original state more closely connected with the supposition of a real material prototype, than the theory of direct perception; and the sceptical doubts that have since been suggested, appear to us to be by no means exclusively applicable to the former hypothesis. He who believes that certain forms or images are actually transmitted through the organs of sense to the mind, must believe, at least, in the reality of the organs and the images, and probably in their origin from real external existences. He who is contented with stating that he is conscious of certain sensations and perceptions, by no means assumes the independent existence of matter, and gives a safer account of the phenomena than the idealist.

Dr. Reid's sole argument for the real existence of a material world, is founded on the

irresistible belief of it that is implied in Perception and Memory; a belief, the foundations of which, he seems to think, it would be something more than absurd to call in question. Now the reality of this general persuasion or belief, no one ever attempted to deny. The question is only about its justness or truth. It is conceivable, certainly, in every case, that our belief should be erroneous; and there can be nothing absurd in suggesting reasons for doubting of its conformity with truth. The obstinacy of our belief, in this instance, and its constant recurrence, even after all our endeavours to familiarise ourselves with the objections that have been made to it, are not absolutely without parallel in the history of the human faculties. All children believe that the earth is at rest; and that the sun and fixed stars perform a diurnal revolution round it. They also believe that the place which they occupy on the surface is absolutely the uppermost, and that the inhabitants of the opposite surface must be suspended in an inverted position. Now of this universal, practical, and irresistible belief, all persons of education are easily disabused in speculation, though it influences their ordinary language, and continues, in fact, to be the habitual impression of their minds. In the same way, a Berkleian might admit the constant recurrence of the illusions of sense, although his speculative reason were sufficiently convinced of their fallacy.

The phenomena of Dreaming and of Delirium, however, appear to afford a sort of *experimentum crucis*, to demonstrate that a real external existence is not necessary to produce sensation and perception in the human mind. Is it utterly absurd and ridiculous to maintain, that all the objects of our thoughts may be "such stuff as dreams are made of?" or that the uniformity of Nature gives us some reason to presume that the *perceptions* of maniacs and of rational men are manufactured, like their organs, out of the same materials? There is a species of insanity known among medical men by the epithet *notional*, in which, as well as in *delirium tremens*, there is frequently no general depravation of the reasoning and judging faculties, but where the disease consists entirely in the patient mistaking the objects of his thought or imagination for real and present existences. The error of his perceptions, in such cases, is only detected by comparing them with the perceptions of other people; and it is evident that he has just the same reason to impute error to them, as they can have individually for imputing it to him. The majority, indeed, necessarily carries the point, as to all practical consequences: But is there any absurdity in alleging that we can have no absolute or infallible assurance of that as to which the internal conviction of an individual must be supported, and *may be overruled* by the testimony of his fellow-creatures?

Dr. Reid has himself admitted that "we might probably have been so made, as to have all the perceptions and sensations which we now have, without any impression on our bodily organs at all." But it is surely altogether as reasonable to say, that we might have had all those perceptions, without the aid or intervention of any material existence at all. Those perceptions, too, might still have been accompanied with a belief that would not have been less universal or irresistible for being utterly without a foundation in reality. In short, our perceptions can never afford any complete or irrefragable proof of the real existence of external things; because it is easy to conceive that we might have such perceptions without them. We do not know, therefore, with certainty, that our perceptions are ever produced by external objects; and in the cases to which we have just alluded, we actually find perception and its concomitant belief, where we do know with certainty that it is *not* produced by any external existence.

It has been said, however, that we have the same evidence for the existence of the material world, as for that of our own thoughts or conceptions;—as we have no reason for believing in the latter, but that we cannot help it; which is equally true of the former. Now, this appears to us to be very inaccurately argued. Whatever we doubt, and whatever we prove, we must plainly *begin with consciousness*. That alone is certain—all the rest is inference. Does Dr. Reid mean to assert, that our perception of external objects is not a necessary *preliminary* to any proof of their reality, or that our belief in their reality is not founded upon our *consciousness* of perceiving them? It is only our perceptions, then, and not the existence of their objects, which we cannot help believing; and it would be nearly as reasonable to say that we must take all our dreams for realities, because we cannot doubt that we dream, as it is to assert that we have the same evidence for the existence of an external world, as for the existence of the sensations by which it is suggested to our minds.

We dare not now venture farther into this subject; yet we cannot abandon it without observing, that the question is entirely a matter of philosophical and abstract speculation, and that by far the most reprehensible passages in Dr. Reid's writings, are those in which he has represented it as otherwise. When we consider, indeed, the exemplary candour, and temper, and modesty, with which this excellent man has conducted the whole of his speculations, we cannot help wondering that he should ever have forgotten himself so far as to descend to the vulgar raillery which he has addressed, instead of argument, to the abettors of the Berkleian hypothesis. The old joke, of the sceptical philosophers running their noses against posts, tumbling into kennels, and being sent to madhouses, is repeated at least ten times in different parts of Dr. Reid's publications, and really seems to have been considered as an objection not less forcible than facetious. Yet Dr. Reid surely could not be ignorant that those who have questioned the reality of a material universe, never affected to have perceptions, ideas, and sensations, of a different nature from other people. The debate was merely about the *origin* of

these sensations; and could not possibly affect the conduct or feelings of the individual. The sceptic, therefore, who has been taught by experience that certain perceptions are connected with unpleasant sensations, will avoid the occasions of them as carefully as those who look upon the object of their perceptions as external realities. Notions and sensations he cannot deny to exist; and this limited faith will regulate his conduct exactly in the same manner as the more extensive creed of his antagonists. We are persuaded that Mr. Stewart would reject the aid of such an argument for the existence of an external world.

The length to which these observations have extended, deters us from prosecuting any farther our remarks on Dr. Reid's philosophy. The other points in which it appears to us that he has left his system vulnerable are, his explanation of our idea of *cause and effect*, and his speculations on the question of *liberty and necessity*. In the former, we cannot help thinking that he has dogmatised, with a degree of confidence which is scarcely justified by the cogency of his arguments; and has endeavoured to draw ridicule on the reasoning of his antagonists, by illustrations that are utterly inapplicable. In the latter, also, he has made something more than a just use of the prejudices of men and the ambiguity of language; and has more than once been guilty, if we be not mistaken, of what, in a less respectable author, we should not have scrupled to call the most palpable sophistry. We are glad that our duty does not require us to enter into the discussion of this very perplexing controversy; though we may be permitted to remark, that it is somewhat extraordinary to find the dependence of human actions on Motives so positively denied by those very philosophers with whom the doctrine of Causation is of such high authority.

(October, 1806.)

Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley, to the year 1795, *written by himself: With a Continuation to the time of his decease, by his Son Joseph Priestley; and Observations on his Writings.* By Thomas Cooper, President Judge of the Fourth District of Pennsylvania, and the Reverend William Christie. 8vo. pp. 481. London: 1805.

Dr. Priestley has written more, we believe, and on a greater variety of subjects, than any other English author; and probably believed, as his friend Mr. Cooper appears to do at this moment, that his several publications were destined to make an æra in the respective branches of speculation to which they bore reference. We are not exactly of that opinion: But we think Dr. Priestley a person of no common magnitude in the history of English literature; and have perused this miscellaneous volume with more interest than we have usually found in publications of the same description. The memoirs are written with great conciseness and simplicity, and present a very singular picture of that indefatigable activity, that bigotted vanity, that precipitation, cheerfulness, and sincerity, which made up the character of this restless philosopher. The observations annexed by Mr. Cooper are the work, we think, of a powerful, presumptuous, and most untractable understanding. They are written in a defying, dogmatical, unaccommodating style: with much force of reasoning, in many places, but often with great rashness and arrogance; and occasionally with a cant of philosophism, and a tang of party politics, which communicate an air of vulgarity to the whole work, and irresistibly excite a smile at the expense of this magnanimous despiser of all sorts of prejudice and bigotry.*

In the Second part of his book, Mr. Cooper professes to estimate the *Metaphysical* writings of Dr. Priestley, and delivers a long and very zealous defence of the doctrines of Materialism, and of the Necessity of human actions. A good deal of learning and a good deal of talent are shown in this production: But we believe that most of our readers will be surprised to find that Mr. Cooper considers both these questions as having been finally set at rest by the disquisitions of his learned friend!

"Indeed," he observes, "those questions must now be considered as settled; for those who can resist Collins' philosophical inquiry, the section of Dr. Hartley on the mechanism of the mind, and the review of the subject taken by Dr. Priestley and his opponents, are not to be reasoned with. *Interest reipublicæ ut denique sit finis litium*, is a maxim of technical law. It will apply equally to the republic of letters; and the time seems to have arrived, when the separate existence of the human Soul, the freedom of the Will, and the eternal duration of Future punishment, like the doctrines of the Trinity! and Transubstantiation, may be regarded as no longer entitled to public discussion."—p. 335.

The advocates of Necessity, we know, have long been pretty much of this opinion; and we have no inclination to disturb them at present with any renewal of the controversy: But we really did not know that the advocates of Materialism laid claim to the same triumph; and certainly find some difficulty in admitting that all who believe in the existence of mind are unfit to be reasoned with. To us, indeed, it has always appeared that it was much easier to prove the existence of mind, than the existence of matter; and with whatever contempt Mr. Cooper and his friends may regard us, we must be permitted to say a word or two in defence of the vulgar opinion.

* I omit now a very considerable portion of this review, containing a pretty full account of Dr. Priestley's life and conversation, and of his various publications on subjects of theology, natural philosophy, and chemistry; retaining only the following examination of his doctrine of Materialism.

The sum of the argument against the existence of mind, in case any of our readers should be ignorant of it, is shortly as follows. The phenomena of thinking, or perception, are always found connected with a certain mass of organised matter, and have never been known to exist in a separate or detached state. It seems natural, therefore, to consider them as *qualities* of that substance: Nor is it any objection to say, that the quality of thinking has no sort of resemblance or affinity to any of the other qualities with which we know matter to be endowed. This is equally true of all the primary qualities of matter, when compared with each other. Solidity, for instance, bears no sort of resemblance or affinity to extension; nor is there any other reason for our considering them as qualities of the same substance, but that they are always found in conjunction—that they occupy the same portion of space, and present themselves together, on all occasions, to our observation. Now, this may be said, with equal force, of the quality of thinking. It is always found in conjunction with a certain mass of solid and extended matter—it inhabits the same portion of space, and presents itself invariably along with those other qualities the assemblage of which makes up our idea of organised matter. Whatever substratum can support and unite the qualities of solidity and extension, may therefore support the quality of thinking also; and it is eminently unphilosophical to suppose, that it inheres in a separate substance to which we should give the appellation of Mind. All the phenomena of thought, it is said, may be resolved by the assistance of Dr. Hartley, into perception and association. Now, perception is evidently produced by certain mechanical impulses upon the nerves, transmitted to the brain, and can therefore be directly proved to be merely a peculiar species of motion; and association is something very like the vibration of musical cords in juxtaposition, and is strictly within the analogy of material movement.

In answering this argument, we will fairly confess that we have no distinct idea of Substance; and that we are perfectly aware that it is impossible to combine three propositions upon the subject, without involving a contradiction. All that we know of substance, are its qualities; yet qualities must belong to something—and of that something to which they belong, and by which they are united, we neither know anything nor can form any conception. We cannot help believing that it exists; but we have no distinct notion as to the mode of its existence.

Admitting this, therefore, in the first place, we may perhaps be permitted to observe, that it seems a little disorderly and unphilosophical, to class perception among the qualities of matter, when it is obvious, that it is by means of perception alone that we get any notion of matter or its qualities; and that it is possible, with perfect consistency, to maintain the existence of our perceptions, and to deny that of matter altogether. The other qualities of matter are perceived by us; but *perception cannot be perceived:* And all we know about it is, that it is that by which we perceive every thing else. It certainly does sound somewhat absurd and unintelligible, therefore, to say, that perception is that quality of matter by which it becomes conscious of its own existence, and acquainted with its other qualities: Since it is plain that this is not a quality, but a knowledge of qualities; and that *the percipient* must necessarily be distinct from that which is perceived. We must always *begin* with perception; and the followers of Berkeley will tell us, that we must *end* there also. At all events, it certainly never entered into the head of any plain man to conceive that the faculty of perception was itself one of the qualities with which that faculty made him acquainted: or that it could possibly belong to a substance, which his earliest intimations and most indestructible impressions taught him to regard as something external and separate.*

This, then, is the first objection to the doctrine of Materialism,—that it makes the faculty of perception a quality of the thing perceived; and converts, in a way that must at first sight appear absurd to all mankind, our knowledge of the qualities of matter into another quality of the same substance. The truth is, however, that it is a gross and unwarrantable abuse of language, to call perception a *quality* at all. It is an act or an event—a fact or a phenomenon—of which the percipient is conscious: but it cannot be intelligibly conceived as a quality; and, least of all, as a quality of that substance which is known to us as solid and extended. 1*st*, All the qualities of matter, it has been already stated, are perceived by the senses: but the *sensation* itself cannot be so perceived; nor is it possible to call it an object of sense, without the grossest perversion of language. 2*dly*, All the qualities of matter have a direct reference to *Space* or extension; and are conceived, in some measure, as attributes or qualities of the space within which they exist. When we say that a particular body is solid, we mean merely that a certain portion of space is impenetrable: when we say that it is coloured, we

* We are not very partial to the practice of quoting poetry in illustration of metaphysics; but the following lines seem to express so forcibly the universal and natural impression of mankind on this subject, that we cannot help offering them to the consideration of the reader.

"Am I but what I seem, mere flesh and blood?
A branching channel, and a mazy flood?
The purple stream, that through my vessels glides,
Dull and unconscious flows like common tides.
The pipes, through which the circling juices stray,
Are not that thinking I, no more than they.
This frame, compacted with transcendent skill,
Of moving joints, obedient to my will,
Nurs'd from the fruitful glebe like yonder tree,
Waxes and wastes: I call it MINE, not ME.
New matter still the mould'ring mass sustains;
The mansion chang'd, the tenant still remains,
And, from the fleeting stream repair'd by food,
Distinct, as is the swimmer from the flood."

mean that the same portion of space appears of one hue,—and so of the other qualities: but sensation or thought is never conceived so to occupy space, or to characterise it; nor can those faculties be at all conceived as being merely definite portions of space, endued with perceptible properties. In the *third* place, all the primary qualities of matter are inseparable from it, and enter necessarily into its conception and definition. *All matter* must necessarily be conceived as extended, solid, and figured: and also as universally capable of all the secondary qualities. It is obvious, however, that thought or sensation is not an *inseparable* attribute of matter; as by far the greater part of matter is entirely destitute of it; and it is found in connection only with those parts which we term organised; and with those, only while they are in a certain state, which we call alive. If it be said, however, that thought may resemble those accidental qualities of matter, such as heat or colour, which are not inseparable or permanent; then we reply, that neither of these things can, in strictness, be termed qualities of matter, more than thought or sensation: They are themselves substances, or matter possessed of inseparable and peculiar qualities, as well as those which address themselves to the other senses. Light is a material substance, from which the quality of colour is inseparable; and heat is a material substance, which has universally the quality of exciting the sensation of warmth: and both address themselves to, and are distinctly perceived through, our senses. If thought be allowed to be a substance in this sense, it will remain to show that it also is material; by being referable to space, capable of subsisting in every sort of body, of being perceived by the senses, of being transferred from one body to another, and liable to attraction, repulsion, condensation, or reflection—like heat or light.

It is to be remarked also, that wherever any proper *quality*, primary or secondary, can be ascribed generally to any perceptible body or mass of matter, that quality must exist and be recognised in every part of it. If the whole of any such body is hard, or coloured, or weighty, or hot, or cold, every part of it, whether merely considered and examined as separable, or actually separated and detached, must be hard, coloured, and weighty also: these qualities being truly conditions, and, in fact, the only real proofs of the material existence of such a body, and of all the parts of it. But though thought or volition may be said to have their residence somewhere within a human body, they certainly are not qualities of its material mass, in this sense; or to the effect of being sensibly present in every part or portion of it! We never, at least, have happened to hear it surmised that there is thought in the elbow-joint, or volition in the nail of the great toe: and if it be said that these *phenomena* are results only of the *living organisation* as a whole, it seems to us that this is a substantial abandonment of the whole argument, and an admission that they are not qualities of matter (for *results* and *qualities* belong not to the same category), but mere facts or *phenomena* of a totally different description, for the production of which the apparatus of some such organisation may, for the time, be necessary.

But the material thing is, that it is not to the whole mass of our bodies, or their living organisation in general, that these phenomena are said by Dr. Priestley and his disciples to belong, as proper qualities. On the contrary, they distinctly admit that they are not qualities of that physical mass generally, nor even of those finer parts of it which constitute our organs of sense. They admit that the eye and the ear act the parts merely of optical or acoustic instruments; and are only useful in transmitting impulses (or, it may be, fine substances) to the nervous part of *the brain*: of which alone, therefore, and indeed only of its minute and invisible portions, these singular *phenomena* are alleged to be proper physical qualities! It is difficult, we think, to make the absurdity of such a doctrine more apparent than by this plain statement of its import and amount. The only ground, it must always be recollected, for holding that mind and all its *phenomena* are mere *qualities of matter*, is the broad and popular one, that we always find them connected with a certain *visible* mass of organised matter, called a living body: But when it is admitted that they are not qualities of this mass generally, or even of any part of it *which is visible* or perceptible by our senses, the allegation of their being mere material qualities of a part of the brain, must appear not merely gratuitous, but inconsistent and absolutely absurd. If the eye and the ear, with their delicate structures and fine sensibility, are but vehicles and apparatus, why should the attenuated and unknown tissues of the cerebral nerves be supposed to be any thing else? or why should the resulting sensations, to which both are apparently ministrant, and no more than ministrant, and which have no conceivable resemblance or analogy to any attribute of matter, but put on the list of the physical qualities of the latter—which is of itself too slight and subtle to enable us to say what are its common physical qualities? But we have yet another consideration to suggest, before finally closing this discussion.

It probably has not escaped observation, that throughout the preceding argument, we have allowed the advocates for Materialism to assume that what (to oblige them) we have called thought or perception generally, was one uniform and identical thing; to which, therefore, the appellation of a *quality* might possibly be given, without manifest and palpable absurdity. But in reality there is no ground, or even room, for claiming such an allowance. The acts or functions which *we* ascribe to mind, are at all events not one, but many and diverse. Perception no doubt is one of them—but it is not identical with sensation; and still less with memory or imagination, or volition,—or with love, anger, fear, deliberation, or hatred. Each of these, on the

contrary, is a separate and distinguishable act, function, or *phenomenon*, of the existence of which we become aware, not through perception, or the external senses at all, but through consciousness or reflection alone: and none of them (with the single exception, perhaps, of perception) have any necessary or natural reference to any external or material existence whatever. It is not disputed, however, that it is only by perception and the senses, that we can gain any knowledge of matter; and, consequently, whatever we come to know by consciousness only, cannot possibly belong to that category, or be either material or external. But we are not aware that any materialist has ever gone the length of directly maintaining that volition for example, or memory, or anger, or fear, or any other such affection, were proper material qualities of our bodily frames, or could be perceived and recognised as such, by the agency of the external senses; in the same way as the weight, heat, colour, or elasticity which may belong to these frames. But if they are not each of them capable of being so perceived, as separate physical qualities, it is plain that nothing can be gained in argument, by affecting to disregard their palpable diversity, and seeking to class them all under one vague name, of thought or perception. Even with that advantage, we have seen that the doctrine, of perception or thought being a mere quality of matter, is not only untenable, but truly self-contradictory and unintelligible. But when the number and diversity of the phenomena necessarily covered by that general appellation is considered, along with the fact that most of them have no reference to matter, and do in no way imply its existence, the absurdity of representing them as so many of its distinct perceptible qualities, must be too apparent, we think, to admit of any serious defence.

The sum of the whole then is, that all the knowledge which we gain only by Perception and the use of our external Senses, is knowledge of Matter, and its qualities and attributes alone; and all which we gain only by Consciousness and Reflection on our own inward feelings, is necessarily knowledge of Mind, and its states, attributes, and functions. *This* in fact is the whole basis, and *rationale* of the distinction between mind and matter: and, consequently, unless it can be shown that love, anger, and sorrow, as well as memory and volition, are direct objects of sense or external perception, like heat and colour, or figure and solidity, there must be an end, we think, of all question as to their being material qualities.

But, though the very basis and foundation of the argument for Materialism is placed upon the assumption, that thought and perception are qualities of our bodies, it is remarkable that Dr. Priestley, and the other champions of that doctrine, do ultimately give up that point altogether, and maintain, that thought is nothing else than Motion! Now, this, we cannot help thinking, was very impolitic and injudicious in these learned persons: For, so long as they stuck to the general assertion, that thought might, in some way or other, be represented as a quality of matter,—although it was not perceived by the senses, and bore no analogy to any of its other qualities,—and talked about the inherent capacity of substance, to support all sorts of qualities; although their doctrine might elude our comprehension, and revolt all our habits of thinking,—still it might be difficult to demonstrate its fallacy; and a certain perplexing argumentation might be maintained, by a person well acquainted with the use, and abuse, of words: But when they cast away the protection of this most convenient obscurity, and, instead of saying that they do not know what thought is, have the courage to refer it to the known category of Motion, they evidently subject their theory to the test of rational examination, and furnish us with a criterion by which its truth may be easily determined.

We shall not be so rash as to attempt any definition of motion; but we believe we may take it for granted, that our readers know pretty well what it is. At all events, it is not *a quality* of matter. It is an act, a phenomenon, or a fact:—but it makes no part of the description or conception of matter; though it can only exist with reference to that substance. Let any man ask himself, however, whether the motion of matter bears any sort of resemblance to thought or sensation; or whether it be even *conceivable* that these should be one and the same thing?—But, it is said, we find sensation always produced by motion; and as we can discover nothing else in conjunction with it, we are justified in ascribing it to motion. But this, we beg leave to say, is not the question. It is not necessary to inquire, whether motion may *produce* sensation or not, but whether sensation *be* motion, and nothing else? It seems pretty evident, to be sure, that motion can never produce any thing but motion or impulse; and that it is at least as inconceivable that it should ever produce sensation in matter, as that it should produce a separate substance, called mind. But this, we repeat, is not the question with the materialists. Their proposition is, not that motion produces sensation—which might be as well in the mind as in the body; but, that sensation *is* motion; and that all the phenomena of thought and perception are intelligibly accounted for by saying, that they are certain little shakings in the pulpy part of the brain.

There are certain propositions which it is difficult to confute, only because it is impossible to comprehend them: and this, the substantive article in the creed of Materialism, really seems to be of this description. To say that thought is motion, is as unintelligible to us, as to say that it is space, or time, or proportion.

There may be little shakings in the brain, for any thing we know, and there may even be shakings of a different kind, accompanying every act of thought or perception;—but, that the shakings themselves *are* the thought or

perception, we are so far from admitting, that we find it absolutely impossible to comprehend what is meant by the assertion. The shakings are certain throbbings, vibrations, or stirrings, in a whitish, half-fluid substance like custard, which we might see perhaps, or feel, if we had eyes and fingers sufficiently small or fine for the office. But what should we see or feel, upon the supposition that we could detect, by our senses, every thing that actually took place in the brain? We should see the particles of this substance change their place a little, move a little up or down, to the right or to the left, round about, or zig-zag, or in some other course or direction. This is all that we could see, if Hartley's conjecture were proved by actual observation; because this is all that exists in motion,—according to our conception of it; and all that we mean, when we say that there is motion in any substance. Is it intelligible, then, to say, that this motion, the whole of which we see and comprehend, is *thought and feeling*?—and that thought and feeling will exist wherever we can excite a similar motion in a similar substance?—In our humble apprehension, the proposition is not so much false, as utterly unmeaning and incomprehensible. That sensation may follow motion in the brain, or may even be produced by it, is conceivable at least, and may be affirmed with perfect precision and consistency; but that the motion is itself sensation, and that the proper and complete definition of thought and feeling is, that they are certain vibrations in the brain, is a doctrine, we think, that can only be wondered at, and that must be comprehended before it be answered.

No advocate for the existence of mind, ever thought it necessary to deny that there was a certain bodily apparatus necessary to thought and sensation in man—and that, on many occasions, the sensation was preceded or introduced by certain impulses and corresponding movements of this material machinery:—we cannot see without eyes and light, nor think without living bodies. All that they maintain is, that these impulses and movements are not feelings or thought, but merely the occasions of feeling and thought; and that it is impossible for them to confound the material motions which precede those sensations, with the sensations themselves, which have no conceivable affinity with matter.

The theory of Materialism, then, appears to us to be altogether unintelligible and absurd; and, without recurring to the reasoning of the Berkeleians, it seems quite enough to determine us to reject it, that it confounds the act of perception with the qualities perceived, and classes among the objects of perception, the faculty by which these objects are introduced to our knowledge,—and which faculty must be exercised, before we can attain to any conception, either of matter or its qualities.

We do not pretend to have looked through the whole controversy which Dr. Priestley's publications on this subject appears to have excited: But nothing certainly has struck us with more astonishment, than the zeal with which he maintains that this doctrine, and that of Necessity, taken together, afford the greatest support to the cause of religion and morality! We are a little puzzled, indeed, to discover what use, or what room, there can be for a God at all, upon this hypothesis of Materialism; as well as to imagine what species of being the God of the materialist must be. If the mere organisation of matter produces reason, memory, imagination, and all the other attributes of mind,—and if these different phenomena be the necessary result of certain motions impressed upon matter; then there is no need for any other reason or energy in the universe: and things may be administered very comfortably, by the intellect spontaneously evolved in the different combinations of matter. But if Dr. Priestley will have a superfluous Deity notwithstanding, we may ask what sort of a Deity he can expect? He denies the existence of mind or spirit altogether; so that his Deity must be material; and his wisdom, power, and goodness must be the necessary result of a certain organisation. But how can a material deity be immortal? How could he have been formed? Or why should there not be more,—formed by himself, or by his creator? We will not affirm that Dr. Priestley has not attempted to answer these questions; but we will take it upon us to say, that he cannot have answered them in a satisfactory manner. As to his paradoxical doctrines, with regard to the natural mortality of man, and the incomprehensible gift of immortality conferred on a material structure which visibly moulders and is dissolved, we shall only say that it exceeds in absurdity any of the dogmas of the Catholics; and can only be exceeded by his own supposition, that our Saviour, being only a man, and yet destined to live to the day of judgment, is still alive in his original human body upon earth, and is really the Wandering Jew of vulgar superstition!

(October, 1805.)

Academical Questions. By the Right Honourable William Drummond. K. C., F. R. S., F. R. S. E Author of a Translation of Persius. Vol. I. 4to. pp. 412. Cadell and Davies. London: 1805

We do not know very well what to say of this very learned publication. To some readers it will probably be enough to announce, that it is occupied with Metaphysical speculations. To others, it may convey a more precise idea of its character, to be told, that though it gave a violent headache, in less than an hour, to the most intrepid logician of our fraternity, he could not help reading on till he came to the end of the volume.*

Mr. Drummond begins with the doctrine of Locke; and exposes, we think, very successfully, the futility of that celebrated author's definition of Substance, as "*one knows not what*" support of such qualities as are capable of producing simple ideas in us. This notion of substance he then shows to be derived from the old Platonic doctrine of the primary matter, or ὑλη, to which the same objections are applicable.

Having thus discarded Substance in general from the list of existences, Mr. Drummond proceeds to do as much for the particular substance called *Matter*, and all its qualities. In this chapter, accordingly, he avows himself to be a determined Idealist; and it is the scope of his whole argument to prove, that what we call qualities in external substances, are in fact nothing more than sensations in our own minds; and that what have been termed primary qualities, are in this respect entirely upon a footing with those which are called secondary. His reasoning upon this subject coincides very nearly with that of Bishop Berkeley; of whom, indeed, he says, that if his arguments be not really conclusive, it is certainly to be lamented that they should have been so imperfectly answered.

To us, we will confess, it does not seem of very great consequence to determine whether there be any room for a distinction between the primary and secondary qualities of matter; for though we are rather inclined to hold that Dr. Reid's observations have established its possibility, we cannot help saying, that it is a distinction which does not touch at all upon the fundamental question, as to the evidence which we have, by our senses, for the existence of a material world. Dr. Reid and his followers contend as strenuously for the real existence of those material qualities which produce in us the sensations of heat, or of colour, as of those which give us intimations of solidity, figure, or extension. We know a little more, indeed, according to them, about the one sort of qualities than the other; but the evidence we have for their existence is exactly the same in both cases; nor is it more a law of our nature, that the sensation of resistance should suggest to us the definable quality of solidity in an external object, than that the sensation of heat should suggest to us, that quality in an external object, which we cannot define otherwise than as the external cause of this sensation.

Mr. Drummond, we think, has not attended sufficiently to this part of his antagonist's position; and after assuming, somewhat too precipitately, that secondary qualities are universally admitted to have no existence but in the mind of him who perceives them, proceeds, with an air of triumph that is at all events premature, to demonstrate, that there is nothing in the case of primary qualities by which they can be distinguished in this respect from the secondary. The fact unquestionably is, that Dr. Reid and his followers assert the positive and independent existence of secondary, as well as of primary qualities in matter; and that there is, upon their hypothesis, exactly the same evidence for the one as for the other. The general problem, as to the probable existence of matter—unquestionably the most fundamental and momentous in the whole science of metaphysics—may be fairly and intelligibly stated in a very few words.

Bishop Berkeley, and after him Mr. Drummond, have observed, that by our senses, we can have nothing but sensations; and that sensations, being affections of mind, cannot possibly bear any resemblance to matter, or any of its qualities; and hence they infer, that we cannot possibly have any evidence for the existence of matter; and that what we term our perception of its qualities, is in fact nothing else than a sensation in our own minds. Dr. Reid, on the other hand, distinctly admitting that the primary functions of our senses is to make us conscious of certain sensations, which can have no sort of resemblance or affinity to the qualities of matter, has asserted it as a *fact* admitting of no dispute, but recognised by every human creature, that these sensations *necessarily suggest to us* the notion of certain external existences, endowed with particular definable qualities; and that these *perceptions*, by which our *sensations* are accompanied, are easily and clearly distinguishable from the sensations themselves, and cannot be confounded with them, without the most wilful perversity. Perception, again, he holds, necessarily implies the existence of the object perceived; and the reality of a material world is thus as clearly deduced from the exercise of *this* faculty, as the reality of our own existence can be from our *consciousness*, or other sensations. It appears, therefore, that there are two questions to be considered in determining on the merits of this controversy. *First*, whether there be any room for a distinction between sensation and perception; and, *secondly*, if we shall allow such a distinction, whether perception does necessarily imply the real and external existence of the objects perceived.

If by perception, indeed, we understand, as Dr. Reid appears to have done, the immediate and positive discovery of external existences, it is evident that the mere assumption of this faculty puts an end to the whole question; since it necessarily takes those existences for granted, and, upon that hypothesis, defines the faculty in question to be that by which we discover their qualities. This, however, it is plain, is not reasoning, but assertion; and it is not the mere assertion of a fact, which in these subjects is the whole perhaps of our legitimate philosophy, but of something which

* For the reasons stated in the note prefixed to this division of the book, I refrain from reprinting the greater part of this review; and give only that part of it which is connected with the speculations in the preceding articles, and bears upon the question of the existence of an external world, and the faith to be given to the intimations of our senses, and other internal convictions.

may or may not be inferred from the fact, according to the views of the inquirer. The inquiry is an inquiry into the functions and operations of *mind;* and all that can possibly be stated as *fact* on such an occasion, must relate to the state and affections of mind only: But to assume the existence of a material world, in order afterwards to define one function of mind to be that by which it discovers material qualities, is evidently blending hypothesis in the statement, and prejudging the controversy by assumption. The fact itself, we really conceive not to be liable to any kind of doubt or dispute; and yet the statement of it, obvious as it is, seems calculated to retrench a good deal from each of the opposite assertions. The fact, if we be not greatly mistaken, is confessedly as follows.

We have occasionally certain sensations which we call heat, pain, resistance, &c. These feelings, of course, belong only to the mind, of which they are peculiar affections; and both parties are agreed in asserting, that they have no resemblance, or necessary reference, to any thing external. Dr. Reid has made this indeed the very ground-work of his reasonings on the subject of perception; and it will not probably be called in question by his antagonists, who go the length of inferring from it, that nothing but mind can be conceived to have an existence in nature. This, then, is one fact which we may safely assume as quite certain and indisputable, viz. that our sensations are affections of the mind, and have no necessary reference to any other existence. But there is another fact at least as obvious and indisputable, which the one party seems disposed to overlook, and the other to invest with undue authority, in the discussion. This second fact is, that some of the sensations in question are uniformly and irresistibly *accompanied* by the apprehension and belief of certain external existences, distinguished by peculiar qualities. The fact certainly admits of no dispute; and, accordingly, the philosophers who first attempted to prove that this belief was without foundation, have uniformly claimed the merit of disabusing mankind of a natural and universal illusion. Now this apprehension and belief of external existences, is in itself as much an affection of mind, as the sensations by which it is accompanied; and those who deny the distinction between perception and sensation, might be justified perhaps in asserting, that it is only a sensation of another kind: at the same time, as the essence of it consists in the apprehension of an independent existence, there can be no harm in distinguishing it, by a separate appellation, from those sensations which centre in the sentient being, and suggest to him no idea of any other existence. It is in this sense alone, it appears to us, that perception can be understood in strict philosophical language. It means no more than that affection of the mind which consists in an apprehension and belief in the existence of external objects.

Now in this sense of the word, there can be no doubt that there is a real distinction between mere sensation and perception; inasmuch as there is a distinction between our feelings of pain, resistance, &c., and our conception and belief of real external existences: But they differ merely as one affection of mind may differ from another; and it is plainly unwarrantable to assume the real existence of external objects as a part of the statement of a purely intellectual phenomenon. After allowing the reality of this distinction, there is still room therefore for considering the second question to which we alluded in the outset, viz. Whether perception does necessarily imply the existence of external objects.

Upon this subject, we entertain an opinion which will not give satisfaction, we are afraid, to either of the contending parties. We think that the existence of external objects is not *necessarily* implied in the phenomena of perception; but we think that there is no complete proof of their nonexistence; and that philosophy, instead of being benefited, would be subjected to needless embarrassments, by the absolute assumption of the ideal theory.

The reality of external existences is not necessarily implied in the phenomena of perception; because we can easily imagine that our impressions and conceptions might have been exactly as they are, although matter had never been created. Belief, we familiarly know, to be no infallible criterion of actual existence; and it is impossible to doubt, that we might have been so framed as to receive all the impressions which we now ascribe to the agency of external objects, from the mechanism of our own minds, or the particular volition of the Deity. The phenomena of dreaming, and of some species of madness, seem to form experimental proofs of the possibility we have now stated; and demonstrate, in our apprehension, that perception, as we have defined it, (*i. e.* an apprehension and belief of external existences,) does not necessarily imply the independent reality of its objects. Nor is it less absurd to say that we have the same evidence for the existence of external objects that we have for the existence of our own sensations: For it is quite plain, that our belief in the former is founded altogether on our consciousness of the latter; and that the evidence of this belief is consequently of a *secondary* nature. We cannot doubt of the existence of our sensations, without being guilty of the grossest contradiction; but we may doubt of the existence of the material world, without any contradiction at all. If we annihilate our sensations, we annihilate ourselves; and, of course, leave no being to doubt or to reason. If we annihilate the external world, we still leave entire all those sensations and perceptions which a different hypothesis would refer to its mysterious agency on our minds.

On the other hand, it is certainly going too far to assert, that the nonexistence of matter is *proved* by such evidence as necessarily to command our assent: Since it evidently implies no contradiction to suppose, that such a thing as matter may exist, and that an omnipotent being might make us capable of discovering its qualities. The instinctive and insurmountable belief that we have of its existence, certainly is not to be surrendered, merely because it is possible to suppose it erroneous; or difficult to comprehend how a material and immaterial substance can act upon each other. The evidence of this universal and irresistible belief, in short, is not to be altogether disregarded; and, unless it can be shown that it leads to actual contradictions and absurdities, the utmost length that philosophy can warrantably go, is to conclude that it may be delusive; but that it may also be true.

The rigorous maxim, of giving no faith to any thing short of direct and immediate consciousness, seems more calculated, we think, to perplex than to simplify our philosophy, and will run us up, in two vast strides, to the very brink of absolute annihilation. We deny the existence of the material world, because we have not for it the primary evidence of consciousness; and because the clear conception and indestructible belief we have of it, *may be* fallacious, for any thing we can prove to the contrary. This conclusion annihilates at once all external objects; and, among them, our own bodies, and the bodies *and minds* of all other men; for it is quite evident that we can have no evidence of the existence of other minds, except through the mediation of the matter they are supposed to animate; and if matter be nothing more than an affection of our own minds, there is an end to the existence of every other. This first step, therefore, reduces the whole universe to the mind of the individual reasoner; and leaves no existence in nature, but *one mind*, with its compliment of sensations and ideas. The second step goes still farther; and no one can hesitate to take it, who has ventured deliberately on the first. If our senses may deceive us, so may our *memory;*—if we will not believe in the existence of matter, because it is not vouched by internal consciousness, and because it is conceivable that it should not exist, we cannot consistently believe in the reality of any past impression: for which, in like manner, we cannot have the direct evidence of consciousness, and of which our present recollection may possibly be fallacious. Even upon the vulgar hypothesis, we know that memory is much more deceitful than perception; and there is still greater hazard in assuming the reality of any past existence from our present recollection of it, than in relying on the reality of a present existence from our immediate perception. If we discredit our *memory*, however, and deny all existence of which we have not a present consciousness or sensation, it is evident that we must annihilate *our own personal identity*, and refuse to believe that we had thought or sensation at any previous moment. There can be no reasoning, therefore, nor knowledge, nor opinion; and we must end by virtually annihilating ourselves, and denying that any thing whatsoever exists in nature, but the present solitary and momentary impression.

This is the legitimate and inevitable termination of that determined scepticism which refuses to believe any thing without the highest of all evidence, and chooses to conclude positively that every thing is not, which may possibly be conceived not to be. The process of reasoning which it implies, is neither long nor intricate; and its conclusion would be undeniably just, if every thing was necessarily true which could be asserted without a contradiction. It is perfectly true, that we are *absolutely sure* of nothing but what we feel at the present moment; and that it is possible to distinguish between the evidence we have for the existence of the present impression, and the evidence of any other existence. The first alone is complete and unquestionable; we may hesitate about all the rest without any absolute contradiction. But the distinction, we apprehend, is in itself of as little use in philosophy, as in ordinary life; and the absolute and positive denial of all existence, except that of our immediate sensation, altogether rash and unwarranted. The objects of our perception and of our recollection, certainly *may* exist, although we cannot demonstrate that they *must;* and when in spite of all our abstractions, we find that we must come back, and not only reason with our fellow creatures as separate existences, but engage daily in speculations about the qualities and properties of matter, it must appear, at least, an unprofitable refinement which would lead us to dwell much on the possibility of their nonexistence. There is no sceptic, probably, who would be bold enough to maintain, that this single doctrine of the nonexistence of any thing but our present impressions, would constitute a just or useful system of logic and moral philosophy; and if, after flourishing with it as an unfruitful paradox in the outset, we are obliged to recur to the ordinary course of observation and conjecture as to the nature of our faculties, it may be doubted whether any real benefit has been derived from its promulgation, or whether the hypothesis can be received into any sober system of philosophy. To deny the existence of matter and of mind, indeed, is not to philosophise, but to destroy the materials of philosophy. It requires no extraordinary ingenuity or power of reasoning to perceive the grounds upon which their existence may be *doubted;* but we acknowledge that we cannot see how it can be said to have been *disproved;* and think we perceive very clearly, that philosophy will neither be simplified nor abridged by refusing to take it for granted.

Upon the whole, then, we are inclined to think, that the conception and belief which we have of material objects (which is what we mean by the perception of them) does not amount to a complete proof of their existence, but renders it sufficiently probable: that the superior and complete assurance we have of the existence of our present sensations, does by no means entitle us positively to deny the reality of every other existence; and that as this speculative scepticism neither renders us independent of the ordinary modes of investi-

gation, nor assists us materially in the use of them, it is inexpedient to dwell long upon it in the course of our philosophical inquiries, and much more advisable to proceed upon the supposition that the real condition of things is conformable to our natural apprehensions.

The little sketch we have now ventured to offer of the abstract, or thorough-going philosophy of scepticism, will render it unnecessary for us to follow our author minutely through the different branches of this inquiry. Overlooking, or at least undervaluing the indisputable fact, that our sensations are uniformly accompanied with a distinct apprehension, and firm belief in the existence of real external objects, he endeavours to prove, that the qualities which we ascribe to them are in reality nothing more than names for our peculiar sensations; and maintains accordingly, that because men differ in their opinions of the same object, it is impossible to suppose that they actually perceive any real object at all; as a real existence must always appear the same to those who actually perceive it.

His illustrations are of this nature. Water, which feels tepid to a Laplander, would appear cold to a native of Sumatra: But the same water cannot be both hot and cold: therefore it is to be inferred that neither of them is affected by any real quality in the external body, but that each describes merely his own sensations. Now, the conclusion here is plainly altogether unwarranted by the fact; since it is quite certain that both the persons in question perceive the same quality in the water, though they are affected by it in a different manner. The solution of the whole puzzle is, that heat and cold are not different qualities; but different degrees of the same quality, and probably exist only relatively to each other. If the water is of a higher temperature than the air, or the body of the person who touches it, he will call it warm; if of a lower temperature, he will call it cold. But this does not prove by any means, that the difference between two distinct temperatures is ideal, or that it is not always perceived by all individuals in the very same way. If Mr. Drummond could find out a person who not only thought the water cold which other people called warm, but also thought that warm which they perceived to be cold, he might have some foundation for his inference; but while all mankind agree that ice is cold, and steam hot, and concur indeed most exactly in their judgments of the *comparative* heat of all external bodies, it is plainly a mere quibble on the convertible nature of these qualities, to call in question the identity of their perceptions, because they make the variable standard of their own temperature the rule for denominating other bodies hot or cold.

In the same way, Mr. Drummond goes on to say, one man calls the flavour of assafœtida nauseous, and another thinks it agreeable;—one nation delights in a species of food which to its neighbours appears disgusting. How, then, can we suppose that they perceive the same real qualities, when their judgments in regard to them are so diametrically opposite? Now, nothing, we conceive, is more obvious than the fallacy of this reasoning. The *liking*, or *disliking*, of men to a particular object, has nothing to do with the perception of its external qualities; and they may differ entirely as to their opinion of its *agreeableness*, though they concur perfectly as to the description of all its properties. One man may admire a tall woman, and another a short one; but it would be rather rash to infer, that they did not agree in recognising a difference in stature, or that they had no uniform ideas of magnitude in general. In the same way, one person may have an antipathy to salt, and another a liking for it; but they both perceive it to be salt, and both agree in describing it by that appellation. To give any degree of plausibility to Mr. Drummond's inferences, it would be necessary for him to show that some men thought brandy and Cayenne pepper insipid and tasteless, and objected at the same time to milk and spring water as excessively acrid and pungent.

In the concluding part of his book, Mr. Drummond undertakes nothing less than a defence of the theory of Ideas, against the arguments of Dr. Reid. This is a bold attempt; but, we are inclined to think, not a successful one. Mr. Drummond begins with the old axiom, that nothing can act but where it is; and infers, that as real material objects cannot penetrate to the seat of the soul, that sentient principle can only perceive certain images or ideas of them; against the assumption of which he conceives there can be no considerable obstacle. Now, it is needless, we think, to investigate the legitimacy of this reasoning very narrowly, because the foundation, we are persuaded, is unsound. The axiom, we believe, is now admitted to be fallacious (in the sense at least here assigned to it) by all who have recently paid any attention to the subject. But what does Mr. Drummond understand exactly by *ideas*? Does he mean certain films, shadows, or *simulacra*, proceeding from real external existences, and passing through real external organs to the local habitation of the soul? If he means this, then he admits the existence of a material world, as clearly as Dr. Reid does; and subjects himself to all the ridicule which he has himself so justly bestowed upon the hypothesis of animal spirits, or any other supposition, which explains the intercourse between mind and matter, by imagining some matter, of so fine a nature as almost to graduate into mind! If, on the other hand, by ideas, Mr. Drummond really means nothing but sensations and perceptions (as we have already explained that word), it is quite obvious that Dr. Reid has never called their existence in question; and the whole debate comes back to the presumptions for the existence of an external world; or the reasonableness of trusting to that indestructible belief which certainly accompanies those sensations, as evidence of their having certain external causes. We cannot help doubting, whether Mr. Drummond has clearly stated to himself, in which of these two senses he proposes to

defend the doctrine of ideas. The doctrine of IMAGES proceeding from actual external existences, is the only one in behalf of which he can claim the support of the ancient philosophers; and it is to it he seems to allude, in several of the remarks which he makes on the illusions of sight. On the other supposition, however, he has no occasion to dispute with Dr. Reid about the existence of ideas; for the Doctor assuredly did not deny that we had sensations and perceptions, notions, recollections, and all the other affections of mind to which the word idea may be applied, in that other sense of it. There can be no question upon that supposition, but about the *origin* of these ideas — which belongs to another chapter.

Mr. Drummond seems to lay the whole stress of his argument upon a position of Hume's, which he applies himself to vindicate from the objections which Dr. Reid has urged against it. "The table which I see," says Dr. Hume, "diminishes as I remove from it; but the real table suffers no alteration:—it could be nothing but its image, therefore, which was present to my mind." Now this statement, we think, admits pretty explicitly, that there is a real table, the image of which is presented to the mind: but, at all events, we conceive that the phenomenon may be easily reconciled with the supposition of its real existence. Dr. Reid's error, if there be one, seems to consist in his having asserted positively, and without any qualification, that it is the real table which we perceive, when our eyes are turned towards it. When the matter however is considered very strictly, it will be found that by the sense of seeing we can perceive nothing but *light*, variously arranged and diversified; and that, when we look towards a table, we do not actually see the table itself, but only the rays of light which are reflected from it to the eye. Independently of the co-operation of our other senses, it seems generally to be admitted, that we should perceive nothing by seeing but an assemblage of colours, divided by different lines; and our only *visual* notion of the table (however real it might be) would, therefore, be that of a definite portion of light, distinguished by its colour, from the other portions that were perceived at the same time. It seems equally impossible to dispute, however, that we should receive from this impression the belief and conception of an external existence, and that we should have the very same evidence for its reality, as for that of the objects of our other senses. But if the external existence of light be admitted, a very slight attention to its laws and properties, will show its appearances must vary, according to our distance from the solid objects which emit it. We perceive the form of bodies by sight, in short, very nearly as a blind man perceives them, by tracing their extremities with his stick: It is only the light in one case, and the stick in the other, that is properly felt or perceived; but the real form of the object is indicated, in both cases, by the state and disposition of the medium which connects it with our sensations. It is by intimations formerly received from the sense of Touch, no doubt, that we ultimately discover that the rays of light which strike our eyes with the impressions of form and colour, proceed from distant objects, which are solid and extended in three dimensions; and it is only by recollecting what we have learned from *this* sense, that we are enabled to conceive them as endued with these qualities. By the eye itself we do not perceive these qualities: nor, in strictness of speech, do we perceive, by this sense, any qualities whatever of the reflecting object; we perceive merely the light which it reflects; distinguished by its colour from the other light that falls on the eye along with it, and assuming a new form and extension, according as the distance or position of the body is varied in regard to us. These variations are clearly explained by the known properties of light, as ascertained by experiment; and evidently afford no ground for supposing any alteration in the object which emits it, or for throwing any doubts upon the real existence of such an object. Because the divergence of the rays of light varies with the distance between their origin and the eye, is there the slightest reason for pretending, that the magnitude of the object from which they proceed must be held to have varied also?

(April, 1807.)

An account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie, LL. D. late Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic in the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen: including many of his original Letters. By Sir W. FORBES of Pitsligo, Baronet, one of the Executors of Dr. Beattie. 2 vols. 4to. pp. 840. Edinburgh and London: 1806.

DR. BEATTIE'S great work, and that which was undoubtedly the first foundation of his celebrity, is the "Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth;" on which such unmeasured praises are bestowed, both by his present biographer, and by all the author's male and female correspondents, that it is with difficulty we can believe that they are speaking of the performance which we have just been wearying ourselves with looking over. That the author's intentions were good, and his convictions sincere, we entertain not

* The greater part of this article also is withheld from the present reprint, for the reasons formerly stated; and only those parts given which bear upon points of metaphysics.

the least doubt; but that the merits of his book have been prodigiously overrated, we think, is equally undeniable. It contains absolutely nothing, in the nature of argument, that had not been previously stated by Dr. Reid in his "Inquiry into the Human Mind;" and, in our opinion, in a much clearer and more unexceptionable form. As to the merits of that philosophy, we have already taken occasion, in more places than one, to submit our opinion to the judgment of our readers; and, after having settled our accounts with Mr. Stewart and Dr. Reid, we really do not think it worth while to enter the lists again with Dr. Beattie. Whatever may be the excellence of the common-sense school of philosophy, he certainly has no claim to the honours of a founder. He invented none of it; and it is very doubtful with us, whether he ever rightly understood the principles upon which it depends. It is unquestionable, at least, that he has exposed it to considerable disadvantage, and embarrassed its more enlightened supporters, by the misplaced confidence with which he has urged some propositions, and the fallacious and fantastic illustrations by which he has aimed at recommending many others.

His confidence and his inaccuracy, however, might have been easily forgiven. Every one has not the capacity of writing philosophically: But every one may at least be temperate and candid; and Dr. Beattie's book is still more remarkable for being abusive and acrimonious, than for its defects in argument or originality. There are no subjects, however, in the wide field of human speculation, upon which such vehemence appears more groundless and unaccountable, than the greater part of those which have served Dr. Beattie for topics of declamation or invective.

His first great battle is about the real existence of external objects. The sceptics say, that perception is merely an act or affection of the mind, and consequently might exist without any external cause. It is a sensation or affection of the mind, to be sure, which consists in the apprehension and belief of such external existences: But being in itself a phenomenon purely mental, it is a mere supposition or conjecture to hold that there are any such existences, by whose operation it is produced. It is impossible, therefore, to bring any evidence for the existence of material objects; and the belief which is admitted to be inseparable from the act of perception, can never be received as such evidence. The whole question is about the *grounds* of this belief, and not about its existence; and the phenomena of dreaming and madness prove experimentally, that perception, as characterised by belief, may exist where there is no external object. Dr. Beattie answers, after Dr. Reid, that the mere existence of this instinctive and indestructible belief in the reality of external objects, is a complete and sufficient proof of their reality; that nature meant us to be satisfied with it; and that we cannot call it in question, without running into the greatest absurdity.

This is the whole dispute; and a pretty correct summary of the argument upon both sides of the question. But is there any thing here that could justify the calling of names, or the violation of decorum among the disputants? The question is, of all other questions that can be suggested, the most purely and entirely speculative, and obviously disconnected from any practical or moral consequences. After what Berkeley has written on the subject, it must be a gross and wilful fallacy to pretend that the *conduct* of men can be in the smallest degree affected by the opinions they entertain about the existence or nonexistence of matter. The system which maintains the latter, leaves all our sensations and perceptions unimpaired and entire; and as it is by these, and by these only, that our conduct can ever be guided, it is evident that it can never be altered by the adoption of that system. The whole dispute is about the *cause* or *origin* of our perceptions; which the one party ascribes to the action of external bodies, and the other to the inward development of some mental energy. It is a question of pure curiosity; it never can be decided; and as its decision is perfectly indifferent and immaterial to any practical purpose, so, it might have been expected that the discussion should be conducted without virulence or abuse.

The next grand dispute is about the evidence of Memory. The sceptics will have it, that we are sure of nothing but our present sensations; and that, though these are sometimes characterised by an impression and belief that other sensations did formerly exist, we can have no evidence of the justice of this belief, nor any certainty that this illusive conception of former sensation, which we call memory, may not be an *original* affection of our minds. The orthodox philosophers, on the other hand, maintain, that the instinctive reliance we have on memory is complete and satisfactory proof of its accuracy; that it is absurd to ask for the grounds of this belief; and that we cannot call it in question without manifest inconsistency. The same observations which were made on the argument for the existence of matter, apply also to this controversy. It is purely speculative, and without application to any practical conclusion. The sceptics do not deny that they remember like other people, and, consequently, that they have an indestructible belief in past events or existences. All the question is about the *origin*, or the justice of this belief;—whether it arise from such events having actually happened before, or from some original affection of the mind, which is attended with that impression.

The argument, as commonly stated by the sceptics, leads only to a negative or sceptical conclusion. It amounts only to this, that the present sensation, which we call memory, affords *no conclusive evidence* of past existence; and that for any thing that can be *proved* to the contrary, nothing of what we remember *may* have existed. We think this undeniably true; and so we believe did Dr. Beattie. He thought it also very useless; and there, too,

we agree with him: But he thought it very wicked and very despicably silly; and there we cannot agree with him at all. It is a very pretty and ingenious puzzle,—affords a very useful mortification to human reason,—and leads us to that state of philosophical wonder and perplexity in which we feel our own helplessness, and in which we *ought* to feel the impropriety of all dogmatism or arrogance in reasoning upon such subjects. This is the only use and the only meaning of such sceptical speculations. It is altogether unfair, and indeed absurd, to suppose that their authors could ever mean positively to maintain that we should try to get the better of any reliance on our memories, or that they themselves really doubted more than other people as to the past reality of the things they remembered. The very arguments they use, indeed, to show that the evidence of memory *may* be fallacious, prove, completely, that, *in point of fact*, they relied as implicitly as their antagonists on the accuracy of that faculty. If they were not sure that they recollected the premises of their own reasonings, it is evidently impossible that they should ever have come to any conclusion. If they did not believe that they had seen the books they answered, it is impossible they should have set about answering them.

The truth is, however, that all men have a practical and irresistible belief both in the existence of matter, and in the accuracy of memory; and that no sceptical writer ever meant or expected to destroy this practical belief in other persons. All that they aimed at was to show their own ingenuity, and the narrow limits of the human understanding;—to point out a curious distinction between the evidence of immediate consciousness, and that of perception of memory,—and to show that there was a kind of logical or argumentative *possibility*, that the objects of the latter faculties might have no existence. There never was any danger of their persuading men to distrust their senses or their memory; nor can they be rationally suspected of such an intention. On the contrary, they necessarily took for granted the instinctive and indestructible belief for which they found it so difficult to account. Their whole reasonings consist of an attempt to explain that admitted fact, and to ascertain the grounds upon which that belief depends. In the end, they agree with their adversaries that those grounds cannot be ascertained: and the only difference between them is, that the adversary maintains that they need no explanation; while the sceptic insists that the want of it still leaves a possibility that the belief may be fallacious; and at any rate establishes a distinction, in degree, between the *primary* evidence of consciousness, which it is impossible to distrust without a contradiction, and the *secondary* evidence of perception and memory, which may be clearly conceived to be erroneous.

To this extent, we are clearly of opinion that the sceptics are right; and though the value of the discovery certainly is as small as possible, we are just as well satisfied that its consequences are perfectly harmless. Their reasonings are about as ingenious and as innocent as some of those which have been employed to establish certain strange paradoxes as to the nature of motion, or the infinite divisibility of matter. The argument is perfectly logical and unanswerable; and yet no man in his senses can practically admit the conclusion. Thus, it may be strictly demonstrated, that the swiftest moving body can never overtake the slowest which is before it at the commencement of the motion; or, in the words of the original problem, that the swift-footed Achilles could never overtake a snail that had a few yards the start of him. The reasoning upon which this valuable proposition is founded, does not admit, we believe, of any direct confutation; and yet there are few, we suppose, who, upon the faith of it, would take a bet as to the result of such a race. The sceptical reasonings as to the mind lead to no other practical conclusion; and may be answered or acquiesced in with the same good nature.

Such, however, are the chief topics which Dr. Beattie has discussed in this Essay, with a vehemence of temper, and an impotence of reasoning, equally surprising and humiliating to the cause of philosophy. The subjects we have mentioned occupy the greater part of the work, and are indeed almost the only ones to which its title at all applies. Yet we think it must be already apparent, that there is nothing whatever in the doctrines he opposes, to call down his indignation, or to justify his abuse. That there are other doctrines in some of the books which he has aimed at confuting, which would justify the most zealous opposition of every friend to religion, we readily admit; but these have no necessary dependence on the general speculative scepticism to which we have now been alluding, and will be best refuted by those who lay all that general reasoning entirely out of consideration. Mr. Hume's theory of morals, which, when rightly understood, we conceive to be both salutary and true, certainly has no connection with his doctrine of ideas and impressions; and the great question of liberty and necessity, which Dr. Beattie has settled, by mistaking, throughout, the power of *doing* what we will, for the power of *willing* without motives, evidently depends upon considerations altogether apart from the nature and immutability of truth. It has always appeared to us, indeed, that too much importance has been attached to *Theories* of morals, and to speculations on the sources of approbation. Our feelings of approbation and disapprobation, and the moral distinctions which are raised upon them, are *Facts* which no theory can alter, although it may fail to explain. While these facts remain, they must regulate the conduct, and affect the happiness of mankind, whether they are well or ill accounted for by the theories of philosophers. It is the same nearly with regard to the controversy about cause and effect. It does not appear to us, however, that Mr. Hume ever meant to deny the existence of such a relation, or of the relative idea of power. He has merely

given a new theory as to its genealogy or descent; and detected some very gross inaccuracies in the opinions and reasonings which were formerly prevalent on the subject.

If Dr. Beattie had been able to refute these doctrines, we cannot help thinking that he would have done it with more temper and moderation; and disdained to court popularity by so much fulsome cant about common sense, virtue, and religion, and his contempt and abhorrence for infidels, sophists, and metaphysicians; by such babyish interjections, as "fy on it! fy on it!"—such triumphant exclamations, as, "say, ye candid and intelligent!"—or such terrific addresses, as, "ye traitors to human kind! ye murderers of the human soul!"—"vain hypocrites! perfidious profligates!" and a variety of other embellishments, as dignified as original in a philosophical and argumentative treatise. The truth is, that the Essay acquired its popularity, partly from the indifference and dislike which has long prevailed in England, as to the metaphysical inquiries which were there made the subject of abuse; partly from the perpetual appeal which it affects to make from philosophical subtlety to common sense; and partly from the accidental circumstances of the author. It was a great matter for the orthodox scholars of the south, who knew little of metaphysics themselves, to get a Scotch professor of philosophy to take up the gauntlet in their behalf. The contempt with which he chose to speak of his antagonists was the very tone which they wished to be adopted; and, some of them, imposed on by the confidence of his manner, and some resolved to give it all chances of imposing on others, they joined in one clamour of approbation, and proclaimed a triumph for a mere rash skirmisher, while the leader of the battle was still doubtful of the victory. The book, thus dandled into popularity by bishops and good ladies, contained many pieces of nursery eloquence, and much innocent pleasantry: it was not fatiguing to the understanding; and read less heavily, on the whole, than most of the Sunday library. In consequence of all these recommendations, it ran through various editions, and found its way into most well-regulated families; and, though made up of such stuff, as we really believe no grown man who had ever thought of the subject could possibly go through without nausea and compassion, still retains its place among the meritorious performances, by which youthful minds are to be purified and invigorated. We shall hear no more of it, however, among those who have left college.

(November, 1810.)

Philosophical Essays. By Dugald Stewart, Esq., F. R. S. Edinburgh, Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, &c. &c. 4to. pp. 590. Edinburgh: 1810.

The studies to which Mr. Stewart has devoted himself, have lately fallen out of favour with the English public; and the nation which once placed the name of Locke immediately under those of Shakespeare and of Newton, and has since repaid the metaphysical labours of Berkeley and of Hume with such just celebrity, seems now to be almost without zeal or curiosity as to the progress of the Philosophy of Mind.

The causes of this distaste it would be curious, and probably not uninstructive, to investigate: but the inquiry would be laborious, and perhaps not very satisfactory. It is easy, indeed, to say, that the age has become frivolous and impatient of labour; and has abandoned this, along with all other good learning, and every pursuit that requires concentration of thought, and does not lead to immediate distinction. This is satire, and not reasoning; and, were it even a fair statement of the fact, such a revolution in the intellectual habits and character of a nation, is itself a phenomenon to be accounted for,—and not to be accounted for upon light or shallow considerations. To us, the phenomenon, in so far as we are inclined to admit its existence, has always appeared to arise from the great multiplication of the branches of liberal study, and from the more extensive diffusion of knowledge among the body of the people,—and to constitute, in this way, a signal example of that *compensation*, by which the good and evil in our lot is constantly equalised, or reduced at least to no very variable standard.

The progress of knowledge has given birth, of late years, to so many arts and sciences, that a man of liberal curiosity finds both sufficient occupation for his time, and sufficient exercise to his understanding, in acquiring a superficial knowledge of such as are most inviting and most popular; and, consequently, has much less leisure, and less inducement than formerly, to dedicate himself to those abstract studies which call for more patient and persevering attention. In older times, a man had nothing for it, but either to be absolutely ignorant and idle, or to take seriously to theology and the school logic. When things grew a little better, the classics and mathematics filled up the measure of general education and private study; and, in the most splendid periods of English philosophy, had received little addition, but from these investigations into our intellectual and moral nature. Some few individuals might attend to other things; but a knowledge of these was all that was required of men of good education; and was held accomplishment enough to entitle them to the rank of scholars and philosophers. Now-a-days, however, the necessary qualification is prodigiously raised,—at least in denomination; and a man can scarcely pass current in the informed circles of society, without knowing something of political economy, chemistry, mineralogy, geology, and etymology,—having a small notion of painting, sculpture, and architecture, with some sort of taste for the picturesque,—and a smattering of German and Spanish literature, and even some idea of Indian, Sanscrit, and Chinese learning and history,—over and above some little knowledge of trade and agriculture; with a reasonable acquaintance with what is called the philosophy of politics, and a far more extensive knowledge of existing parties, factions, and eminent individuals, both literary and political, at home and abroad, than ever were required in any earlier period of society. The dissipation of time and of attention occasioned by these multifarious occupations, is, of course, very unfavourable to the pursuit of any abstract or continued study; and even if a man could, for himself, be content to remain ignorant of many things, in order to obtain a profound knowledge of a few, it would be difficult for him, in the present state of the world, to resist the impulse and the seductions that assail him from without. Various and superficial knowledge is now not only so common, that the want of it is felt as a disgrace; but the facilities of acquiring it are so great, that it is scarcely possible to defend ourselves against its intrusion. So many easy and pleasant elementary books,—such tempting summaries, abstracts, and tables,—such beautiful engravings, and ingenious charts, and *coups-d'œil* of information,—so many museums, exhibitions, and collections, meet us at every corner,—and so much amusing and provoking talk in every party, that a taste for miscellaneous and imperfect information is formed, almost before we are aware; and our time and curiosity irrevocably devoted to a sort of Encyclopedical trifling.

In the mean time, the misfortune is, that there is no popular nor royal road to the profounder and more abstract truths of philosophy; and that these are apt, accordingly, to fall into discredit or neglect, at a period when it is labour enough for most men to keep themselves up to the level of that great tide of popular information, which has been rising, with such unexampled rapidity, for the last forty years.

Such, we think, are the most general and uncontrollable causes which have recently depressed all the sciences requiring deep thought and solitary application, far below the level of their actual importance; and produced the singular appearance of a partial falling off in intellectual enterprise and vigour, in an age distinguished, perhaps, above all others, for the rapid development of the human faculties. *The effect* we had formerly occasion to observe, when treating of the singular decay of Mathematical science in England; and so powerful and extensive is the operation of *the cause*, that, even in the intellectual city which we inhabit, we have known instances of persons of good capacity who had never found leisure to go beyond the first elements of mathematical learning; and were even suspected of having fallen into several heresies in metaphysics, merely from want of time to get regularly at the truth!

If the philosophy of mind has really suffered more, from this universal hurry, than all her sister sciences of the same serious complexion, we should be inclined to ascribe this misfortune, partly to the very excellence of what has been already achieved by her votaries, and partly to the very severe treatment which their predecessors have received at their hands. Almost all the great practical maxims of this mistress of human life, such as the use of the principle of Association in education, and the generation and consequences of Habits in all periods of life, have been lately illustrated in the most popular and satisfactory manner; and rendered so clear and familiar, as rules of practical utility, that few persons think it necessary to examine into the details of that fine philosophy by which they may have been first suggested, or brought into notice. There is nothing that strikes one as very important to be known upon these subjects, which may not now be established in a more vulgar and empirical manner,—or which requires, in order to be understood, that the whole process of a scientific investigation should be gone over. By most persons, therefore, the labour of such an investigation will be declined; and the practical benefits applied—with ungrateful indifference to the sources from which they were derived. Of those, again, whom curiosity might still tempt to look a little closer upon this great field of wonders, no small part are dismayed at the scene of ruin which it exhibits. The destruction of ancient errors, has hitherto constituted so very large a part of the task of modern philosophers, that they may be said to have been employed rather in throwing down, than in building up, and have as yet established very little but the fallacy of all former philosophy. Now, they who had been accustomed to admire that ancient philosophy, can not be supposed to be much delighted with its demolition; and, at all events, are naturally discouraged from again attaching themselves to a system, which they may soon have the mortification of seeing subverted in its turn. In their minds, therefore, the opening of such a course of study is apt only to breed a general distrust of philosophy, and to rivet a conviction of its extreme and irremediable uncertainty: while those who had previously been indifferent to the systems of error, are displeased with the labour of a needless refutation; and disappointed to find, that, after a long course of inquiry, they are brought back to that very state of ignorance from which they had expected it would relieve them.

If anything could counteract the effect of these and some other causes, and revive in England that taste for abstract speculation for which it was once so distinguished, we should have expected this to be accomplished by the publications of the author before us.—The great celebrity of his name, and the uniform

clearness, simplicity, and good sense of his statements, might indeed have failed to attract those whom similar merits could no longer tempt to look into the pages of Locke or of Berkeley. But the singular eloquence with which Mr. Stewart has contrived to adorn the most unpromising parts of his subject,—the rich lights which his imagination has every where thrown in, with such inimitable judgment and effect,—the warm glow of moral enthusiasm which he has spread over the whole of his composition,—and the tone of mildness, dignity, and animation which he has uniformly sustained, in controversy, as well as in instruction; are merits which we do not remember to have seen united in any other philosophical writer; and which might have recommended to general notice, topics far less engaging than those on which they were employed. His former work, on the Philosophy of the Human Mind, has accordingly been more read than any other modern book on such subjects; and the volume before us, we think, is calculated to be still more popular.*

But it is in the second part of the Preliminary Dissertation that we take the chief interest—as Mr. Stewart has there taken occasion to make a formal reply to some of our hasty speculations, and has done us the honour of embodying several of our transitory pages in this enduring volume. If we were at liberty to yield to the common weaknesses of authors, we should probably be tempted to defend ourselves in a long dissertation; but we know too well what is due to our readers and to the public, to think of engaging any considerable share of their attention with a controversy which may be considered in some measure as personal to ourselves; and therefore, however honourable we think it, to be thus singled out for equal combat by such an antagonist, we shall put what we have to say within the shortest possible compass.

The observations to which Mr. Stewart has here condescended to reply, occur in an early number of our publication, and were intended to show, that as mind was not the proper subject of *Experiment*, but of *Observation*, so, there could be no very close analogy between the rules of metaphysical investigation, and the most approved methods of inquiry as to those physical substances which are subject to our disposal and control;—that as all the facts with regard to mind must be derived from previous and universal Consciousness, it was difficut to see how any arrangement of them could add to our substantial knowledge; and that there was, therefore, no reason either to expect Discoveries in this branch of science, or to look to it for any real augmentation of our *Power*.

With regard to Perception and the other primary functions of mind, it was observed, that this doctrine seemed to hold without any limitation; and as to the Associating principle, while it was admitted that the case was somewhat different, it was observed, that all men were in reality aware of its existence, and acted upon it on all important occasions, though they might never have made its laws a subject of reflection, nor ever stated its general phenomena in the form of an abstract proposition.

To all this Mr. Stewart proceeds to answer, by observing, that the distinction between experiment and observation is really of no importance whatever, in reference to this argument; because the facts disclosed by experiment are merely phenomena that are observed, and the inferences and generalisations that are deduced from the observation of *spontaneous* phenomena, are just of the same sort with those that are inferred from experiment, and afford equally certain grounds of conclusion, provided they be sufficiently numerous and consistent. The justice of the last proposition, we do not mean to dispute; and assuredly, if any thing inconsistent with it is to be found in our former speculations, it must have arisen from that haste and inadvertence which, we make no doubt, have often betrayed us into still greater errors. But it is very far from following from this, that there is not a material difference between experiment and observation; or that the philosophy of mind in not necessarily restrained within very narrow limits, in consequence of that distinction. Substances which are in our power, are the objects of experiment; those which are not in our power, of observation only. With regard to the former, it is obvious, that, by well-contrived experiments, we may discover many things that could never be disclosed by any length of observation. With regard to the latter, an attentive observer may, indeed, see more in them than strikes the eye of a careless spectator: But he can see nothing that *may* not be seen by every body; and, in cases where the appearances are very few, or very interesting, the chance is, that he *does* see nothing more—and that all that is left to philosophy is, to distinguish them into classes, and to fit them with appropriate appellations. Now, Mind, we humbly conceive, considered as a subject of investigation, is the subject of observation only; and is known nearly as well by all men, as by those who have most diligently studied its phenomena. "We cannot decompose our sensations," we formerly observed, "in a crucible, nor divide our perceptions with a prism." The metaphor was something violent; but, the meaning obviously was, that we cannot subject those faculties to any analogous processes; nor discover more of their nature than consciousness has taught all the beings who possess them. Is it a satisfactory answer, then, for Mr. Stewart, to say, that we may analyse them by reflection and attention, and other instruments better suited than prisms or crucibles to the intellectual laboratory which furnishes their materials? Our reply is, that *we cannot analyse them at all*; and can never know more of them than has always been known to all to whom they had been imparted; and that, for this

* A portion of the original article, containing a general view of the subject of these Essays, is here omitted, for the reasons stated at the head of this division.

plain reason, that the truth of every thing that is said with regard to the mind, can be determined by an appeal to consciousness alone, and would not be even intelligible, if it informed men of any thing that they did not previously feel to be true.

With regard to the actual *experiments* to which Mr. Stewart alludes, as having helped to explain the means by which the eye judges of distances and magnitudes, these, we must observe, are, according to our conception, very clearly experiments, not upon mind, but upon *matter*; and are only entitled to that name at all, in so far as they are carried on by means of the power we possess of disposing certain pieces of matter in certain masses and intervals. Strictly considered, they are optical experiments on the effects produced by distance on the light reflected from known bodies; and are nearly akin to experiments on the effects produced on such reflected rays by the interposition of *media* of different refracting powers, whether in the shape of prisms, or in any other shape. At all events, they certainly are not investigations carried on solely by attending to the subjects of our Consciousness; which is Mr. Stewart's own definition of the business of the philosophy of mind.

In answer to our remark, that "no metaphysician expects, by analysis, to discover a new power, or to excite a new sensation in the mind, as the chemist discovers a new earth or a new metal," Mr. Stewart is pleased to observe—

"That it is no more applicable to the anatomy of the mind, than to the anatomy of the body. After all the researches of physiologists on this last subject, both in the way of observation and of experiment, no discovery has yet been made of a new organ, either of power or of pleasure, or even of the means of adding a cubit to the human stature; but it does not therefore follow that these researches are useless. By enlarging his knowledge of his own internal structure, they increase the *power of man*, in that way in which alone they profess to increase it. They furnish him with resources for remedying many of the accidents to which his health and his life are liable; for recovering, in some cases, those active powers which disease has destroyed or impaired; and, in others, by giving sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, for awakening powers of perception which were dormant before. Nor must we overlook what they have contributed, in conjunction with the arts of the optician and of the mechanist, to extend the sphere of those senses, and to prolong their duration."—*Prelim. Diss.* pp. xlvi, xlvii.

Now, ingenious and elegant as this parallel must be admitted to be, we cannot help regarding it as utterly fallacious—for this simple reason—that the business of anatomy is to lay open, with the knife, the secrets of that internal structure, which could never otherwise be apparent to the keenest eye; while the metaphysical inquirer can disclose nothing of which all his pupils are not previously aware. There is no opaque skin, in short, on the mind, to conceal its interior mechanism; nor does the metaphysician, when he appeals to the consciousness of all thinking beings for the truth of his classifications, perform any thing at all analogous to the dissector, when he removes those outer integuments, and reveals the wonders of the inward organisation of our frame. *His* statements do not receive their proof from the previous, though perhaps undigested knowledge of his hearers, but from the actual revelation which he makes to their senses; and his services would evidently be more akin to those of the metaphysician, if, instead of actually disclosing what was not previously known, or suspected to exist, he had only drawn the attention of an incurious generation to the fact that they had each ten fingers and ten toes, or that most of them had thirty-two teeth, distinguishable into masticators and incisors.

When, from these, and some other considerations, we had ventured to infer, that the knowledge derived from mere observation could scarcely make any addition to our power, Mr. Stewart refers triumphantly to the instance of astronomy; and, taking it almost for granted, that all the discoveries in that science have been made by observation alone, directs the attention of his readers to the innumerable applications which may be made of it, to purposes of unquestioned utility.

"In compensation," he observes, "for the inability of the astronomer to control those movements of which he studies the laws, he may boast, as I already hinted, of the immense accession of a more useful power which his discoveries have added to the human race, on the surface of their own planet. It would be endless to enumerate all the practical uses to which his labours are subservient. It is sufficient for me to repeat an old, but very striking reflection, that the only accurate knowledge which Man yet possesses of the surface of the earth, has been derived from the previous knowledge he had acquired of the phenomena of the stars. Is it possible to produce a more apposite, or a more undeniable proof of the universality of Bacon's maxim, that '*knowledge is power*,' than a fact which demonstrates the essential aid which man has derived, in asserting his dominion over this lower world, from a branch of science which seems, at first view, fitted only to gratify a speculative curiosity; and which, in its infancy, served to amuse the leisure of the Chaldean shepherd?"—*Prelim. Diss.* pp. xxxviii, xxxix.

To this we have to answer, in the first place, that astronomical science has *not* been perfected by observation alone; but that all the elements which have imparted to it the certainty, the simplicity, and the sublimity which it actually possesses, have been derived from *experiments* made upon substances in the power of their contrivers;—from experiments performed with small pieces of matter, on the laws of projectile motion—the velocities of falling bodies—and on centrifugal and centripetal forces. The knowledge of those laws, like all other valuable knowledge, was obtained by experiment only; and their application to the movements of the heavenly bodies was one of those splendid generalisations, which derive their chief merit from those inherent imperfections of *observation* by which they were rendered necessary.

But, in the second place, we must observe, that even holding astronomy to be a science of mere observation, the power which Mr. Stewart says we have obtained by means of it, is confessedly a power, *not* over the sub-

stances with which that science is conversant; but over *other* substances which stand in some relation to them; and to which, accordingly, that science is capable of being applied. It is over the earth and the ocean that we have extended our dominion by means of our knowledge of the stars. Now, applying this case to that of the philosophy of Mind, and assuming, as we seem here entitled to assume, that it has invested us with no new power over mind itself,—what, we would ask, are the *other* objects over which our power is increased by means of our knowledge of mind? Is there any other substance to which that knowledge can possibly be applied? Is there any thing else that we either know better, or can dispose of more effectually in consequence of our observations on our own intellectual constitution? It is evident, we humbly conceive, that these questions must be answered in the negative. The most precise knowledge which the metaphysician can acquire by reflecting on the subjects of his consciousness, can give him no new power over the mind in which he discovers those subjects; and it is almost a self-evident proposition, that the most accurate knowledge of the subjects of consciousness can give him no power over any thing but mind.

There is one other little point connected with this argument, which we wish to settle with Mr. Stewart. In speaking of the useful *applications* that may be ultimately made of the knowledge derived from observation, we had said, that for the power or the benefit so obtained, mankind were indebted—not to the observer, but to him who suggested the application. Mr. Stewart admits the truth of this—but adds, that the case is exactly the same with the knowledge derived from experiment;—and that the mere empiric is on a footing with the mere observer. Now, we do not think the cases exactly the same;—and it is in their difference that we conceive the great disadvantage of observation to consist. Whoever makes an experiment, must have the power at least to repeat that experiment —and, in almost every case, to repeat it with some variation of circumstances. Here, therefore, is one power necessarily ascertained and established, and an invitation held out to increase that power, by tracing it through all the stages and degrees of its existence: while he who merely observes a phenomenon over which he has no control, neither exercises any power, nor holds out the prospect of acquiring any power, either over the subject of his observation, or over any other substance. He who first ascertained, by experiment, the expansive force of steam, and its destruction by cold—or the identity of lightning and electricity, and the consequent use of the conducting rod, plainly bestowed, in that instant, a great power upon mankind, of which it was next to impossible that some important application should not be speedily made. But he who first observed the periodical immersions and emersions of the satellites of Jupiter, certainly neither acquired nor bestowed any power in the first instance; and seems to have been but a remote and casual auxiliary to him whose genius afterwards found the means of employing those phenomena to guide him through the trackless waters of the ocean.—Epxeriment, therefore, necessarily implies power; and, by suggesting analogous experiments, leads naturally to the interminable expansion of inquiry and of knowledge:—but observation, for the most part, centres in itself, and tends rather to gratify and allay our curiosity, than to rouse or inflame it.

After having thus attemped to prove that experiment has no prerogative above mere observation, Mr. Stewart thinks it worth while to recur again to the assertion, that the philosophy of mind does admit of experiments; and, after remarking, rather rashly, that "the whole of a philosopher's life, if he spends it to any purpose, is one continued series of experiments on his own faculties and powers," he goes on to state, that

> "—— hardly any experiment can be imagined, which has not already been tried by the hand of Nature; displaying, in the infinite varieties of human genius and pursuits, the astonishingly diversified effects, resulting from the possible combinations, of those elementary faculties and principles, of which every man is conscious in himself. Savage society, and all the different modes of civilization; —the different callings and professions of individuals, whether liberal or mechanical; the prejudiced clown;—the factitious man of fashion;—the varying phases of character from infancy to old age;— the prodigies effected by human art in all the objects around us;—laws,—government,—commerce,—religion:—but above all, the records of thought, preserved in those volumes which fill our libraries; what are they but *experiments*, by which Nature illustrates, for our instruction, on her own grand scale, the varied range of man's intellectual faculties, and the omnipotence of education in fashioning his mind?"—*Prel. Diss.* pp. xlv, xlvi.

If experiment be rightly defined the intentional arrangement of substances in our power, for the purpose of observing the result, then these are *not* experiments; and neither imply, nor tend to bestow, that power which enters into the conception of all experiment. But the argument, in our apprehension, is chargeable with a still more radical fallacy. The philosophy of mind is distinctly defined, by Mr. Stewart himself, to be that which is employed "on phenomena of which we are conscious;" its peculiar object and aim is stated to be, "to ascertain the laws of our constitution, in so far as they can be ascertained, by attention to the subjects of our consciousness;" and, in a great variety of passages, it is explained, that the powers by which all this is to be effected, are, reflection upon our mental operations, and the faculty of calm and patient attention to the sensations of which we are conscious. But, if this be the proper province and object of the philosophy of mind, what benefit is the student to receive from observing the various effects of manners and situation, in imparting a peculiar colour or bias to the character of the savage and the citizen, "the prejudiced clown, and factitious man of fashion?" The observation of such varieties is, no doubt, a very

curious and a very interesting occupation;—but we humbly conceive it to form no part, or, at least, a very small and inconsiderable part, of the occupation of a student of philosophy. It is an occupation which can only be effectually pursued, in the world, by travelling, and intercourse with society; and, at all events, by vigilant observation of what is shown to us, by our senses, of the proceedings of our fellow-men. The philosophy of mind, however, is to be cultivated in solitude and silence —by calm reflection on *our own* mental experiences, and patient attention to the subjects of our own consciousness. But can we ever be *conscious* of those varieties of temper and character that distinguish the different conditions of human life?—or, even independent of Mr. Stewart's definition—is it reconcilable to common usage or general understanding, to call our attention to such particulars the study of the philosophy of mind?—Is it not, on the contrary, universally understood to be the peculiar and limited province of that philosophy, to explain the nature and distinctions of those primary functions of the mind, which are possessed in common by men of *all* vocations and *all* conditions?—to treat, in short, of perception, and attention, and memory, and imagination, and volition, and judgment, and all the other powers or faculties into which our intellectual nature may be distinguished?—Is it not with *these*, that Hobbes, and Locke, and Berkeley, and Reid, and all the other philosophers who have reasoned or philosophised about mind, have been occupied?—or, what share of Mr. Stewart's own invaluable publications is devoted to those slighter shades of individual character, to which alone his supposed *experiments* have any reference? The philosophy of the human mind, we conceive, is conversant only with what is common to all human beings—and with those faculties of which every individual of the species is equally conscious: and though it may occasionally borrow illustrations, or even derive some reflected light from the contemplation of those slighter varieties that distinguish one individual from another, this evidently forms no part of the study of the subjects of our consciousness, and can never be permitted to rank as a legitimate part of that philosophy.

This exhausts almost all that we have to say in defence of our supposed heresies as to the importance and practical value of the philosophy of mind, considered with reference to the primary and more elementary faculties of man. With regard to the Associating principle, we have still a word or two to add. In our original observations we admitted, that this principle seemed to stand in a situation somewhat different from the simpler phenomena of the mind—and that the elucidations which Philosophy had furnished with regard to its operations, were not so easily recognised as previously impressed on our consciousness, as most of her revelations. We allowed, therefore, that some utility might be derived from the clear exposition of this more complicated part of our mental organisation, in respect both to the certainty and the extent of its application; at the same time that we felt ourselves constrained to add, that, even as to this habit of the mind, Philosophy could lay no claim to the honours of a *discovery;* since the principle was undoubtedly familiar to the feelings of all men, and was acted upon, with unvarying sagacity, in almost every case where it could be employed with advantage; though by persons who had never thought of embodying it in a maxim, or attending to it as a law of general application. The whole scheme of education, it was observed, has been founded on this principle, in every age of the world. "The groom," it was added, "who never heard of ideas or associations, feeds the young war-horse to the sound of the trumpet; and the unphilosophical artists who tame elephants, or train dancing dogs, proceed on the same obvious and familiar principle."

As this part of our speculations has incurred more of Mr. Stewart's disapprobation than any thing which we have hitherto attempted to defend, we think ourselves called upon to state the substance of his objections, in his own eloquent and impressive words. After quoting the sentence we have already transcribed, he proceeds:—

> "This argument, I suspect, leads a little too far for the purpose of its author; inasmuch as it concludes still more forcibly (in consequence of the great familiarity of the subject) against Physics, strictly so called, than against the Science of Mind. The savage, who never heard of the accelerating force of gravity, yet knows how to add to the momentum of his missile weapons, by gaining an eminence; though a stranger to Newton's third law of motion, he applies it to its practical use, when he sets his canoe afloat, by pushing with a pole against the shore: in the use of his sling, he illustrates, with equal success, the doctrine of centrifugal forces, as he exemplifies (without any knowledge of the experiments of Robins) the principle of the rifle-barrel, in feathering his arrow. The same groom who, "in feeding his young war-horse to the sound of the drum," has nothing to learn from Locke or from Hume concerning the laws of association, might boast, with far greater reason, that, without having looked into Borelli, he can train that animal to his various paces; and that, when he exercises him with the *longe*, he exhibits an experimental illustration of the centrifugal force, and of the centre of gravity, which was known in the riding-school long before their theories were unfolded in the Principia of Newton. Even the operations of the animal which is the subject of his discipline, seem to involve an acquaintance with the same physical laws, when we attend to the mathematical accuracy with which he adapts the obliquity of his body to the rate of his circular speed. In both cases (in that of the man as well as of the brute) this practical knowledge is obtruded on the organs of external sense by the hand of Nature herself: But it is not on that account the less useful to evolve the general theorems which are thus embodied with their particular applications; and to combine them in a systematical and scientific form, for our own instruction and that of others. Does it detract from the value of the theory of pneumatics to remark, that the same effects of a *vacuum*, and of the elasticity and pressure of the air, which afford an explanation of its most curious phenomena, are recognized in an instinctive process coëval with the first breath which we draw; and exemplified in the mouth of every babe and suckling?"—*Prel. Diss.* p. lx. lxi.

Now, without recurring to what we have already said as to the total absence of power in all cases of mere observation, we shall merely request our readers to consider, what is the circumstance that bestows a value, an importance, or an utility, upon the discovery and statement of those general laws, which are admitted, in the passage now quoted, to have been previously exemplified in practice. Is it any thing else, than their capacity of a more extensive application?—the possibility or facility of employing them to accomplish many things to which they had *not* been previously thought applicable? If Newton's third law of motion could never have been employed for any other purpose than to set afloat the canoe of the savage—or if the discovery of the pressure of the atmosphere had led to nothing more than an explanation of the operation of sucking—would there have been any thing gained by stating that law, or that discovery, in general and abstract terms? Would there have been any utility, any dignity or real advancement of knowledge, in the mere technical arrangement of these limited and familiar phenomena under a new classification?

There can be but one answer to these interrogatories. But we humbly conceive, that all the laws of mental operation which philosophy may collect and digest, are exactly in this last predicament. They have no application to any other phenomena than the particular ones by which they are suggested—and which they were familiarly employed to produce. They are not capable of being extended *to any other cases;* and all that is gained by their digestion into a system, is a more precise and methodical enumeration of truths that were always notorious.

From the experience and consciousness of all men, in all ages, we learn that, when two or more objects are frequently presented together, the mind passes spontaneously from one to the other, and invests both with something of the colouring which belongs to the most important. This is the law of association; which is known to every savage, and to every clown, in a thousand familiar instances: and, with regard to its capacity of useful application, it seems to be admitted, that it has been known and acted upon by parents, pedagogues, priests, and legislators, in all ages of the world; and has even been employed, as an obvious and easy instrument, by such humble judges of intellectual resources, as common horse-jockies and bear-dancers.

If this principle, then, was always known, and regularly employed wherever any advantage could be expected from its employment, what reason have we to imagine, that any substantial benefit is to be derived from its scientific investigation, or any important uses hereafter discovered for it, in consequence merely of investing it with a precise name, and stating, under one general theorem, the common law of its operation? If such persons as grooms and masters of menageries have been guided, by their low intellects and sordid motives, to its skilful application as a means of directing even the lower animals, is it to be believed, that there can be many occasions for its employment in the government of the human mind, of which men have never yet had the sense to bethink themselves? Or, can it be seriously maintained, that it is capable of applications as much more extensive and important than those which have been vulgarly made in past ages, as are the uses of Newton's third law of motion, compared with the operation of the savage in pushing his canoe from the shore? If Mr. Stewart really entertained any such opinion as this, it was incumbent upon him to have indicated, in a general way, the departments in which he conceived that these great discoveries were to be made; and to have pointed out some, at least, of the new applications, on the assumption of which alone he could justify so ambitious a parallel.* Instead of this, however, we do not find that he has contemplated any other spheres for the application of this principle, than those which have been so long conceded to it—the formation of taste, and the conduct of education: and, with regard to the last and most important of these, he has himself recorded an admission, which to us, we will confess, appears a full justification of all that we have now been advancing, and a sufficient answer to the positions we have been endeavouring to combat. "In so far," Mr. Stewart observes, "as education is effectual and salutary, it is founded on those principles of our nature which *have forced themselves upon general observation*, in consequence of the experience of ages." That the principle of association is to be reckoned in the number of these, Mr. Stewart certainly will not deny; and our proposition is, that *all* the principles of our nature which are capable of any useful application, have thus "forced themselves on general observation" many centuries ago, and can now receive little more than a technical nomenclature and description from the best efforts of philosophy.

The sentiments to which we have ventured to give expression in these and our former hasty observations, were suggested to us, we will confess, in a great degree, by the striking contrast between the wonders which have been wrought by the cultivation of modern Physics, and the absolute nothingness of the effects that have hitherto been produced by the labours of the philosophers of mind. We have only to mention the names of Astronomy, Chemistry, Mechanics, Optics, and Navigation;—nay, we have only to look around us, in public or in private,—to cast a glance on the machines and manufactures, the ships, observatories, steam engines, and elaboratories, by which we are perpetually surrounded,—or to turn our eyes on the most common

* Upwards of thirty years have now elapsed since this was written; during which a taste for metaphysical inquiry has revived in France, and been greatly encouraged in Germany. Yet I am not aware to what useful applications of the science its votaries can yet point; or what practical improvement or increase of human power they can trace to its cultivation.

articles of our dress and furniture,—on the mirrors, engravings, books, fire-arms, watches, barometers, thunder-rods and opera-glasses, that present themselves in our ordinary dwellings, to feel how vast a progress has been made in exploring and subduing the physical elements of nature, and how stupendous an increase the power of man has received, by the experimental investigation of her laws. Now is any thing in this astonishing survey more remarkable, than the feeling with which it is always accompanied, that what we have hitherto done in any of these departments is but a small part of what we are yet destined to accomplish; and that the inquiries which have led us so far, will infallibly carry us still farther. When we ask, however, for the trophies of the philosophy of mind, or inquire for the vestiges of *her* progress in the more plastic and susceptible elements of human genius and character, we are answered only by ingenuous silence, or vague anticipations—and find nothing but a blank in the record of her actual achievements. The knowledge and the power of man over inanimate nature has been increased tenfold in the course of the last two centuries. The knowledge and the power of man over the mind of man remains almost exactly where it was at the first development of his faculties. The natural philosophy of antiquity is mere childishness and dotage, and their physical inquirers are mere pigmies and drivellers, compared with their successors in the present age; but their logicians, and metaphysicians, and moralists, and, what is of infinitely more consequence, the practical maxims and the actual *effects* resulting from *their* philosophy of mind, are very nearly on a level with the philosophy of the present day. The end and aim of all *that* philosophy is to make education rational and effective, and to train men to such sagacity and force of judgment, as to induce them to cast off the bondage of prejudices, and to follow happiness and virtue with assured and steady steps. We do not know, however, what modern work contains juster, or more profound views on the subject of education, than may be collected from the writings of Xenophon and Quintilian, Polybius, Plutarch, and Cicero: and, as to that sagacity and justness of thinking, which, after all, is the fruit by which this tree of knowledge must be ultimately known, we are not aware of many modern performances that exemplify it in a stronger degree, than many parts of the histories of Tacitus and Thucydides, or the Satires and Epistles of Horace. In the conduct of business and affairs, we shall find Pericles, and Cæsar, and Cicero, but little inferior to the philosophical politicians of the present day; and, for lofty and solid principles of practical ethics, we might safely match Epictetus and Antoninus (without mentioning Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch, Xenophon, or Polybius,) with most of our modern speculators.

Where, then, it may be asked, are the performances of this philosophy, which makes such large promises? or, what are the grounds upon which we should expect to see so much accomplished, by an instrument which has hitherto effected so little? It is in vain for Mr. Stewart to say, that the science is yet but in its infancy, and that it will bear its fruit in due season. The truth is, that it has, of necessity, been more constantly and diligently cultivated than any other. It has always been the first object with men of talent and good affections, to influence and to form the minds of others, and to train their own to the highest pitch of vigour and perfection: and accordingly, it is admitted by Mr. Stewart, that the most important principles of this philosophy have been long ago "forced upon general observation" by the feelings and experience of past ages. Independently, however, of this, the years that have passed since Hobbes, and Locke, and Malebranche, and Leibnitz drew the attention of Europe to this study, and the very extraordinary genius and talents of those who have since addicted themselves to it, are far more than enough to have brought it, if not to perfection, at least to such a degree of excellence, as no longer to leave it a matter of dispute, whether it was really destined to add to our knowledge and our power, or to produce any sensible effects upon the happiness and condition of mankind. That society has made great advances in comfort and intelligence, during that period, is indisputable; but we do not find that Mr. Stewart himself imputes any great part of this improvement to our increased knowledge of our mental constitution; and indeed it is quite obvious, that it is an effect resulting from the increase of political freedom—the influences of reformed Christianity—the invention of printing—and that improvement and multiplication of the mechanical arts, that have rendered the body of the people far more busy, wealthy, inventive and independent, than they ever were in any former period of society.

To us, therefore, it certainly does appear, that the lofty estimate which Mr. Stewart has again made of the *practical* importance of his favourite studies, is one of those splendid visions by which men of genius have been so often misled, in the enthusiastic pursuit of science and of virtue. That these studies are of a very dignified and interesting nature, we admit most cheerfully;—that they exercise and delight the understanding, by reasonings and inquiries, at once subtle, cautious, and profound, and either gratify or exalt a keen and aspiring curiosity, must be acknowledged by all who have been initiated into their elements. Those who have had the good fortune to be so initiated by the writings of Mr. Stewart, will be delighted to add, that they are blended with so many lessons of gentle and of ennobling virtue—so many striking precepts and bright examples of liberality, high-mindedness, and pure taste—as to be calculated, in an eminent degree, to make men love goodness and aspire to elegance, and to improve at once the understanding, the imagination, and the heart. But this must be the limit of our praise.

The sequel of this article is not now reprinted, for the reasons already stated.

NOVELS, TALES,

AND

PROSE WORKS OF FICTION.

As I perceive I have, in some of the following papers, made a sort of apology for seeking to direct the attention of my readers to things so insignificant as *Novels*, it may be worth while to inform the present generation that, *in my youth*, writings of this sort were rated very low with us—scarcely allowed indeed to pass as part of a nation's permanent literature—and generally deemed altogether unworthy of any grave critical notice. Nor, in truth—in spite of Cervantes and Le Sage—and Marivaux, Rousseau, and Voltaire abroad—and even our own Richardson and Fielding at home—would it have been easy to controvert that opinion, in our England, at the time: For certainly a greater mass of trash and rubbish never disgraced the press of any country, than the ordinary Novels that filled and supported our circulating libraries, down nearly to the time of Miss Edgeworth's first appearance. There had been, the Vicar of Wakefield, to be sure, before; and Miss Burney's Evelina and Cecilia—and Mackenzie's Man of Feeling, and some bolder and more varied fictions of the Misses Lee. But the staple of our Novel market was, beyond imagination, despicable: and had consequently sunk and degraded the whole department of literature, of which it had usurped the name.

All this, however, has since been signally, and happily, changed; and that rabble rout of abominations driven from our confines for ever. The *Novels* of Sir Walter Scott are, beyond all question, the most remarkable productions of the present age; and have made a sensation, and produced an effect, all over Europe, to which nothing parallel can be mentioned since the days of Rousseau and Voltaire; while, in our own country, they have attained a place, inferior only to that which must be filled for ever by the unapproachable glory of Shakespeare. With the help, no doubt, of their political revolutions, they have produced, in France, Victor Hugo, Balsac, Paul de Cocq, &c., the *promessi sposi* in Italy—and Cooper, at least, in America.—In England, also, they have had imitators enough; in the persons of Mr. James, Mr. Lover, and others. But the works most akin to them in excellence have rather, I think, been related as collaterals than as descendants. Miss Edgeworth, indeed, stands more in the line of their ancestry; and I take Miss Austen and Sir E. L. Bulwer to be as intrinsically original;—as well as the great German writers, Goethe, Tiek, Jean Paul, Richter, &c. Among them, however, the honour of this branch of literature has at any rate been splendidly redeemed;—and now bids fair to maintain its place, at the head of all that is graceful and instructive in the productions of modern genius.

(July, 1809.)

Tales of Fashionable Life. By Miss Edgeworth, Author of "Practical Education," "Belinda," "Castle Rackrent," &c. 12mo. 3 vols. London: 1809.

If it were possible for reviewers to *Envy* the authors who are brought before them for judgment, we rather think we should be tempted to envy Miss Edgeworth;—not, however, so much for her matchless powers of probable invention—her never-failing good sense and cheerfulness—nor her fine discrimination of characters—as for the delightful consciousness of having done more good than any other writer, male or female, of her generation. Other arts and sciences have their use, no doubt; and, Heaven knows, they have their reward and their fame. But the great art is the art of living; and the chief science the science of being happy. Where there is an absolute deficiency of good sense, these cannot indeed be taught; and, with an extraordinary share of it, they may be acquired

without an instructor: but the most common case is, to be capable of learning, and yet to require teaching; and a far greater part of the misery which exists in society arises from ignorance, than either from vice or from incapacity.

Miss Edgeworth is the great modern mistress in this school of true philosophy; and has eclipsed, we think, the fame of all her predecessors. By her many excellent tracts on education, she has conferred a benefit on the whole mass of the population; and discharged, with exemplary patience as well as extraordinary judgment, a task which superficial spirits may perhaps mistake for an humble and easy one. By her Popular Tales, she has rendered an invaluable service to the middling and lower orders of the people; and by her Novels, and by the volumes before us, has made a great and meritorious effort to promote the happiness and respectability of the higher classes. On a former occasion we believe we hinted to her, that these would probably be the least successful of all her labours; and that it was doubtful whether she could be justified for bestowing so much of her time on the case of a few persons, who scarcely deserved to be cured, and were scarcely capable of being corrected. The foolish and unhappy part of the fashionable world, for the most part, "is not fit to bear itself convinced." It is too vain, too busy, and too dissipated to listen to, or remember any thing that is said to it. Every thing serious it repels, by "its dear wit and gay rhetoric;" and against every thing poignant, it seeks shelter in the impenetrable armour of its conjunct audacity.

> "Laugh'd at, it laughs again;—and, stricken hard,
> Turns to the stroke its adamantine scales,
> That fear no discipline of human hands."

A book, on the other hand, and especially a witty and popular book, is still a thing of consequence, to such of the middling classes of society as are in the habit of reading. They dispute about it, and think of it; and as they occasionally make themselves ridiculous by copying the manners it displays, so they are apt to be impressed with the great lessons it may be calculated to teach; and, on the whole, receive it into considerable authority among the regulators of their lives and opinions.—But a fashionable person has scarcely any leisure to read; and none to think of what he has been reading. It would be a derogation from his dignity to speak of a book in any terms but those of frivolous derision; and a strange desertion of his own superiority, to allow himself to receive, from its perusal, any impressions which could at all affect his conduct or opinions.

But though, for these reasons, we continue to think that Miss Edgeworth's fashionable patients will do less credit to her prescriptions than the more numerous classes to whom they might have been directed, we admit that her plan of treatment is in the highest degree judicious, and her conception of the disorder most luminous and precise.

There are two great sources of unhappiness to those whom fortune and nature seem to have placed above the reach of ordinary miseries. The one is *ennui*—that stagnation of life and feeling which results from the absence of all motives to exertion; and by which the justice of providence has so fully compensated the partiality of fortune, that it may be fairly doubted whether, upon the whole, the race of beggars is not happier than the race of lords; and whether those vulgar wants that are sometimes so importunate, are not, in this world, the chief ministers of enjoyment. This is a plague that infects all indolent persons who can live on in the rank in which they were born, without the necessity of working: but, in a free country, it rarely occurs in any great degree of virulence, except among those who are already at the summit of human felicity. Below this, there is room for ambition, and envy, and emulation, and all the feverish movements of aspiring vanity and unresting selfishness, which act as prophylactics against this more dark and deadly distemper. It is the canker which corrodes the full-blown flower of human felicity—the pestilence which smites at the bright hour of noon.

The other curse of the happy, has a range more wide and indiscriminate. It, too, tortures only the comparatively rich and fortunate; but is most active among the least distinguished; and abates in malignity as we ascend to the lofty regions of pure *ennui*. This is the desire of being fashionable;—the restless and insatiable passion to pass for creatures a little more distinguished than we really are—with the mortification of frequent failure, and the humiliating consciousness of being perpetually exposed to it. Among those who are secure of "meat, clothes, and fire," and are thus above the chief physical evils of existence, we do believe that this is a more prolific source of unhappiness, than guilt, disease, or wounded affection; and that more positive misery is created, and more true enjoyment excluded, by the eternal fretting and straining of this pitiful ambition, than by all the ravages of passion, the desolations of war, or the accidents of mortality. This may appear a strong statement; but we make it deliberately, and are deeply convinced of its truth. The wretchedness which it produces may not be so intense; but it is of much longer duration, and spreads over a far wider circle. It is quite dreadful, indeed, to think what a sweep this pest has taken among the comforts of our prosperous population. To be thought fashionable—that is, to be thought more opulent and tasteful, and on a footing of intimacy with a greater number of distinguished persons than they really are, is the great and laborious pursuit of four families out of five, the members of which are exempted from the necessity of daily industry. In this pursuit, their time, spirits, and talents are wasted; their tempers, soured; their affections palsied; and their natural manners and dispositions altogether sophisticated and lost.

These are the giant curses of fashionable

life, and Miss Edgeworth has accordingly dedicated her two best tales to the delineation of their symptoms. The history of "Lord Glenthorn" is a fine picture of *ennui*—that of "Almeria" an instructive representation of the miseries of aspirations after fashion. We do not know whether it was a part of the fair writer's *design* to represent these maladies as absolutely incurable, without a change of condition; but *the fact* is, that in spite of the best dispositions and capacities, and the most powerful inducements to action, the hero of *ennui* makes no advances towards amendment, till he is deprived of his title and estate! and the victim of fashion is left, at the end of the tale, pursuing her weary career, with fading hopes and wasted spirits, but with increased anxiety and perseverance. The moral use of these narratives, therefore, must consist in warning us against the first approaches of evils which can never afterwards be resisted.

These are the great twin scourges of the prosperous: But there are other maladies, of no slight malignity, to which they are peculiarly liable. One of these, arising mainly from want of more worthy occupation, is that perpetual use of stratagem and contrivance—that little, artful diplomacy of private life, by which the simplest and most natural transactions are rendered complicated and difficult, and the common business of existence made to depend on the success of plots and counterplots. By the incessant practice of this petty policy, a habit of duplicity and anxiety is infallibly generated, which is equally fatal to integrity and enjoyment. We gradually come to look on others with the distrust which we are conscious of deserving; and are insensibly formed to sentiments of the most unamiable selfishness and suspicion. It is needless to say, that all these elaborate artifices are worse than useless to the person who employs them; and that the ingenious plotter is almost always baffled and exposed by the downright honesty of some undesigning competitor. Miss Edgeworth, in her tale of "Manœuvring," has given a very complete and most entertaining representation of "the by-paths and indirect crook'd ways," by which these artful and inefficient people generally make their way to disappointment. In the tale, entitled "Madame de Fleury," she has given some useful examples of the ways in which the rich may most effectually do good to the poor—an operation which, we really believe, fails more frequently from want of skill than of inclination: And, in "The Dun," she has drawn a touching and most impressive picture of the wretchedness which the poor so frequently suffer, from the unfeeling thoughtlessness which withholds from them the scanty earnings of their labour.

Of these tales, "Ennui" is the best and the most entertaining—though the leading character is somewhat caricatured, and the *dénouement* is brought about by a discovery which shocks by its needless improbability. Lord Glenthorn is bred up, by a false and indulgent guardian, as the heir to an immense English and Irish estate; and, long before he is of age, exhausts almost all the resources by which life can be made tolerable to those who have nothing to wish for. Born on the very pinnacle of human fortune, "he had nothing to do but to sit still and enjoy the barrenness of the prospect." He tries travelling, gaming, gluttony, hunting, pugilism, and coach-driving; but is so pressed down with the load of life, as to be repeatedly on the eve of suicide. He passes over to Ireland, where he receives a temporary relief, from the rebellion—and from falling in love with a lady of high character and accomplishments; but the effect of these stimulants is speedily expended, and he is in danger of falling into a confirmed lethargy, when it is fortunately discovered that he has been changed at nurse! and that, instead of being a peer of boundless fortune, he is the son of a cottager who lives on potatoes. With great magnanimity, he instantly gives up the fortune to the rightful owner, who has been bred a blacksmith, and takes to the study of the law. At the commencement of this arduous career, he fortunately falls in love, for the second time, with the lady entitled, after the death of the blacksmith, to succeed to his former estate. Poverty and love now supply him with irresistible motives for exertion. He rises in his profession; marries the lady of his heart; and in due time returns, an altered man, to the possession of his former affluence.

Such is the naked outline of a story, more rich in character, incident, and reflection, than any English narrative which we can now call to remembrance:—as rapid and various as the best tales of Voltaire, and as full of practical good sense and moral pathetic as any of the other tales of Miss Edgeworth. The Irish characters are inimitable;—not the coarse caricatures of modern playwrights—but drawn with a spirit, a delicacy, and a precision, to which we do not know if there be any parallel among national delineations. As these are tales of fashionable life, we shall present our readers, in the first place, with some traits of an Irish lady of rank. Lady Geraldine—the enchantress whose powerful magic almost raised the hero of *ennui* from his leaden slumbers is represented with such exquisite liveliness and completeness of effect, that the reader can scarcely help imagining that he has formerly been acquainted with the original. Every one, at least we conceive, must have known somebody, the recollection of whom must convince him that the following description is as true nature as it is creditable to art:—

"As Lady Geraldine entered, I gave one involuntary glance of curiosity. I saw a tall, finely-shaped woman, with the commanding air of a person of rank: she moved well; not with feminine timidity, yet with ease, promptitude, and decision. She had fine eyes, and a fine complexion, yet no regularity of feature. The only thing that struck me as really extraordinary, was her indifference when I was introduced to her. Every body had seemed extremely desirous that I should see her ladyship, and that her ladyship should see me; and I was rather surprised by her unconcerned air. This piqued me, and fixed my attention. She turned from me, and began to converse with others. Her voice was agreeable, though rather loud: she did not speak with the Irish accent; but, when I listened maliciously, I detected certain Hibernian inflexions—nothing of the vulgar Irish idiom, but something that was more interrogative, more exclamatory, and perhaps more rhetorical, than the common language of English ladies, accompanied with infinitely more animation of countenance and demonstrative gesture. This appeared to me peculiar and unusual, but not affected. She was uncommonly eloquent; and yet, without action, her words were not sufficiently rapid to express her ideas. Her manner appeared foreign, yet it was not quite French. If I had been obliged to decide, I should, however, have pronounced it rather more French than English. To determine which it was, or whether I had ever seen any thing similar, I stood considering her ladyship with more attention than I had ever bestowed on any other woman. The words *striking—fascinating—bewitching*, occurred to me as I looked at her and heard her speak. I resolved to turn my eyes away, and shut my ears; for I was positively determined not to like her; I dreaded so much the idea of a second Hymen. I retreated to the farthest window, and looked out very soberly upon a dirty fish-pond.

"If she had treated me with tolerable civility at first, I never should have thought about her. High-born and high-bred, she seemed to consider more what she should think of others, than what others thought of her. Frank, candid, and affable, yet opinionated, insolent, and an egotist: her candour and affability appeared the effect of a naturally good temper; her insolence and egotism only that of a spoiled child. She seemed to talk of herself purely to oblige others, as the most interesting possible topic of conversation; for such it had always been to her fond mother, who idolized her ladyship as an only daughter, and the representative of an ancient house. Confident of her talents, conscious of her charms, and secure of her station, Lady Geraldine gave free scope to her high spirits, her fancy, and her turn for ridicule. She looked, spoke, and acted, like a person privileged to think, say, and do, what she pleased. Her raillery, like the raillery of princes, was without fear of retort. She was not ill-natured, yet careless to whom she gave offence, provided she produced amusement; and in this she seldom failed; for, in her conversation, there was much of the raciness of Irish wit, and the oddity of Irish humour. The singularity that struck me most about her ladyship was her indifference to flattery. She certainly preferred frolic. Miss Bland was her humble companion; Miss Tracey her *butt*. It was one of Lady Geraldine's delights, to humour Miss Tracey's rage for imitating the fashions of fine people. 'Now you shall see Miss Tracey appear at the ball to-morrow, in every thing that I have sworn to her is fashionable. Nor have I cheated her in a single article: but the *tout ensemble* I leave to her better judgment; and you shall see her, I trust, a perfect monster, formed of every creature's best: Lady Kilrush's feathers, Mrs. Moore's wig, Mrs. O'Connor's gown, Mrs. Leighton's sleeves, and all the necklaces of all the Miss Ormsbys. She has no taste, no judgment; none at all, poor thing; but she can imitate as well as those Chinese painters, who, in their drawings, give you the flower of one plant stuck on the stalk of another, and garnished with the leaves of a third.'"—i. 130—139.

This favourite character is afterwards exhibited in a great variety of dramatic contrasts. For example:—

"Lord Craiglethorpe was, as Miss Tracey had described him, very stiff, cold, and *high*. His manners were in the extreme of English reserve; and his ill-bred show of contempt for the Irish was sufficient provocation and justification of Lady Geraldine's ridicule. He was much in awe of his fair and witty cousin: and she could easily put him out of countenance, for he was, in his way, extremely bashful. Once, when he was out of the room, Lady Geraldine exclaimed, 'That cousin Craiglethorpe of mine is scarcely an agreeable man: The awkwardness of *mauvaise-hont* might be pitied and pardoned, even in a nobleman,' continued her ladyship, 'if it really proceeded from humility; but here, when I know it is connected with secret and inordinate arrogance, 'tis past all endurance. As the Frenchman said of the Englishman, for whom even his politeness could not find another compliment, "Il faut avouer que ce Monsieur a un grand talent pour le silence;"—he holds his tongue till people actually believe that he has somothing to say—a mistake they could never fall into if he would but speak.—It is not timidity; it is all pride. I would pardon his dulness, and even his ignorance; for one, as you say, might be the fault of his nature, and the other of his education: but his self-sufficiency is his own fault; and that I will not, and cannot pardon. Somebody says, that nature may make a fool, but a coxcomb is always of his own making. Now, my cousin—(as he is my cousin, I may say what I please of him,)—my cousin Craiglethorpe is a solemn coxcomb, who thinks, because his vanity is not talkative and sociable, that it's not vanity. What a mistake!'"—i. 146—148.

These other traits of her character are given, on different occasions, by Lord Glenthorn:—

"At first I had thought her merely superficial, and intent solely upon her own amusement; but I soon found that she had a taste for literature beyond what could have been expected in one who lived so dissipated a life; a depth of reflection that seemed inconsistent with the rapidity with which she thought; and, above all, a degree of generous indignation against meanness and vice, which seemed incompatible with the selfish character of a fine lady; and which appeared quite incomprehensible to the imitating tribe of her fashionable companions."
i. 174.

"Lady Geraldine was superior to manœuvring little arts, and petty stratagems, to attract attention. She would not stoop, even to conquer. From gentlemen she seemed to expect attention as her right, as the right of her sex; not to beg, or accept of it as a favour: if it were not paid, she deemed the gentleman degraded, not herself. Far from being mortified by any preference shown to other ladies, her countenance betrayed only a sarcastic sort of pity for the bad taste of the men, or an absolute indifference and look of haughty absence. I saw that she beheld with disdain the paltry competitions of the young ladies her companions: as her companions, indeed, she hardly seemed to consider them; she tolerated their foibles, forgave their envy, and never exerted any superiority, except to show her contempt of vice and meanness."—i. 198, 199.

This may suffice as a specimen of the high life of the piece; which is more original and characteristic than that of Belinda—and altogether as lively and natural. For the low life, we do not know if we could extract a more felicitous specimen than the following description of the equipage in which Lord Glenthorn's English and French servant were compelled to follow their master in Ireland.

"From the inn yard came a hackney chaise, in a most deplorably crazy state; the body mounted up to a prodigious height, on unbending springs, nodding forwards, one door swinging open, three blinds up, because they could not be let down, the perch tied in two places, the iron of the wheels half off, half loose, wooden pegs for linch-pins, and ropes for harness. The horses were worthy of the harness; wretched little dog-tired creatures, that looked as if they had been driven to the last gasp, and as if they had never been rubbed down in their lives; their bones starting through their skin; one lame, the other blind; one with a raw back, the

other with a galled breast; one with his neck poking down over his collar, and the other with his head dragged forward by a bit of a broken bridle, held at arms' length by a man dressed like a mad beggar, in half a hat, and half a wig, both awry in opposite directions; a long tattered coat, tied round his waist by a hay-rope; the jagged rents in the skirts of this coat showing his bare legs, marbled of many colours; while something like stockings hung loose about his ankles. The noises he made, by way of threatening or encouraging his steeds, I pretend not to describe. In an indignant voice I called to the landlord—'I hope these are not the horses—I hope this is not the chaise, intended for my servants.' The innkeeper, and the pauper who was preparing to officiate as postilion, both in the same instant exclaimed—'*Sorrow* better chaise in the county!' '*Sorrow!*' said I—what do you mean by sorrow?' 'That there's no better, plase your honour, can be seen. We have two more to be sure—but one has no top, and the other no bottom. Any way, there's no better can be seen than this same.' 'And these horses!' cried I—'why this horse is so lame he can hardly stand.' 'Oh, plase your honour, tho' he can't stand, he'll *go* fast enough. He has a great deal of the rogue in him, plase your honour. He's always that way at first setting out.' 'And that wretched animal with the galled breast!' 'He's all the better for it, when once he warms; it's he that will go with the speed of light, plase your honour. Sure, is not he Knockecroghery? and didn't I give fifteen guineas for him, barring the luckpenny, at the fair of Knockecroghery, and he rising four year old at the same time?'

"Then seizing his whip and reins in one hand, he clawed up his stockings with the other: so with one easy step he got into his place, and seated himself, coachman-like, upon a well-worn bar of wood, that served as a coach-box. 'Throw me the loan of a trusty, Bartly, for a cushion,' said he. A frieze coat was thrown up over the horse's heads. Paddy caught it. 'Where are you, Hosey!' cried he to a lad in charge of the leaders. 'Sure I'm only rowling a wisp of straw on my leg,' replied Hosey. 'Throw me up,' added this paragon of postilions, turning to one of the crowd of idle bystanders. 'Arrah, push me up, can't ye?'—A man took hold of his knee, and threw him upon the horse. He was in his seat in a trice. Then clinging by the mane of his horse, he scrambled for the bridle which was under the other horse's feet, reached it, and, well satisfied with himself, looked round at Paddy, who looked back to the chaise-door at my angry servants, 'secure in the last event of things.' In vain the Englishman, in monotonous anger, and the Frenchman in every note of the gamut, abused Paddy. Necessity and wit were on Paddy's side. He parried all that was said against his chaise, his horses, himself, and his country, with invincible comic dexterity; till at last, both his adversaries, dumb-founded, clambered into the vehicle, where they were instantly shut up in straw and darkness. Paddy, in a triumphant tone, called to *my* postilions, bidding them 'get on, and not be stopping the way any longer.'"—i. 64, 65.

By and by the wheel horse stopped short, and began to kick furiously.

"'Never fear,' reiterated Paddy. 'I'll engage I'll be up wid him. Now for it, Knockecroghery! Oh the rogue, he thinks he has me at a *nonplush;* but I'll show him the *differ*.'

"After this brag of war, Paddy whipped, Knockecroghery kicked, and Paddy, seemingly unconscious of danger, sat within reach of the kicking horse, twitching up first one of his legs, then the other, and shifting as the animal aimed his hoofs, escaping every time as it were by miracle. With a mixture of temerity and presence of mind, which made us alternately look upon him as a madman and a hero, he gloried in the danger, secure of success, and of the sympathy of the spectators.

"'Ah! didn't I *compass* him cleverly then? Oh the villain, to be browbating me! I'm too cute for him yet. See, there, now, he's come too; and I'll be his bail he'll go *asy* enough wid me. Ogh! he has a fine spirit of his own; but it's I that can match him. 'Twould be a poor case if a man like me couldn't match a horse any way, let alone a mare, which this is, or it never would be so vicious.'"—i. 68, 69.

The most delectable personage, however, in the whole tale, is the ancient Irish nurse Ellinor. The devoted affection, infantine simplicity, and strange pathetic eloquence of this half-savage, kind-hearted creature, afford Miss Edgeworth occasion for many most original and characteristic representations. We shall scarcely prepossess our English readers in her favour, by giving the description of her cottage.

"It was a wretched looking, low, mud-walled cabin. At one end it was propped by a buttress of loose stones, upon which stood a goat reared on his hind legs, to browse on the grass that grew on the housetop. A dunghill was before the only window, at the other end of the house, and close to the door was a puddle of the dirtiest of dirty water, in which ducks were dabbling. At my approach, there came out of the cabin a pig, a calf, a lamb, a kid, and two geese, all with their legs tied; followed by cocks, hens, chickens, a dog, a cat, a kitten, a beggar-man, a beggar-woman, with a pipe in her mouth; children innumerable, and a stout girl, with a pitch-fork in her hand; altogether more than I, looking down upon the roof as I sat on horseback, and measuring the superficies with my eye, could have possibly supposed the mansion capable of containing. I asked if Ellinor O'Donoghoe was at home; but the dog barked, the geese cackled, the turkeys gobbled, and the beggars begged with one accord, so loudly, that there was no chance of my being heard. When the *girl* had at last succeeded in appeasing them all with her pitchfork, she answered, that Ellinor O'Donoghoe was at home, but that she was out with the potatoes; and she ran to fetch her, after calling to *the boys, who was within in the room smoking*, to come out to his honour. As soon as they had crouched under the door, and were able to stand upright, they welcomed me with a very good grace, and were proud to see me in the *kingdom*. I asked if they were all Ellinor's sons. 'All entirely,' was the first answer. 'Not one but one,' was the second answer. The third made the other two intelligible. 'Plase your Honour, we are all her sons-in-law, except myself, who am her lawful son.' 'Then you are my foster brother?' 'No, plase your Honour, it's not me, but my brother, and he's *not in it*.' '*Not in it?*' 'No, plase your Honour; becaase he's in the forge up *above*. Sure he's the blacksmith, my lard. 'And what are you?' 'I'm Ody, plase your honour;' the short for Owen," &c.—i. 94—96.

It is impossible, however, for us to select any thing that could give our readers even a vague idea of the interest, both serious and comic, that is produced by this original character, without quoting more of the story than we can now make room for. We cannot leave it, however, without making our acknowledgments to Miss Edgeworth for the handsome way in which she has treated our country, and for the judgment as well as liberality she has shown in the character of Mr. Macleod, the proud, sagacious, friendly, and reserved agent of her hero. There is infinite merit and powers of observation even in her short sketch of his exterior.

"He was a hard-featured, strong built, perpendicular man, with a remarkable quietness of deportment: he spoke with deliberate distinctness, in an accent slightly Scotch; and, in speaking, he made use of no gesticulation, but held himself surprisingly still. No part of him but his eyes, moved; and they had an expression of slow, but determined good sense. He was sparing of his words; but the few that he used said much, and went directly to the point."—i. 82.

But we must now take an abrupt and reluctant leave of Miss Edgeworth. Thinking as we do, that her writings are, beyond all comparison, the most useful of any that have come before us since the commencement of our critical career, it would be a point of conscience with us to give them all the notoriety that they can derive from our recommendation, even if their execution were in some measure liable to objection. In our opinion, however, they are as entertaining as they are instructive; and the genius, and wit, and imagination they display, are at least as remarkable as the justness of the sentiments they so powerfully inculcate. To some readers they may seem to want the fairy colouring of high fancy and romantic tenderness; and it is very true that they are not poetical love tales, any more than they are anecdotes of scandal. We have great respect for the admirers of Rousseau and Petrarca; and we have no doubt that Miss Edgeworth has great respect for them;—but *the world*, both high and low, which she is labouring to mend, have no sympathy with this respect. They laugh at these things, and do not understand them; and therefore, the solid sense which she presses perhaps rather too closely upon them, though it admits of relief from wit and direct pathos, really could not be combined with the more luxuriant ornaments of an ardent and tender imagination. We say this merely to obviate the only objection which we think can be made to the execution of these stories; and to justify our decided opinion, that they are actually as *perfect* as it was possible to make them with safety to the great object of the author.

(July, 1812.)

Tales of Fashionable Life. By Miss Edgeworth, Author of "Practical Education," "Belinda," "Castle Rackrent," &c. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 1450. Johnson. London: 1812.

The writings of Miss Edgeworth exhibit so singular an union of sober sense and inexhaustible invention—so minute a knowledge of all that distinguishes manners, or touches on happiness in every condition of human fortune—and so just an estimate both of the real sources of enjoyment, and of the illusions by which they are obstructed, that it cannot be thought wonderful that we should separate her from the ordinary manufacturers of novels, and speak of her Tales as works of more serious importance than much of the true history and solemn philosophy that come daily under our inspection. The great business of life, and the object of all arts and acquisitions, is undoubtedly to be happy; and though our success in this grand endeavour depends, in some degree, upon external circumstances, over which we have no control, and still more on temper and dispositions, which can only be controlled by gradual and systematic exertion, a very great deal depends also upon creeds and *opinions*, which may be effectually and even suddenly rectified, by a few hints from authority that cannot be questioned, or a few illustrations so fair and striking, as neither to be misapplied nor neglected. We are all, no doubt, formed, in a great degree, by the circumstances in which we are placed, and the beings by whom we are surrounded; but still we have all theories of happiness—notions of ambition, and opinions as to the *summum bonum* of our own—more or less developed, and more or less original, according to our situation and character—but influencing our conduct and feelings at every moment of our lives, and leading us on to disappointment, and away from real gratification, as powerfully as mere ignorance or passion. It is to the correction of those erroneous theories that Miss Edgeworth has applied herself in that series of moral fictions, the last portion of which has recently come to our hands; and in which, we think, she has combined more solid instruction with more universal entertainment, and given more practical lessons of wisdom, with less tediousness and less pretension, than any other writer with whom we are acquainted.

When we reviewed the first part of these Tales which are devoted to the delineation of fashionable life, we ventured to express a doubt, whether the author was justifiable for expending so large a quantity of her moral medicines on so small a body of patients—and upon patients too whom she had every reason to fear would turn out incurable. Upon reflection, however, we are now inclined to recall this sentiment. The vices and illusions of fashionable life are, for the most part, merely the vices and illusions of human nature—presented sometimes in their most conspicuous, and almost always in only their most seductive form;—and even where they are not merely fostered and embellished, but actually generated only in that exalted region, it is very well known that they "drop upon the place beneath," and are speedily propagated and diffused into the world below. To expose them, therefore, in this their original and proudest sphere, is not only to purify the stream at its source, but to counteract their pernicious influence precisely where it is most formidable and extensive. To point out

the miseries of those infinite and laborious pursuits in which persons who *pretend* to be fasionable consume their days, would be but an unprofitable task; while nobody could be found who would admit that they belonged to the class of pretenders; and all that remained therefore was to show, that the pursuits themselves were preposterous; and inflicted the same miseries upon the unquestioned leaders of fashion, as upon the humblest of their followers. For this task, too, Miss Edgeworth possessed certain advantages of which it would have been equally unnatural and unfortunate for her readers, if she had not sought to avail herself.

We have said, that the hints by which we may be enabled to correct those errors of opinion which so frequently derange the whole scheme of life, must be given by one whose authority is not liable to dispute. Persons of fashion, therefore, and pretenders to fashion, will never derive any considerable benefit from all the edifying essays and apologues that superannuated governesses and preceptors may indite for their reformation;—nor from the volumes of sermons which learned divines may put forth for the amendment of the age;—nor the ingenious discourses which philosophers may publish, from the love of fame, money, or mankind. Their feeling as to all *such* monitors is, that they know nothing at all about the matter, and have nothing to do with personages so much above them;—and so they laugh at their prosing and presumption—and throw them aside, with a mingled sense of contempt and indignation. Now, Miss Edgeworth happens fortunately to be born in the condition of a lady—familiar from early life with the polite world, and liable to no suspicion of having become an author from any other motives than those she has been pleased to assign.

But it is by no means enough that we should be on a footing, in point of rank, with those to whom we are moved to address our instructions. It is necessary that we should also have some relish for the pleasures we accuse them of overrating, and some pretensions to the glory we ask them to despise. If a man, without stomach or palate, takes it into his head to lecture against the pleasures of the table—or an old maid against flirtation—or a miser against extravagance, they may say as many wise and just things as they please—but they may be sure that they will either be laughed at, or not listened to; and that all their dissuasives will be set down to the score of mere ignorance or envy. In the same way, a man or woman who is obviously without talents to shine or please in fashionable life, may utter any quantity of striking truths as to its folly or unsatisfactoriness, without ever commanding the attention of one of its votaries. The inference is so ready, and so consolatory—that all those wise reflections are the fruit of disappointment and mortification—that they want to reduce all the world to their own dull level—and to deprive others of gratifications which they are themselves incapable of tasting. The judgment of Miss Edgeworth, however, we think, is not in any very imminent danger of being disabled by this ingenious imputation; since, if we were to select any one of the traits that are indicated by her writings as peculiarly characteristic, and peculiarly entitled to praise, we should specify the singular force of judgment and self-denial, which has enabled her to resist the temptation of being the most brilliant and fashionable writer of her day, in order to be the most useful and instructive.

The writer who conceived the characters, and reported the conversations of Lady Delacour—Lady Geraldine—and Lady Dashfort (to take but these three out of her copious *dramatis personæ*), certainly need not be afraid of being *excelled* by any of her contemporaries, in that faithful but flattering representation of the spoken language of persons of wit and politeness of the present day—in that light and graceful tone of raillery and argument—and in that gift of sportive but cutting *médisance*, which is sure of success in those circles, where success is supposed to be most difficult, and most desirable. With the consciousness of such rare qualifications, we do think it required no ordinary degree of fortitude to withstand the temptation of being the flattering delineator of fashionable manners, instead of their enlightened corrector; and to prefer the chance of amending the age in which she lived, to the certainty of enjoying its applauses. Miss Edgeworth, however, is entitled to the praise of this magnanimity:—For not only has she abstained from dressing any of her favourites in this glittering drapery, but she has uniformly exhibited it in such a way as to mark its subordination to the natural graces it is sometimes allowed to eclipse, and to point out the defects it still more frequently conceals. It is a very rare talent, certainly, to be able to delineate both solid virtues and captivating accomplishments with the same force and fidelity;—but it is a still rarer exercise of that talent, to render the former both more amiable and more attractive than the latter—and, without depriving wit and vivacity of any of their advantages, to win not only our affections, but our admiration away from them, to the less dazzling qualities of the heart and the understanding. By what resources Miss Edgeworth is enabled to perform this feat, we leave our readers to discover, from the perusal of her writings;—of which it is our present business to present them with a slender account, and a scanty sample.

These three new volumes contain but three stories;—the first filling exactly a volume, the second half a volume, and the last no less than a volume and a half. The first, which is entitled "Vivian," is intended to show not only into what absurdities, but into what guilt and wretchedness, a person, otherways estimable, may be brought by that "infirmity of purpose" which renders him incapable of resisting the solicitations of others,—of saying *No*, in short, on proper occasions. The moral, perhaps, is brought a little too constantly forward; and a little more exaggeration is admitted into the construction of the story, than

Miss Edgeworth generally employs;—but it is full of characters and incidents and good sense, like all her other productions.*

But we pass at once to the last, the longest, and by far the most interesting of these tales. It is entitled, "The Absentee;" and is intended to expose the folly and misery of renouncing the respectable character of country ladies and gentlemen, to push, through intolerable expense, and more intolerable scorn, into the outer circles of fashion in London. That the case may be sufficiently striking, Miss Edgeworth has taken her example in an *Irish* family, of large fortune, and considerable rank in the peerage; and has enriched her main story with a greater variety of collateral incidents and characters, than in any of her other productions.

Lord and Lady Clonbrony are the absentees;—and they are so, because Lady Clonbrony is smitten with the ambition of making a figure in the fashionable circles of London;—where her very eagerness obstructs her success; and her inward shame, and affected contempt for her native country, only make her national accent, and all her other nationalities more remarkable. She has a niece, however, a Miss Grace Nugent, who is full of gentleness, and talent, and love for Ireland—and a son, Lord Colambre, who, though educated in England, has very much of his cousin's propensities. The first part of the story represents the various mortifications and repulses which Lady Clonbrony encounters, in her grand attempt to be very fashionable in London—the embarrassments, and gradual declension into low company, of Lord Clonbrony—their plots to marry Lord Colambre to an heiress—and the growth of his attachment to Miss Nugent, who cordially shares both in his regret for the ridicule which his mother is at so much expense to excite, and his wish to snatch her from a career at once so inglorious and so full of peril. Partly to avoid his mother's importunities about the heiress, and partly to escape from the fascinations of Miss Nugent, whose want of fortune and high sense of duty seem to forbid all hopes of their union, he sets out on a visit to Ireland; where the chief interest of the story begins. There are here many admirable delineations of Irish character, in both extremes of life; and a very natural development of all its most remarkable features. At first, his Lordship is very nearly entangled in the spells of Lady Dashfort and her daughter; and is led by their arts to form rather an unfavourable opinion of his countrymen. An accidental circumstance, however, disclosing the artful and unprincipled character of these fair ladies, he breaks from his bondage, and travels *incog.* to his father's two estates of Colambre and Clonbrony;—the one flourishing under the management of a conscientious and active agent; the other going to ruin under the dominion of an unprincipled oppressor. In both places, he sees a great deal of the native politeness, native wit, and kind-heartedness of the lower Irish; and makes an acquaintance at the latter with one group of Catholic cottagers, more interesting, and more beautifully painted, in the simple colouring of nature, than all the Arcadians of pastoral or romance. After detecting the frauds and villany of the tyrannical agent, he hurries back to London, to tell his story to his father; and arrives just in time to hinder him from being irretrievably entangled in his snares. He and Miss Nugent now make joint suit to Lady Clonbrony to retire for a while to Ireland,—an application in which they are powerfully seconded by the terrors of an execution in the house; and at last enabled to succeed, by a solemn promise that the yellow damask furniture of the great drawing-room shall be burnt on the very day of their arrival. In the mean time, Lord Colambre, whose wider survey of the female world had finally determined him to seek happiness with Grace Nugent, even with an humble fortune, suffers great agony, from a discovery maliciously made by Lady Dashfort, of a stain on her mother's reputation; which he is enabled at length to remove, and at the same time to recover a splendid inheritance, which had been long withheld by its prevalence, from the woman of his choice. This last event, of course, reconciles all parties to the match; and they all set out, in bliss and harmony, to the paradise regained, of Clonbrony;—their arrival and reception at which is inimitably described in a letter from one of their postilions, with which the tale is concluded.

In this very brief abstract, we have left out an infinite multitude of the characters and occurrences, from the variety and profusion of which the story derives its principal attraction; and have only attempted indeed to give such a general notice of the relations and proceedings of the chief agents, as to render the few extracts we propose to make intelligible. The contrivance of the story indeed is so good, and the different parts of it so concisely represented, that we could not give an adequate epitome of it in much less compass than the original. We can venture on nothing, therefore, but a few detached specimens: And we take the first from a class of society, which we should scarcely have thought characteristic of the country in question: we mean the Fine ladies of the Plebeian order, who dash more extravagantly, it seems, in Dublin, than any other place in this free and commercial empire. Lord Colambre had the good fortune to form an acquaintance with one of these, the spouse of a rich grocer, who invited him to dine with her at her villa, on his way back from the county of Wicklow. The description, though of a different character from most of Miss Edgeworth's delineations, is so picturesque and lively, that we cannot help thinking it must have been taken from the life. We are tempted, therefore, to give it at full length.

"After a charming tour in the county of Wicklow, where the beauty of the natural scenery, and the taste with which those natural beauties have been cultivated, far surpassed the sanguine expect-

* I now omit the original account of the two first tales; and give only what relates to the last,—and most interesting, and characteristic.

ations Lord Colambre had formed, his Lordship and his companions arrived at Tusculum; where he found Mrs. Raffarty, and Miss Juliana O'Leary, —very elegant—with a large party of the ladies and gentlemen of Bray assembled in a drawing-room, fine with bad pictures and gaudy gilding; the windows were all shut, and the company were playing cards, with all their might. This was the fashion of the neighbourhood. In compliment to Lord Colambre and the officers, the ladies left the card-tables; and Mrs. Raffarty, observing that his Lordship seemed *partial* to walking, took him out, as she said, 'to do the honours of nature and art.'

"The dinner had two great faults—profusion and pretension. There was, in fact ten times more on the table than was necessary; and the entertainment was far above the circumstances of the person by whom it was given: for instance, the dish of fish at the head of the table had been brought across the island from Sligo, and had cost five guineas; as the lady of the house failed not to make known. But, after all, things were not of a piece: there was a disparity between the entertainment and the attendants; there was no proportion or fitness of things. A painful endeavour at what could not be attained, and a toiling in vain to conceal and repair deficiencies and blunders. Had the mistress of the house been quiet; had she, as Mrs. Broadhurst would say, but let things alone, let things take their course; all would have passed off with well-bred people: but she was incessantly apologising, and fussing and fretting inwardly and outwardly, and directing and calling to her servants—striving to make a butler who was deaf, and a boy who was hair-brained, do the business of five accomplished footmen of *parts and figure*. Mrs. Raffarty called 'Larry! Larry! My Lord's plate there!—James! bread, to Captain Bowles!—James! port wine, to the Major.—James! James Kenny! James!' And panting James toiled after her in vain. At length one course was fairly got through; and after a torturing half hour, the second course appeared, and James Kenny was intent upon one thing, and Larry upon another, so that the wine sauce for the hare was spilt by their collision; but what was worse, there seemed little chance that the whole of this second course should ever be placed altogether rightly upon the table. Mrs. Raffarty cleared her throat and nodded, and pointed, and sighed, and set Larry after Kenny, and Kenny after Larry; for what one did, the other undid; but at last, the lady's anger kindled, and she spoke!—'Kenny! James Kenny, set the sea-cale at this corner, and put down the grass, cross-corners; and match your maccaroni yonder with *them* puddens, set—Ogh! James! the pyramid in the middle can't ye.' The pyramid in changing places was overturned. Then it was, that the mistress of the feast, falling back in her seat, and lifting up her hands and eyes in despair, ejaculated: 'Oh, James! James!'—The pyramid was raised by the assistance of the military engineers, and stood trembling again on its base; but the lady's temper could not be so easily restored to its equilibrium."—pp. 25—28.

We hurry forward now to the cottage scene at Clonbrony; which has made us almost equally in love with the Irish, and with the writer who has painted them with such truth, pathos, and simplicity. An ingenious and good-natured postboy overturns his Lordship in the night, a few miles from Clonbrony; and then says,

"'If your honour will lend me your hand till I pull you up the back of the ditch, the horses will stand while we go. I'll find you as pretty a lodging for the night, with a widow of a brother of my sister's husband that was, as ever you slept in your life; and your honour will be, no compare, snugger than the inn at Clonbrony, which has no roof, the devil a stick. But where will I get your honour's hand? for it's coming on so dark, I can't see rightly.—There! you're up now safe. Yonder candle's the house.' 'Well, go and ask whether they can give us a night's lodging.' 'Is it *ask?* When I see the light!—Sure they'd be proud to give the traveller all the beds in the house, let alone one. Take care of the potatoe furrows, that's all, and follow me straight. I'll go on to meet the dog, who knows me, and might be strange to your honour.'

"'Kindly welcome!' were the first words Lord Colambre heard when he approached the cottage; and 'kindly welcome' was in the sound of the voice, and in the countenance of the old woman, who came out shading her rush candle from the wind, and holding it so as to light the path. When he entered the cottage, he saw a cheerful fire and a neat pretty young woman making it blaze: she curtsied, put her spinning wheel out of the way, set a stool by the fire for the stranger; and repeating in a very low tone of voice, 'Kindly welcome, sir,' retired. 'Put down some eggs, dear, there's plenty in the bowl,' said the old woman, calling to her; 'I'll do the bacon. Was not we lucky to be up?—The boy's gone to bed, but waken him,' said she, turning to the postilion; 'and he will help you with the chay, and put your horses in the bier for the night.'"

"No: Larry chose to go on to Clonbrony with the horses, that he might get the chaise mended betimes for his honour. The table was set; clean trenchers, hot potatoes, milk, eggs, bacon, and 'kindly welcome to all.' 'Set the salt, dear; and the butter, love; where's your head, Grace, dear?' 'Grace!' repeated Lord Colambre, looking up; and to apologise for his involuntary exclamation he added, 'Is Grace a common name in Ireland?' 'I can't say, plase your honour, but it was give her by Lady Clonbrony, from a niece of her own that was her foster-sister, God bless her; and a very kind lady she was to us and to all when she was living in it; but those times are gone past,' said the old woman, with a sigh. The young woman sighed too; and sitting down by the fire, began to count the notches in a little bit of stick, which she held in her hand; and after she had counted them, sighed again. 'But don't be sighing, Grace, now,' said the old woman; 'sighs is bad sauce for the traveller's supper; and we won't be troubling him with more,' added she, turning to Lord Colambre, with a smile—'Is your egg done to your liking?' 'Perfectly, thank you.' 'Then I wish it was a chicken for your sake, which it should have been, and roast too, had we time. I wish I could see you eat another egg.' No more, thank you, my good lady; I never ate a better supper, nor received a more hospitable welcome.' 'O, the welcome is all we have to offer.'

"'May I ask what that is?' said Lord Colambre, looking at the notched stick, which the young woman held in her hand, and on which her eyes were still fixed. 'It's a *tally*, plase your honour.—O you're a foreigner—It's the way the labourer keeps the account of the day's work with the overseer. And there's been a mistake, and is a dispute here between our boy and the overseer; and she was counting the boy's tally, that's in bed, tired, for in troth he's over-worked.' 'Would you want any thing more from me, mother,' said the girl, rising and turning her head away. 'No, child; get away, for your heart's full.' She went instantly. 'Is the boy her brother?' said Lord Colambre. 'No: he's her bachelor,' said the old woman, lowering her voice. 'Her bachelor?' 'That is, her sweetheart: for she is not my daughter, though you heard her call me mother. The boy's my son; but I am *afeard* they must give it up; for they're too poor, and the times is hard—and the agent's harder than the times! There's two of them, the under and the upper; and they grind the substance of one between them, and then blow one away like chaff: but we'll not be talking of that, to spoil your hon-

our's night's rest. The room's ready, and here's the rush light.' She showed him into a very small, but neat room. 'What a comfortable looking bed,' said Lord Colambre. 'Ah, these red check curtains,' said she, letting them down; 'these have lasted well; they were give me by a good friend now far away, over the seas, my Lady Clonbrony; and made by the prettiest hands ever you see, her neice's, Miss Grace Nugent's, and she a little child that time; sweet love! all gone!' The old woman wiped a tear from her eye, and Lord Colambre did what he could to appear indifferent. She set down the candle and left the room; Lord Colambre went to bed, but he lay awake, 'revolving sweet and bitter thoughts.'

"The kettle was on the fire, tea things set, every thing prepared for her guest, by the hospitable hostess, who, thinking the gentleman would take tea to his breakfast, had sent off a *gossoon* by the *first light* to Clonbrony, for an ounce of tea, a *quarter of sugar*, and a loaf of white bread; and there was on the little table good cream, milk, butter, eggs—all the promise of an excellent breakfast. It was a *fresh* morning, and there was a pleasant fire on the hearth neatly swept up. The old woman was sitting in her chimney corner, behind a little skreen of white-washed wall, built out into the room, for the purpose of keeping those who sat at the fire from the *blast of the door*. There was a loop-hole in this wall, to let the light in, just at the height of a person's head, who was sitting near the chimney. The rays of the morning sun now came through it, shining across the face of the old woman, as she sat knitting; Lord Colambre thought he had seldom seen a more agreeable countenance; intelligent eyes, benevolent smile, a natural expression of cheerfulness, subdued by age and misfortune. 'A good morrow to you kindly, sir, and I hope you got the night well?—A fine day for us this Sunday morning; my Grace is gone to early prayers, so your honour will be content with an old woman to make your breakfast.—O, let me put in plenty, or it will never be good; and if your honour takes stirabout, an old hand will engage to make that to your liking any way, for by great happiness we have what will just answer for you, of the nicest meal the miller made my Grace a compliment of, last time she went to the mill.'"—pp. 171—179.

In the course of conversation, she informs her guest of the precarious tenure on which she held the little possession that formed her only means of subsistence.

"'The good lord himself granted us the *lase;* the life's dropped, and the years is out: but we had a promise of renewal in writing from the landlord.—God bless him! if he was not away, he'd be a good gentleman, and we'd be happy and safe.' 'But if you have a promise in writing of a renewal, surely, you are safe, whether your landlord is absent or present.'—'Ah, no! that makes a great *differ*, when there's no eye or hand over the agent.—Yet, indeed, there,' added she, after a pause, 'as you say, I think we are safe; for we have that memorandum in writing, with a pencil, under his own hand, on the back of the *lase*, to me, by the same token when my good lord had his foot on the step of the coach, going away; and I'll never forget the smile of her that got that good turn done for me, Miss Grace. And just when she was going to England and London, and young as she was, to have the thought to stop and turn to the likes of me! O, then, if you could see her, and know her as I did! *That* was the comforting angel upon earth—look and voice, and heart and all! O, that she was here present, this minute!—But did you scald yourself?' said the widow to Lord Colambre. —'Sure, you must have scalded yourself; for you poured the kettle straight over your hand, and it boiling! O *dear!* to think of so young a gentleman's hand shaking so like my own. Luckily, to prevent her pursuing her observations from the hand to the face, which might have betrayed more than Lord Colambre wished she should know, her own Grace came in at this instant—'There, it's for you safe, mother dear—the *lase!*' said Grace, throwing a packet into her lap. The old woman lifted up her hands to heaven with the lease between them—'Thanks be to Heaven!' Grace passed on, and sunk down on the first seat she could reach. Her face flushed, and, looking much fatigued, she loosened the strings of her bonnet and cloak.—'Then, I'm tired!' but recollecting herself, she rose, and curtsied to the gentleman.—'What tired ye, dear?' —'Why, after prayers, we had to go—for the agent was not at prayers, nor at home for us, when we called—we had to go all the way up to the castle; and there by great good luck, we found Mr. Nick Garraghty himself, come from Dublin, and the *lase* in his hands; and he sealed it up that way, and handed it to me very civil. I never saw him so good—though he offered me a glass of spirits, which was not manners to a decent young woman, in a morning—as Brian noticed after.'—'But why didn't Brian come home all the way with you, Grace?'—'He would have seen me home,' said Grace, 'only that he went up a piece of the mountain for some stones or ore for the gentleman,—for he had the manners to think of him this morning, though shame for me. I had not, when I came in, or I would not have told you all this, and he himself by. See, there he is, mother.'—Brian came in very hot, out of breath, with his hat full of stones. 'Good morrow to your honour. I was in bed last night; and sorry they did not call me up to be of *sarvice*. Larry was telling us, this morning, your honour's from Wales, and looking for mines in Ireland, and I heard talk that there was one on our mountain—may be, you'd be *curious* to see; and so, I brought the best I could, but I'm no judge.'"

Vol. vi. pp. 182—188.

A scene of villainy now begins to disclose itself, as the experienced reader must have anticipated. The pencil writing is rubbed out: but the agent promises, that if they pay up their arrears, and be handsome, with their sealing money and glove money, &c. he will grant a renewal. To obtain the rent, the widow is obliged to sell her cow.—But she shall tell her story in her own words.

"'Well, still it was but paper we got for the cow; then that must be gold before the agent would take, or touch it—so I was laying out to sell the dresser, and had taken the plates and cups, and little things off it, and my boy was lifting it out with Andy the carpenter, that was agreeing for it, when in comes Grace, all rosy, and out of breath—it's a wonder I minded her run out, and not missed her—Mother, says she, here's the gold for you, don't be stirring your dresser.—And where's your own gown and cloak, Grace? says I. But, I beg your pardon, sir; may be I'm tiring you?'—Lord Colambre encouraged her to go on.—'Where's your gown and cloak, Grace, says I.'—'Gone,' says she. 'The cloak was too warm and heavy, and I don't doubt, mother, but it was that helped to make me faint this morning. And as to the gown, sure I've a very nice one here, that you spun for me yourself, mother; and that I prize above all the gowns that ever came out of a loom; and that Brian said became me to his fancy above any gown ever he see me wear, and what could I wish for more.'—Now, I'd a mind to scold her for going to sell the gown unknown'st to me; but I don't know how it was, I couldn't scold her just then,—so kissed her, and Brian the same; and that was what no man ever did before.—And she had a mind to be angry with him, but could not, nor ought not, says I; for he's as good as your husband now, Grace; and no man can part *yees* now, says I, putting their hands to-

gether.—Well, I never saw her look so pretty; nor there was not a happier boy that minute on God's earth than my son, nor a happier mother than myself; and I thanked God that he had given them to me; and down they both fell on their knees for my blessing, little worth as it was; and my heart's blessing they had, and I laid my hands upon them. 'It's the priest you must get to do this for you tomorrow, says I.' "—Vol. vi. pp. 205—207.

Next morning they go up in high spirits to the castle, where the villanous agent denies his promise; and is laughing at their despair, when Lord Colambre is fortunately identified by Mrs. Raffarty, who turns out to be a sister of the said agent, and, like a god in epic poetry, turns agony into triumph!

We can make room for no more now, but the epistle of Larry Brady, the good-natured postboy, to his brother, giving an account of the return of the family to Clonbrony. If Miss Edgeworth had never written any other thing, this one letter must have placed her at the very top of our scale, as an observer of character, and a mistress in the simple pathetic. We give the greater part of this extraordinary production.

"My dear brother,—Yours of the 16th, enclosing the five pound note for my father, came safe to hand Monday last; and, with his thanks and blessing to you, he commends it to you herewith enclosed back again, on account of his being in no immediate necessity, nor likelihood to want in future, as you shall hear forthwith; but wants you over, with all speed, and the note will answer for travelling charges; for we can't enjoy the luck it has pleased God to give us, without *yees:* put the rest in your pocket, and read it when you've time.

"Now, cock up your ears, Pat! for the great news is coming, and the good. The master's come home—long life to him!—and family come home yesterday, all entirely! The *ould* lord and the young lord, (ay there's the man, Paddy!) and my lady, and Miss Nugent. And I driv Miss Nugent's maid, that maid that was, and another; so I had the luck to be in it alone *wid' em*, and see all, from first to last. And first, I must tell you, my young Lord Colambre remembered and noticed me the minute he lit at our inn, and condescended to beckon at me out of the yard to him, and axed me—'Friend Larry,' says he, 'did you keep your promise?'——'My oath again the whiskey is it?' says I. 'My Lord, I surely did,' said I; which was true, as all the country knows I never tasted a drop since. And I'm proud to see your honour, my lord, as good as your word too, and back again among us. So then there was a call for the horses; and no more at that time passed betwix' my young lord and me, but that he pointed me out to the *ould* one, as I went off. I noticed and thanked him for it in my heart, though I did not know all the good was to come of it. Well no more of myself, for the present.

"Ogh, it's I driv 'em well; and we all got to the great gate of the park before sunset, and as fine an evening as ever you see; with the sun shining on the tops of the trees, as the ladies noticed the leaves changed, but not dropped, though so late in the season. I believe the leaves knew what they were about, and kept on, on purpose to welcome them; and the birds were singing; and I stopped whistling, that they might hear them: but sorrow bit could they hear when they got to the park gate, for there was such a crowd, and such a shout, as you never see—and they had the horses off every carriage entirely, and drew 'em home, with blessings, through the park. And, God bless 'em, when they got out, they didn't go shut themselves up in the great drawing-room, but went straight out to the *tirrass*, to satisfy the eyes and hearts that followed them. My lady *laning* on my young lord, and Miss Grace Nugent that was, the beautifullest angel that ever you set eyes on, with the finest complexion and sweetest of smiles, *laning* upon the old lord's arm, who had his hat off, bowing to all, and noticing the old tenants as he passed by name. O, there was great gladness, and tears in the midst; for joy I could scarcely keep from myself.

"After a turn or two upon the *tirrass*, my Lord Colambre *quit* his mother's arm for a minute, and he come to the edge of the slope, and looked down and through all the crowd for some one. 'Is it the widow O'Neill, my lord?' says I; 'she's yonder, with the spectacles on her nose, betwixt her son and daughter, as usual.' Then my lord beckoned, and they did not know which of the *tree* would stir; and then he gave *tree* beckons with his own finger, and they all *tree* came fast enough to the bottom of the slope, forenent my lord; and he went down and helped the widow up, (O, he's the true jantleman,) and brought 'em all *tree* upon the *tirrass*, to my lady and Miss Nugent; and I was up close after, that I might hear, which wasn't manners, but I couldn't help it! So what he said I don't well know, for I could not get near enough after all. But I saw my lady smile very kind, and take the widow O'Neill by the hand, and then my Lord Colambre *'troduced* Grace to Miss Nugent, and there was the word *namesake*, and something about a check curtains; but whatever it was, they was all greatly pleased: then my Lord Colambre turned and looked for Brian, who had fell back, and took him with some commendation to my lord his father. And my lord the master said, which I didn't know till after, that they should have their house and farm at the *ould* rent; and at the surprise, the widow dropped down dead; and there was a cry as for ten *berrings*. 'Be qu'ite,' says I, 'she's only kilt for joy;' and I went and lift her up, for her son had no more strength that minute than the child new born; and Grace trembled like a leaf, as white as the sheet, but not long, for the mother came to, and was as well as ever when I brought some water, which Miss Nugent handed to her with her own hand.

"'That was always pretty and good,' said the widow, laying her hand upon Miss Nugent, 'and kind and good to me and mine. That minute there was music from below. The blind harper, O'Neill, with his harp, that struck up 'Gracey Nugent!' And that finished, and my Lord Colambre smiling with the tears standing in his eyes too, and the *ould* lord quite wiping his, I ran to the *tirrass* brink to bid O'Neill play it again; but as I run, I thought I heard a voice call Larry.

"'Who calls Larry?' says I. 'My Lord Colambre calls you, Larry,' says all at once; and four takes me by the shoulders, and spins me round. 'There's my young lord calling you, Larry—run for your life.' So I run back for my life, and walked respectful, with my hat in my hand, when I got near. 'Put on your hat, my father desires it,' says my Lord Colambre. The ould lord made a sign to that purpose, but was too full to speak. 'Where's your father?' continues my young lord. —'He's very ould, my lord,' says I.—'I didn't *ax* you how ould he was,' says he; 'but where is he?' —'He's behind the crowd below; on account of his infirmities he couldn't walk so fast as the rest, my lord,' says I; 'but his heart is with you, if not his body.'—'I must have his body too: so bring him bodily before us; and this shall be your warrant for so doing,' said my lord, joking. For he knows the *natur* of us, Paddy, and how we love a joke in our hearts, as well as if he had lived all his life in Ireland; and by the same token will, for that *rason*, do what he pleases with us, and more may be than a man twice as good, that never would smile on us.

"But I'm telling you of my father. 'I've a warrant for you, father,' says I; 'and must have you bodily before the justice, and my lord chief justice.' So he changed colour a bit at first; but

he saw me smile. 'And I've done no sin,' said he; 'and, Larry, you may lead me now, as you led me all my life.'—And up the slope he went with me, as light as fifteen; and when we got up, my Lord Clonbrony said, 'I am sorry an old tenant, and a good old tenant, as I hear you were, should have been turned out of your farm.'—'Don't fret, it's no great matter, my lord,' said my father. 'I shall be soon out of the way; but if you would be so kind to speak a word for my boy here, and that I could afford, while the life is in me, to bring my other boy back out of banishment—'

"'Then,' says my Lord Clonbrony, 'I'll give you and your sons three lives, or thirty-one years, from this day, of your former farm. Return to it when you please.' 'And,' added my Lord Colambre, 'the flaggers, I hope, will soon be banished.' O, how could I thank him—not a word could I proffer—but I know I clasped my two hands and prayed for him inwardly. And my father was dropping down on his knees, but the master would not let him; and *observed*, that posture should only be for his God! And, sure enough, in that posture, when he was out of sight, we did pray for him that night, and will all our days.

"But before we quit his presence, he call me back, and bid me write to my brother, and bring you back, if you've no objections to your own country.—So come, my dear Pat, and make no delay, for joy's not joy complate till you're in it—my father sends his blessing, and Peggy her love. The family entirely is to settle for good in Ireland; and there was in the castle yard last night a bonfire made by my lord's orders of the ould yellow damask furniture, to plase my lady, my lord says. And the drawing-rooms, the butler was telling me, is new hung; and the chairs, with velvet, as white as snow, and shaded over with natural flowers, by Miss Nugent.—Oh! how I hope what I guess will come true, and I've *rason* to believe it will, for I dream't in my bed last night, it did. But keep yourself to yourself—that Miss Nugent (who is no more Miss Nugent, they say, but Miss Reynolds, and has a new-found grandfather, and is a big heiress, which she did not want in my eyes, nor in my young lord's,) I've a notion, will be sometime, and may be sooner than is expected, my Lady Viscountess Colambre—so haste to the wedding! And there's another thing: they say the rich ould grandfather's coming over;—and another thing, Pat, you would not be out of the fashion. And you see it's growing the fashion, not to be an Absentee!"

If there be any of our readers who is not moved with delight and admiration in the perusal of this letter, we must say, that we have but a poor opinion either of his taste or his moral sensibility; and shall think all the better of ourselves, in future, for appearing tedious in his eyes. For our own parts, we do not know whether we envy the author most, for the rare talent she has shown in this description, or for the *experience* by which its materials have been supplied. She not only makes us know and love the Irish nation far better than any other writer, but seems to us more qualified than most others to promote the knowledge and the love of mankind.

(November, 1814.)

Waverly, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since. In three volumes 12mo. pp. 1112. Third Edition. Edinburgh: 1814.*

It is wonderful what genius and adherence to nature will do, in spite of all disadvantages. Here is a thing obviously very hastily, and, in many places, somewhat unskilfully written—composed, one half of it, in a dialect unintelligible to four-fifths of the reading population of the country—relating to a period too recent to be romantic, and too far gone by

* I have been a good deal at a loss what to do with these famous novels of Sir Walter. On the one hand, I could not bring myself to let this collection go forth, without *some* notice of works which, for many years together, had occupied and delighted me more than any thing else that ever came under my critical survey: While, on the other, I could not but feel that it would be absurd, and in some sense almost dishonest, to fill these pages with long citations from books which, for the last twenty-five years, have been in the hands of at least fifty times as many readers as are ever likely to look into this publication—and are still as familiar to the generation which has last come into existence, as to those who can yet remember the sensation produced by their first appearance. In point of fact I was informed, but the other day, by Mr. Caddell, that he had actually sold not less than *sixty thousand volumes* of these extraordinary productions, in the course of the preceding year! and that the demand for them, instead of slackening—had been for some time sensibly on the increase. In these circumstances I think I may safely assume that their contents are still so perfectly known as not to require any citations to introduce such of the remarks originally made on them as I may now wish to repeat. And I have therefore come to the determination of omitting almost all the quotations, and most of the detailed abstracts which appeared in the original reviews; and to retain only the general criticism, and character, or estimate of each performance—together with such incidental observations as may have been suggested by the tenor or success of these wonderful productions. By this course, no doubt, a sad shrinking will be effected in the primitive dimensions of the articles which are here reproduced; and may probably give to what is retained something of a naked and jejune appearance. If it should be so, I can only say that I do not see how I could have helped it: and after all it may not be altogether without interest to see, from a contemporary record, what were the first impressions produced by the appearance of this new luminary on our horizon; while the secret of the authorship was yet undivulged, and before the rapid accumulation of its glories had forced on the dullest spectator a sense of its magnitude and power. I may venture perhaps also to add, that some of the general speculations of which these reviews suggested the occasion, may probably be found as well worth preserving as most of those which have been elsewhere embodied in this experimental, and somewhat hazardous, publication.

Though living in familiar intercourse with Sir Walter, I need scarcely say that I was not in the secret of his authorship; and in truth had no assurance of the fact, till the time of its promulgation.

to be familiar—and published, moreover, in a quarter of the island where materials and talents for novel-writing have been supposed to be equally wanting: And yet, by the mere force and truth and vivacity of its colouring, already casting the whole tribe of ordinary novels into the shade, and taking its place rather with the most popular of our modern poems, than with the rubbish of provincial romances.

The secret of this success, we take it, is merely that the author is a man of Genius; and that he has, notwithstanding, had virtue enough to be true to Nature throughout; and to content himself, even in the marvellous parts of his story, with copying from actual existences, rather than from the phantasms of his own imagination. The charm which this communicates to all works that deal in the representation of human actions and character, is more readily felt than understood; and operates with unfailing efficacy even upon those who have no acquaintance with the originals from which the picture has been borrowed. It requires no ordinary talent, indeed, to choose such realities as may outshine the bright imaginations of the inventive, and so to combine them as to produce the most advantageous effect; but when this is once accomplished, the result is sure to be something more firm, impressive, and engaging, than can ever be produced by mere fiction.

The object of the work before us, was evidently to present a faithful and animated picture of the manners and state of society that prevailed in this northern part of the island, in the earlier part of last century; and the author has judiciously fixed upon the era of the Rebellion in 1745, not only as enriching his pages with the interest inseparably attached to the narration of such occurrences, but as affording a fair opportunity for bringing out all the contrasted principles and habits which distinguished the different classes of persons who then divided the country, and formed among them the basis of almost all that was peculiar in the national character. That unfortunate contention brought conspicuously to light, and, for the last time, the fading image of feudal chivalry in the mountains, and vulgar fanaticism in the plains; and startled the more polished parts of the land with the wild but brilliant picture of the devoted valour, incorruptible fidelity, patriarchal brotherhood, and savage habits of the Celtic Clans, on the one hand,—and the dark, intractable, and domineering bigotry of the Covenanters on the other. Both aspects of society had indeed been formerly prevalent in other parts of the country,—but had there been so long superseded by more peaceable habits, and milder manners, that their vestiges were almost effaced, and their very memory nearly extinguished. The feudal principalities had been destroyed in the South, for near three hundred years,—and the dominion of the Puritans from the time of the Restoration. When the glens, and banded clans, of the central Highlands, therefore, were opened up to the gaze of the English, in the course of that insurrection, it seemed as if they were carried back to the days of the Heptarchy;—and when they saw the array of the West country Whigs, they might imagine themselves transported to the age of Cromwell. The effect, indeed, is almost as startling at the present moment; and one great source of the interest which the volumes before us undoubtedly possess, is to be sought in the surprise that is excited by discovering, that in our own country, and almost in our own age, manners and characters existed, and were conspicuous, which we had been accustomed to consider as belonging to remote antiquity, or extravagant romance.

The way in which they are here represented must satisfy every reader, we think, by an inward *tact* and conviction, that the delineation has been made from actual experience and observation;—experience and observation employed perhaps only on a few surviving relics and specimens of what was familiar a little earlier—but generalised from instances sufficiently numerous and complete, to warrant all that may have been added to the portrait:—And, indeed, the existing records and vestiges of the more extraordinary parts of the representation are still sufficiently abundant, to satisfy all who have the means of consulting them, as to the perfect accuracy of the picture. The great traits of Clannish dependence, pride, and fidelity, may still be detected in many districts of the Highlands, though they do not now adhere to the chieftains when they mingle in general society; and the existing contentions of Burghers and Antiburghers, and Cameronians, though shrunk into comparative insignificance, and left, indeed, without protection to the ridicule of the profane, may still be referred to, as complete verifications of all that is here stated about Gifted Gilfillan, or Ebenezer Cruickshank. The traits of Scottish national character in the lower ranks, can still less be regarded as antiquated or traditional; nor is there any thing in the whole compass of the work which gives us a stronger impression of the nice observation and graphical talent of the author, than the extraordinary fidelity and felicity with which all the inferior agents in the story are represented. No one who has not lived extensively among the lower orders of all descriptions, and made himself familiar with their various tempers and dialects, can perceive the full merit of those rapid and characteristic sketches; but it requires only a general knowledge of human nature, to feel that they must be faithful copies from known originals; and to be aware of the extraordinary facility and flexibility of hand which has touched, for instance, with such discriminating shades, the various gradations of the Celtic character, from the savage imperturbability of Dugald Mahony, who stalks grimly about with his battle-axe on his shoulder, without speaking a word to any one,—to the lively unprincipled activity of Callum Beg,—the coarse unreflecting hardihood and heroism of Evan Maccombich,—and the pride, gallantry, elegance, and ambition of Fergus himself. In the lower class of the Lowland characters, again, the vulgarity of Mrs. Flockhart and of

Lieutenant Jinker is perfectly distinct and original;—as well as the puritanism of Gilfillan and Cruickshank—the atrocity of Mrs. Mucklewrath—and the slow solemnity of Alexander Saunderson. The Baron of Bradwardine, and Baillie Macwheeble, are caricatures no doubt, after the fashion of the caricatures in the novels of Smollet,—or pictures, at the best, of individuals who must always have been unique and extraordinary: but almost all the other personages in the history are fair representatives of classes that are still existing, or may be remembered at least to have existed, by many whose recollections do not extend quite so far back as to the year 1745.

Waverley is the representative of an old and opulent Jacobite family in the centre of England—educated at home in an irregular manner, and living, till the age of majority, mostly in the retirement of his paternal mansion—where he reads poetry, feeds his fancy with romantic musings, and acquires amiable dispositions, and something of a contemplative, passive, and undecided character. All the English adherents of the abdicated family having renounced any serious hopes of their cause long before the year 1745, the guardians of young Waverley were induced, in that celebrated year, to allow him to enter into the army, as the nation was then engaged in foreign war—and a passion for military glory had always been characteristic of his line. He obtains a commission, accordingly, in a regiment of horse, then stationed in Scotland, and proceeds forthwith to head-quarters. Cosmo Comyne Bradwardine, Esq., of Tully-Veolan in Perthshire, had been an ancient friend of the house of Waverley, and had been enabled, by their good offices, to get over a very awkward rencontre with the King's Attorney-General soon after the year 1715. The young heir was accordingly furnished with credentials to this faithful ally; and took an early opportunity of paying his respects at the ancient mansion of Tully-Veolan. The house and its inhabitants, and their way of life, are admirably described. The Baron himself had been bred a lawyer; and was, by choice, a diligent reader of the Latin classics. His profession, however, was that of arms; and having served several campaigns on the Continent, he had superadded, to the pedantry and jargon of his forensic and academical studies, the technical slang of a German martinet—and a sprinkling of the coxcombry of a French mousquetaire. He was, moreover, prodigiously proud of his ancestry; and, with all his peculiarities, which, to say the truth, are rather more than can be decently accumulated in one character, was a most honourable, valiant, and friendly person. He had one fair daughter, and no more—who was gentle, feminine, and affectionate. Waverley, though struck at first with the strange manners of this northern baron, is at length domesticated in the family; and is led, by curiosity, to pay a visit to the cave of a famous Highland robber or freebooter, from which he is conducted to the castle of a neighbouring chieftain, and sees the Highland life in all its barbarous but captivating characters. This chief is Fergus Vich Ian Vohr—a gallant and ambitious youth, zealously attached to the cause of the exiled family, and busy, at the moment, in fomenting the insurrection, by which his sanguine spirit never doubted that their restoration was to be effected. He has a sister still more enthusiastically devoted to the same cause—recently returned from a residence at the Court of France, and dazzling the romantic imagination of Waverley not less by the exaltation of her sentiments, than his eyes by her elegance and beauty. While he lingers in this perilous retreat, he is suddenly deprived of his commission, in consequence of some misunderstandings and misrepresentations which it is unnecessary to detail; and in the first heat of his indignation, is almost tempted to throw himself into the array of the Children of Ivor, and join the insurgents, whose designs are no longer seriously disguised from him. He takes, however, the more prudent resolution of returning, in the first place, to his family; but is stopped, on the borders of the Highlands, by the magistracy, whom rumours of coming events had made more than usually suspicious, and forwarded as a prisoner to Stirling. On the march he is rescued by a band of unknown Highlanders, who ultimately convey him in safety to Edinburgh, and deposit him in the hands of his friend Fergus Mac-Ivor, who was mounting guard with his Highlanders at the ancient palace of Holyrood, where the Royal Adventurer was then actually holding his court. A combination of temptations far too powerful for such a temper, now beset Waverley; and, inflamed at once by the ill-usage he thought he had received from the government—the recollection of his hereditary predilections—his friendship and admiration of Fergus—his love for his sister—and the graceful condescension and personal solicitations of the unfortunate Prince,—he rashly vows to unite his fortunes with theirs, and enters as a volunteer in the ranks of the Children of Ivor.

During his attendance at the court of Holyrood, his passion for the magnanimous Flora is gradually abated by her continued indifference, and too entire devotion to the public cause; and his affections gradually decline upon Miss Bradwardine, who has leisure for less important concernments. He accompanies the Adventurer's army, and signalises himself in the battle of Preston,—where he has the good fortune to save the life of an English officer, who turns out to be an intimate friend of his family, and remonstrates with him with considerable effect on the rash step he has taken. It is now impossible, however, he thinks, to recede with honour; and he pursues the disastrous career of the invaders into England—during which he quarrels with, and is again reconciled to Fergus—till he is finally separated from his corps in the confusion and darkness of the night-skirmish at Clifton—and, after lurking for some time in concealment, finds his way to London, where he is protected by the grateful friend whose life he had saved at Preston,

and sent back to Scotland till some arrangements could be made about his pardon. Here he learns the final discomfiture of his former associates—is fortunate enough to obtain both his own pardon, and that of old Bradwardine—and, after making sure of his interest in the heart of the young lady, at last bethinks him of going to give an account of himself to his family at Waverley-Honour.—In his way, he attends the assizes at Carlisle, where all his efforts are ineffectual to avert the fate of his gallant friend Fergus—whose heroic demeanour in that last extremity, is depicted with great feeling;—has a last interview with the desolated Flora—obtains the consent of his friends to his marriage with Miss Bradwardine—puts the old Baron in possession of his forfeited manor, and, in due time, carries his blooming bride to the peaceful shades of his own paternal abode.

Such is the outline of the story;—although it is broken and diversified with so many subordinate incidents, that what we have now given, will afford but a very inadequate idea even of the narrative part of the performance. Though that narrative is always lively and easy, the great charm of the work consists, undoubtedly, in the characters and descriptions—though we can scarcely venture to present our readers with more than a single specimen; and we select, as one of the most characteristic, the account of Waverley's night visit to the cave of the Highland freebooter.

"In a short time, he found himself on the banks of a large river or lake, where his conductor gave him to understand they must sit down for a little while. The moon, which now began to rise, showed obscurely the expanse of water which spread before them, and the shapeless and indistinct forms of mountains, with which it seemed to be surrounded. The cool, and yet mild air of the summer night, refreshed Waverley after his rapid and toilsome walk; and the perfume which it wafted from the birch trees, bathed in the evening dew, was exquisitely fragrant.

"He had now time to give himself up to the full romance of his situation. Here he sat on the banks of an unknown lake, under the guidance of a wild native, whose language was unknown to him, on a visit to the den of some renowned outlaw, a second Robin Hood perhaps, or Adam o' Gordon, and that at deep midnight, through scenes of difficulty and toil, separated from his attendant, and left by his guide.

"While wrapt in these dreams of imagination, his companion gently touched him, and pointing in a direction nearly straight across the lake, said, 'Yon's ta cove.' A small point of light was seen to twinkle in the direction in which he pointed, and, gradually increasing in size and lustre, seemed to flicker like a meteor upon the verge of the horizon. While Edward watched this phenomenon, the distant dash of oars was heard. The measured splash arrived near and more near; and presently a loud whistle was heard in the same direction. His friend with the battle-axe immediately whistled clear and shrill, in reply to the signal; and a boat, manned with four or five Highlanders, pushed for a little inlet, near which Edward was seated. He advanced to meet them with his attendant; was immediately assisted into the boat by the officious attention of two stout mountaineers; and had no sooner seated himself, than they resumed their oars, and began to row across the lake with great rapidity.

"The party preserved silence, interrupted only by the monotonous and murmured chant of a Gaelic song, sung in a kind of low recitative by the steersman, and by the dash of the oars, which the notes seemed to regulate, as they dipped to them in cadence. The light, which they now approached more nearly, assumed a broader, redder, and more irregular splendour. It appeared plainly to be a large fire; but whether kindled upon an island or the mainland, Edward could not determine. As he saw it, the red glaring orb seemed to rest on the very surface of the lake itself, and resembled the fiery vehicle in which the Evil Genius of an oriental tale traverses land and sea. They approached nearer; and the light of the fire sufficed to show that it was kindled at the bottom of a huge dark crag or rock, rising abruptly from the very edge of the water; its front, changed by the reflection to dusky red, formed a strange and even awful contrast to the banks around, which were from time to time faintly and partially enlightened by pallid moonlight.

"The boat now neared the shore, and Edward could discover that this large fire was kindled in the jaws of a lofty cavern, into which an inlet from the lake seemed to advance; and he conjectured, which was indeed true, that the fire had been kindled as a beacon to the boatmen on their return. They rowed right for the mouth of the cave; and then shipping their oars, permitted the boat to enter with the impulse which it had received. The skiff passed the little point, or platform of rock on which the fire was blazing, and running about two boats' length farther, stopped where the cavern, for it was already arched overhead, ascended from the water by five or six broad ledges of rock, so easy and regular that they might be termed natural steps. At this moment, a quantity of water was suddenly flung upon the fire, which sunk with a hissing noise, and with it disappeared the light it had hitherto afforded. Four or five active arms lifted Waverley out of the boat, placed him on his feet, and almost carried him into the recesses of the cave. He made a few paces in darkness, guided in this manner; and advancing towards a hum of voices, which seemed to sound from the centre of the rock, at an acute turn Donald Bean Lean and his whole establishment were before his eyes.

"The interior of the cave, which here rose very high, was illuminated by torches made of pine-tree, which emitted a bright and bickering light, attended by a strong, though not unpleasant odour. Their light was assisted by the red glare of a large charcoal fire, round which were seated five or six armed Highlanders, while others were indistinctly seen couched on their plaids, in the more remote recesses of the cavern. In one large aperture, which the robber facetiously called his *spence* (or pantry), there hung by the heels the carcases of a sheep or ewe, and two cows, lately slaughtered.

"Being placed at a convenient distance from the charcoal fire, the heat of which the season rendered oppressive, a strapping Highland damsel placed before Waverley, Evan, and Donald Bean, three cogues, or wooden vessels, composed of staves and hoops, containing *imrigh*, a sort of strong soup made out of a particular part of the inside of the beeves. After this refreshment, which, though coarse, fatigue and hunger rendered palatable, steaks, roasted on the coals, were supplied in liberal abundance, and disappeared before Evan Dhu and their host with a promptitude that seemed like magic, and astonished Waverley, who was much puzzled to reconcile their voracity with what he had heard of the abstemiousness of the Highlanders.—A heath pallet, with the flowers stuck uppermost, had been prepared for him in a recess of the cave; and here, covered with such spare plaids as could be mustered, he lay for some time watching the motions of the other inhabitants of the cavern. Small parties of two or three entered or left the place without any other ceremony than a few words in Gaelic to the principal outlaw, and when he fell

asleep, to a tall Highlander who acted as his lieutenant, and seemed to keep watch during his repose. Those who entered, seemed to have returned from some excursion, of which they reported the success, and went without farther ceremony to the larder, where cutting with their dirks their rations from the carcases which were there suspended, they proceeded to broil and eat them at their own time and leisure.

"At length the fluctuating groupes began to swim before the eyes of our hero as they gradually closed; nor did he reopen them till the morning sun was high on the lake without, though there was but a faint and glimmering twilight in the recesses of Uaimh an Ri, or the King's cavern, as the abode of Donald Bean Lean, was proudly denominated.

"When Edward had collected his scattered recollection, he was surprised to observe the cavern totally deserted. Having arisen and put his dress in some order, he looked more accurately around him, but all was still solitary. If it had not been for the decayed brands of the fire, now sunk into grey ashes, and the remnants of the festival, consisting of bones half burned and half gnawed, and an empty keg or two, there remained no traces of Donald and his band.

"Near to the mouth of the cave he heard the notes of a lively Gaelic song, guided by which, in a sunny recess, shaded by a glittering birch tree, and carpetted with a bank of firm white sand, he found the damsel of the cavern, whose lay had already reached him, busy to the best of her power, in arranging to advantage a morning repast of milk, eggs, barley bread, fresh butter, and honeycomb. The poor girl had made a circuit of four miles that morning in search of the eggs, of the meal which baked her cakes, and of the other materials of the breakfast, being all delicacies which she had to beg or borrow from distant cottagers. The followers of Donald Bean Lean used little food except the flesh of the animals which they drove away from the Lowlands; bread itself was a delicacy seldom thought of, because hard to be obtained; and all the domestic accommodations of milk, poultry, butter, &c. were out of the question in this Scythian camp. Yet it must not be omitted, that although Alice had occupied a part of the morning in providing those accommodations for her guest which the cavern did not afford, she had secured time also to arrange her own person in her best trim. Her finery was very simple. A short russet-coloured jacket, and a petticoat of scanty longitude, was her whole dress: but these were clean, and neatly arranged. A piece of scarlet embroidered cloth, called the *snood*, confined her hair, which fell over it in a profusion of rich dark curls. The scarlet plaid, which formed part of her dress, was laid aside, that it might not impede her activity in attending the stranger. I should forget Alice's proudest ornament were I to omit mentioning a pair of gold earrings, and a golden rosary which her father, (for she was the daughter of Donald Bean Lean) had brought from France—the plunder probably of some battle or storm.

"Her form, though rather large for her years, was very well proportioned, and her demeanour had a natural and rustic grace, with nothing of the sheepishness of an ordinary peasant. The smiles, displaying a row of teeth of exquisite whiteness, and the laughing eyes, with which, in dumb-show, she gave Waverley that morning greeting which she wanted English words to express, might have been interpreted by a coxcomb, or perhaps a young soldier, who, without being such, was conscious of a handsome person, as meant to convey more than the courtesy of a hostess. Nor do I take it upon me to say, that the little wild mountaineer would have welcomed any staid old gentleman advanced in life, the Baron of Bradwardine, for example, with the cheerful pains which she bestowed upon Edward's accommodation. She seemed eager to place him by the meal which she had so sedulously arranged, and to which she now added a few bunches of cranberries, gathered in an adjacent morass. Having had the satisfaction of seeing him seated at breakfast, she placed herself demurely upon a stone at a few yards' distance, and appeared to watch with great complacency for some opportunity of serving him.

"Meanwhile Alice had made up in a small basket what she thought worth removing, and flinging her plaid around her, she advanced up to Edward, and, with the utmost simplicity, taking hold of his hand, offered her cheek to his salute, dropping, at the same time, her little courtesy. Evan, who was esteemed a wag among the mountain fair, advanced, as if to secure a similar favour; but Alice, snatching up her basket, escaped up the rocky bank as fleetly as a deer, and, turning round and laughing, called something out to him in Gaelic, which he answered in the same tone and language; then waving her hand to Edward, she resumed her road, and was soon lost among the thickets, though they continued for some time to hear her lively carol, as she proceeded gaily on her solitary journey."—Vol. i. pp. 240—270.

The gay scenes of the Adventurer's court—the breaking up of his army from Edinburgh—the battle of Preston—and the whole process of his disastrous advance and retreat from the English provinces, are given with the greatest brilliancy and effect—as well as the scenes of internal disorder and rising disunion that prevail in his scanty army—the quarrel with Fergus—and the mystical visions by which that devoted chieftain foresees his disastrous fate. The lower scenes again with Mrs. Flockhart, Mrs. Nosebag, Callum-Beg, and the Cumberland peasants, though to some fastidious readers they may appear coarse and disgusting, are painted with a force and a truth to nature, which equally bespeak the powers of the artist, and are incomparably superior to any thing of the sort which has been offered to the public for the last "sixty years." There are also various copies of verses scattered through the work, which indicate poetical talents of no ordinary description—though bearing, perhaps still more distinctly than the prose, the traces of considerable carelessness and haste.

The worst part of the book by far is that portion of the first volume which contains the history of the hero's residence in England—and next to it is the laborious, tardy, and obscure explanation of some puzzling occurrences in the story, which the reader would, in general, be much better pleased to be permitted to forget—and which are neither well explained after all, nor at all worth explaining.

There has been much speculation, at least in this quarter of the island, about the authorship of this singular performance—and certainly it is not easy to conjecture why it is still anonymous.—Judging by internal evidence, to which alone we pretend to have access, we should not scruple to ascribe it to the highest of those authors to whom it has been assigned by the sagacious conjectures of the public;—and this at least we will venture to say, that if it be indeed the work of an author hitherto unknown, Mr. Scott would do well to look to his laurels, and to rouse himself for a sturdier competition than any he has yet had to encounter!

(March, 1817.)

Tales of My Landlord, collected and arranged by Jedediah Cleishbotham, Schoolmaster and Parish Clerk of the Parish of Gandercleugh. 4 vols. 12mo. Edinburgh: 1816.

This, we think, is beyond all question a new coinage from the mint which produced Waverley, Guy Mannering, and the Antiquary:—For though it does not bear the legend and superscription of the Master on the face of the pieces, there is no mistaking either the quality of the metal or the execution of the die—and even the private mark, we doubt not, may be seen plain enough, by those who know how to look for it. It is quite impossible to read ten pages of this work, in short, without feeling that it belongs to the same school with those very remarkable productions; and no one who has any knowledge of nature, or of art, will ever doubt that it is an original. The very identity of the leading characters in the whole set of stories, is a stronger proof, perhaps, that those of the last series are *not* copied from the former, than even the freshness and freedom of the draperies with which they are now invested—or the ease and spirit of the new groups into which they are here combined. No imitator would have ventured so near his originals, and yet come off so entirely clear of them: And we are only the more assured that the old acquaintances we continually recognise in these volumes, are really the persons they pretend to be, and no false mimics, that we recollect so perfectly to have seen them before,—or at least to have been familiar with some of their near relations!

We have often been astonished at the quantity of talent—of invention, observation, and knowledge of character, as well as of spirited and graceful composition, that may be found in those works of fiction in our language, which are generally regarded as among the lower productions of our literature,—upon which no great pains is understood to be bestowed, and which are seldom regarded as titles to a permanent reputation. If Novels, however, are not fated to last as long as Epic poems, they are at least a great deal more popular in their season; and, slight as their structure, and imperfect as their finishing may often be thought in comparison, we have no hesitation in saying, that the better specimens of the art are incomparably more entertaining, and considerably more instructive. The great objection to them, indeed, is, that they are too entertaining—and are so pleasant in the reading, as to be apt to produce a disrelish for other kinds of reading, which may be more necessary, and can in no way be made so agreeable. Neither science, nor authentic history, nor political nor professional instruction, can be rightly conveyed, we fear, in a pleasant tale; and, therefore, all those things are in danger of appearing dull and uninteresting to the votaries of these more seductive studies. Among the most popular of these popular productions that have appeared in our times, we must rank the works to which we just alluded; and we do not hesitate to say, that they are well entitled to that distinction. They are indeed, in many respects, very extraordinary performances—though in nothing more extraordinary than in having remained so long unclaimed. There is no name, we think, in our literature, to which they would not add lustre—and lustre, too, of a very enviable kind; for they not only show great talent, but infinite good sense and good nature,—a more vigorous and wide-reaching intellect than is often displayed in novels, and a more powerful fancy, and a deeper sympathy with various passion, than is often combined with such strength of understanding.

The author, whoever he is, has a truly graphic and creative power in the invention and delineation of characters—which he sketches with an ease, and colours with a brilliancy, and scatters about with a profusion, which reminds us of Shakespeare himself: Yet with all this force and felicity in the representation of living agents, he has the eye of a poet for all the striking aspects external of nature; and usually contrives, both in his scenery and in the groups with which it is enlivened, to combine the picturesque with the natural, with a grace that has rarely been attained by artists so copious and rapid. His narrative, in this way, is kept constantly full of life, variety, and colour; and is so interspersed with glowing descriptions, and lively allusions, and flying traits of sagacity and pathos, as not only to keep our attention continually awake, but to afford a pleasing exercise to most of our other faculties. The prevailing tone is very gay and pleasant; but the author's most remarkable, and, perhaps, his most delightful talent, is that of representing kindness of heart in union with lightness of spirits and great simplicity of character, and of bending the expression of warm and generous and exalted affections with scenes and persons that are in themselves both lowly and ludicrous. This gift he shares with his illustrious countryman Burns—as he does many of the other qualities we have mentioned with another living poet,—who is only inferior perhaps in that to which we have last alluded. It is very honourable indeed, we think, both to the author, and to the readers among whom he is so extremely popular, that the great interest of his pieces is for the most part a Moral interest—that the concern we take in his favourite characters is less on account of their adventures than of their amiableness—and that the great charm of his works is derived from the kindness of heart, the capacity of generous emotions, and the lights of native taste which he ascribes, so lavishly, and at the same time with such an air of truth and familiarity, even to the humblest of these favourites. With all his relish for the ridiculous, accordingly, there is no tone of misanthropy, or even of sarcasm, in his representations; but, on the contrary, a great indulgence and relenting even towards those who are to be the objects of our disapprobation. There is no keen or cold-blooded satire—no bitterness of heart, or fierceness of resentment, in any part of his writings. His love of ridicule is little else than a love of mirth; and savours throughout of the joyous temperament in which it appears to have its origin; while the buoyancy of a raised and poetical imagination lifts him continually above the region of mere jollity and good humour, to which a taste, by no means nice or fastidious, might otherwise be in danger of sinking him. He is evidently a person of a very sociable and liberal spirit—with great habits of observation—who has ranged pretty extensively through the varieties of human life and character, and mingled with them all, not only with intelligent familiarity, but with a free and natural sympathy for all the diversities of their tastes, pleasures, and pursuits—one who has kept his heart as well as his eyes open to all that has offered itself to engage them; and learned indulgence for human faults and follies, not only from finding kindred faults in their most intolerant censors, but also for the sake of the virtues by which they are often redeemed, and the sufferings by which they have still oftener been chastised. The temper of his writings, in short, is precisely the reverse of those of our Laureates and Lakers, who, being themselves the most whimsical of mortals, make it a conscience to loathe and abhor all with whom they happen to disagree; and labour to promote mutual animosity and all manner of uncharitableness among mankind, by referring every supposed error of taste, or peculiarity of opinion, to some hateful corruption of the heart and understanding.

With all the indulgence, however, which we so justly ascribe to him, we are far from complaining of the writer before us for being too neutral and undecided on the great subjects which are most apt to engender excessive zeal and intolerance—and we are almost as far from agreeing with him as to most of those subjects. In politics it is sufficiently manifest, that he is a decided Tory—and, we are afraid, something of a latitudinarian both in morals and religion. He is very apt at least to make a mock of all enthusiasm for liberty or faith—and not only gives a decided preference to the social over the austerer virtues—but seldom expresses any warm or hearty admiration, except for those graceful and gentleman-like principles, which can generally be acted upon with a gay countenance—and do not imply any great effort of self-denial, or any deep sense of the rights of others, or the helplessness and humility of our common nature. Unless we misconstrue very grossly the indications in these volumes, the author thinks no times so happy as those in which an indulgent monarch awards a reasonable portion of liberty to grateful subjects, who do not call in question his right either to give or to withhold it—in which a dignified and decent hierarchy receives the homage of their submissive and uninquiring flocks—and a gallant nobility redeems the venial immoralities of their gayer hours, by brave and honourable conduct towards each other, and spontaneous kindness to vassals, in whom they recognise no independent rights, and not many features of a common nature.

It is very remarkable, however, that, with propensities thus decidedly aristocratical, the ingenious author has succeeded by far the best in the representation of rustic and homely characters; and not in the ludicrous or contemptuous representation of them—but by making them at once more natural and more interesting than they had ever been made before in any work of fiction; by showing them, not as clowns to be laughed at—or wretches, to be pitied and despised—but as human creatures, with as many pleasures and fewer cares than their superiors—with affections not only as strong, but often as delicate as those whose language is smoother—and with a vein of humour, a force of sagacity, and very frequently an elevation of fancy, as high and as natural as can be met with among more cultivated beings. The great merit of all these delineations, is their admirable truth and fidelity—the whole manner and cast of the characters being accurately moulded on their condition—and the finer attributes that are ascribed to them so blended and harmonised with the native rudeness and simplicity of their life and occupations, that they are made interesting and even noble beings, without the least particle of foppery or exaggeration, and delight and amuse us, without trespassing at all on the province of pastoral or romance.

Next to these, we think, he has found his happiest subjects, or at least displayed his greatest powers, in the delineation of the grand and gloomy aspects of nature, and of the dark and fierce passions of the heart. The natural gaiety of his temper does not indeed allow him to dwell long on such themes;—but the sketches he occasionally introduces, are executed with admirable force and spirit—and give a strong impression both of the vigour of his imagination, and the variety of his talent. It is only in the third rank that we would place his pictures of chivalry and chivalrous character—his traits of gallantry, nobleness, and honour—and that bewitching combination of gay and gentle manners, with generosity, candour, and courage, which has long been familiar enough to readers and writers of novels, but has never before been represented with such an air of truth, and so much ease and happiness of execution.

Among his faults and failures, we must give the first place to his descriptions of virtuous young ladies—and his representations of the

ordinary business of courtship and conversation in polished life. We admit that those things, as they are commonly conducted in real life, are apt to be a little insipid to a mere critical spectator;—and that while they consequently require more heightening than strange adventures or grotesque persons, they admit less of exaggeration or ambitious ornament:—Yet we cannot think it necessary that they should be altogether so tame and mawkish as we generally find them in the hands of this spirited writer,—whose powers really seem to require some stronger stimulus to bring them into action, than can be supplied by the flat realities of a peaceful and ordinary existence. His love of the ludicrous, it must also be observed, often betrays him into forced and vulgar exaggerations, and into the repetition of common and paltry stories,—though it is but fair to add, that he does not detain us long with them, and makes amends by the copiousness of his assortment for the indifferent quality of some of the specimens. It is another consequence of this extreme abundance in which he revels and riots, and of the fertility of the imagination from which it is supplied, that he is at all times a little apt to overdo even those things which he does best. His most striking and highly coloured characters appear rather too often, and go on rather too long. It is astonishing, indeed, with what spirit they are supported, and how fresh and animated they are to the very last;—but still there is something too much of them—and they would be more waited for and welcomed, if they were not quite so lavish of their presence.—It was reserved for Shakespeare alone, to leave all his characters as new and unworn as he found them,—and to carry Falstaff through the business of three several plays, and leave us as greedy of his sayings as at the moment of his first introduction. It is no light praise to the author before us, that he has sometimes reminded us of this, as well as other inimitable excellences in that most gifted of all inventors.

To complete this hasty and unpremeditated sketch of his general characteristics, we must add, that he is above all things national and Scottish,—and never seems to feel the powers of a Giant, except when he touches his native soil. His countrymen alone, therefore, can have a full sense of his merits, or a perfect relish of his excellences;—and those only, indeed, of them, who have mingled, as he has done, pretty freely with the lower orders, and made themselves familiar not only with their language, but with the habits and traits of character, of which it then only becomes expressive. It is one thing to understand the meaning of words, as they are explained by other words in a glossary, and another to know their value, as expressive of certain feelings and humours in the speakers to whom they are native, and as signs both of temper and condition among those who are familiar with their import.

We must content ourselves, we fear, with this hasty and superficial sketch of the general character of this author's performances, in the place of a more detailed examination of those which he has given to the public since we first announced him as the author of Waverley. The time for noticing his two intermediate works, has been permitted to go by so far, that it would probably be difficult to recal the public attention to them with any effect; and, at all events, impossible to affect, by any observations of ours, the judgment which has been passed upon them, with very little assistance, we must say, from professed critics, by the mass of their intelligent readers,—by whom, indeed, we have no doubt that they are, by this time, as well known, and as correctly estimated, as if they had been indebted to us for their first impressions on the subject. For our own parts we must confess, that *Waverley* still has to us all the fascination of a first love! and that we cannot help thinking, that the greatness of the public transactions in which that story was involved, as well as the wildness and picturesque graces of its Highland scenery and characters, have invested it with a charm, to which the more familiar attractions of the other pieces have not quite come up. In this, perhaps, our opinion differs from that of better judges;—but we cannot help suspecting, that the latter publications are most admired by many, at least in the southern part of the island, only because they are more easily and perfectly understood, in consequence of the training which had been gone through in the perusal of the former. But, however that be, we are far enough from denying that the two succeeding works are performances of extraordinary merit,—and are willing even to admit, that they show quite as much power and genius in the author—though, to our taste at least, the subjects are less happily selected.

Dandie Dinmont is, beyond all question, we think, the best rustic portrait that has ever yet been exhibited to the public—the most honourable to rustics, and the most creditable to the heart, as well as the genius of the artist—the truest to nature—the most interesting and the most complete in all its lineaments.—Meg Merrilees belongs more to the department of poetry. She is most akin to the witches of Macbeth, with some traits of the ancient Sybil engrafted on the coarser stock of a Gipsy of the last century. Though not absolutely in nature, however, she must be allowed to be a very imposing and emphatic personage; and to be mingled, both with the business and the scenery of the piece, with the greatest possible skill and effect.—Pleydell is a harsh caricature; and Dirk Hatteric a vulgar bandit of the German school. The lovers, too, are rather more faultless and more insipid than usual,—and all the genteel persons, indeed, not a little fatiguing. Yet there are many passages of great merit, of a gentler and less obtrusive character. The grief of old Ellengowan for the loss of his child, and the picture of his own dotage and death, are very touching and natural; while the many descriptions of the coast scenery, and of the various localities of the story, are given with a freedom, force, and effect, that bring every

feature before our eyes, and impress us with an irresistible conviction of their reality.

The Antiquary is, perhaps, on the whole, less interesting,—though there are touches in it equal, if not superior, to any thing that occurs in either of the other works. The adventure of the tide and night storm under the cliffs, we do not hesitate to pronounce the very best description we ever met with,—in verse or in prose, in ancient or in modern writing. Old Edie is of the family of Meg Merrilees,—a younger brother, we confess, with less terror and energy, and more taste and gaiety, but equally a poetical embellishment of a familiar character; and yet resting enough on the great points of nature, to be blended without extravagance in the transactions of beings so perfectly natural and thoroughly alive that no suspicion can be entertained of *their* reality. The Antiquary himself is the great blemish of the work,—at least in so far as he is an Antiquary;—though we must say for him, that, unlike most oddities, he wearies us most at first; and is so managed, as to turn out both more interesting and more amusing than we had any reason to expect. The low characters in this book are not always worth drawing; but they are exquisitely finished; and prove the extent and accuracy of the author's acquaintance with human life and human nature.—The family of the fisherman is an exquisite group throughout; and, at the scene of the funeral, in the highest degree striking and pathetic. Dousterswivel is as wearisome as the genuine Spurzheim himself: And the tragic story of the Lord is, on the whole, a miscarriage; though interspersed with passages of great force and energy. The denouement which connects it with the active hero of the piece, is altogether forced and unnatural.—We come now, at once, to the work immediately before us.

The Tales of My Landlord, though they fill four volumes, are, as yet, but two in number; the one being three times as long, and ten times as interesting as the other. The introduction, from which the general title is derived, is as foolish and clumsy as may be; and is another instance of that occasional imbecility, or self-willed caprice, which every now and then leads this author, before he gets afloat on the full stream of his narration, into absurdities which excite the astonishment of the least gifted of his readers. This whole prologue of My Landlord, which is vulgar in the conception, trite and lame in the execution, and utterly out of harmony with the stories to which it is prefixed, should be entirely retrenched in the future editions; and the two novels, which have as little connection with each other as with this ill-fancied prelude, given separately to the world, each under its own denomination.

The first, which is comprised in one volume, is called "The Black Dwarf"—and is, in every respect, the least considerable of the family—though very plainly of the legitimate race—and possessing merits, which, in any other company, would have entitled it to no slight distinction. The Dwarf himself is a little too much like the hero of a fairy tale, and the structure and contrivance of the story, in general, would bear no small affinity to that meritorious and edifying class of compositions, was it not for the nature of the details, and the quality of the other persons to whom they relate—who are as real, intelligible, and tangible beings as those with whom we are made familiar in the course of the author's former productions. Indeed they are very apparently the same sort of people, and come here before us again with all the recommendations of old acquaintance. The outline of the story is soon told. The scene is laid among the Elliots and Johnstons of the Scottish border, and in the latter part of Queen Anne's reign; when the union then newly effected between the two kingdoms, had revived the old feelings of rivalry, and held out, in the general discontent, fresh encouragement to the partizans of the banished family. In this turbulent period, two brave, but very peaceful and loyal persons, are represented as plodding their way homewards from deer-stalking, in the gloom of an autumn evening, when they are encountered, on a lonely moor, by a strange misshapen Dwarf, who rejects their proffered courtesy, in a tone of insane misanthropy, and leaves Hobbie Elliot, who is the successor of Dandie Dinmont in this tale, perfectly persuaded that he is not of mortal lineage, but a goblin of no amiable dispositions. He, and his friend Mr. Earnscliff, who is a gentleman of less credulity, revisit him again, however, in daylight; when they find him laying the foundations of a small cottage in that dreary spot. With some casual assistance the fabric is completed; and the Solitary, who still maintains the same repulsive demeanour, fairly settled in it. Though he shuns all society and conversation, he occasionally administers to the diseases of men and cattle; and acquires a certain awful reputation in the country, half between that of a wizard and a heaven-taught cow-doctor. In the mean time poor Hobbie's house is burned, and his cattle and his bride carried off by the band of one of the last Border foragers, instigated chiefly by Mr. Vere, the profligate Laird of Ellieslaw, who wishes to raise a party in favour of the Jacobites; and between whose daughter and young Earnscliff there is an attachment, which her father disapproves. The mysterious Dwarf gives Hobbie an oracular hint to seek for his lost bride in the fortress of this plunderer, which he and his friends, under the command of young Earnscliff, speedily invest; and when they are ready to smoke him out of his inexpugnable tower, he capitulates, and leads forth, to the astonishment of all the besiegers, not Grace Armstrong, but Miss Vere, who, by some unintelligible refinement of iniquity, had been sequestered by her worthy father in that appropriate custody. The Dwarf, who, with all his misanthropy, is the most benevolent of human beings, gives Hobbie a fur bag full of gold, and contrives to have his bride restored to him. He is likewise consulted in secret by Miss Vere, who is sadly distressed, like all other fictitious damsels, by

her father's threats to solemnise a forced marriage between her and a detestable baronet,—and promises to appear and deliver her, however imminent the hazard my appear. Accordingly, when they are all ranged for the sacrifice before the altar in the castle chapel, his portentous figure pops out from behind a monument,—when he is instantly recognised by the guilty Ellieslaw, for a certain Sir Edward Mauley, who was the cousin and destined husband of the lady *he* had afterwards married, and who had been plunged into temporary insanity by the shock of that fair one's inconstancy, on his recovery from which he had allowed Mr. Vere to retain the greatest part of the property to which he succeeded by her death; and had been supposed to be sequestered in some convent abroad, when he thus appears to protect the daughter of his early love. The desperate Ellieslaw at first thinks of having recourse to force, and calls in an armed band which he had that day assembled, in order to favour a rising of the Catholics—when he is suddenly surrounded by Hobbie Elliot and Earnscliff, at the head of a more loyal party, who have just overpowered the insurgents, and taken possession of the castle. Ellieslaw and the Baronet of course take horse and shipping forth of the realm; while his fair daughter is given away to Earnscliff by the benevolent Dwarf; who immediately afterwards disappears, and seeks a more profound retreat, beyond the reach of their gratitude and gaiety.

The other and more considerable story, which fills the three remaining volumes of this publication, is entitled, though with no great regard even to its fictitious origin, "Old Mortality;"—for, at most, it should only have been called the tale or story of Old Mortality—being supposed to be collected from the information of a singular person who is said at one time to have been known by that strange appellation. The *redacteur* of his interesting traditions is here supposed to be a village schoolmaster; and though his introduction brings us again in contact with My Landlord and his parish clerk, we could have almost forgiven that unlucky fiction, if it had often presented us in company with sketches, as graceful as we find in the following passage, of the haunts and habits of this singular personage. After mentioning that there was, on the steep and heathy banks of a lonely rivulet, a deserted burying ground to which he used frequently to turn his walks in the evening, the gentle pedagogue proceeds—

"One summer evening as, in a stroll such as I have described, I approached this deserted mansion of the dead, I was somewhat surprised to hear sounds distinct from those which usually soothe its solitude, the gentle chiding, namely, of the brook, and the sighing of the wind in the boughs of three gigantic ash trees, which mark the cemetery. The clink of a hammer was, upon this occasion, distinctly heard; and I entertained some alarm that a march-dike, long meditated by the two proprietors whose estates were divided by my favourite brook, was about to be drawn up the glen, in order to substitute its rectilinear deformity for the graceful winding of the natural boundary. As I approached I was agreeably undeceived. A old man was seated upon the monument of the slaughtered Presbyterians; and busily employed in deepening, with his chisel, the letters of the inscription, which announcing, in scriptural language, the promised blessings of futurity to be the lot of the slain, anathematized the murderers with corresponding violence. A blue bonnet of unusual dimensions covered the grey hairs of the pious workman. His dress was a large old-fashioned coat, of the coarse cloth called *hoddin-grey*, usually worn by the elder peasants, with waistcoat and breeches of the same; and the whole suit, though still in decent repair, had obviously seen a train of long service. Strong clouted shoes studded with hob-nails, and *gramoches* or *leggins* made of thick black cloth, completed his equipment. Beside him, fed among the graves, a pony, the companion of his journey, whose extreme whiteness, as well as its projecting bones and hollow eyes, indicated its antiquity. It was harnessed in the most simple manner, with a pair of branks, and hair tether, or halter, and a *sunk*, or cushion of straw, instead of bridle and saddle. A canvass pouch hung round the neck of the animal, for the purpose, probably, of containing the rider's tools, and any thing else he might have occasion to carry with him. Although I had never seen the old man before, yet, from the singularity of his employment, and the style of his equipage, I had no difficulty in recognising a religious itinerant whom I had often heard talked of, and who was known in various parts of Scotland by the name of Old Mortality.

"Where this man was born, or what was his real name, I have never been able to learn, nor are the motives which made him desert his home, and adopt the erratic mode of life which he pursued, known to me except very generally. He is said to have held, at one period of his life, a small moorland farm; but, whether from pecuniary losses, or domestic misfortune, he had long renounced that and every other gainful calling. In the language of Scripture, he left his house, his home, and his kindred, and wandered about until the day of his death—a period, it is said, of nearly thirty years.

"During this long pilgrimage, the pious enthusiast regulated his circuit so as annually to visit the graves of the unfortunate Covenanters, who suffered by the sword, or by the executioner, during the reigns of the two last monarchs of the Stuart line. These tombs are often apart from all human habitation, in the remote moors and wilds to which the wanderers had fled for concealment. But wherever they existed, Old Mortality was sure to visit them, when his annual round brought them within his reach. In the most lonely recesses of the mountains, the moorfowl shooter has been often surprised to find him busied in cleaning the moss from the grey stones, renewing with his chisel the half-defaced inscriptions, and repairing the emblems of death with which these simple monuments are usually adorned.

"As the wanderer was usually to be seen bent on this pious task within the precincts of some country churchyard, or reclined on the solitary tombstone among the heath, disturbing the plover and the blackcock with the clink of his chisel and mallet, with his old white pony grazing by his side, he acquired, from his converse among the dead, the popular appellation of Old Mortality."

Vol. ii. pp. 7—18.

The scene of the story thus strikingly introduced is laid—in Scotland of course—in those disastrous times which immediately preceded the Revolution of 1688; and exhibits a lively picture, both of the general state of manners at that period, and of the conduct and temper and principles of the two great parties in politics and religion that were then engaged in unequal and rancorous hostility. There are no times certainly, within the reach of authentic history, on which it is more painful to look back—which show a government more base and tyrannical, or a people more helpless and miserable: And though all pictures of the greater passions are full of interest, and a lively representation of strong and enthusiastic emotions never fails to be deeply attractive, the piece would have been too full of distress and humiliation, if it had been chiefly engaged with the course of public events, or the record of public feelings. So sad a subject would not have suited many readers—and the author, we suspect, less than any of them. Accordingly, in this, as in his other works, he has made use of the historical events which came in his way, rather to develope the characters, and bring out the peculiarities of the individuals whose adventures he relates, than for any purpose of political information; and makes us present to the times in which he has placed them, less by his direct notices of the great transactions by which they were distinguished, than by his casual intimations of their effects on private persons, and by the very contrast which their temper and occupations often appear to furnish to the colour of the national story. Nothing, indeed, in this respect is more delusive, or at least more woefully imperfect, than the suggestions of authentic history, as it is generally—or rather universally written—and nothing more exaggerated than the impressions it conveys of the actual state and condition of those who live in its most agitated periods. The great public events of which alone it takes cognisance, have but little direct influence upon the body of the people; and do not, in general, form the principal business, or happiness or misery even of those who are in some measure concerned in them. Even in the worst and most disastrous times—in periods of civil war and revolution, and public discord and oppression, a great part of the time of a great part of the people is still spent in making love and money—in social amusement or professional industry—in schemes for worldly advancement or personal distinction, just as in periods of general peace and prosperity. Men court and marry very nearly as much in the one season as in the other; and are as merry at weddings and christenings—as gallant at balls and races—as busy in their studies and counting houses—eat as heartily, in short, and sleep as sound—prattle with their children as pleasantly—and thin their plantations and scold their servants as zealously, as if their contemporaries were not furnishing materials thus abundantly for the Tragic muse of history. The quiet undercurrent of life, in short, keeps its deep and steady course in its eternal channels, unaffected, or but slightly disturbed, by the storms that agitate its surface; and while long tracts of time, in the history of every country, seem, to the distant student of its annals, to be darkened over with one thick and oppressive cloud of unbroken misery, the greater part of those who have lived through the whole acts of the tragedy will be found to have enjoyed a fair average share of felicity, and to have been much less impressed by the shocking events of their day, than those who know nothing else of it than that such events took place in its course. Few men, in short, are historical characters—and scarcely any man is always, or most usually, performing a public part. The actual happiness of every life depends far more on things that regard it exclusively, than on those political occurrences which are the common concern of society; and though nothing lends such an air, both of reality and importance, to a fictitious narrative, as to connect its persons with events in real history, still it is the imaginary individual himself that excites our chief interest throughout, and we care for the national affairs only in so far as they affect him. In one sense, indeed, this is the true end and the best use of history; for as all public events are important only as they ultimately concern individuals, if the individual selected belong to a large and comprehensive class, and the events, and their natural operation on him, be justly represented, we shall be enabled, in following out his adventures, to form no bad estimate of their true character and value for all the rest of the community.

The author before us has done all this, we think; and with admirable talent and effect: and if he has not been quite impartial in the management of his historical persons, has contrived, at any rate, to make them contribute largely to the interest of his acknowledged inventions. His view of the effects of great political contentions on private happiness, is however, we have no doubt, substantially true; and that chiefly because it is not exaggerated—because he does not confine himself to show how gentle natures may be roused into heroism, or rougher tempers exasperated into rancour, by public oppression,—but turns still more willingly to show with what ludicrous absurdity genuine enthusiasm may be debased, how little the gaiety of the light-hearted and thoughtless may be impaired by the spectacle of public calamity, and how, in the midst of national distraction, selfishness will pursue its little game of quiet and cunning speculation—and gentler affections find time to multiply and to meet!

It is this, we think, that constitutes the great and peculiar merit of the work before us. It contains an admirable picture of manners and of characters; and exhibits, we think, with great truth and discrimination, the extent and the variety of the shades which the stormy aspect of the political horizon would be likely to throw on such objects. And yet, though exhibiting beyond all doubt the greatest possible talent and originality, we cannot help fancying that we can trace the rudiments of almost all its characters in the very first of the author's publications.—Morton is but another edition of Waverley;—taking a bloody part in political contention, without caring much about the cause, and interchanging high offices of generosity with his political opponents.—Claverhouse has many of the features of the gallant Fergus.—Cuddie Headrigg, of whose merits, by the way, we have given no fair specimen in our extracts, is a Dandie Dinmont of a considerably lower species;—and even

the Covenanters and their leaders were shadowed out, though afar off, in the gifted Gilfillan, and mine host of the Candlestick. It is in the picture of these hapless enthusiasts, undoubtedly, that the great merit and the great interest of the work consists. That interest, indeed, is so great, that we perceive it has even given rise to a sort of controversy among the admirers and contemners of those ancient worthies. It is a singular honour, no doubt, to a work of fiction and amusement, to be thus made the theme of serious attack and defence upon points of historical and theological discussion; and to have grave dissertations written by learned contemporaries upon the accuracy of its representations of public events and characters, or the moral effects of the style of ridicule in which it indulges. It is difficult for us, we confess, to view the matter in so serious a light; nor do we feel much disposed, even if we had leisure for the task, to venture ourselves into the array of the disputants. One word or two, however, we shall say, before concluding, upon the two great points of difference. First, as to the author's profanity, in making scriptural expressions ridiculous by the misuse of them he has ascribed to the fanatics; and, secondly, as to the fairness of his general representation of the conduct and character of the insurgent party and their opponents.

As to the first, we do not know very well what to say. Undoubtedly, all light or jocular use of Scripture phraseology is in some measure indecent and profane: Yet we do not know in what other way those hypocritical pretences to extraordinary sanctity which generally disguise themselves in such a garb, can be so effectually exposed. And even where the ludicrous misapplication of holy writ arises from mere ignorance, or the foolish mimicry of more learned discoursers, as it is impossible to avoid smiling at the folly when it actually occurs, it is difficult for witty and humorous writers, in whose way it lies, to resist fabricating it for the purpose of exciting smiles. In so far as practice can afford any justification of such a proceeding, we conceive that its justification would be easy. In all our jest-books, and plays and works of humour for two centuries back, the characters of Quakers and Puritans and Methodists, have been constantly introduced as fit objects of ridicule, on this very account. The Reverend Jonathan Swift is full of jokes of this description; and the pious and correct Addison himself is not a little fond of a sly and witty application of a text from the sacred writings. When an author, therefore, whose aim was amusement, had to do with a set of people, all of whom dealt in familiar applications of Bible phrases and Old Testament adventures, and who, undoubtedly, very often made absurd and ridiculous applications of them, it would be rather hard, we think, to interdict him entirely from the representation of these absurdities; or to put in force, for him alone, those statutes against profaneness which so many other people have been allowed to transgress, in their hours of gaiety, without censure or punishment.

On the other point, also, we rather lean to the side of the author. He is a Tory, we think, pretty plainly in principle, and scarcely disguises his preference for a Cavalier over a Puritan: But, with these propensities, we think he has dealt pretty fairly with both sides—especially when it is considered that, though he lays his scene in a known crisis of his national history, his work is professedly a work of fiction, and cannot well be accused of misleading any one as to matters of fact. He might have made Claverhouse victorious at Drumclog, if he had thought fit—and nobody could have found fault with him. The insurgent Presbyterians of 1666 and the subsequent years, were, beyond all question, a pious, brave, and conscientious race of men—to whom, and to whose efforts and sufferings, their descendants are deeply indebted for the liberty both civil and religious which they still enjoy, as well as for the spirit of resistance to tyranny, which, we trust, they have inherited along with it. Considered generally as a party, it is impossible that they should ever be remembered, at least in Scotland, but with gratitude and veneration—that their sufferings should ever be mentioned but with deep resentment and horror—or their heroism, both active and passive, but with pride and exultation. At the same time, it is impossible to deny, that there were among them many absurd and ridiculous persons—and some of a savage and ferocious character—old women, in short, like Mause Headrigg—preachers like Kettledrummle—or desperadoes like Balfour or Burley. That a Tory novelist should bring such characters prominently forward, in a tale of the times, appears to us not only to be quite natural, but really to be less blameable than almost any other way in which party feelings could be shown. But, even he, has not represented the bulk of the party as falling under this description, or as fairly represented by such personages. He has made his hero—who, of course, possesses all possible virtues—of that persuasion; and has allowed them, in general, the courage of martyrs, the self-denial of hermits, and the zeal and sincerity of apostles. His representation is almost avowedly that of one who is not of their communion; and yet we think it impossible to peruse it, without feeling the greatest respect and pity for those to whom it is applied. A zealous Presbyterian might, no doubt, have said more in their favour, without violating, or even concealing the truth;—but, while zealous Presbyterians will not write entertaining novels themselves, they cannot expect to be treated in them with exactly the same favour as if that had been the character of their authors.

With regard to the author's picture of their opponents, we must say that, with the exception of Claverhouse himself, whom he has invested gratuitously with many graces and liberalities to which we are persuaded he has no title, and for whom, indeed, he has a foolish fondness, with which it would be absurd to deal seriously—he has shown no signs of a partiality that can be blamed, nor exhibited many traits in them with which their enemies have reason to quarrel. If any person can read his strong and lively pictures of military insolence and oppression, without feeling his blood boil within him, we must conclude the fault to be in his own apathy, and not in any softenings of the partial author;—nor do we know any Whig writer who has exhibited the baseness and cruelty of that wretched government, in more naked and revolting deformity, than in his scene of the torture at the Privy Council. The military executions of Claverhouse himself are admitted without palliation: and the bloodthirstiness of Dalzell, and the brutality of Lauderdale, are represented in their true colours. In short, if this author has been somewhat severe upon the Covenanters, neither has he spared their oppressors; and the truth probably is, that never dreaming of being made responsible for historical accuracy or fairness in a composition of this description, he has exaggerated a little on both sides, for the sake of effect—and been carried, by the bent of his humour, most frequently to exaggerate on that which afforded the greatest scope for ridicule.

(February, 1818.)

Rob Roy. By the author of Waverley, Guy Mannering, and The Antiquary. 12mo. 3 vols. pp. 930. Edinburgh: 1818.

This is not so good, perhaps, as some others of the family;—but it is better than any thing else; and has a charm and a spirit about it that draws us irresistibly away from our graver works of politics and science, to expatiate upon that which every body understands and agrees in; and after setting us diligently to read over again what we had scarce finished reading, leaves us no choice but to tell our readers what they all know already, and to persuade them of that of which they are most intimately convinced.

Such, we are perfectly aware, is the task which we must seem to perform to the greater part of those who may take the trouble of accompanying us through this article. But there may still be some of our readers to whom the work of which we treat is unknown;—and we know there are many who are far from being duly sensible of its merits. The public, indeed, is apt now and then to behave rather unhandsomely to its greatest benefactors; and to deserve the malison which Milton has so emphatically bestowed on those impious persons, who,

> —— "with senseless base ingratitude,
> Cram, and blaspheme their feeder."

—nothing, we fear, being more common, than to see the bounty of its too lavish providers repaid by increased captiousness at the quality of the banquet, and complaints of imaginary fallings off—which should be imputed entirely to the distempered state of their own pampered appetites. We suspect, indeed, that we were ourselves under the influence of this illaudable feeling when he wrote the first line of this paper: For, except that the subject seems to us somewhat less happily chosen, and the variety of characters rather less than in some of the author's former publications, we do not know what right we had to say that it was in any respect inferior to them. Sure we are, at all events, that it has the same brilliancy and truth of colouring—the same gaiety of tone, rising every now and then into feelings both kindly and exalted—the same dramatic vivacity—the same deep and large insight into human nature—and the same charming facility which distinguish all the other works of this great master; and make the time in which he flourished an era never to be forgotten in the literary history of our country.

One novelty in the present work is, that it is thrown into the form of a continued and unbroken narrative, by one of the persons principally concerned in the story—and who is represented in his declining age, as detailing to an intimate friend the most interesting particulars of his early life, and all the recollections with which they were associated. We prefer, upon the whole, the communications of an avowed author; who, of course, has no character to sustain but that of a pleasing writer—and can praise and blame, and wonder and moralise, in all tones and directions, without subjecting himself to any charge of vanity, ingratitude, or inconsistency. The thing, however, is very tolerably managed on the present occasion; and the hero contrives to let us into all his exploits and perplexities, without much violation either of heroic modesty or general probability;—to which ends, indeed, it conduces not a little, that, like most of the other heroes of this ingenious author, his own character does not rise very notably above the plain level of mediocrity—being, like the rest of his brethren, a well-conditioned, reasonable, agreeable young gentleman—not particularly likely to do any thing which it would be very boastful to speak of, and much better fitted to be a spectator and historian of strange doings, than a partaker in them.

This discreet hero, then, our readers will probably have anticipated, is not Rob Roy—though *his* name stands alone in the title—but a Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, the only son of a great London Merchant or Banker, and nephew of a Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone, a worthy Catholic Baronet, who spent his time in hunting, and drinking Jacobite toasts in Northumberland, some time about the year

1714. The young gentleman having been educated among the muses abroad, testifies a decided aversion to the gainful vocations in which his father had determined that he should assist and succeed him;—and as a punishment for this contumacy, he banishes him for a season to the Siberia of Osbaldistone Hall, from which he himself had been estranged ever since his infancy. The young exile jogs down on horseback rather merrily, riding part of the way with a stout man, who was scandalously afraid of being robbed, and meeting once with a sturdy Scotchman, whose resolute air and energetic discourses make a deep impression on him.—As he approaches the home of his fathers, he is surrounded by a party of fox hunters, and at the same moment electrified by the sudden apparition of a beautiful young woman, galloping lightly at the head of the field, and managing her sable palfrey with all the grace of an Angelica.

Making up to this etherial personage, he soon discovers that he is in the heart of his kinsfolks—that the tall youths about him are the five sons of Sir Hildebrand; and the virgin huntress herself, a cousin and inmate of the family, by the name of Diana Vernon. She is a very remarkable person this same Diana. Though only eighteen years of age, and exquisitely lovely, she knows all arts and sciences, elegant and inelegant—and has, moreover, a more than masculine resolution, and more than feminine kindness and generosity of character—wearing over all this a playful, free, and reckless manner, more characteristic of her age than her various and inconsistent accomplishments. The rest of the household are comely savages; who hunt all day, and drink all night, without one idea beyond those heroic occupations—all, at least, except Rashleigh, the youngest son of this hopeful family—who, having been designed for the church, and educated among the Jesuits beyond seas, had there acquired all the knowledge and the knavery which that pious brotherhood was so long supposed to impart to their disciples.—Although very plain in his person, and very depraved in his character, he has great talents and accomplishments, and a very insinuating address. He had been, in a good degree, the instructor of Diana, who, we should have mentioned, was also a Catholic, and having lost her parents, was destined to take the veil in a foreign land, if she did not consent to marry one of the sons of Sir Hildebrand, for all of whom she cherished the greatest aversion and contempt.

Mr. Obaldistone, of course, can do nothing but fall in love with this wonderful infant; for which, and some other transgressions, he incurs the deadly, though concealed, hate of Rashleigh, and meets with several unpleasant adventures through his means. But we will not be tempted even to abridge the details of a story with which we cannot allow ourselves to doubt that all our readers have long been familiar: and indeed it is not in his story that this author's strength ever lies; and here he has lost sight of probability even in the conception of some of his characters; and displayed the extraordinary talent of being true to nature, even in the representation of impossible persons.

The serious interest of the work rests on Diana Vernon and on Rob Roy: the comic effect is left chiefly to the ministrations of Baillie Nicol Jarvie and Andrew Fairservice, with the occasional assistance of less regular performers. Diana is, in our apprehension, a very bright and felicitous creation—though it is certain that there never could have been any such person. A girl of eighteen, not only with more wit and learning than any man of forty, but with more sound sense, and firmness of character, than any man whatever—and with perfect frankness and elegance of manners, though bred among boors and bigots—is rather a more violent fiction, we think, than a king with marble legs, or a youth with an ivory shoulder. In spite of all this, however, this particular fiction is extremely elegant and impressive; and so many features of truth are blended with it, that we soon forget the impossibility, and are at least as much interested as by a more conceivable personage. The combination of fearlessness with perfect purity and delicacy, as well as that of the inextinguishable gaiety of youth with sad anticipations and present suffering, are all strictly natural, and are among the traits that are wrought out in this portrait with the greatest talent and effect. In the deep tone of feeling, and the capacity of heroic purposes, this heroine bears a family likeness to the Flora of Waverley; but her greater youth, and her unprotected situation, add prodigiously to the interest of these qualities. Andrew Fairservice is a new, and a less interesting incarnation of Cuddie Headrigg; with a double allowance of selfishness, and a top-dressing of pedantry and conceit—constituting a very admirable and just representation of the least amiable of our Scottish vulgar. The Baillie, we think, is an original. It once occurred to us, that he might be described as a mercantile and townish Dandie Dinmont; but the points of resemblance are really fewer than those of contrast. He is an inimitable picture of an acute, sagacious, upright, and kind man, thoroughly low bred, and beset with all sorts of vulgarities. Both he and Andrew are rich mines of the true Scottish language; and afford, in the hands of this singular writer, not only an additional proof of his perfect familiarity with all its dialects, but also of its extraordinary copiousness, and capacity of adaptation to all tones and subjects. The reader may take a brief specimen of Andrew's elocution in the following characteristic account of the purgation of the Cathedral Church of Glasgow, and its consequent preservation from the hands of our Gothic reformers.

"'Ah! it's a brave kirk—nane o' yere whigmaleeries and curlie-wurlies and open-steek hems about it—a' solid, weel-jointed mason-wark, that will stand as long as the warld, keep hands and gunpowther aff it. It had amaist a doun-come lang syne at the Reformation, when they pu'd doun the kirks of St. Andrews and Perth, and thereawa, to cleanse them o' Papery, and idolatry, and image worship, and surplices, and sic like rags o' the muckle hoor that sitteth on seven hills, as if ane was na braid aneugh for her auld hinder end. Sae the commons o' Renfrew, and o' the Barony, and the Gorbals, and a' about, they behooved to come into Glasgow ae fair morning to try their hand on purging the High Kirk o' Popish nick-nackets. But the townsmen o' Glasgow, they were feared their auld edifice might slip the girths in gaun through siccan rough physic, sae they rang the common bell, and assembled the train bands wi' took o' drum—By good luck, the worthy James Rabat was Dean o' Guild that year—(and a gude mason he was himsell, made him the keener to keep up the auld bigging), and the trades assembled, and offered downright battle to the commons, rather than their kirk should coup the crans, as they had done elsewhere. It was na for luve o' Paparie—na, na!—nane could ever say that o' the trades o' Glasgow—Sae they sune cam to an agreement to take a' the idolatrous statutes of sants (sorrow be on them) out o' their neuks—And sae the bits o' stane idols were broken in pieces by Scripture warrant, and flung into the Molendinar Burn, and the auld kirk stood as crouse as a cat when the fleas are caimed aff her, and a'body was alike pleased. And I hae heard wise folk say, that if the same had been done in ilka kirk in Scotland, the Reform wad just hae been as pure as it is e'en now, and we wad had mair Christian-like kirks; for I hae been sae lang in England, that naething will drive it out o' my head, that the dog-kennell at Osbaldistone-Hall is better than mony a house o' God in Scotland.'"

(January, 1820.)

1. *Ivanhoe.* A Romance. By the Author of Waverley, &c. 3 vols. Edinburgh, Constable & Co.
2. *The Novels and Tales of the Author of Waverley; comprising Waverley, Guy Mannering, Antiquary, Rob Roy, Tales of My Landlord,* First, Second, and Third Series; New Edition, with a copious Glossary. Edinburgh, Constable & Co.: 1820.

Since the time when Shakespeare wrote his thirty-eight plays in the brief space of his early manhood—besides acting in them, and drinking and living idly with the other actors—and then went carelessly to the country, and lived out his days, a little more idly, and apparently unconscious of having done any thing at all extraordinary—there has been no such prodigy of fertility as the anonymous author before us. In the period of little more than five years, he has founded a new school of invention; and established and endowed it with nearly thirty volumes of the most animated and original compositions that have enriched English literature for a century—volumes that have cast sensibly into the shade all contemporary prose, and even all recent poetry—(except perhaps that inspired by the Genius—or the Demon, of Byron)—and, by their force of colouring and depth of feeling—by their variety, vivacity, magical facility, and living presentment of character, have rendered conceivable to this later age the miracles of the Mighty Dramatist.

Shakespeare, to be sure, is more purely original; but it should not be forgotten, that, in his time, there was much less to borrow—and that he too has drawn freely and largely from the sources that were open to him, at least for his fable and graver sentiment;—for his wit and humour, as well as his poetry, are always his own. In our times, all the higher walks of literature have been so long and so often trodden, that it is scarcely possible to keep out of the footsteps of some of our precursors; and the ancients, it is well known, have stolen most of our bright thoughts—and not only visibly beset all the patent approaches to glory—but swarm in such ambushed multitudes behind, that when we think we have gone fairly beyond their plagiarisms, and honestly worked out an original excellence of our own, up starts some deep-read antiquary, and makes it out, much to his own satisfaction, that heaven knows how many of these busy bodies have been beforehand with us, both in the *genus* and the *species* of our invention!

The author before us is certainly in less danger from such detections, than any other we have ever met with; but, even in him, the traces of imitation are obvious and abundant; and it is impossible, therefore, to give him the same credit for absolute originality as those earlier writers, who, having no successful author to imitate, were obliged to copy directly from nature. In naming him along with Shakespeare, we meant still less to say that he was to be put on a level with Him, as to the richness and sweetness of his fancy, or that living vein of pure and lofty poetry which flows with such abundance through every part of his compositions. On that level no other writer has ever stood—or will ever stand—though we do think that there is fancy and poetry enough in these contemporary pages, if not to justify the comparison we have ventured to suggest, at least to save it, for the first time for two hundred years, from being altogether ridiculous. In saying even this, however, we wish to observe, that we have in view the prodigious variety and facility of the modern writer—at least as much as the quality of his several productions. The variety stands out on the face of each of them; and the facility is attested, as in the case of Shakespeare himself, both by the inimitable freedom and happy carelessness of the style in which they are executed, and by the matchless rapidity with which they have been lavished on the public.

Such an author would really require a review to himself—and one too of swifter than quarterly recurrence; and accordingly we have long since acknowledged our inability to keep up with him, and fairly renounced the task of keeping a regular account of his successive publications; contenting ourselves with greet-

ing him now and then in the pauses of his brilliant career, and casting, when we do meet, a hurried glance over the wide field he has traversed since we met before.

We gave it formerly, we think, as our reason for thus passing over, without special notice, some of the most remarkable productions of the age, that they were in fact too remarkable to need any notice of ours—that they were as soon, and as extensively read, as we could hope our account of them to be—and that in reality all the world thought just what we were inclined to say of them. These reasons certainly remain in full force; and we may now venture to mention another, which had in secret, perhaps, as much weight with us as all the rest put together. We mean simply, that when we began with one of those works, we were conscious that we never knew how to leave off; but, finding the author's words so much more agreeable than our own, went on in the most unreasonable manner copying out description after description, and dialogue after dialogue, till we were abused, not altogether without reason, for selling our readers in small letter what they had already in large, —and for the abominable nationality of filling up our pages with praises of a Scottish author, and specimens of Scottish pleasantry and pathos. While we contritely admit the justice of these imputations, we humbly trust that our Southern readers will now be of opinion that the offence has been in some degree expiated, both by our late forbearance, and our present proceeding: For while we have done violence to our strongest propensities, in passing over in silence two very tempting publications of this author, on Scottish subjects and in the Scottish dialect, we have at last recurred to him for the purpose of noticing the only work he has produced on a subject entirely English; and one which is nowhere graced either with a trait of our national character, or a (voluntary) sample of our national speech.

Before entering upon this task, however, we must be permitted, just for the sake of keeping our chronology in order, to say a word or two on those neglected works, of which we constrained ourselves to say nothing, at the time when they formed the subject of all other disceptation.

"The Heart of Mid-Lothian" is remarkable for containing fewer characters, and less variety of incident, than any of the author's former productions:—and it is accordingly, in some places, comparatively languid. The Porteous mob is rather heavily described; and the whole part of George Robertson, or Stanton, is extravagant and unpleasing. The final catastrophe, too, is needlessly improbable and startling; and both Saddletrees and Davie Deans become at last somewhat tedious and unreasonable; while we miss, throughout, the character of the generous and kindhearted rustic, which, in one form or another, gives such spirit and interest to most of the other stories. But with all these defects, the work has both beauty and power enough to vindicate its title to a legitimate descent from its mighty father—and even to a place in "the valued file" of his productions. The trial and condemnation of Effie Deans are pathetic and beautiful in the very highest degree; and the scenes with the Duke of Argyle are equally full of spirit; and strangely compounded of perfect knowledge of life and of strong and deep feeling. But the great boast of the piece, and the great exploit of the author—perhaps the greatest of all his exploits—is the character and history of Jeanie Deans, from the time she first reproves her sister's flirtations at St. Leonard's, till she settles in the manse in Argyleshire. The singular talent with which he has engrafted on the humble and somewhat coarse stock of a quiet unassuming peasant girl, the heroic affection, the strong sense, and lofty purposes, which distinguish this heroine—or rather, the art with which he has so tempered and modified those great qualities, as to make them appear noways unsuitable to the station or ordinary bearing of such a person, and so ordered and disposed the incidents by which they are called out, that they seem throughout adapted, and native as it were, to her condition,—is superior to any thing we can recollect in the history of invention; and must appear, to any one who attentively considers it, as a remarkable triumph over the greatest of all difficulties in the conduct of a fictitious narrative. Jeanie Deans, in the course of her adventurous undertaking, excites our admiration and sympathy a great deal more powerfully than most heroines, and is in the highest degree both pathetic and sublime;—and yet she never says or does any one thing that the daughter of a Scotch cowfeeder might not be supposed to say—and scarcely any thing indeed that is not characteristic of her rank and habitual occupations. She is never sentimental, nor refined, nor elegant; and though acting always, and in very difficult situations, with the greatest judgment and propriety, never seems to exert more than that downright and obvious good sense which is so often found to rule the conduct of persons of her condition. This is the great ornament and charm of the work. Dumbiedykes, however, is an admirable sketch in the grotesque way;—and the Captain of Knockdunder is a very spirited, and, though our Saxon readers will scarcely believe it, a very accurate representation of a Celtic deputy. There is less description of scenery, and less sympathy with external nature, in this, than in any of the other tales.

"The Bride of Lammermoor" is more sketchy and romantic than the usual vein of the author—and loses, perhaps, in the exaggeration that is incident to that style, some of the deep and heartfelt interest that belongs to more familiar situations. The humours of Caleb Balderstone, too, are to our taste the least successful of this author's attempts at pleasantry—and belong rather to the school of French or Italian buffoonery, than to that of English humour;—and yet, to give scope to these farcical exhibitions, the poverty of the Master of Ravenswood is exaggerated beyond all credibility, and to the injury even of his personal dignity. Sir W. Ashton is tedious

and Bucklaw and his Captain, though excellently drawn, take up rather too much room for subordinate agents.—There are splendid things, however, in this work also.—The picture of old Ailie is exquisite—and beyond the reach of any other living writer.—The hags that convene in the churchyard, have all the terror and sublimity, and more than the nature of Macbeth's witches; and the courtship at the Mermaiden's well, as well as some of the immediately preceding scenes, are full of dignity and beauty. There is a deep pathos indeed, and a genuine tragic interest in the whole story of the ill-omened loves of the two victims. The final catastrophe of the Bride, however, though it may be founded on fact, is too horrible for fiction.—But that of Ravenswood is magnificent—and, taken along with the prediction which it was doomed to fulfil, and the mourning and death of Balderstone, is one of the finest combinations of superstition and sadness which the gloomy genius of our fiction has ever put together.

"The Legend of Montrose" is also of the nature of a sketch or fragment, and is still more vigorous than its companion.—There is too much, perhaps, of Dalgetty—or, rather, he engrosses too great a proportion of the work, —for, in himself, we think he is uniformly entertaining;—and the author has nowhere shown more affinity to that matchless spirit who could bring out his Falstaffs and his Pistols, in act after act, and play after play, and exercise them every time in scenes of unbounded loquacity, without either exhausting their humour, or varying a note from its characteristic tone, than in his large and reiterated specimens of the eloquence of the redoubted Rittmaster. The general idea of the character is familiar to our comic dramatists after the Restoration—and may be said in some measure to be compounded of Captain Fluellen and Bobadil;—but the ludicrous combination of the *soldado* with the Divinity student of Marischal college, is entirely original; and the mixture of talent, selfishness, courage, coarseness, and conceit, was never so happily exemplified. Numerous as his speeches are, there is not one that is not characteristic—and, to our taste, divertingly ludicrous. Annot Lyle, and the Children of the Mist, are in a very different manner—and, though extravagant, are full of genius and poetry. The whole scenes at Argyle's Castle, and in the escape from it—though trespassing too far beyond the bounds of probability—are given with great spirit and effect; and the mixture of romantic incident and situation, with the tone of actual business and the real transactions of a camp, give a life and interest to the warlike part of the story, which belong to the fictions of no other hand. There is but little made of Montrose himself; and the wager about the Candlesticks—though said to be founded in fact, and borrowed from a very well known and entertaining book, is one of the few things in the writings of this author, to which we are constrained to apply the epithets of stupid and silly.

Having thus hastily set our mark on those productions of which we have been prevented from speaking in detail, we proceed, without further preface, to give an account of the work before us.

The story, as we have already stated, is entirely English; and consequently no longer possesses the charm of that sweet Doric dialect, of which even strangers have been made of late to feel the force and the beauty. But our Southern neighbours will be no great gainers, after all, in point of familiarity with the personages, by this transference of the scene of action:—For the time is laid as far back as the reign of Richard I.—and we suspect that the Saxons and Normans of that age are rather less known to them than even the Highlanders and Cameronians of the present. This was the great difficulty the author had to contend with, and the great disadvantage of the subject with which he had to deal. Nobody now alive can have a very clear or complete conception of the actual way of life and *manière d'être* of our ancestors in the year 1194. Some of the more prominent outlines of their chivalry, their priesthood, and their villenage, may be known to antiquaries, or even to general readers; but all the filling up, and details, which alone could give body and life to the picture, have been long since effaced by time. We have scarcely any notion, in short, of the private life and conversation of any class of persons in that remote period; and, in fact, know less how the men and women occupied or amused themselves—what they talked about—how they looked—or what they habitually thought or felt, at that time in England, than we know of what they did or thought at Rome in the time of Augustus, or at Athens in the time of Pericles. The memorials and relics of those earlier ages and remoter nations are greatly more abundant and more familiar to us, than those of our ancestors at the distance of seven centuries. Besides ample histories and copious orations, we have plays, poems, and familiar letters of the former periods; while of the latter we have only some vague chronicles, some superstitious legends, and a few fragments of foreign romance. We scarcely know, indeed, what language was then either spoken or written. Yet, with all these helps, how cold and conjectural a thing would a novel be, of which the scene was laid in ancient Rome! The author might talk with perfect propriety of the business of the Forum, and the amusements of the Circus—of the baths and the suppers, and the canvass for office—and the sacrifices, and musters, and assemblies. He might be quite correct as to the dress, furniture, and utensils he had occasion to mention; and might even engross in his work various anecdotes and sayings preserved in contemporary authors. But when he came to represent the details of individual character and feeling, and to delineate the daily conduct, and report the ordinary conversation of his persons, he would find himself either frozen in among naked and barren generalities, or engaged with modern Englishmen in the masquerade habits of antiquity.

In stating these difficulties, however, we really mean less to account for the defects, than to enhance the merits of the work before us. For though the author has not worked impossibilities, he has done wonders with his subject; and though we do sometimes miss those fresh and living pictures of the characters which we know, and the nature with which we are familiar—and that high and deep interest which the home scenes of our own times, and our own people could alone generate or sustain, it is impossible to deny that he has made marvellous good use of the scanty materials at his disposal—and eked them out both by the greatest skill and dexterity in their arrangement, and by all the resources that original genius could render subservient to such a design. For this purpose he has laid his scene in a period when the rivalry of the victorious Norman and the conquered Saxon, had not been finally composed; and when the courtly petulance, and chivalrous and military pride of the one race, might yet be set in splendid opposition to the manly steadiness, and honest but homely simplicity of the other: And has, at the same time, given an air both of dignity and of reality to his story, by bringing in the personal prowess of Cœur de Lion himself, and other personages of historical fame, to assist in its development.—Though reduced, in a great measure, to the vulgar staple of armed knights, and jolly friars or woodsmen, imprisoned damsels, lawless barons, collared serfs, and household fools—he has made such admirable use of his great talents for description, and invested those traditional and theatrical persons with so much of the feelings and humours that are of all ages and all countries, that we frequently cease to regard them—as it is generally right to regard them—as parts of a fantastical pageant; and are often brought to consider the knights who joust in panoply in the lists, and the foresters who shoot deer with arrows, and plunder travellers in the woods, as real individuals, with hearts of flesh and blood beating in their bosoms like our own—actual existences, in short, into whose views we may still reasonably enter, and with whose emotions we are bound to sympathise. To all this he has added, out of the prodigality of his high and inventive genius, the grace and the interest of some lofty, and sweet, and superhuman characters—for which, though evidently fictitious, and unnatural in any stage of society, the remoteness of the scene on which they are introduced, may serve as an apology—if they could need any other than what they bring along with them in their own sublimity and beauty.

In comparing this work then with the former productions of the same master-hand, it is impossible not to feel that we are passing in a good degree from the reign of nature and reality, to that of fancy and romance; and exchanging for scenes of wonder and curiosity, those more homefelt sympathies and deeper touches of delight that can only be excited by the people among whom we live, and the objects that are constantly around us. A far greater proportion of the work is accordingly made up of splendid descriptions of arms and dresses—moated and massive castles—tournaments of mailed champions—solemn feasts—formal courtesies, and other matters of external and visible presentment, that are only entitled to such distinction as connected with the olden time, and new only by virtue of their antiquity—while the interest of the story is maintained, far more by surprising adventures and extraordinary situations, the startling effect of exaggerated sentiments, and the strong contrast of exaggerated characters, than by the sober charms of truth and reality,—the exquisite representation of scenes with which we are familiar, or the skilful development of affections which we have often experienced.

These bright lights and deep shadows—this succession of brilliant pictures, addressed as often to the eye as to the imagination, and oftener to the imagination than the heart—this preference of striking generalities to homely details, all belong more properly to the province of Poetry than of Prose; and Ivanhoe accordingly seems to us much more akin to the most splendid of modern poems, than the most interesting of modern novels; and savours more of Marmion, or the Lady of the Lake, than of Waverley, or Old Mortality. For our part we prefer, and we care not who knows it, the prose to the poetry—whether in metre or out of it; and would willingly exchange, if the proud alternative were in our choice, even the great fame of Mr. Scott, for that which awaits the mighty unknown who has here raised his standard of rivalry, within the ancient limits of his reign. We cannot now, however, give even an abstract of the story; and shall venture, but on a brief citation, from the most striking of its concluding scenes. The majestic Rebecca, our readers will recollect, had been convicted before the grand master of the Templars, and sentenced to die, unless a champion appeared to do battle with her accuser, before an appointed day. The appointed day at last arrives. Rebecca is led out to the scaffold—faggots are prepared by the side of the lists—and in the lists appears the relentless Templar, mounted and armed for the encounter. No champion appears for Rebecca; and the heralds ask her if she yields herself as justly condemned.

"'Say to the Grand Master,' replied Rebecca, 'that I maintain my innocence, and do not yield me as justly condemned, lest I become guilty of mine own blood. Say to him, that I challenge such delay as his forms will permit, to see if God, whose opportunity is in man's extremity, will raise me up a deliverer; and when such uttermost space is passed, may his Holy will be done!' The herald retired to carry this answer to the Grand Master.—'God forbid,' said Lucas Beaumanoir, 'that Jew or Pagan should impeach us of injustice.—Until the shadows be cast from the west to the eastward, will we wait to see if a champion will appear for this unfortunate woman.'

The hours pass away—and the shadows begin to pass to the eastward. The assembled multitudes murmur with impatience and compassion—and the Judges whisper to each other, that it is time to proceed to doom.

"At this instant a knight, urging his horse to speed, appeared on the plain advancing towards the lists. An hundred voices exclaimed, 'A champion! a champion!' And, despite the prepossession and prejudices of the multitude, they shouted unanimously as the knight rode rapidly into the tilt-yard. To the summons of the herald, who demanded his rank, his name, and purpose, the stranger knight answered readily and boldly, 'I am a good knight and noble, come hither to sustain with lance and sword the just and lawful quarrel of this damsel, Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York; to uphold the doom pronounced against her to be false and truthless; and to defy Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, as a traitor, murtherer, and liar.' 'The stranger must first show,' said Malvoisin, 'that he is a good Knight, and of honourable lineage. The Temple sendeth not forth her champions against nameless men.'—'My name,' said the Knight, raising his helmet, 'is better known, my lineage more pure, Malvoisin, than thine own. I am Wilfred of Ivanhoe.'—'I will not fight with thee,' said the Templar, in a changed and hollow voice. 'Get thy wounds healed, and purvey thee a better horse, and it may be I will hold it worth my while to scourge out of thee this boyish spirit of bravade.'—'Ha! proud Templar,' said Ivanhoe, 'hast thou forgotten that twice didst thou fall before this lance? Remember the lists at Acre—remember the Passage of Arms at Ashby—remember thy proud vaunt in the halls of Rotherwood, and the gage of your gold chain against my reliquary, that thou wouldst do battle with Wilfred of Ivanhoe, and recover the honour thou hadst lost! By that reliquary, and the holy relique it contains, I will proclaim thee, Templar, a coward in every court in Europe—in every Preceptory of thine Order—unless thou do battle without farther delay.'—Bois-Guilbert turned his countenance irresolutely towards Rebecca, and then exclaimed, looking fiercely at Ivanhoe, 'Dog of a Saxon, take thy lance, and prepare for the death thou hast drawn upon thee!'—'Does the Grand Master allow me the combat?' said Ivanhoe.—'I may not deny what you have challenged,' said the Grand Master, 'yet I would thou wert in better plight to do battle. An enemy of our Order hast thou ever been, yet would I have thee honourably met with.' 'Thus—thus as I am, and not otherwise,' said Ivanhoe; 'it is the judgment of God!—to his keeping I commend myself.'"

We cannot make room for the whole of this catastrophe. The overtired horse of Ivanhoe falls in the shock; but the Templar, though scarcely touched by the lance of his adversary, reels, and falls also;—and when they seek to raise him, is found to be utterly dead! a victim to his own contending passions.

We will give but one scene more—and it is in honour of the divine Rebecca—for the fate of all the rest may easily be divined. Richard forgives his brother; and Wilfred weds Rowena.

"It was upon the second morning after this happy bridal, that the Lady Rowena was made acquainted by her handmaid Elgitha, that a damsel desired admission to her presence, and solicited that their parley might be without witness. Rowena wondered, hesitated, became curious, and ended by commanding the damsel to be admitted, and her attendants to withdraw.—She entered—a noble and commanding figure; the long white veil in which she was shrouded, overshadowing rather than concealing the elegance and majesty of her shape. Her demeanour was that of respect, unmingled by the least shade either of fear, or of a wish to propitiate favour. Rowena was ever ready to acknowledge the claims, and attend to the feelings of others. She arose, and would have conducted the lovely stranger to a seat; but she looked at Elgitha, and again intimated a wish to discourse with the Lady Rowena alone. Elgitha had no sooner retired with unwilling steps, than, to the surprise of the Lady of Ivanhoe, her fair visitant kneeled suddenly on one knee, pressed her hands to her forehead, and, bending her head to the ground, in spite of Rowena's resistance, kissed the embroidered hem of her tunic.—'What means this?' said the surprised bride; 'or why do you offer to me a deference so unusual?'—'Because to you, Lady of Ivanhoe,' said Rebecca, rising up and resuming the usual quiet dignity of her manner, 'I may lawfully, and without rebuke, pay the debt of gratitude which I owe to Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I am—forgive the boldness which has offered to you the homage of my country—I am the unhappy Jewess, for whom your husband hazarded his life against such fearful odds in the tilt-yard of Templestowe.—'Damsel,' said Rowena, 'Wilfred of Ivanhoe on that day rendered back but in a slight measure your unceasing charity towards him in his wounds and misfortunes. Speak, is there aught remains in which he and I can serve thee?'—'Nothing,' said Rebecca, calmly, 'unless you will transmit to him my grateful farewell.'—'You leave England, then,' said Rowena, scarce recovering the surprise of this extraordinary visit.—'I leave it, lady, ere this moon again changes. My father hath a brother high in favour with Mohammed Boabdil, King of Grenada—thither we go, secure of peace and protection, for the payment of such ransom as the Moslem exact from our people.'—'And are you not then as well protected in England?' said Rowena. 'My husband has favour with the King—the King himself is just and generous.'—'Lady,' said Rebecca, 'I doubt it not—but England is no safe abode for the children of my people. Ephraim is an heartless dove—Issachar an over-laboured drudge, which stoops between two burthens. Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbours, and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during her wanderings.'—'But you, maiden,' said Rowena—'you surely can have nothing to fear. She who nursed the sick-bed of Ivanhoe,' she continued, rising with enthusiasm—'she can have nothing to fear in England, where Saxon and Norman will contend who shall most do her honour.'—'Thy speech is fair, lady,' said Rebecca, 'and thy purpose fairer; but it may not be—there is a gulf betwixt us. Our breeding, our faith, alike forbid either to pass over it. Farewell!—yet, ere I go, indulge me one request. The bridal veil hangs over thy face; raise it, and let me see the features of which fame speaks so highly.'—'They are scarce worthy of being looked upon,' said Rowena; 'but, expecting the same from my visitant, I remove the veil.'—She took it off accordingly, and partly from the consciousness of beauty, partly from bashfulness, she blushed so intensely, that cheek, brow, neck, and bosom, were suffused with crimson. Rebecca blushed also, but it was a momentary feeling; and, mastered by higher emotions, passed slowly from her features like the crimson cloud, which changes colour when the sun sinks beneath the horizon.

"'Lady, she said, 'the countenance you have deigned to show me will long dwell in my remembrance. There reigns in it gentleness and goodness; and if a tinge of the world's pride or vanities may mix with an expression so lovely, how may we chide that which is of earth for bearing some colour of its original? Long, long shall I remember your features, and bless God that I leave my noble deliverer united with'—She stopped short—her eyes filled with tears. She hastily wiped them, and answered to the anxious inquiries of Rowena—'I am well, lady—well. But my heart swells when I think of Torquilstone and the lists of Templestowe!—Farewell! One, the most trifling part of my duty, remains undischarged. Accept this casket—startle not at its contents.'—Rowena opened the small silver-chased casket, and perceived a carcanet, or necklace, with ear-jewels, of diamonds, which were visibly of immense value.—'It is impossible,' she said, tendering back the casket, 'I dare not accept

a gift of such consequence.'—'Yet keep it, lady,' returned Rebecca.—'Let me not think you deem so wretchedly ill of my nation as your commons believe. Think ye that I prize these sparkling fragments of stone above my liberty? or that my father values them in comparison to the honour of his only child? Accept them, lady—to me they are valueless. I will never wear jewels more.'—'You are then unhappy,' said Rowena, struck with the manner in which Rebecca uttered the last words. 'O, remain with us—the counsel of holy men will wean you from your unhappy law, and I will be a sister to you.'—'No, lady,' answered Rebecca, the same calm melancholy reigning in her soft voice and beautiful features,—'that may not be. I may not change the faith of my fathers, like a garment unsuited to the climate in which I seek to dwell; and unhappy, lady, I will not be. He, to whom I dedicate my future life, will be my comforter, if I do His will.'—'Have you then convents, to one of which you mean to retire?' asked Rowena.—'No, lady,' said the Jewess; 'but among our people, since the time of Abraham downward, have been women who have devoted their thoughts to Heaven, and their actions to works of kindness to men, tending the sick, feeding the hungry, and relieving the distressed. Among these will Rebecca be numbered. Say this to thy lord, should he inquire after the fate of her whose life he saved!'—There was an involuntary tremor in Rebecca's voice, and a tenderness of accent, which perhaps betrayed more than she would willingly have expressed. She hastened to bid Rowena adieu.—'Farewell,' she said, 'may He, who made both Jew and Christian, shower down on you his choicest blessings!'

"She glided from the apartment, leaving Rowena surprised as if a vision had passed before her. The fair Saxon related the singular conference to her husband, on whose mind it made a deep impression. He lived long and happily with Rowena; for they were attached to each other by the bonds of early affection, and they loved each other the more, from recollection of the obstacles which had impeded their union. Yet it would be inquiring too curiously to ask, whether the recollection of Rebecca's beauty and magnanimity did not recur to his mind more frequently than the fair descendant of Alfred might altogether have approved."

The work before us shows at least as much genius as any of those with which it must now be numbered—and excites, perhaps, at least on the first perusal, as strong an interest: But it does not delight so deeply—and we rather think it will not please so long. Rebecca is almost the only lovely being in the story—and she is evidently a creature of the fancy—a mere poetical personification. Next to her—for Isaac is but a milder Shylock, and by no means more natural than his original—the heartiest interest is excited by the outlaws and their merry chief—because the tone and manners ascribed to them are more akin to those that prevailed among the yeomanry of later days, than those of the Knights, Priors, and Princes, are to any thing with which a more recent age has been acquainted.—Cedric the Saxon, with his thralls, and Bois-Guilbert the Templar with his Moors, are to us but theoretical or mythological persons. We know nothing about them—and never feel assured that we fully comprehend their drift, or enter rightly into their feelings. The same genius which now busies us with their concerns, might have excited an equal interest for the adventures of Oberon and Pigwiggin—or for any imaginary community of Giants, Amazons, or Cynocephali. The interest we do take is in the situations—and the extremes of peril, heroism, and atrocity, in which the great latitude of the fiction enables the author to indulge. Even with this advantage, we soon feel, not only that the characters he brings before us are contrary to our experience, but that they are actually impossible. There could in fact have been no such state of society as that of which the story before us professes to give us but samples and ordinary results. In a country beset with such worthies as Front-de-Bœuf, Malvoisin, and the rest, Isaac the Jew could neither have grown rich, nor lived to old age; and no Rebecca could either have acquired her delicacy, or preserved her honour. Neither could a plump Prior Aymer have followed venery in woods swarming with the merry men of Robin Hood.—Rotherwood must have been burned to the ground two or three times in every year—and all the knights and thanes of the land been killed off nearly as often. The thing, in short, when calmly considered, cannot be received as a reality; and, after gazing for a while on the splendid pageant which it presents, and admiring the exaggerated beings who counterfeit, in their grand style, the passions and feelings of our poor human nature, we soon find that we must turn again to our Waverleys, and Antiquaries, and Old Mortalities, and become acquainted with our neighbours and ourselves, and our duties, and dangers, and true felicities, in the exquisite pictures which our author *there* exhibits of the follies we daily witness or display, and of the prejudices, habits, and affections, by which we are still hourly obstructed, governed, or cheered.

We end, therefore, as we began—by preferring the home scenes, and the copies of originals which we know—but admiring, in the highest degree, the fancy and judgment and feeling by which this more distant and ideal prospect is enriched. It is a splendid Poem—and contains matter enough for six good Tragedies. As it is, it will make a glorious melodrame for the end of the season.—Perhaps the author does better—for us and for himself—by writing more novels: But we have an earnest wish that he would try his hand in the actual bow of Shakespeare—venture fairly within his enchanted circle—and reassert the Dramatic Sovereignty of England, by putting forth a genuine Tragedy of passion, fancy, and incident. He has all the qualifications to insure success*—except perhaps the art of compression;—for we suspect it would cost him no little effort to confine his story, and the development of his characters, to some fifty or sixty small pages. But the attempt is worth making; and he may be certain that he cannot fail without glory.

* We take it for granted, that the charming extracts from "Old Plays," that are occasionally given as mottoes to the chapters of this and some of his other works, are original compositions of the author whose prose they garnish:—and they show that he is not less a master of the most beautiful style of Dramatic versification, than of all the higher and more inward secrets of that forgotten art.

(June, 1822.)

The Fortunes of Nigel. By the Author of "Waverley," "Kenilworth," &c. In 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 950. Edinburgh: Constable & Co. 1822.

It was a happy thought in us to review this author's works in groups, rather than in single pieces; for we should never otherwise have been able to keep up both with him and with our other business. Even as it is, we find we have let him run so far ahead, that we have now rather more of him on hand than we can well get through at a sitting; and are in danger of forgetting the early part of the long series of stories to which we are thus obliged to look back, or of finding it forgotten by the public—or at least of having the vast assemblage of events and characters that now lie before us something jumbled and confounded, both in our own recollections, and that of our admiring readers.

Our last particular notice, we think, was of Ivanhoe, in the end of 1819; and in the two years that have since elapsed, we have had the Monastery, the Abbot, Kenilworth, the Pirates, and Nigel,—one, two, three, four, five—large original works from the same fertile and inexhaustible pen. It is a strange manufacture! and, though depending entirely on invention and original fancy, really seems to proceed with all the steadiness and regularity of a thing that was kept in operation by industry and application alone. *Our* whole fraternity, for example, with all the works of all other writers to supply them with materials, are not half so sure of bringing out their two volumes in the year, as this one author, with nothing but his own genius to depend on, is of bringing out his six or seven. There is no instance of any such experiment being so long continued with success; and, according to all appearances, it is just as far from a termination now, as it was at the beginning. If it were only for the singularity of the thing, it would be worth while to chronicle the actual course and progress of this extraordinary adventure.

Of the two first works we have mentioned, the Monastery and the Abbot, we have the least to say; and we believe the public have the least curiosity to know our opinion. They are certainly the least meritorious of the whole series, either subsequent or preceding; and while they are decidedly worse than the other works of the same author, we are not sure that we can say, as we have done of some of his other failures, that they are better than those of any other recent writer of fiction.—So conspicuous, indeed, was their inferiority, that we at one time apprehended that we should have been called upon to interfere before our time, and to admonish the author of the hazard to which he was exposing his fame. But as he has since redeemed that slip, we shall now pass it over lightly, and merely notice one or two things that still live in our remembrance.

We do not think the White Lady, and the other supernatural agencies, the worst blemish of "The Monastery." On the contrary, the first apparition of the spirit by her lonely fountain (though borrowed from Lord Byron's Witch of the Alps in Manfred), as well as the effect of the interview on the mind of the young aspirant to whom she reveals herself, have always appeared to us to be very beautifully imagined: But we must confess, that their subsequent descent into an alabaster cavern, and the seizure of a stolen Bible from an altar blazing with cold flames, is a fiction of a more ignoble stock; and looks very like an unlucky combination of a French fairy tale and a dull German romance. The Euphuist too, Sir Piercie Shafton, is a mere nuisance throughout. Nor can we remember any incident in an unsuccessful farce more utterly absurd and pitiable, than the remembrance of tailorship that is supposed to be conjured up in the mind of this chivalrous person, by the presentment of the fairy's bodkin to his eyes. There is something ineffably poor at once, and extravagant, in the idea of a solid silver implement being taken from the hair of a spiritual and shadowy being, for the sage purpose of making an earthly coxcomb angry to no end;—while our delight at this happy imagination is not a little heightened by reflecting that it is all the time utterly unintelligible, how the mere exhibition of a lady's bodkin should remind any man of a tailor in his pedigree—or be thought to import such a disclosure to the spectators.

But, notwithstanding these gross faults, and the general flatness of the monkish parts—including that of the Sub-prior, which is a failure in spite of considerable labour—it would be absurd to rank this with common novels, or even to exclude it from the file of the author's characteristic productions. It has both humour, and fancy and pathos enough, to maintain its title to such a distinction.—The aspiring temper of Halbert Glendinning, the rustic establishment of Glendearg, the picture of Christie of Clinthill, and, above all, the scenes at the castle of Avenel, are all touched with the hand of a master. Julian's dialogue, or soliloquy rather, to his hawk, in presence of his paramour, with its accompaniments and sequel, is as powerful as any thing the author has produced; and the tragic and historical scenes that lead to the conclusion are also, for the most part, excellent. It is a work, in short, which pleases more upon a second reading than at first—as we not only pass over the Euphuism and other dull pas-

sages, but, being aware of its defects, no longer feel the disappointment and provocation which are apt, on their first excitement, to make us unjust to its real merits.

In point of real merit, "The Abbot" is not much better, we think, than the Monastery—but it is fuller of historical painting, and, in the higher scenes, has perhaps a deeper and more exalted interest. The Popish zealots, whether in the shape of prophetic crones or heroic monks, are very tiresome personages. Catherine Seyton is a wilful deterioration of Diana Vernon, and is far too pert and confident; while her paramour Roland Græme is, for a good part of the work, little better than a blackguard boy, who should have had his head broken twice a day, and been put nightly in the stocks, for his impertinence. Some of the scenes at Lochleven are of a different pitch;—though the formal and measured sarcasms which the Queen and Lady Douglas interchange with such solemn verbosity, have a very heavy and unnatural effect. These faults, however, are amply redeemed by the beauties with which they are mingled. There are some grand passages, of enthusiasm and devoted courage, in Catherine Seyton. The escape from Lochleven is given with great effect and spirit—and the subsequent mustering of the Queen's adherents, and their march to Langside, as well as the battle itself, are full of life and colouring. The noble bearing and sad and devoted love of George Douglas—the brawl on the streets of Edinburgh, and the scenes at Holyrood, both serious and comic, as well as many of the minor characters, such as the Ex-abbot of St. Mary's metamorphosed into the humble gardener of Lochleven, are all in the genuine manner of the author, and could not have proceeded from any other hand. On the whole, however, the work is unsatisfactory, and too deficient in design and unity. We do not know why it should have been called "The Abbot," as that personage has scarcely any thing to do with it. As an historical sketch, it has neither beginning nor end;—nor does the time which it embraces possess any peculiar interest:—and for a history of Roland Græme, which is the only denomination that can give it coherence, the narrative is not only far too slight and insignificant in itself, but is too much broken in upon by higher persons and weightier affairs, to retain any of the interest which it might otherwise have possessed.

"Kenilworth," however, is a flight of another wing—and rises almost, if not altogether, to the level of Ivanhoe;—displaying, perhaps, as much power in assembling together, and distributing in striking groups, the copious historical materials of that romantic age, as the other does in eking out their scantiness by the riches of the author's imagination. Elizabeth herself, surrounded as she is with lively and imposing recollections, was a difficult personage to bring prominently forward in a work of fiction: But the task, we think, is here not only fearlessly, but admirably performed; and the character brought out, not merely with the most unsparing fulness, but with the most brilliant and seducing effect. Leicester is less happy; and we have certainly a great deal too much both of the blackguardism of Michael Lambourne, the atrocious villany of Varney and Foster, and the magical dealings of Alasco and Wayland Smith. Indeed, almost all the lower agents in the performance have a sort of Demoniacal character; and the deep and disgusting guilt by which most of the main incidents are developed, make a splendid passage of English history read like the Newgate Calendar, and give a certain horror to the story, which is neither agreeable to historical truth, nor attractive in a work of imagination.

The great charm and glory of the piece, however, consists in the magnificence and vivacity of the descriptions with which it abounds; and which set before our eyes, with a freshness and force of colouring which can scarcely ever be gained except by actual observation, all the pomp and stateliness, the glitter and solemnity, of that heroic reign. The moving picture of Elizabeth's night entry to Kenilworth is given with such spirit, richness, and copiousness of detail, that we seem actually transported to the middle of the scene. We feel the press, and hear the music and the din—and descry, amidst the fading lights of a summer eve, the majestical pacings and waving banners that surround the march of the heroic Queen; while the mixture of ludicrous incidents, and the ennui that steals on the lengthened parade and fatiguing preparation, give a sense of truth and reality to the sketch that seems to belong rather to recent recollection than mere ideal conception. We believe, in short, that we have at this moment as lively and distinct an impression of the whole scene, as we shall have in a few weeks of a similar Joyous Entry, for which preparations are now making * in this our loyal metropolis,—and of which we hope, before that time, to be spectators. The account of Leicester's princely hospitality, and of the royal divertisements that ensued,—the feastings and huntings, the flatteries and dissemblings, the pride, the jealousy, the ambition, the revenge,—are all portrayed with the same animating pencil, and leave every thing behind, but some rival works of the same unrivalled artist. The most surprising piece of mere description, however, that we have ever seen, is that of Amy's magnificent apartments at Cumnor Place, and of the dress and beauty of the lovely creature for whom they were adorned. We had no idea before that upholstery and millinery could be made so engaging; and though we are aware that it is the living Beauty that gives its enchantment to the scene, and breathes over the whole an air of voluptuousness, innocence, and pity, it is impossible not to feel that the vivid and clear presentment of the visible objects by which she is surrounded, and the antique splendour in which she is enshrined, not only strengthen our impressions of the reality, but

* The visit of George IV. to Edinburgh in July, 1822.

actually fascinate and delight us in themselves,—just as the draperies and still-life in a grand historical picture often divide our admiration with the pathetic effect of the story told by the principal figures. The catastrophe of the unfortunate Amy herself is too sickening and full of pity to be endured; and we shrink from the recollection of it, as we would from that of a recent calamity of our own. The part of Tressilian is unfortunate on the whole, though it contains touches of interest and beauty. The sketch of young Raleigh is splendid, and in excellent keeping with every thing beside it. More, we think, might have been made of the desolate age and broken-hearted anguish of Sir Hugh Robsart; though there are one or two little traits of his paternal love and crushed affection, that are inimitably sweet and pathetic, and which might have lost their effect, perhaps, if the scene had been extended. We do not care much about the goblin dwarf, nor the host, nor the mercer,—nor any of the other characters. They are all too fantastical and affected. They seem copied rather from the quaintness of old plays, than the reality of past and present nature; and serve better to show what manner of personages were to be met with in the Masks and Pageants of the age, than what were actually to be found in the living population of the land.

"The Pirates" is a bold attempt to furnish out a long and eventful story, from a very narrow circle of society, and a scene so circumscribed as scarcely to admit of any great scope or variety of action; and its failure, in so far as it may be thought to have failed, should, in fairness, be ascribed chiefly to this scantiness and defect of the materials. The author, accordingly, has been obliged to borrow pretty largely from other regions. The character and story of Mertoun (which is at once common-place and extravagant),—that of the Pirate himself,—and that of Halcro the poet, have no connection with the localities of Shetland, or the peculiarities of an insular life. Mr. Yellowlees, though he gives occasion to some strong contrasts, is in the same situation. The great blemish, however, of the work, is the inconsistency in Cleveland's character, or rather the way in which he disappoints us, by turning out so much better than we had expected—and yet substantially so ill. So great, indeed, is this disappointment, and so strong the grounds of it, that we cannot help suspecting that the author himself must have altered his design in the course of the work; and, finding himself at a loss how to make either a demon or a hero of the personage whom he had introduced with a view to one or other of these characters, betook himself to the expedient of leaving him in that neutral or mixed state, which, after all, suits the least with his conduct and situation, or with the effects which he is supposed to produce. All that we see of him is a daring, underbred, forward, heartless fellow—very unlikely, we should suppose, to captivate the affections of the high-minded, romantic Minna, or even to supplant an old friend in the favour of the honest Udaller. The charm of the book is in the picture of his family. Nothing can be more beautiful than the description of the two sisters, and the gentle and innocent affection that continues to unite them, even after love has come to divide their interests and wishes. The visit paid them by Norna, and the tale she tells them at midnight, lead to a fine display of the perfect purity of their young hearts, and the native gentleness and dignity of their character. There is, perhaps, still more genius in the development and full exhibition of their father's character; who is first introduced to us as little else than a jovial, thoughtless, hospitable housekeeper, but gradually discloses the most captivating traits, not only of kindness and courage, but of substantial generosity and delicacy of feeling, without ever departing, for an instant, from the frank homeliness of his habitual demeanour. Norna is a new incarnation of Meg Merrilees, and palpably the same in the spirit. Less degraded in her habits and associates, and less lofty and pathetic in her denunciations, she reconciles fewer contradictions, and is, on the whole, inferior perhaps to her prototype; but is far above the rank of a mere imitated or borrowed character. The Udaller's visit to her dwelling on the Fitful-head is admirably managed, and highly characteristic of both parties. Of the humorous characters, Yellowlees is the best. Few things, indeed, are better than the description of his equestrian progression to the feast of the Udaller. Claud Halcro is too fantastical; and peculiarly out of place, we should think, in such a region. A man who talks in quotations from common plays, and proses eternally about glorious John Dryden, luckily is not often to be met with anywhere, but least of all in the Orkney Islands. Bunce is liable to the same objection,—though there are parts of his character, as well as that of Fletcher and the rest of the crew, given with infinite spirit and effect. The denouement of the story is strained and improbable, and the conclusion rather unsatisfactory: But the work, on the whole, opens up a new world to our curiosity, and affords another proof of the extraordinary pliability, as well as vigour, of the author's genius.

We come now to the work which has afforded us a pretext for this long retrospection, and which we have approached, as befitteth a royal presence, through this long vista of preparatory splendour. Considering that it has now been three months in the hands of the public—and must be about as well known to most of our readers as the older works to which we have just alluded—we do not very well see why we should not deal with it as summarily as we have done with them; and, sparing our dutiful readers the fatigue of toiling through a detail with which they are already familiar, content ourselves with marking our opinion of it in the same general and comprehensive manner that we have ventured to adopt as to those earlier productions. This accordingly is the course which, in the main, we propose to follow; though, for the sake of

our distant readers, as well as to give more force and direct application to our general remarks, we must somewhat enlarge the scale of our critical notice.

This work, though dealing abundantly in invention, is, in substance, like Old Mortality and Kenilworth, of an historical character, and may be correctly represented as an attempt to describe and illustrate, by examples, the manners of the court, and generally speaking, of the age, of James I. of England. And this, on the whole, is the most favourable aspect under which it can be considered; for, while it certainly presents us with a very brilliant, and, we believe, a very faithful sketch of the manners and habits of the time, we cannot say that it either embodies them in a very interesting story, or supplies us with any rich variety of particular characters. Except King James himself, and Richie Moniplies, there is but little individuality in the personages represented. We should perhaps add Master George Heriot; except that he is too staid and prudent a person to engage very much of our interest. The story is of a very simple structure, and may soon be told.

Lord Glenvarloch, a young Scottish nobleman, whose fortunes had been ruined by his father's profusion, and chiefly by large loans to the Crown, comes to London about the middle of James' reign, to try what part of this debt may be recovered from the justice of his now opulent sovereign. From want of patronage and experience, he is unsuccessful in his first application; and is about to withdraw in despair, when his serving man, Richard Moniplies, falling accidentally in the way of George Heriot, the favourite jeweller and occasional banker of the King, that benevolent person (to whom, it may not be known to our Southern readers, Edinburgh is indebted for the most flourishing and best conducted of her founded schools or charities) is pleased to take an interest in his affairs, and not only represents his case in a favourable way to the Sovereign, but is the means of introducing him to another nobleman, with whose son, Lord Dalgarno, he speedily forms a rather inauspicious intimacy. By this youth he is initiated into all the gaieties of the town; of which, as well of the manners and bearing of the men of fashion of the time, a very lively picture is drawn. Among other things, he is encouraged to try his fortune at play; but, being poor and prudent, he plays but for small sums, and, rather unhandsomely we must own, makes it a practice to come away after a moderate winning. On this account he is slighted by Lord Dalgarno and his more adventurous associates; and, having learned that they talked contemptuously of him, and that Lord D. had prejudiced the King and the Prince against him, he challenges him for his perfidy in the Park, and actually draws on him, in the precincts of the royal abode. This was, in those days, a very serious offence; and, to avoid its immediate consequences, he is advised to take refuge in Whitefriars, then known by the cant name of *Alsatia*, and understood to possess the privileges of a sanctuary against ordinary arrests. *A propos* of this retirement, we have a very striking and animated picture of the bullies and bankrupts, and swindlers and petty felons by whom this city of refuge was chiefly inhabited—and among whom the young Lord has the good luck to witness a murder, committed on the person of his miserly host. He then bethinks himself of repairing to Greenwich, where the court was, throwing himself upon the clemency of the King, and insisting on being confronted with his accusers; but happening unfortunately to meet with his Majesty in a retired part of the Park to which he had pursued the stag, ahead of all his attendants, his sudden appearance so startles and alarms that pacific monarch, that he accuses him of a treasonable design on his life, and has him committed to the Tower, under that weighty accusation. In the mean time, however, a certain Margaret Ramsey, a daughter of the celebrated watchmaker of that name, who had privately fallen in love with him at the table of George Heriot her god-father, and had, ever since, kept watch over his proceedings, and aided him in his difficulties by various stratagems and suggestions, had repaired to Greenwich in male attire, with the romantic design of interesting and undeceiving the King with regard to him. By a lucky accident, she does obtain an opportunity of making her statement to James; who, in order to put her veracity to the test, sends her, disguised as she was, to Glenvarloch's prison in the Tower, and also looses upon him in the same place, first his faithful Heriot, and afterwards a sarcastic courtier, while he himself plays the eavesdropper to their conversation, from an adjoining apartment constructed for that purpose. The result of this Dionysian experiment is, to satisfy the sagacious monarch both of the innocence of his young countryman, and the malignity of his accusers; who are speedily brought to shame by his acquittal and admittance to favour.

There is an underplot of a more extravagant and less happy structure, about a sad and mysterious lady who inhabits an inaccessible apartment in Heriot's house, and turns out to be the deserted wife of Lord Dalgarno, and a near relation of Lord Glenvarloch. The former is compelled to acknowledge her by the King, very much against his will; though he is considerably comforted when he finds that, by this alliance, he acquires right to an ancient mortgage over the lands of the latter, which nothing but immediate payment of a large sum can prevent him from foreclosing. This is accomplished by the new-raised credit and consequential agency of Richie Moniplies, though not without a scene of pettifogging difficulties. The conclusion is something tragical and sudden. Lord Dalgarno, travelling to Scotland with the redemption-money in a portmanteau, challenges Glenvarloch to meet and fight him, one stage from town; and, while he is waiting on the common, is himself shot dead by one of the Alsatian bullies, who had heard of the precious cargo with which he was making the journey. His antagonist comes up soon enough to revenge

him; and, soon after, is married to Miss Ramsey, for whom the King finds a suitable pedigree, and at whose marriage-dinner he condescends to preside; while Richard Moniplies marries the heroic daughter of the Alsatian miser, and is knighted in a very characteristic manner by the good-natured monarch.

The best things in the book, as we have already intimated, are the pictures of King James and of Richard Moniplies—though my Lord Dalgarno is very lively and witty, and well represents the gallantry and profligacy of the time; while the worthy Earl, his father, is very successfully brought forward as the type of the ruder and more uncorrupted age that preceded. We are sorely tempted to produce a sample of Jin Vin the smart apprentice, and of the mixed childishness and heroism of Margaret Ramsay, and the native loftiness and austere candour of Martha Trapbois, and the humour of Dame Suddlechops, and divers other inferior persons. But the rule we have laid down to ourselves, of abstaining from citations from well-known books, must not be farther broken, in the very hour of its enactment;—and we shall therefore conclude, with a few such general remarks on the work before us as we have already bestowed on some other performances, probably no longer so familiar to most of our readers.

We do not think, then, that it is a work either of so much genius or so much interest as Kenilworth or Ivanhoe, or the earlier historical novels of the same author—and yet there be readers who will in all likelihood prefer it to those books, and that for the very reasons which induce us to place it beneath them. These reasons are,—First, that the scene is all in London—and that the piece is consequently deprived of the interest and variety derived from the beautiful descriptions of natural scenery, and the still more beautiful combination of its features and expression, with the feelings of the living agents, which abound in those other works; and next, that the characters are more entirely borrowed from the written memorials of the age to which they refer, and less from that eternal and universal nature which is of all ages, than in any of his former works. The plays of that great dramatic era, and the letters and memoirs which have been preserved in such abundance, have made all diligent readers familiar with the peculiarities by which it was marked. But unluckily the taste of the writers of that age was quaint and fantastical; and though their representations necessarily give us a true enough picture of its fashions and follies, it is obviously a distorted and exaggerated picture—and their characters plainly both speak and act as no living men ever did speak or act. Now, this style of caricature is too palpably copied in the work before us,—and, though somewhat softened and relaxed by the good sense of the author, is still so prevalent, that most of his characters strike us rather as whimsical humourists or affected maskers, than as faithful copies of the actual society of *any* historical period; and though they may afford great delight to such slender wits as think the commentators on Shakespeare the greatest men in the world, and here find their little archæological persons made something less inconceivable than usual, they cannot fail to offend and disappoint all those who hold that nature alone must be the source of all natural interest.

Finally, we object to this work, as compared with those to which we have alluded, that the interest is more that of situation, and less of character or action, than in any of the former. The hero is not so much an actor or a sufferer, in most of the events represented, as a spectator. With comparatively little to do in the business of the scene, he is merely placed in the front of it, to look on with the reader as it passes. He has an ordinary and slow-moving suit at court—and, *a propos* of this—all the humours and oddities of the sovereign are exhibited in rich and splendid detail. He is obliged to take refuge for a day in Whitefriars—and all the horrors and atrocities of the Sanctuary are spread out before us through the greater part of a volume. Two or three murders are committed, in which he has no interest, and no other part than that of being accidentally present. His own scanty part, in short, is performed in the vicinity of a number of other separate transactions; and this mere juxtaposition is made an apology for stringing them all up together into one historical romance. We should not care very much if this only destroyed the unity of the piece—but it also sensibly weakens its interest—and reduces it from the rank of a comprehensive and engaging narrative, in which every event gives and receives importance from its connection with the rest, to that of a mere collection of sketches, relating to the same period and state of society.

The character of the hero, we also think, is more than usually a failure. He is not only a reasonable and discreet person, for whose prosperity we need feel no great apprehension, but he is gratuitously debased by certain infirmities of a mean and somewhat sordid description, which suit remarkably ill with the heroic character. His prudent deportment at the gaming table, and his repeated borrowings of money, have been already hinted at; and we may add, that when interrogated by Heriot about the disguised damsal who is found with him in the Tower, he makes up a false story for the occasion, with a cool promptitude of invention, which reminds us more of Joseph Surface and his French milliner, than of the high-minded son of a stern puritanical Baron of Scotland.

These are the chief faults of the work, and they are not slight ones. Its merits do not require to be specified. They embrace all to which we have not specially objected. The general brilliancy and force of the colouring, the ease and spirit of the design, and the strong touches of character, are all such as we have have long admired in the best works of the author. Besides the King and Richie Moniplies, at whose merits we have already hinted, it would be unjust to pass over the prodigious strength of writing that distin

guishes the part of Mrs. Martha Trapbois, and the inimitable scenes, though of a coarse and revolting complexion, with Duke Hildebrod and the miser of Alsatia. The Templar Lowestoffe, and Jin Vin, the aspiring apprentice, are excellent sketches of their kind. So are John Christie and his frail dame. Lord Dalgarno is more questionable. There are passages of extraordinary spirit and ability in this part; but he turns out too atrocious. Sir Mungo Malagrowther wearies us from the beginning, and so does the horologist Ramsay —because they are both exaggerated and unnatural characters. We scarcely see enough of Margaret Ramsay to forgive her all her irregularities, and her high fortune; but a great deal certainly of what we do see is charmingly executed. Dame Ursula is something between the vulgar gossipping of Mrs. Quickly in the merry Wives of Windsor, and the atrocities of Mrs. Turner and Lady Suffolk; and it is rather a contamination of Margaret's purity to have used such counsel.

We have named them all now, or nearly—and must at length conclude. Indeed, nothing but the fascination of this author's pen, and the difficulty of getting away from him, could have induced us to be so particular in our notices of a story, the details of which will so soon be driven out of our heads by other details as interesting—and as little fated to be remembered. There are other two books coming, we hear, in the course of the winter; and by the time there are four or five, that is, in about eighteen months hence, we must hold ourselves prepared to give some account of them.

(October, 1823.)

1. *Annals of the Parish, or the Chronicle of Dalmailing, during the Ministry of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder.* Written by Himself. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 400. Blackwood. Edin.: 1819.
2. *The Ayrshire Legatees, or the Pringle Family.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 395. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1820.
3. *The Provost.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," "Ayrshire Legatees," &c. 1 vol. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1820.
4. *Sir Andrew Wyllie of that Ilk.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 3 vols. 12mo. Blackwood. Edin.: 1822.
5. *The Steam Boat.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 1 vol. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1822.
6. *The Entail, or the Lairds of Grippy.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," "Sir Andrew Wyllie," &c. 3 vols. 18mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1823.
7. *Ringan Gilhaize, or the Covenanters.* By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c. 3 vols. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1823.
8. *Valerius, a Roman Story.* 3 vols. 12mo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1820.
9. *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.* 1 vol. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1822.
10. *Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair, Minister of the Gospel at Cross-Meikle* 1 vol. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1822.
11. *The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay.* By the Author of "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life." 1 vol. 8vo. Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1823.
12. *Reginald Dalton.* By the Author of "Valerius," and "Adam Blair." 3 vols. 8vo Blackwood. Edinburgh: 1823.*

We have been sometimes accused, we observe, of partiality to the writers of our own country, and reproached with helping middling Scotch works into notice, while far more meritorious publications in England and Ireland have been treated with neglect. We take leave to say, that there could not possibly be a more unjust accusation: and the list of books which we have prefixed to this article, affords of itself, we now conceive, the most triumphant refutation of it. Here is a set of lively and popular works, that have attracted, and very deservedly, a large share of attention in every part of the empire—issuing from the press, successively for four or five years, in this very city, and under our eyes, and not hitherto honoured by us with any indication of our being even conscious of their existence. The causes of this long neglect it can now be of no importance to explain. But sure we are, that our ingenious countrymen have far greater reason to complain of it, than any aliens can have to impute this tardy reparation to national partiality.

The works themselves are evidently too numerous to admit of our now giving more than a very general account of them:—and indeed, some of their authors emulate their great prototype so successfully in the rapid succession of their performances, that, even if they had not been so far ahead of us at the starting, we must soon have been reduced to deal with them as we have done with him,

* I have retained most of the citations in this article:—the books from which they are taken not being so universally known as those of Sir Walter Scott—and yet deserving, I think, of being thus recalled to the attention of general readers. The whole seem to have been originally put out anonymously:—But the authorship has been long ago acknowledged;—so that it is scarcely necessary for me to mention that the first seven in the list are the works of the late Mr. Galt, Valerius and Adam Blair of Mr. Lockhart—and the Lights and Shadows, and Margaret Lindsay, of Professor Wilson.

and only to have noticed their productions when they had grown up into groups and families—as they increased and multiplied in the land. In intimating that we regard them as imitations of the inimitable novels,—which *we*, who never presume to peep under masks, still hold to be by an author unknown,—we have already exhausted more than half their general character. They are inferior certainly (and what is not?) to their great originals. But they are the best copies which have yet been produced of them; and it is not a little creditable to the genius of our beloved country, that, even in those gay and airy walks of literature from which she had been so long estranged, an opening was no sooner made, by the splendid success of one gifted Scotsman, than many others were found ready to enter upon them, with a spirit of enterprise, and a force of invention, that promised still farther to extend their boundaries—and to make these new adventurers, if not formidable rivals, at least not unworthy followers of him by whose example they were roused.

There are three authors, it seems, to the works now before us;—so at least the title-pages announce; and it is a rule with us, to give implicit faith to those solemn intimations. We think, indeed, that without the help of that oracle, we should have been at no loss to ascribe all the works which are now claimed by the author of the Annals of the Parish, to one and the same hand; But we should certainly have been inclined to suppose, that there was only one author for all the rest,—with the exception, perhaps, of *Valerius*, which has little resemblance, either in substance or manner, to any of those with which it is now associated.

In the arduous task of imitating the great novelist, they have apparently found it necessary to resort to the great principle of division of labour; and yet they have not, among them, been able to equal the work of his single hand! The author of the Parish Annals seems to have sought chiefly to rival the humorous and less dignified parts of his original; by large representations of the character and manners of the middling and lower orders in Scotland, intermingled with traits of sly and sarcastic sagacity, and occasionally softened and relieved by touches of unexpected tenderness and simple pathos, all harmonised by the same truth to nature and fine sense of national peculiarity. In these delineations there is, no doubt, more vulgarity, both of style and conception, and less poetical invention, than in the corresponding passages of the works he aspires to imitate; but, on the other hand, there is more of that peculiar humour which depends on the combination of great *naïveté*, indolence, and occasional absurdity, with natural good sense, and taste, and kind feelings in the principal characters—such combinations as Sir Roger de Coverley, the Vicar of Wakefield, and My Uncle Toby, have made familiar to all English readers, but of which we have not hitherto had any good Scottish representative. There is also more systematic, though very good-humoured, sarcasm, and a more distinct moral, or unity of didactic purpose, in most of his writings, than it would be easy to discover in the playful, capricious, and fanciful sketches of his great master.

The other two authors have formed themselves more upon the poetical, reflective, and pathetic parts of their common model; and have aimed at emulating such beautiful pictures as that of Mr. Peter Pattison, the blind old women in Old Mortality and the Bride of Lammermoor, the courtship at the Mermaiden's Well, and, generally, his innumerable and exquisite descriptions of the soft, simple, and sublime scenery of Scotland, as viewed in connection with the character of its better rustic population. Though far better skilled than their associate, in the art of composition, and chargeable, perhaps, with less direct imitation, we cannot but regard them as much less original, and as having performed, upon the whole, a far easier task. They have no great variety of style, and but little of actual invention,—and are *mannerists* in the strongest sense of that term. Though unquestionably pathetic in a very powerful degree, they are pathetic, for the most part, by the common recipes, which enable any one almost, to draw tears, who will condescend to employ them. They are mighty religious too,—but apparently on the same principle; and, while their laboured attacks on our sympathies are felt, at last, to be somewhat importunate and puerile, their devotional orthodoxies seem to tend, every now and then, a little towards cant. This is perhaps too harshly said; and is more, we confess, the result of the second reading than the first; and suggested rather by a comparison with their great original, than an impression of their own independent merits. Compared with that high standard, it is impossible not to feel that they are somewhat wanting in manliness, freedom, and liberality; and, while they enlarge, in a sort of pastoral, emphatic, and melodious style, on the virtues of our cottagers, and the apostolical sanctity of our ministers and elders, the delights of pure affection, and the comforts of the Bible, are lamentably deficient in that bold and free vein of invention, that thorough knowledge of the world, and rectifying spirit of good sense, which redeem all that great author's flights from the imputation either of extravagance or affectation, and give weight, as well as truth, to his most poetical delineations of nature and of passion. But, though they cannot pretend to this rare merit, which has scarcely fallen to the share of more than one since the days of Shakespeare, there is no doubt much beautiful writing, much admirable description, and much both of tender and of lofty feeling, in the volumes of which we are now speaking; and though their inferior and borrowed lights are dimmed in the broader blaze of the luminary, who now fills our Northern sky with his glory, they still hold their course distinctly within the orb of his attraction, and make a visible part of the splendour which draws to that quarter of the heavens the admiration of so many distant eyes.

We must now, however, say a word or two on the particular works we have enumerated; among which, and especially in the first series, there is a very great difference of design, as well as inequality of merit. The first with which we happened to become acquainted, and, after all, perhaps the best and most interesting of the whole, is that entitled "Annals of the Parish," comprising in one little volume of about four hundred pages the domestic chronicle of a worthy minister, on the coast of Ayrshire, for a period of no less than fifty-one years, from 1760 to 1810. The primitive simplicity of the pastor's character, tinctured as it is by his professional habits and sequestered situation, form but a part of the attraction of this work. The brief and natural notices of the public events which signalised the long period through which it extends, and the slight and transient effects they produced on the tranquil lives and peaceful occupations of his remote parishioners, have not only a natural, we think, but a moral and monitory effect; and, while they revive in our own breasts the almost forgotten impressions of our childhood and early youth, as to the same transactions, make us feel the actual insignificance of those successive occurrences which, each in its turn, filled the minds of his contemporaries,—and the little real concern which the bulk of mankind have in the public history of their day. This quiet and detailed retrospect of fifty years, brings the true moment and value of the events it embraces to the test, as it were, of their actual operation on particular societies; and helps to dissipate the illusion, by which private persons are so frequently led to suppose, that they have a personal interest in the wisdom of cabinets, or the madness of princes. The humble simplicity of the chronicler's character assists, no doubt, this sobering effect of his narrative. The natural and tranquil manner in which he puts down great things by the side of little—and considers as exactly on the same level, the bursting of the parish mill-dam and the commencement of the American troubles—the victory of Admiral Rodney and the donation of 50*l.* to his kirk-session,—are all equally edifying and agreeable; and illustrate, in a very pleasing way, that law of intellectual, as well as of physical optics, by which small things at hand uniformly appear greater than large ones at a distance.

The great charm of the work, however, is in the traits of character which it discloses, and the commendable brevity with which the whole chronicle is digested. We know scarcely any instance in which a modern writer has shown such forbearance and consideration for his readers. With very considerable powers of humour, the ludricous incidents are never dwelt upon with any tediousness, nor pushed to the length of burlesque or caricature—and the more seducing touches of pathos with which the work abounds, are intermingled and cut short, with the same sparing and judicious hand;—so that the temperate and natural character of the pastor is thus, by a rare merit and felicity, made to preponderate over the tragic and comic genius of the author. That character is, as we have already hinted, as happily conceived as it is admirably executed—contented, humble, and perfectly innocent and sincere—very orthodox, and zealously Presbyterian, without learning or habits of speculation—soft-hearted and full of indulgence and ready sympathy, without any enthusiasm or capacity of devoted attachment—given to old-fashioned prejudices, with an instinctive sagacity in practical affairs—and unconsciously acute in detecting the characters of others, and singularly awake to the beauties of nature, without a notion either of observation or of poetry—very patient and primitive in short, indolent and gossiping, and scarcely ever stirring either in mind or person, beyond the limits of his parish. The style of the book is curiously adapted to the character of the supposed author—very genuine homely Scotch in the idiom and many of the expressions — but tinctured with scriptural phrases, and some relics of college learning—and all digested in the grave and methodical order of an old-fashioned sermon.

After so much praise, we are rather afraid to make any extracts—for the truth is, that there is not a great deal of matter in the book, and a good deal of vulgarity—and that it is only good-natured people, with something of the annalist's own simplicity, that will be as much pleased with it as we have been. For the sake of such persons, however, we will venture on a few specimens. Here is the description of Mrs. Malcolm.

"Secondly. I have now to speak of the coming of Mrs. Malcolm. She was the widow of a Clyde shipmaster, that was lost at sea with his vessel. She was a genty body, calm and methodical. From morning to night she sat at her wheel, spinning the finest lint, which suited well with her pale hands. She never changed her widow's weeds, and she was aye as if she had just been ta'en out of a band-box. The tear was often in her e'e when the bairns were at the school; but when they came home, her spirit was lighted up with gladness, although, poor woman, she had many a time very little to give them. They were, however, wonderful well-bred things, and took with thankfulness whatever she set before them, for they knew that their father, the breadwinner, was away, and that she had to work sore for their bit and drap. I dare say, the only vexation that ever she had from any of them, on their own account, was when Charlie, the eldest laddie, had won fourpence at pitch and toss at the school, which he brought home with a proud heart to his mother. I happened to be daunrin' bye at the time, and just looked in at the door to say gude night. And there was she sitting with the silent tear on her cheek, and Charlie greeting as if he had done a great fault, and the other four looking on with sorrowful faces. Never, I am sure, did Charlie Malcolm gamble after that night.

"I often wondered what brought Mrs. Malcolm to our clachan, instead of going to a populous town where she might have taken up a huxtry-shop, as she was but of a silly constitution, the which would have been better for her than spinning from morning to far in the night, as if she was in verity drawing the thread of life. But it was, no doubt, from an honest pride to hide her poverty; for when her daughter Effie was ill with the measles—the poor lassie was very ill—nobody thought she could come through; and when she did get the turn, she was for many a day a heavy handful;—our session being rich, and nobody on it but cripple Tammy Daidles, that was at that time known through all the country side for begging on a horse, I thought it my duty to call upon Mrs. Malcolm in a sympathising way, and offer her some assistance—but she refused it. 'No, sir,' said she. 'I canna take help from the poor's box, although it's very true that I am in great need; for it might hereafter be cast up to my bairns, whom it may please God to restore to better circumstances when I am no to see't; but I would fain borrow five pounds, and if, sir, you will write to Mr. Maitland, that is now the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and tell him that Marion Shaw would be obliged to him for the lend of that soom, I think he will not fail to send it.'

"I wrote the letter that night to Provost Maitland, and, by the retour of the post, I got an answer, with twenty pounds for Mrs. Malcolm, saying, 'that it was with sorrow he heard so small a trifle could be serviceable.' When I took the letter and the money, which was in a bank-bill, she said, 'This is just like himsel.' She then told me, that Mr. Maitland had been a gentleman's son of the east country, but driven out of his father's house, when a laddie, by his step-mother; and that he had served as a servant lad with her father, who was the Laird of Yillcogie, but ran through his estate, and left her, his only daughter, in little better than beggary with her auntie, the mother of Captain Malcolm, her husband that was. Provost Maitland in his servitude, had ta'en a notion of her; and when he recovered his patrimony, and had become a great Glasgow merchant, on hearing how she was left by her father, he offered to marry her, but she had promised herself to her cousin the Captain, whose widow she was. He then married a rich lady, and in time grew, as he was, Lord Provost of the City: but his letter with the twenty pounds to me, showed that he had not forgotten his first love. It was a short, but a well-written letter, in a fair hand of write, containing much of the true gentleman; and Mrs. Malcolm said, 'Who knows but out of the regard he once had for their mother, he may do something for my five helpless orphans.'"—*Annals of the Parish*, pp. 16—21.

Charles afterwards goes to sea, and comes home unexpectedly.

"One evening, towards the gloaming, as I was taking my walk of meditation, I saw a brisk sailor laddie coming towards me. He had a pretty green parrot, sitting on a bundle, tied in a Barcelona silk handkerchief, which he carried with a stick over his shoulder, and in this bundle was a wonderful big nut, such as no one in our parish had ever seen. It was called a cocker-nut. This blithe callant was Charlie Malcolm, who had come all the way that day his leaful lane, on his own legs from Greenock, where the Tobacco trader was then 'livering her cargo. I told him how his mother, and his brothers, and his sisters were all in good health, and went to convoy him home; and as we were going along, he told me many curious things: and he gave me six beautiful yellow limes, that he had brought in his pouch all the way across the seas, for me to make a bowl of punch with! and I thought more of them than if they had been golden guineas—it was so mindful of the laddie.

"When we got to the door of his mother's house, she was sitting at the fire-side, with her three other bairns at their bread and milk, Kate being then with Lady Skimmilk, at the Breadland, sewing. It was between the day and dark, when the shuttle stands still till the lamp is lighted. But such a shout of joy and thankfulness as rose from that hearth, when Charlie went in! The very parrot, ye would have thought, was a participator, for the beast gied a skraik that made my whole head dirl; and the neighbours came flying and flocking to see what was the matter, for it was the first parrot ever seen within the bounds of the parish, and some thought it was but a foreign hawk, with a yellow head and green feathers."—*Ibid.* pp. 44, 45.

The good youth gets into the navy, and distinguishes himself in various actions. This is the catastrophe.

"But, oh! the wicked wastry of life in war! In less than a month after, the news came of a victory over the French fleet, and by the same post I got a letter from Mr. Howard, that was the midshipman who came to see us with Charles, telling me that poor Charles had been mortally wounded in the action, and had afterwards died of his wounds. 'He was a hero in the engagement,' said Mr. Howard, 'and he died as a good and a brave man should.'—These tidings gave me one of the sorest hearts I ever suffered; and it was long before I could gather fortitude to disclose the tidings to poor Charles' mother. But the callants of the school had heard of the victory, and were going shouting about, and had set the steeple bell a-ringing, by which Mrs. Malcolm heard the news; and knowing that Charles' ship was with the fleet, she came over to the Manse in great anxiety, to hear the particulars, somebody telling her that there had been a foreign letter to me by the post-man.

"When I saw her I could not speak, but looked at her in pity! and the tear fleeing up into my eyes, she guessed what had happened. After giving a deep and sore sigh, she inquired, 'How did he behave? I hope well, for he was aye a gallant laddie!'—and then she wept very bitterly. However, growing calmer, I read to her the letter, and when I had done, she begged me to give it her to keep, saying, 'It's all that I have now left of my pretty boy; but it's mair precious to me than the wealth of the Indies;' and she begged me to return thanks to the Lord, for all the comforts and manifold mercies with which her lot had been blessed, since the hour she put her trust in Him alone, and that was when she was left a pennyless widow, with her five fatherless bairns. It was just an edification of the spirit, to see the Christian resignation of this worthy woman. Mrs. Balwhidder was confounded, and said, there was more sorrow in seeing the deep grief of her fortitude, than tongue could tell.

"Having taken a glass of wine with her, I walked out to conduct her to her own house, but in the way we met with a severe trial. All the weans were out parading with napkins and kail-blades on sticks, rejoicing and triumphing in the glad tidings of victory. But when they saw me and Mrs. Malcolm coming slowly along, they guessed what had happened, and threw away their banners of joy; and, standing all up in a row, with silence and sadness, along the kirk-yard wall as we passed, showed an instinct of compassion that penetrated to my very soul. The poor mother burst into fresh affliction, and some of the bairns into an audible weeping; and, taking one another by the hand, they followed us to her door, like mourners at a funeral. Never was such a sight seen in any town before. The neighbours came to look at it, as we walked along; and the men turned aside to hide their faces, while the mothers pressed their babies fondlier to their bosoms, and watered their innocent faces with their tears.

"I prepared a suitable sermon, taking as the words of my text, 'Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for your strength is laid waste.' But when I saw around me so many of my people, clad in complimentary mourning for the gallant Charles Malcolm, and that even poor daft Jenny Gaffaw, and her daughter, had on an old black ribbon; and when I thought of him, the spirited laddie, coming home from Jamaica, with his parrot on his shoulder, and his limes for me, my heart filled full, and I was obliged to sit down in the pulpit and drop a tear."—*Ibid.* pp. 214—218.

We like these tender passages the best—but the reader should have a specimen of the

humorous vein also. The following we think excellent.

"In the course of the summer, just as the roof was closing in of the school-house, my lord came to the castle with a great company, and was not there a day till he sent for me to come over on the next Sunday, to dine with him; but I sent him word that I could not do so, for it would be a transgression of the Sabbath; which made him send his own gentleman, to make his apology for having taken so great a liberty with me, and to beg me to come on the Monday, which I accordingly did, and nothing could be better than the discretion with which I was used. There was a vast company of English ladies and gentlemen, and his lordship, in a most jocose manner, told them all how he had fallen on the midden, and how I had clad him in my clothes, and there was a wonder of laughing and diversion: But the most particular thing in the company, was a large, round-faced man, with a wig, that was a dignitary in some great Episcopalian church in London, who was extraordinary condescending towards me, drinking wine with me at the table, and saying weighty sentences in a fine style of language, about the becoming grace of simplicity and innocence of heart, in the clergy of all denominations of Christians, which I was pleased to hear; for really he had a proud red countenance, and I could not have thought he was so mortified to humility within, had I not heard with what sincerity he delivered himself, and seen how much reverence and attention was paid to him by all present, particularly by my lord's chaplain, who was a pious and pleasant young divine, though educated at Oxford for the Episcopalian persuasion.

"One day soon after, as I was sitting in my closet conning a sermon for the next Sunday, I was surprised by a visit from the dean, as the dignitary was called. He had come, he said, to wait on me as rector of the parish, for so it seems they call a pastor in England, and to say, that, if it was agreeable, he would take a family dinner with us before he left the castle. I could make no objection to his kindness, but said I hoped my lord would come with him, and that we would do our best to entertain them with all suitable hospitality. About an hour or so after he had returned to the castle, one of the flunkies brought a letter from his lordship to say, that not only he would come with the dean, but that they would bring the other guests with them, and that, as *they* could only drink London wine, the butler would send me a hamper in the morning, assured, as he was pleased to say, that Mrs. Balwhidder would otherwise provide good cheer.

"This notification, however, was a great trouble to my wife, who was only used to manufacture the produce of our glebe and yard to a profitable purpose, and not used to the treatment of deans and lords, and other persons of quality. However, she was determined to stretch a point on this occasion, and we had, as all present declared, a charming dinner; for fortunately one of the sows had a litter of pigs a few days before, and, in addition to a goose, that is but a boss bird, we had a roasted pig, with an apple in its mouth, which was just a curiosity to see; and my lord called it a tythe pig, but I told him it was one of Mrs. Balwhidder's own clecking, which saying of mine made no little sport when expounded to the dean."—*Annals of the Parish*, pp. 136—141.

We add the description of the first dancing-master that had been seen in these parts in the year 1762.

"Also a thing happened in this year, which deserves to be recorded, as manifesting what effect the smuggling was beginning to take on the morals of the country side. One Mr. Macskipnish, of Highland parentage, who had been a valet-de-chambre with a Major in the campaigns, and taken a prisoner with him by the French, he having come home in a cartel, took up a dancing-school at Ireville, the which art he had learned in the genteelest fashion, in the mode of Paris, at the French court. Such a thing as a dancing-school had never, in the memory of man, been known in our country side; and there was such a sound about the steps and cotillions of Mr. Macskipnish, that every lad and lass, that could spare time and siller, went to him, to the great neglect of their work. The very bairns on the loan, instead of their wonted play, gaed linking and louping in the steps of Mr. Macskipnish, who was, to be sure, a great curiosity, with long spindle legs, his breast shot out like a duck's, and his head powdered and frizzled up like a tappit-hen. He was, indeed, the proudest peacock that could be seen, and he had a ring on his finger, and when he came to drink his tea at the Breadland, he brought no hat on his head, but a droll cockit thing under his arm, which, he said, was after the manner of the courtiers at the petty suppers of one Madame Pumpadour, who was at that time the concubine of the French king.

"I do not recollect any other remarkable thing that happened in this year. The harvest was very abundant, and the meal so cheap, that it caused a great defect in my stipend, so that I was obligated to postpone the purchase of a mahogany scrutoire for my study, as I had intended. But I had not the heart to complain of this; on the contrary, I rejoiced thereat, for what made me want my scrutoire till another year, had carried blitheness into the hearth of the cotter, and made the widow's heart sing with joy; and I would have been an unnatural creature, had I not joined in the universal gladness, because plenty did abound."—*Ibid.* pp. 30—32.

We shall only try the patience of our readers farther with the death of Nanse Banks, the old parish school-mistress.

"She had been long in a weak and frail state, but, being a methodical creature, still kept on the school, laying the foundation for many a worthy wife and mother. However, about the decline of the year her complaints increased, and she sent for me to consult about her giving up the school; and I went to see her on a Saturday afternoon, when the bit lassies, her scholars, had put the house in order, and gone home till the Monday.

"She was sitting in the window-nook, reading THE WORD to herself, when I entered; but she closed the book, and put her spectacles in for a mark when she saw me: and, as it was expected I would come, her easy chair, with a clean cover, had been set out for me by the scholars, by which I discerned that there was something more than common to happen, and so it appeared when I had taken my seat. 'Sir,' said she, 'I hae sent for you on a thing troubles me sairly. I have warsled with poortith in this shed, which it has pleased the Lord to allow me to possess; but my strength is worn out, and I fear I maun yield in the strife;' and she wiped her eye with her apron. I told her, however, to be of good cheer; and then she said, 'that she could no longer thole the din of the school; and that she was weary, and ready to lay herself down to die whenever the Lord was pleased to permit. But,' continued she, 'what can I do without the school? and, alas! I can neither work nor want; and I am wae to go on the Session, for I am come of a decent family.' I comforted her, and told her, that I thought she had done so much good in the parish, that the Session was deep in her debt, and that what they might give her was but a just payment for her service. 'I would rather, however, sir,' said she, 'try first what some of my auld scholars will do, and it was for that I wanted to speak with you. If some of them would but just, from time to time, look in upon me, that I may not die alane; and the little pick and drap that I require would not be hard upon them—I am more sure that in this way their gratitude would be no discredit, than I am of having any claim on the Session.'

"As I had always a great respect for an honest

pride, I assured her that I would do what she wanted; and accordingly, the very morning after, being Sabbath, I preached a sermon on the helplessness of them that have no help of man; meaning aged single women, living in garret-rooms, whose forlorn state, in the gloaming of life, I made manifest to the hearts and understandings of the congregation, in such a manner that many shed tears, and went away sorrowful.

"Having thus roused the feelings of my people, I went round the houses on the Monday morning, and mentioned what I had to say more particularly about poor old Nanse Banks the schoolmistress, and truly I was rejoiced at the condition of the hearts of my people. There was a universal sympathy among them; and it was soon ordered that, what with one and another, her decay should be provided for. But it was not ordained that she should be long heavy on their good will. On the Monday the school was given up, and there was nothing but wailing among the bit lassies, the scholars, for getting the vacance, as the poor things said, because the mistress was going to lie down to dee. And, indeed, so it came to pass; for she took to her bed the same afternoon, and, in the course of the week, dwindled away, and slippet out of this howling wilderness into the kingdom of heaven, on the Sabbath following, as quietly as a blessed saint could do. And here I should mention, that the Lady Macadam, when I told her of Nanse Banks' case, inquired if she was a snuffer, and, being answered by me that she was, her ladyship sent her a pretty French enamel box full of Macabaw, a fine snuff that she had in a bottle; and, among the Macabaw, was found a guinea, at the bottom of the box, after Nanse Banks had departed this life, which was a kind thing of Lady Macadam to do."—*Annals of the Parish*, pp. 87—91.

The next of this author's publications, we believe, was "The Ayrshire Legatees," also in one volume, and a work of great, and similar, though inferior merit, to the former. It is the story of the proceedings of a worthy Scottish clergyman and his family, to whom a large property had been unexpectedly bequeathed by a relation in India, in the course of their visit to London to recover this property. The patriarch himself and his wife, and his son and daughter, who form the party, all write copious accounts of what they see, to their friends in Ayrshire—and being all lowly and simply bred, and quite new to the scenes in which they are now introduced, make up among them a very entertaining miscellany, of original, *naive* and preposterous observations. The idea of thus making a family club, as it were, for a varied and often contradictory account of the same objects—each tinging the picture with his own peculiarities, and unconsciously drawing his own character in the course of the description, was first exemplified, we believe, in the Humphrey Clinker of Smollett, and has been since copied with success in the Bath Guide, Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, the Fudge Family, and other ingenious pieces, both in prose and verse. Though the conception of the Ayrshire Legatees, however, is not new, the execution and details must be allowed to be original; and, along with a good deal of *twaddle*, and too much vulgarity, certainly display very considerable powers both of humour, invention, and acute observation.

The author's next work is "The Provost," which is decidedly better than the Legatees, and on a level nearly with the Annals of the Parish. There is no inconsiderable resemblance, indeed, it appears to us, in the character of the two Biographies: for if we substitute the love of jobbing and little management, which is inseparable from the situation of a magistrate in one of our petty Burghs, for the zeal for Presbyterian discipline which used to attach to our orthodox clergy, and make a proper allowance for the opposite effects of their respective occupations, we shall find a good deal of their remaining peculiarities common to both those personages,—the same kindness of nature with the same tranquillity of temper—and the same practical sagacity, with a similar deficiency of large views or ingenious speculations. The Provost, to be sure, is a more worldly person than the Pastor, and makes no scruple about using indirect methods to obtain his ends, from which the simplicity of the other would have recoiled;—but his ends are not, on the whole, unjust or dishonest; and his good nature, and acute simplicity, with the Burghal authority of his tone, would almost incline us to conclude, that he was somehow related to the celebrated Bailie Nicol Jarvie of the Saltmarket! The style of his narrative is exceedingly meritorious; for while it is pitched on the self-same key of picturesque homeliness and deliberate method with that of the parish Annalist, it is curiously distinguished from it, by a sensible inferiority in literature, and an agreeable intermixture of *malaprops*, and other figures of rhetoric befitting the composition of a loyal chief magistrate. By far the most remarkable and edifying thing, however, in this volume, is the discovery, which the worthy Provost is represented as having gradually made, of the necessity of consulting public opinion in his later transactions, and the impossibility of managing public affairs, in the present times, with the same barefaced assertion, and brave abuse, of authority, which had been submitted to by a less instructed generation. As we cannot but suspect, that this great truth is not yet sufficiently familiar with all in authority among us, and as there is something extremely engaging in the Provost's confession of his slow and reluctant conversion, and in the honest simplicity with which he avows his adherence to the principles of the old school of corruption, though convinced that the manner of advancing them must now be changed, we are tempted to extract a part of his lucubrations on this interesting subject. After noticing the death of old Bailie M'Lucre, he takes occasion to observe:—

"And now that he is dead and gone, and also all those whom I found conjunct with him, when I first came into power and office, I may venture to say, that things in yon former times were not guided so thoroughly by the hand of a disinterested integrity as in these latter years. On the contrary, it seemed to be the use and wont of men in public trusts, to think they were free to indemnify themselves, in a left-handed way, for the time and trouble they bestowed in the same. But the thing was not so far wrong in principle, as in the hug germuggering way in which it was done, and which

gave to it a guilty colour, that, by the judicious stratagem of a right system, it would never have had. And, sooth to say, through the whole course of my public life, I met with no greater difficulties and trials, than in cleansing myself from the old habitudes of office. For I must, in verity, confess, that I myself partook, in a degree, at my beginning, of the caterpillar nature, &c.—While, therefore, I think it has been of a great advantage to the public to have survived that method of administration in which the like of Bailie M'Lucre was engendered, I would not have it understood that I think the men who held the public trust in those days a whit less honest than the men of my own time. The spirit of their own age was upon them, as that of ours is upon us; and their ways of working the wherry entered more or less into all their trafficking, whether for the commonality, or for their own particular behoof and advantage.

"I have been thus large and frank in my reflections anent the death of the Bailie, because, poor man, he had outlived the times for which he was qualified; and instead of the merriment and jocularity that his wily by-hand ways used to cause among his neighbours, the rising generation began to pick and dab at him, in such a manner, that, had he been much longer spared, it is to be feared he would not have been allowed to enjoy his earnings both with ease and honour."

The Provost, pp. 171—174.

Accordingly, afterwards, when a corps of volunteers was raised in his Burgh, he observes—

"I kept myself aloof from all handling in the pecuniaries of the business; but I lent a friendly countenance to every feasible project that was likely to strengthen the confidence of the King in the loyalty and bravery of his people. For by this time I had learnt, that there was a wakerife Common Sense abroad among the opinions of men; and that the secret of the new way of ruling the world was to follow, not to control, the evident dictates of the popular voice; and I soon had reason to felicitate myself on this prudent and seasonable discovery; for it won me great reverence among the forward young men, who started up at the call of their country.—The which, as I tell frankly, was an admonition to me, that the peremptory will of authority was no longer sufficient for the rule of mankind; and, therefore, I squared my after conduct more by a deference to public opinion, than by any laid down maxims and principles of my own. The consequence of which was, that my influence still continued to grow and gather strength in the community, and I was enabled to accomplish many things that my predecessors would have thought it was almost beyond the compass of man to undertake."—*Ibid.* pp. 208—217.

Upon occasion of his third and last promomotion to the Provostry, he thus records his own final conversion.

"When I returned home to my own house, I retired into my private chamber for a time, to consult with myself in what manner my deportment should be regulated; for I was conscious that heretofore I had been overly governed with a disposition to do things my own way; and although not in an avaricious temper, yet something, I must confess, with a sort of sinister respect for my own interests. It may be, that standing now clear and free of the world, I had less incitement to be so grippy, and so was thought of me, I very well know; but in sobriety and truth I conscientiously affirm, and herein record, that I had lived to partake of the purer spirit which the great mutations of the age had conjured into public affairs; and I saw that there was a necessity to carry into all dealings with the concerns of the community, the same probity which helps a man to prosperity, in the sequestered traffic of private life."—*Ibid.* pp. 315, 316.

Trusting that these lessons from a person of such prudence, experience, and loyalty, will not be lost on his successors, we shall now indulge ourselves by quoting a few specimens of what will generally be regarded as his more interesting style; and, with our usual predilection for the tragic vein, shall begin with the following very touching account of the execution of a fair young woman for the murder of her new-born infant.

"The heinousness of the crime can by no possibility be lessened; but the beauty of the mother, her tender years, and her light-headedness, had won many favourers, and there was a great leaning in the hearts of all the town to compassionate her, especially when they thought of the ill example that had been set to her in the walk and conversation of her mother. It was not, however, within the power of the magistrates to overlook the accusation; so we were obligated to cause a precognition to be taken, and the search left no doubt of the wilfulness of the murder. Jeanie was in consequence removed to the Tolbooth, where she lay till the Lords were coming to Ayr, when she was sent thither to stand her trial before them; but, from the hour she did the deed, she never spoke.

"Her trial was a short procedure, and she was cast to be hanged—and not only to be hanged, but ordered to be executed in our town, and her body given to the doctors to make an Atomy. The execution of Jeanie was what all expected would happen; but when the news reached the town of the other parts of the sentence, the wail was as the sough of a pestilence, and fain would the council have got it dispensed with. But the Lord Advocate was just wud at the crime, both because there had been no previous concealment, so as to have been an extenuation for the shame of the birth, and because Jeanie would neither divulge the name of the father, nor make answer to all the interrogatories that were put to her, standing at the bar like a dumbie, and looking round her, and at the judges, like a demented creature—and beautiful as a Flanders baby! It was thought by many that her advocate might have made great use of her visible consternation, and plead that she was by herself; for in truth she had every appearance of being so. He was, however, a dure man, no doubt well enough versed in the particulars and punctualities of the law for an ordinary plea, but no of the right sort of knowledge and talent to take up the case of a forlorn lassie, misled by ill example and a winsome nature, and clothed in the allurement of loveliness, as the judge himself said to the jury.

"On the night before the day of execution, she was brought over in a chaise from Ayr between two town-officers, and placed again in our hands, and still she never spoke. Nothing could exceed the compassion that every one had for poor Jeanie; so she was na committed to a common cell, but laid in the council room, where the ladies of the town made up a comfortable bed for her, and some of them sat up all night and prayed for her: But her thoughts were gone, and she sat silent. In the morning, by break of day, her wanton mother that had been trolloping in Glasgow came to the Tolbooth door, and made a dreadful wally waeing; and the ladies were obligated, for the sake of peace, to bid her be let in. But Jeanie noticed her not, still sitting with her eyes cast down, waiting the coming on of the hour of her doom.

"There had not been an execution in the town in the memory of the oldest person then living; the last that suffered was one of the martyrs in the time of the persecution, so that we were not skilled in the business, and had besides no hangman, but were necessitated to borrow the Ayr one. Indeed, I being the youngest bailie, was in terror that the obligation might have fallen on me. A scaffold was erected at the Tron just under the Tolbooth windows, by Thomas Gimblet, the Master-of-work, who had a good penny of profit by the job; for he contracted with the town council, and had the boards after the business was done to the bargain; but Thomas was then deacon of the wrights, and himself a member of our body.

"At the hour appointed, Jeanie, dressed in white, was led out by the town-officers, and in the midst of the magistrates from among the ladies, with her hands tied behind her with a black ribbon. At the first sight of her at the Tolbooth stairhead, a universal sob rose from all the multitude, and the sternest ee could na refrain from shedding a tear. We marched slowly down the stair, and on to the foot of the scaffold, where her younger brother, Willy, that was stable-boy at my lord's, was standing by himself, in an open ring made round him in the crowd; every one compassionating the dejected laddie, for he was a fine youth, and of an orderly spirit. As his sister came towards the foot of the ladder, he ran towards her, and embraced her with a wail of sorrow that melted every heart, and made us all stop in the middle of our solemnity. Jeanie looked at him (for her hands were tied), and a silent tear was seen to drop from her cheek. But in the course of little more than a minute, all was quiet, and we proceeded to ascend the scaffold. Willy, who had by this time dried his eyes, went up with us, and when Mr. Pittle had said the prayer, and sung the psalm, in which the whole multitude joined, as it were with the contrition of sorrow, the hangman stepped forward to put on the fatal cap, but Willy took it out of his hand, and placed it on his sister himself, and then kneeling down, *with his back towards her*, closing his eyes and shutting his ears with his hands, he saw not nor heard when she was launched into eternity!

"When the awful act was over, and the stir was for the magistrates to return, and the body to be cut down, poor Willy rose, and, without looking round, went down the steps of the scaffold; the multitude made a lane for him to pass, and he went on through them hiding his face, and gaed straight out of the town."—*The Provost*, pp. 67—73.

This is longer than we had expected—and therefore, omitting all the stories of his wiles and jocosities, we shall take our leave of the Provost, with his very pathetic and picturesque description of the catastrophe of the Windy Yule, which we think would not discredit the pen of the great novelist himself.

"In the morning, the weather was blasty and sleety, waxing more and more tempestuous, till about mid-day, when the wind checked suddenly round from the nor-east to the sou-west, and blew a gale, as if the prince of the powers of the air was doing his utmost to work mischief. The rain blattered, the windows clattered, the shop shutters flapped, pigs from the lum-heads came rattling down like thunder-claps, and the skies were dismal both with cloud and carry. Yet, for all that, there was in the streets a stir and a busy visitation between neighbours, and every one went to their high windows to look at the five poor barks, that were warsling against the strong arm of the elements of the storm and the ocean.

"Still the lift gloomed, and the wind roared; and it was as doleful a sight as ever was seen in any town afflicted with calamity, to see the sailor's wives, with their red cloaks about their heads, followed by their hirpling and disconsolate bairns, going one after another to the kirkyard, to look at the vessels where their helpless breadwinners were battling with the tempest. My heart was really sorrowful, and full of a sore anxiety to think of what might happen to the town, whereof so many were in peril, and to whom no human magistracy could extend the arm of protection. Seeing no abatement of the wrath of heaven, that howled and roared around us, I put on my big coat, and taking my staff in my hand, having tied down my hat with a silk handkerchief, towards gloaming I walked likewise to the kirkyard, where I beheld such an assemblage of sorrow, as few men in situation have ever been put to the trial to witness.

"In the lea of the kirk many hundreds of the town were gathered together; but there was no discourse among them. The major part were sailors' wives and weans, and at every new thud of the blast, a sob rose, and the mothers drew their bairns closer in about them, as if they saw the visible hand of a foe raised to smite them. Apart from the multitude, I observed three or four young lasses, standing behind the Whinnyhill families' tomb, and I jealoused that they had joes in the ships, for they often looked to the bay, with long necks and sad faces, from behind the monument. But of all the piteous objects there, on that doleful evening, none troubled my thoughts more than three motherless children, that belonged to the mate of one of the vessels in the jeopardy. He was an Englishman that had been settled some years in the town, where his family had neither kith nor kin; and his wife having died about a month before, the bairns, of whom the eldest was but nine or so, were friendless enough, though both my gudewife, and other well-disposed ladies, paid them all manner of attention till their father would come home. The three poor little things, knowing that he was in one of the ships, had been often out and anxious, and they were then sitting under the lea of a headstone, near their mother's grave, chittering and creeping closer and closer at every squall! Never was such an orphan-like sight seen.

"When it began to be so dark, that the vessels could no longer be discerned from the churchyard, many went down to the shore, and I took the three babies home with me, and Mrs. Pawkie made tea for them, and they soon began to play with our own younger children, in blythe forgetfulness of the storm; every now and then, however, the eldest of them, when the shutters rattled, and the lum-head roared, would pause in his innocent daffing, and cower in towards Mrs. Pawkie, as if he was daunted and dismayed by something he knew not what.

"Many a one that night walked the sounding shore in sorrow, and fires were lighted along it to a great extent, but the darkness and the noise of the raging deep, and the howling wind, never intermitted till about midnight; at which time a message was brought to me, that it might be needful to send a guard of soldiers to the beach, for that broken masts and tackle had come in, and that surely some of the barks had perished. I lost no time in obeying this suggestion, which was made to me by one of the owners of the Louping Meg; and to show that I sincerely sympathised with all those in affliction, I rose and dressed myself, and went down to the shore, where I directed several old boats to be drawn up by the fires, and blankets to be brought, and cordials prepared, for them that might be spared with life to reach the land; and I walked the beach with the mourners till the morning.

"As the day dawned, the wind began to abate in its violence, and to wear away from the sou-west into the norit; but it was soon discovered, that some of the vessels with the corn had perished! for the first thing seen, was a long fringe of tangle and grain, along the line of the highwater mark, and every one strained with greedy and grieved eyes, as the daylight brightened, to discover which had suffered. But I can proceed no farther with the dismal recital of that doleful morning! Let it suffice here to be known, that, through the haze, we at last saw three of the vessels lying on their beam-ends, with their masts broken, and the waves riding like the furious horses of destruction over them. What had become of the other two, was

never known; but it was supposed that they had foundered at their anchors, and that all on board perished.

"The day being now Sabbath, and the whole town idle, every body in a manner was down on the beach, to help, and mourn, as the bodies, one after another, were cast out by the waves. Alas! few were the better of my provident preparation, and it was a thing not to be described, to see, for more than a mile along the coast, the new-made widows and fatherless bairns, mourning and weeping over the corpses of those they loved! Seventeen bodies were, before ten o'clock, carried to the desolated dwellings of their families; and when old Thomas Pull, the betherel, went to ring the bell for public worship, such was the universal sorrow of the town, that Nanse Donsie, an idiot natural, ran up the street to stop him, crying, in the voice of a pardonable desperation, 'Wha, in sic a time, can praise the Lord?'"—*The Provost*, pp. 177–184.

The next work on our list is the history of "Sir Andrew Wylie," in three volumes—and this, we must say, is not nearly so good as any of the former. It contains, however, many passages of great interest and originality, and displays, throughout, a power which we think ought naturally to have produced something better; but the story is clumsily and heavily managed, and the personages of polite life very unsuccessfully dealt with. The author's great error, we suspect, was in resolving to have three volumes instead of one—and his writing, which was full of spirit, while he was labouring to confine his ideas within the space assigned to them, seems to have become flat and languid, the moment his task was to find matter to fill that space.

His next publication, however, though only in one volume, is undoubtedly the worst of the whole—we allude to the thing called the "The Steam-Boat," which has really no merit at all; and should never have been transplanted from the Magazine in which we are informed it first made its appearance. With the exception of some trash about the Coronation, which nobody of course could ever look at three months after the thing itself was over, it consists of a series of vulgar stories, with little either of probability or originality to recommend them. The attempt at a parallel or paraphrase on the story of Jeanie Deans, is, without any exception, the boldest and the most unsuccessful speculation we have ever seen in literary adventure.

The piece that follows, though in three volumes, is of a far higher order—and though in many points unnatural, and on the whole rather tedious, is a work undoubtedly of no ordinary merit. We mean "The Entail." It contains many strong pictures, much sarcastic observation, and a great deal of native and effective humour, though too often debased by a tone of wilful vulgarity. The ultimate conversion of the Entailer himself into a sublime and sentimental personage, is a little too romantic—the history of poor Watty, the innocent imbecile, and his Betty Bodle, is perhaps the best full-length narrative—and the drowning of honest Mr. Walkinshaw the most powerful single sketch in the work. We can afford to make no extracts.

"Ringan Gilhaize," also in three volumes, is the last, in so far as we know, of this ready writer's publications; and is a bold attempt to emulate the fame of the Historical novels of his original; and to combine a striking sketch of great public occurrences, with the details of individual adventure. By the assistance of his grandfather's recollections, which fill nearly half the book, the hero contrives to embrace the period both of the Reformation from Popery, in the Reign of Queen Mary, and of the sufferings of the Covenanters from that of King Charles till the Revolution. But with all the benefit of this wide range, and the interest of those great events, we cannot say that he has succeeded in making a good book; or shown any spark of that spirit which glows in the pages of Waverley and Old Mortality. The work, however, is written with labour and care: and, besides a full narrative of all the remarkable passages of our ecclesiastical story, from the burning of Mr. Wishart at St. Andrew's, to the death of Dundee at Killicrankie, contains some animated and poetical descriptions of natural scenery, and a few sweet pictures of humble virtue and piety. Upon the whole, however, it is a heavy work—and proves conclusively, that the genius of the author lies much more in the quieter walks of humorous simplicity, intermixed with humble pathos, than the lofty paths of enthusiasm or heroic emotion. In the first part we meet with nothing new or remarkable, but the picture of the Archbishop of St. Andrews' luxurious dalliance with his paramour, and of the bitter penitence and tragical death of that fair victim of his seductions, both which are sketched with considerable power and effect. In the latter part, there is some good and minute description of the perils and sufferings which beset the poor fugitive Covenanters, in the days of their long and inhuman persecution. The cruel desolation of Gilhaize's own household is also given with great force and pathos; as well as the description of that irresistible impulse of zeal and vengeance that drives the sad survivor to rush alone to the field of Killicrankie, and to repay at last, on the head of the slaughtered victor of that fight, the accumulated wrongs and oppressions of his race. But still the book is tiresome, and without effect. The narrative is neither pleasing nor probable, and the calamities are too numerous, and too much alike; while the uniformity of the tone of actual suffering and dim religious hope, weighs like a load on the spirit of the reader. There is no interesting complication of events or adventure, and no animating development or catastrophe. In short, the author has evidently gone beyond his means in entering the lists with the master of *historical* romance; and must be contented, hereafter, to follow his footsteps in the more approachable parts of his career.

Of the other set of publications before us, "Valerius" is the first in point of date; and the most original in conception and design. It is a Roman story, the scene of which is laid in the first age of Christianity; and its object seems to be, partly to present us with a living

picture of the manners and characters of those ancient times, and partly to trace the effects of the true faith on the feelings and affections of those who first embraced it, in the dangers and darkness of expiring Paganism. It is a work to be excepted certainly from our general remark, that the productions before us were imitations of the celebrated novels to which we have so often made reference, and their authors disciples of that great school. Such as it is, Valerius is undoubtedly original; or at least owes nothing to that new source of inspiration. It would be more plausible to say, that the author had borrowed something from the travels of Anacharsis, or the ancient romance of Heliodorus and Charielea—or the later effusions of M. Chateaubriand. In the main, however, it is original; and it is written with very considerable power and boldness. But we cannot, on the whole, say that it has been successful; and even greater powers could not have insured success for such an undertaking. We must know the daily life and ordinary habits of the people in whose domestic adventures we take an interest:—and we really know nothing of the life and habits of the ancient Romans and primitive Christians. We may patch together a *cento* out of old books, and pretend that it exhibits a view of their manners and conversation: But the truth is, that all that is authentic in such a compilation can amount only to a few fragments of such a picture; and that any thing like a complete and living portrait must be made up by conjecture, and inferences drawn at hazard. Accordingly, the work before us consists alternately of enlarged transcripts of particular acts and usages, of which accounts have been accidentally transmitted to us, and details of dialogue and observation in which there is nothing antique or Roman but the names,—and in reference to which, the assumed time and place of the action is felt as a mere embarrassment and absurdity. To avoid or disguise this awkwardness, the only resource seems to be, to take shelter in a vague generality of talk and description,—and to save the detection of the modern in his masquerade of antiquity, by abstaining from every thing that is truly characteristic either of the one age or the other, and consequently from every thing by which either character or manners can be effectually delineated or distinguished. The very style of the work before us affords a curious example of the necessity of this timid indefiniteness, under such circumstances, and of its awkward effect. To exclude the tone of modern times, it is without idiom, without familiarity, without any of those natural marks by which alone either individuality of character, or the stamp and pressure of the time, can possibly be conveyed,—and runs on, even in the gay and satirical passages, in a rumbling, roundabout, rhetorical measure, like a translation from solemn Latin, or some such academical exercitation. It is an attempt, in short, which, though creditable to the spirit and talents of the author, we think he has done wisely in not seeking to repeat,—and which, though it has not failed through any deficiency of his, has been prevented, we think, from succeeding by the very nature of the subject.

The next in order, we believe, is "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life,"—an affected, or at least too poetical a title,—and, standing before a book, not very natural, but bright with the lights of poetry. It is a collection of twenty-five stories or little pieces, half novels half idylls, characteristic of Scottish scenery and manners—mostly pathetic, and mostly too favourable to the country to which they relate. They are, on the whole, we think, very beautifully and sweetly written, and in a soft spirit of humanity and gentleness. But the style is too elaborate and uniform;—there is occasionally a good deal of weakness and commonplace in the passages that are most emphatically expressed,—and the poetical heightenings are often introduced where they hurt both the truth and the simplicity of the picture. Still, however, they have their foundation in a fine sense of the peculiarities of our national character and scenery, and a deep feeling of their excellence and beauty—and, though not executed according to the dictates of a severe or correct taste, nor calculated to make much impression on those who have studied men and books, "with a learned spirit of observation," are yet well fitted to minister delight to less fastidious spirits,—and to revive, in many world-wearied hearts, those illusions which had only been succeeded by illusions less innocent and attractive, and those affections in which alone there is neither illusion nor disappointment.

As the author's style of narration is rather copious, we cannot now afford to present our readers with any of his stories—but, as a specimen of his tone and manner of composition, we may venture on one or two of his introductory descriptions. The following, of a snowy morning, is not the least characteristic.

"It was on a fierce and howling winter day that I was crossing the dreary moor of Auchindown, on my way to the Manse of that parish, a solitary pedestrian. The snow, which had been incessantly falling for a week past, was drifted into beautiful but dangerous wreaths, far and wide, over the melancholy expanse—and the scene kept visibly shifting before me, as the strong wind that blew from every point of the compass struck the dazzling masses, and heaved them up and down in endless transformation. There was something inspiriting in the labour with which, in the buoyant strength of youth, I forced my way through the storm—and I could not but enjoy those gleamings of sunlight that ever and anon burst through some unexpected opening in the sky, and gave a character of cheerfulness, and even warmth, to the sides or summits of the stricken hills. As the momentary cessations of the sharp drift allowed my eyes to look onwards and around, I saw here and there up the little opening valleys, cottages just visible beneath the black stems of their snow-covered clumps of trees, or beside some small spot of green pasture kept open for the sheep. These intimations of life and happiness came delightfully to me in the midst of the desolation; and the barking of a dog, attending some Shepherd in his quest on the hill, put fresh vigour into my limbs, telling me that, lonely as I seemed to be, I was surrounded by cheerful though unseen company, and that I was not the only wanderer over the snows.