THE

SKETCH-BOOK

OF

GEOFFREY CRAYON, GENT.

"I have no wife nor children, good or bad, to provide for. A mere spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures, and how they play their parts; which, methinks, are diversely presented unto me, as from a common theatre or scene."—Burton.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement to the first American edition</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement to the first English edition</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Author's Account of Himself</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Voyage</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roscoe</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wife</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rip Van Winkle</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Writers on America</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Life in England</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Broken Heart</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Art of Book-Making</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Royal Poet</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Country Church</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Widow and her Son</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boar's Head Tavern</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mutability of Literature</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Funerals</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Inn Kitchen</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spectre Bridegroom</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster Abbey</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THIS WORK

IS DEDICATED,

IN TESTIMONY OF THE

ADMIRATION AND AFFECTION

OF

THE AUTHOR.
ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

The following writings are published on experiment; should they please, they may be followed by others. The writer will have to contend with some disadvantages. He is unsettled in his abode, subject to interruptions, and has his share of cares and vicissitudes. He cannot, therefore, promise a regular plan, nor regular periods of publication. Should he be encouraged to proceed, much time may elapse between the appearance of his numbers; and their size will depend on the materials he may have on hand. His writings will partake of the fluctuations of his own thoughts and feelings; sometimes treating of scenes before him, sometimes of others purely imaginary, and sometimes wandering back with his recollections to his native country. He will not be able to give them that tranquil attention necessary to
cient importance to attract the attention of critics, he solicits for them that courtesy and candour which a stranger has some right to claim who presents himself at the threshold of a hospitable nation.

*February, 1820.*
THE

AUTHOR'S ACCOUNT

OF

HIMSELF.

I am of this mind with Homer, that as the snail that crept of her shell was turned eftsoones into a toad, and thereby is forced to make a stoole to sit on; so the traveller that agleth from his owne country is in a short time transformed to so monstrous a shape, that he is faine to alter his mansion th his manners, and to live where he can, not where he ould.—Lyly’s Euphues.

I was always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when mere child I began my travels, and made many urs of discovery into foreign parts and unknown gions of my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents, and the emolument of the town crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my ob-bervations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rames about the surrounding country. I made myself miliar with all its places famous in history or fable. knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the neighbouring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge, by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with their sages and great men. I even journeyed one long summer’s day to the sum-
mit of the most distant hill, from whence I stretched
my eye over many a mile of terra incognita, and
was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited.

This rambling propensity strengthened with my
years. Books of voyages and travels became my
passion, and in devouring their contents, I neglected
the regular exercises of the school. How wistfully
would I wander about the pier heads in fine weather,
and watch the parting ships, bound to distant climes
—with what longing eyes would I gaze after their
lessening sails, and waft myself in imagination to the
ends of the earth!

Farther reading and thinking, though they brought
this vague inclination into more reasonable bounds,
only served to make it more decided. I visited
various parts of my own country; and had I been
merely influenced by a love of fine scenery, I should
have felt little desire to seek elsewhere its gratifica-
tion: for on no country have the charms of nature
been more prodigally lavished. Her mighty lakes,
like oceans of liquid silver; her mountains, with
their bright aerial tints; her valleys, teeming with
wild fertility; her tremendous cataracts, thundering
in their solitudes; her boundless plains, waving with
spontaneous verdure; her broad deep rivers, rolling
in solemn silence to the ocean; her trackless forests,
where vegetation puts forth all its magnificence; her
skies, kindling with the magic of summer clouds and
glorious sunshine:—no, never need an American
look beyond his own country for the sublime and
beautiful of natural scenery.
But Europe held forth all the charms of storied and poetical association. There were to be seen the masterpieces of art, the refinements of highly cultivated society, the quaint peculiarities of ancient and local custom. My native country was full of youthful promise; Europe was rich in the accumulated treasures of age. Her very ruins told the history of times gone by, and every mouldering stone was a chronicle. I longed to wander over the scenes of renowned achievement—to tread, as it were, in the footsteps of antiquity—to loiter about the ruined castle—to meditate on the falling tower—to escape, in short, from the commonplace realities of the present, and lose myself among the shadowy grandeurs of the past.

I had, beside all this, an earnest desire to see the great men of the earth. We have, it is true, our great men in America: not a city but has an ample share of them. I have mingled among them in my time, and been almost withered by the shade into which they cast me; for there is nothing so baleful to a small man as the shade of a great one, particularly the great man of a city. But I was anxious to see the great men of Europe; for I had read in the works of various philosophers, that all animals degenerated in America, and man among the number. A great man of Europe, thought I, must therefore be as superior to a great man of America, as a peak of the Alps to a highland of the Hudson; and in this idea I was confirmed, by observing the comparative importance and swelling magnitude of many English travellers among us, who, I was assured, were very little
people in their own country. I will visit this land of wonders, thought I, and see the gigantic race from which I am degenerated.

It has been either my good or evil lot to have my roving passion gratified. I have wandered through different countries, and witnessed many of the shifting scenes of life. I cannot say that I have studied them with the eye of a philosopher, but rather with the sauntering gaze with which humble lovers of the picturesque stroll from the window of one print-shop to another; caught sometimes by the delineations of beauty, sometimes by the distortions of caricature, and sometimes by the loveliness of landscape. As it is the fashion for modern tourists to travel pencil in hand, and bring home their portfolios filled with sketches, I am disposed to get up a few for the entertainment of my friends. When, however, I look over the hints and memorandums I have taken down for the purpose, my heart almost fails me, at finding how my idle humour has led me aside from the great objects studied by every regular traveller who would make a book. I fear I shall give equal disappointment with an unlucky landscape-painter, who had travelled on the continent, but following the bent of his vagrant inclination, had sketched in nooks, and corners, and by places. His sketch-book was accordingly crowded with cottages, and landscapes, and obscure ruins; but he had neglected to paint St. Peter’s, or the Col iseum; the cascade of Terni, or the bay of Naples and had not a single glacier or volcano in his whole collection.
THE VOYAGE.

ships, ships, I will describe you
Amidst the main,
I will come and try you,
What you are protecting,
And projecting,
What's your end and aim.
One goes abroad for merchandise and trading,
Another stays to keep his country from invading,
A third is coming home with rich and wealthy lading,
Hallo! my fancie, whither wilt thou go?

OLD PoEM.

To an American visiting Europe, the long voyage he has to make is an excellent preparative. The temporary absence of worldly scenes and employments produces a state of mind peculiarly fitted to receive new and vivid impressions. The vast space of waters that separates the hemispheres is like a blank page in existence. There is no gradual transition by which, as in Europe, the features and population of one country blend almost imperceptibly with those of another. From the moment you lose sight of the land you have left, all is vacancy, until you step on the opposite shore, and are launched at once into the bustle and novelties of another world.

In travelling by land there is a continuity of scene, and a connected succession of persons and incidents, that carry on the story of life, and lessen the effect.
of absence and separation. We drag, it is true, "a lengthening chain" at each remove of our pilgrimage; but the chain is unbroken; we can trace it back link by link; and we feel that the last of them still grapples us to home. But a wide sea voyage severs us at once. It makes us conscious of being cast loose from the secure anchorage of settled life, and sent adrift upon a doubtful world. It interposes a gulf, not merely imaginary, but real, between us and our homes—a gulf, subject to tempest, and fear, and uncertainty, that makes distance palpable, and return precarious.

Such, at least, was the case with myself. As I saw the last blue line of my native land fade away like a cloud in the horizon, it seemed as if I had closed one volume of the world and its concerns, and had time for meditation, before I opened another. That land, too, now vanishing from my view, which contained all that was most dear to me in life; what vicissitudes might occur in it—what changes might take place in me, before I should visit it again! Who can tell, when he sets forth to wander, whither he may be driven by the uncertain currents of existence; or when he may return; or whether it may be ever his lot to revisit the scenes of his childhood?

I said, that at sea all is vacancy; I should correct the expression. To one given to day dreaming, and fond of losing himself in reveries, a sea voyage is full of subjects for meditation; but then they are the wonders of the deep and of the air, and rather tend to abstract the mind from worldly themes. I
delighted to loll over the quarter-railing or climb to the main-top, of a calm day, and muse for hours together on the tranquil bosom of a summer's sea;—to gaze upon the piles of golden clouds just peering above the horizon; fancy them some fairy realms, and people them with a creation of my own;—to watch the gentle undulating billows, rolling their silver volumes, as if to die away on those happy shores.

There was a delicious sensation of mingled security and awe with which I looked down, from my giddy height, on the monsters of the deep at their uncouth gambols: shoals of porpoises tumbling about the bow of the ship; the grampus, slowly heaving his huge form above the surface; or the ravenous shark, darting, like a spectre, through the blue waters. My imagination would conjure up all that I had heard or read of the watery world beneath me: of the finny herds that roam its fathomless valleys; of the shapeless monsters that lurk among the very foundations of the earth, and of those wild phantasms that swell the tales of fishermen and sailors.

Sometimes a distant sail, gliding along the edge of the ocean, would be another theme of idle speculation. How interesting this fragment of a world, hastening to rejoin the great mass of existence! What a glorious monument of human invention; that has thus triumphed over wind and wave; has brought the ends of the world into communion; has established an interchange of blessings, pouring into the steril regions of the north all the luxuries of the south; has diffused the light of knowledge, and the charities of
glimpse of two or three half-naked wretches, rushing from her cabin; they just started from their beds to be swallowed shrieking by the waves. I heard their drowning cry mingling with the wind. The blast that bore it to our ears, swept us out of all farther hearing. I shall never forget that cry! It was some time before we could put the ship about, she was under such headway. We returned as nearly as we could guess, to the place where the smack had anchored. We cruised about for several hours in the dense fog. We fired signal-guns, and listened if we might hear the halloo of any survivors; but all was silent—we never saw or heard any thing of them more."

I confess these stories, for a time, put an end to all my fine fancies. The storm increased with the night. The sea was lashed into tremendous confusion. There was a fearful, sullen sound of rushing waves, and broken surges. Deep called unto deep. At times the black volume of clouds over head seemed rent asunder by flashes of lightning that quivered along the foaming billows, and made the succeeding darkness doubly terrible. The thunders bellowed over the wild waste of waters, and were echoed and prolonged by the mountain waves. As I saw the ship staggering and plunging among these roaring caverns, it seemed miraculous that she regained her balance, or preserved her buoyancy. Her yards would dip into the water; her bow was almost buried beneath the waves. Sometimes an impending surge appeared ready to overwhelm her, and nothing
but a dexterous movement of the helm preserved her from the shock.

When I retired to my cabin, the awful scene still followed me. The whistling of the wind through the rigging sounded like funereal wailings. The creaking of the masts; the straining and groaning of bulkheads, as the ship laboured in the weltering sea, were frightful. As I heard the waves rushing along the side of the ship, and roaring in my very ear, it seemed as if Death were raging round this floating prison, seeking for his prey: the mere starting of a nail, the yawning of a seam, might give him entrance.

A fine day, however, with a tranquil sea and favouring breeze, soon put all these dismal reflections to flight. It is impossible to resist the gladdening influence of fine weather and fair wind at sea. When the ship is decked out in all her canvas, every sail swelled, and careering gaily over the curling waves, how lofty, how gallant, she appears—how she seems to lord it over the deep! I might fill a volume with the reveries of a sea voyage; for with me it is almost a continual reverie—but it is time to get to shore.

It was a fine sunny morning when the thrilling cry of “land!” was given from the mast-head. None but those who have experienced it can form an idea of the delicious throng of sensations which rush into an American’s bosom when he first comes in sight of Europe. There is a volume of associations with the very name. It is the land of promise, teeming with every thing of which his childhood has heard, or on which his studious years have pondered.
ROSCOE.

——In the service of mankind to be
A guardian god below; still to employ
The mind's brave ardour in heroic aims,
Such as may raise us o'er the grovelling herd,
And make us shine for ever—that is life.

THOMSON.

One of the first places to which a stranger is taken in Liverpool, is the Athenæum. It is established on a liberal and judicious plan; it contains a good library and spacious reading-room, and is the great literary resort of the place. Go there at what hour you will—no matter when you are sure to find it filled with grave-looking men and women, deeply absorbed in the study of newspapers.

As I was once visiting this haunt of the learned, my attention was attracted to a person just entering the library. He was advanced in life, tall, and of a majestic command. He might once have been commanding, but it was not that might once have been commanding, but it was little bowed by time—perhaps by care. He had a noble Roman style of countenance; a head that would have pleased a painter; and though some slight wrinkles on his brow showed that wasting thought had been there, yet his eye still beamed with the brilliancy of a poetic soul. There was something in his whole appearance that indicated a being of a different order from the bustling race around him.

I inquired his name, and was informed that it
Roscoe. I drew back with an involuntary feeling of veneration. This, then, was an author of celebrity; this was one of those men whose voices have gone forth to the ends of the earth; with whose minds I have communed even in the solitudes of America. Accustomed, as we are in our country, to know European writers only by their works, we cannot conceive of them, as of other men, engrossed by trivial or sordid pursuits, and jostling with the crowd of common minds in the dusty paths of life. They pass before our imaginations like superior beings, radiant with the emanations of their own genius, and surrounded by a halo of literary glory.

To find, therefore, the elegant historian of the Medici mingling among the busy sons of traffic, at first shocked my poetical ideas; but it is from the very circumstances and situation in which he has been placed, that Mr. Roscoe derives his highest claims to admiration. It is interesting to notice how some minds seem almost to create themselves; springing up under every disadvantage, and working their solitary but irresistible way through a thousand obstacles. Nature seems to delight in disappointing the assiduities of art, with which it would rear legitimate dulness to maturity; and to glory in the vigour and luxuriance of her chance productions. She scatters the seeds of genius to the winds, and though some may perish among the stony places of the world, and some be choked by the thorns and brambles of early adversity, yet others will now and then strike root even in the clefts of the rock,
struggle bravely up into sunshine, and spread over their steril birth-place all the beauties of vegetation.

Such has been the case with Mr. Roscoe. Born in a place apparently ungenial to the growth of literary talent; in the very market-place of trade; without fortune, family connexions, or patronage; self-prompted, self-sustained, and almost self-taught, he has conquered every obstacle, achieved his way to eminence, and having become one of the ornaments of the nation, has turned the whole force of his talents and influence to advance and embellish his native town.

Indeed, it is this last trait in his character which has given him the greatest interest in my eyes, and induced me particularly to point him out to my countrymen. Eminent as are his literary merits, he is but one among the many distinguished authors of this intellectual nation. They, however, in general, live but for their own fame, or their own pleasures. Their private history presents no lesson to the world, or, perhaps, a humiliating one of human frailty and inconsistency. At best, they are prone to steal away from the bustle and commonplace of busy existence; to indulge in the selfishness of lettered ease; and to revel in scenes of mental, but exclusive enjoyment.

Mr. Roscoe, on the contrary, has claimed none of the accorded privileges of talent. He has shut himself up in no garden of thought, nor elysium of fancy; but has gone forth into the highways and thorough-fares of life, he has planted bowers by the way-side, for the refreshment of the pilgrim and the sojourner, and has opened pure fountains, where the labouring
man may turn aside from the dust and heat of the day, and drink of the living streams of knowledge. There is a "daily beauty in his life," on which mankind may meditate and grow better. It exhibits no lofty and almost useless, because inimitable example of excellence; but presents a picture of active, yet simple and imitable virtues, which are within every man's reach, but which, unfortunately, are not exercised by many, or this world would be a paradise.

But his private life is peculiarly worthy the attention of the citizens of our young and busy country, where literature and the elegant arts must grow up side by side with the coarser plants of daily necessity; and must depend for their culture, not on the exclusive devotion of time and wealth; nor the quickening rays of titled patronage; but on hours and seasons snatched from the pursuit of worldly interests, by intelligent and public-spirited individuals.

He has shown how much may be done for a place in hours of leisure by one master spirit, and how completely it can give its own impress to surrounding objects. Like his own Lorenzo De Medici, on whom he seems to have fixed his eye, as on a pure model of antiquity, he has interwoven the history of his life with the history of his native town, and has made the foundations of its fame the monuments of his virtues. Wherever you go, in Liverpool, you perceive traces of his footsteps in all that is elegant and liberal. He found the tide of wealth flowing merely in the channels of traffic; he has diverted from it invigorating rills to refresh the gardens of literature. By his own
example and constant exertions, he has effected that union of commerce and the intellectual pursuits, so eloquently recommended in one of his latest writings;* and has practically proved how beautifully they may be brought to harmonize, and to benefit each other. The noble institutions for literary and scientific purposes, which reflect such credit on Liverpool, and are giving such an impulse to the public mind, have mostly been originated, and have all been effectively promoted, by Mr. Roscoe: and when we consider the rapidly increasing opulence and magnitude of that town, which promises to vie in commercial importance with the metropolis, it will be perceived that in awakening an ambition of mental improvement among its inhabitants, he has effected a great benefit to the cause of British literature.

In America, we know Mr. Roscoe only as the author—in Liverpool, he is spoken of as the banker; and I was told of his having been unfortunate in business. I could not pity him, as I heard some rich men do. I considered him far above the reach of my pity. Those who live only for the world, and in the world, may be cast down by the frowns of adversity; but a man like Roscoe is not to be overcome by the reverses of fortune. They do but drive him in upon the resources of his own mind; to the superior society of his own thoughts; which the best of men are apt sometimes to neglect, and to roam abroad in search of less worthy associates. He is independent of the

* Address on the opening of the Liverpool Institution
world around him. He lives with antiquity, and with
posterity: with antiquity, in the sweet communion
of studious retirement; and with posterity, in the
generous aspirings after future renown. The solitude
of such a mind is its state of highest enjoyment. It is
then visited by those elevated meditations which are
the proper aliment of noble souls, and are, like manna,
sent from heaven, in the wilderness of this world.

While my feelings were yet alive on the subject,
it was my fortune to light on farther traces of Mr. Ros-
coe. I was riding out with a gentleman, to view the
environs of Liverpool, when he turned off, through
a gate, into some ornamented grounds. After riding
a short distance, we came to a spacious mansion of
freestone, built in the Grecian style. It was not in
the purest taste, yet it had an air of elegance, and
the situation was delightful. A fine lawn sloped away
from it, studded with clumps of trees, so disposed as
to break a soft fertile country into a variety of land-
scapes. The Mersey was seen winding a broad quiet
sheet of water through an expanse of green meadow
land; while the Welsh mountains, blending with
clouds, and melting into distance, bordered the
horizon.

This was Roscoe's favourite residence during the
days of his prosperity. It had been the seat of ele-
gant hospitality and literary refinement. The house
was now silent and deserted. I saw the windows of
the study, which looked out upon the soft scenery I
have mentioned. The windows were closed—the
library was gone. Two or three ill-favoured beings
were loitering about the place, whom my fancy pictured into retainers of the law. It was like visiting some classic fountain that had once welled its waters in a sacred shade, but finding it dry and dusty with the lizard and the toad brooding over the shattered marbles.

I inquired after the fate of Mr. Roscoe's library, which had consisted of scarce and foreign books, many of which he had drawn the materials for Italian histories. It had passed under the hammer of the auctioneer, and was dispersed about the count

The good people of the vicinity thronged the wreckers to get some part of the noble vessel they had been driven on shore. Did such a scene of ludicrous associations, we might imagine somewhat whimsical in this strange irruption into the region of learning. Pigmies rummaging the armoury of a giant and contending for the possession of weapons which they could not wield. We might picture to ourselves some knot of speculators, debating with calculating brow over the quaint binding and illuminated margin of an obsolete author; or the air of intense, but fled sagacity, with which some successful purchaser attempted to dive into the black-letter bargain he had secured.

It is a beautiful incident in the story of Mr. Roscoe's misfortunes, and one which cannot fail to interest the studious mind, that the parting with books seems to have touched upon his tenderest feelings, and to have been the only circumstance that could provoke the notice of his muse. The scho
only knows how dear these silent, yet eloquent, companions of pure thoughts and innocent hours become in the season of adversity. When all that is worldly turns to dross around us, these only retain their steady value. When friends grow cold, and the converse of intimates languishes into vapid civility and commonplace, these only continue the unaltered countenance of happier days, and cheer us with that true friendship which never deceived hope, nor deserted sorrow.

I do not wish to censure; but, surely, if the people of Liverpool had been properly sensible of what was due to Mr. Roscoe and to themselves, his library would never have been sold. Good worldly reasons may, doubtless, be given for the circumstance, which it would be difficult to combat with others that might seem merely fanciful; but it certainly appears to me such an opportunity as seldom occurs, of cheering a noble mind struggling under misfortunes by one of the most delicate, but most expressive tokens of public sympathy. It is difficult, however, to estimate a man of genius properly who is daily before our eyes. He becomes mingled and confounded with other men. His great qualities lose their novelty, and we become too familiar with the common materials which form the basis even of the loftiest character. Some of Mr. Roscoe’s townsmen may regard him merely as a man of business; others as a politician; all find him engaged like themselves in ordinary occupations, and surpassed, perhaps, by themselves on some points of worldly wisdom. Even that amiable and unostentatious simplicity of character, which gives the name-
bind up its shattered boughs; so is it beautifully or-
dered by Providence, that woman, who is the mere
dependant and ornament of man in his happier hours,
should be his stay and solace when smitten with sud-
den calamity; winding herself into the rugged re-
cesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping
head, and binding up the broken heart.

I was once congratulating a friend, who had around
him a blooming family, knit together in the strongest
affection. "I can wish you no better lot," said he,
with enthusiasm, "than to have a wife and children.
If you are prosperous, there they are to share your
prosperity; if otherwise, there they are to comfort
you." And, indeed, I have observed that a married
man falling into misfortune, is more apt to retrieve
his situation in the world than a single one; partly,
because he is more stimulated to exertion by the ne-
cessities of the helpless and beloved beings who de-
pend upon him for subsistence; but chiefly, because
his spirits are soothed and relieved by domestic en-
dearments, and his self-respect kept alive by finding
that though all abroad is darkness and humiliation,
yet there is still a little world of love at home, of
which he is the monarch. Whereas, a single man is
apt to run to waste and self-neglect; to fancy himself
lonely and abandoned, and his heart to fall to ruin,
like some deserted mansion, for want of an inhabitant.

These observations call to mind a little domestic
story, of which I was once a witness. My intimate
friend, Leslie, had married a beautiful and accom-
plished girl, who had been brought up in the midst of
The Wife.

An fashionable life. She had, it is true, no fortune, but
hat of my friend was ample; and he delighted in the
nticipation of indulging her in every elegant pursuit,
nd administering to those delicate tastes and fancies
hat spread a kind of witchery about the sex.—"Her
life," said he, "shall be like a fairy tale."

The very difference in their characters produced
a harmonious combination; he was of a romantic,
and somewhat serious cast; she was all life and glad-
ess. I have often noticed the mute rapture with
which he would gaze upon her in company, of which
her sprightly powers made her the delight; and how,
in the midst of applause, her eye would still turn to
him, as if there alone she sought favour and acceptance.
When leaning on his arm, her slender form contrasted
finely with his tall manly person. The fond confiding
air with which she looked up to him seemed to call
forth a flush of triumphant pride and cherishing ten-
derness, as if he doated on his lovely burden for its
very helplessness. Never did a couple set forward
on the flowery path of early and well-suited marriage
with a fairer prospect of felicity.

It was the misfortune of my friend, however, to have
embarked his property in large speculations; and he
had not been married many months, when, by a suc-
cession of sudden disasters it was swept from him, and
he found himself reduced to almost penury. For a
time he kept his situation to himself, and went about
with a haggard countenance, and a breaking heart
His life was but a protracted agony; and what ren-
dered it more insupportable was the necessity of keep-
ing up a smile in the presence of his wife; for he could not bring himself to overwhelm her with the news. She saw, however, with the quick eyes of affection, that all was not well with him. She marked his altered looks and stifled sighs, and was not to be deceived by his sickly and vapid attempts at cheerfulness. She task ed all her sprightly powers and tender blandishments to win him back to happiness; but she only drove the arrow deeper into his soul. The more he saw cause to love her, the more torturing was the thought that he was soon to make her wretched. A little while, thought he, and the smile will vanish from that cheek—the song will die away from those lips—the lustre of those eyes will be quenched with sorrow—and the happy heart which now beats lightly in that bosom, will be weighed down, like mine, by the cares and miseries of the world.

At length he came to me one day, and related his whole situation in a tone of the deepest despair. When I had heard him through, I inquired; "Does your wife know all this?" At the question he burst into an agony of tears. "For God's sake!" cried he, "if you have any pity on me, don't mention my wife; it is the thought of her that drives me almost to madness!"

"And why not?" said I. "She must know it sooner or later: you cannot keep it long from her, and the intelligence may break upon her in a more startling manner than if imparted by yourself; for the accents of those we love soften the harshest tidings. Besides, you are depriving yourself of the comforts of her sympathy; and not merely that, but also endangering the
only bond that can keep hearts together—an unreserved community of thought and feeling. She will soon perceive that something is secretly preying upon your mind; and true love will not brook reserve: it feels undervalued and outraged, when even the sorrows of those it loves are concealed from it."

"Oh, but my friend! to think what a blow I am to give to all her future prospects—how I am to strike her very soul to the earth, by telling her that her husband is a beggar!—that she is to forego all the elegancies of life—all the pleasures of society—to shrink with me into indigence and obscurity! To tell her that I have dragged her down from the sphere in which she might have continued to move in constant brightness—the light of every eye—the admiration of every heart!—How can she bear poverty? She has been brought up in all the refinements of opulence. How can she bear neglect? She has been the idol of society. Oh, it will break her heart—it will break her heart!"

I saw his grief was eloquent, and I let it have its flow; for sorrow relieves itself by words. When his paroxysm had subsided, and he had relapsed into moody silence, I resumed the subject gently, and urged him to break his situation at once to his wife. He shook his head mournfully, but positively.

"But how are you to keep it from her? It is necessary she should know it, that you may take the steps proper to the alteration of your circumstances. You must change your style of living—nay," observing a pang to pass across his countenance, "don't let that afflict you. I am sure you have never placed your
happiness in outward show—you have yet friends, warm friends, who will not think the worse of you for being less splendidly lodged: and surely it does not require a palace to be happy with Mary—" "I could be happy with her," cried he convulsively, "in a hovel!—I could go down with her into poverty and the dust!—I could—I could—God bless her!—God bless her!" cried he, bursting into a transport of grief and tenderness.

"And believe me, my friend," said I, stepping up and grasping him warmly by the hand, "believe me, she can be the same with you. Ay, more: it will be a source of pride and triumph to her—it will call forth all the latent energies and fervent sympathies of her nature; for she will rejoice to prove that she loves you for yourself. There is in every true woman's heart a spark of heavenly fire, which lies dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity; but which kindles up, and beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity. No man knows what the wife of his bosom is—no man knows what a ministering angel she is—until he has gone with her through the fiery trials of this world."

There was something in the earnestness of my manner, and the figurative style of my language, that caught the excited imagination of Leslie. I knew the auditor I had to deal with; and following up the impression I had made, I finished by persuading him to go home and unburthen his sad heart to his wife.

I must confess, notwithstanding all I had said, I felt some little solicitude for the result. Who can
alculate on the fortitude of one whose whole life has been a round of pleasures? Her gay spirits might revolt at the dark, downward path of low humility, suddenly pointed out before her, and might cling to the sunny regions in which they had hitherto revelled. Besides, ruin in fashionable life is accompanied by so many galling mortifications, to which, in other ranks, it is a stranger.—In short, I could not meet Leslie, the next morning, without trepidation. He had made the disclosure.

"And how did she bear it?"

"Like an angel! It seemed rather to be a relief to her mind, for she threw her arms round my neck and asked if this was all that had lately made me unhappy.—But, poor girl," added he, "she cannot realize the change we must undergo. She has no idea of poverty but in the abstract: she has only read of it in poetry, where it is allied to love. She feels as yet no privation: she suffers no loss of accustomed conveniences nor elegancies. When we come practically to experience its sordid cares, its paltry wants, its petty humiliations—then will be the real trial."

"But," said I, "now that you have got over the severest task, that of breaking it to her, the sooner you let the world into the secret the better. The disclosure may be mortifying; but then it is a single misery, and soon over; whereas you otherwise suffer it, in anticipation, every hour in the day. It is not poverty, so much as pretence, that harasses a ruined man—the struggle between a proud mind and an
empty purse—the keeping up a hollow show that must soon come to an end. Have the courage to appear poor, and you disarm poverty of its sharpest sting.” On this point I found Leslie perfectly prepared. He had no false pride himself, and as to his wife, she was only anxious to conform to their altered fortunes.

Some days afterwards, he called upon me in the evening. He had disposed of his dwelling-house, and taken a small cottage in the country, a few miles from town. He had been busied all day in sending out furniture. The new establishment required few articles, and those of the simplest kind. All the splendid furniture of his late residence had been sold, excepting his wife’s harp. That, he said, was too closely associated with the idea of herself; it belonged to the little story of their loves; for some of the sweetest moments of their courtship were those when he had leaned over that instrument, and listened to the melting tones of her voice. I could not but smile at this instance of romantic gallantry in a doating husband.

He was now going out to the cottage, where his wife had been all day, superintending its arrangement. My feelings had become strongly interested in the progress of this family story, and as it was a fine evening, I offered to accompany him.

He was wearied with the fatigues of the day, and as we walked out, fell into a fit of gloomy musing.

“Poor Mary!” at length broke, with a heavy sigh, from his lips.
"And what of her," asked I, "has any thing happened to her?"

"What," said he, darting an impatient glance, "is it nothing to be reduced to this paltry situation—to be caged in a miserable cottage—to be obliged to toil almost in the menial concerns of her wretched habitation?"

"Has she then repined at the change?"

"Repined! she has been nothing but sweetness and good humour. Indeed, she seems in better spirits than I have ever known her; she has been to me all love, and tenderness, and comfort!"

"Admirable girl!" exclaimed I. "You call yourself poor, my friend; you never were so rich—you never knew the boundless treasures of excellence you possessed in that woman."

"Oh! but my friend, if this first meeting at the cottage were over, I think I could then be comfortable. But this is her first day of real experience: she has been introduced into an humble dwelling—she has been employed all day in arranging its miserable equipments—she has for the first time known the fatigues of domestic employment—she has for the first time looked around her on a home destitute of every thing elegant—almost of everything convenient; and may now be sitting down, exhausted and spiritless, brooding over a prospect of future poverty."

There was a degree of probability in this picture that I could not gainsay, so we walked on in silence.

After turning from the main road, up a narrow lane, so thickly shaded by forest trees as to give it a com-
plete air of seclusion, we came in sight of the cot-
tage. It was humble enough in its appearance for
the most pastoral poet; and yet it had a pleasing rural
look. A wild vine had overrun one end with a pro-
fusion of foliage; a few trees threw their branches
gracefully over it; and I observed several pots of
flowers tastefully disposed about the door, and on the
grass-plot in front. A small wicket-gate opened upon
a footpath that wound through some shrubbery to the
door. Just as we approached, we heard the sound
of music—Leslie grasped my arm; we paused and
listened. It was Mary’s voice, singing, in a style of
the most touching simplicity, a little air of which her
husband was peculiarly fond.

I felt Leslie’s hand tremble on my arm. He stepped
forward, to hear more distinctly. His step made a
noise on the gravel-walk. A bright beautiful face
 glanced out at the window, and vanished—a light
footstep was heard—and Mary came tripping forth
to meet us. She was in a pretty rural dress of white;
a few wild flowers were twisted in her fine hair; a
fresh bloom was on her cheek; her whole counte-
nance beamed with smiles—I had never seen her
look so lovely.

“My dear George,” cried she, “I am so glad you
are come; I have been watching and watching for
you; and running down the lane, and looking out for
you. I’ve set out a table under a beautiful tree be-
hind the cottage; and I’ve been gathering some of
the most delicious strawberries, for I know you are
fond of them—and we have such excellent cream—
and every thing is so sweet and still here.—Oh!" said she, putting her arm within his, and looking up brightly in his face, "Oh, we shall be so happy!"

Poor Leslie was overcome.—He caught her to his bosom—he folded his arms round her—he kissed her again and again—he could not speak, but the tears gushed into his eyes; and he has often assured me, that though the world has since gone prosperously with him, and his life has indeed been a happy one, yet never has he experienced a moment of more exquisite felicity.
[The following Tale was found among the papers of the late
Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New-York, who
was very curious in the Dutch History of the province, and the
manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His
historical researches, however, did not lie so much among
books, as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty
on his favourite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and
still more, their wives, rich in that legendary lore, so invaluable
to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a
genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farm-
house, under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little
casped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of
a bookworm.

The result of all these researches was a history of the prov-
ince, during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he pub-
lished some years since. There have been various opinions as
to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is
not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrup-
ulous accuracy, which, indeed, was a little questioned, on its
first appearance, but has since been completely established; and
it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of
unequivocal authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his
work, and now, that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much
harm to his memory, to say, that his time might have been
much better employed in weightier labours. He, however,
was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now
and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbours,
and grieve the spirit of some friends for whom he felt the truest
defence and affection, yet his errors and follies are remem-
bered "more in sorrow than in anger,"* and it begins to be
suspected, that he never intended to injure or offend. But
however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still
held dear among many folk, whose good opinion is well worth
having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone
so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes, and
have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to
the being stamped on a Waterloo medal, or a Queen Anne's
farthing.]

* Vide the excellent discourse of G. C. Verplanck, Esq. before the
New-York Historical Society.
RIP VAN WINKLE.

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre—

CARTWRIGHT.

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson, must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains; and they are regarded by all the good Elfes, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the near evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapours about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager
may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant, (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses, (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten,) there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was moreover a kind neighbour, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable
In the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles, and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder, for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He
would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences. The women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them;—in a word, Rip was ready to attend to any body's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; every thing about it went wrong, and would go wrong in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than any where else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.
Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away, in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family.

Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and every thing he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife, so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house, his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his
legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle, as years of matrimony rolled on: a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edge tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of his majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade, of a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions which sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands, from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficient-
ly to avoid the sun, and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true, he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however, (for every great man has his adherents,) perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When any thing that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds, and sometimes taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapour curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this strong hold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage, and call the members all to nought; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair, and his only alternative to escape from the labour of the farm and the clamour of his wife, was to take gun in hand, and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads
thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind, on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favourite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees, he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far, below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village; and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.
RIP VAN WINKLE.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked around, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same ry ring through the still evening air; "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf rustled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the len. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him: he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he arrived on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be some one of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach, he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulders a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity, and mutually relieving each other, they clam-
bered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which, impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky, and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time, Rip and his companion had laboured on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe, and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion: some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large head, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white
ugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlour of Dominie Van Schaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip, was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such a fixed statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees, Rip's awe and apprehension subsided.
He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavour of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another, and he resterated his visits to the flagon so often, that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll from whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with the keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the wo-begone party at nine-pins—the flagon—"Oh! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel encrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and
outed his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to mend his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," said Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up in a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed me with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully upon which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, forcing his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sea-grass, and witch-hazel; and sometimes tripped up entangled by the wild grape vines that twisted their bils and tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs, to the amphitheatre; but no ices of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and plunged into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled for his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a
dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? The morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village, he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture, induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognised for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered: it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—every thing
was stranger. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but a day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—“That flagon last night,” thought he, “has addled my poor head sadly!”

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog, that looked like Wolf, was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed.—“My very dog,” sighed poor Rip, “has forgotten me!”

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken, and mended
with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognised on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe, but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, General Washington.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke, instead of idle speeches, or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—election—members of Congress—liberty—Bunker's hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words,
that were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and the army of women and children that had gathered at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot, with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and drawing him partly aside, inquired, "on which side he voted?" Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, "whether he was Federal or Democrat." Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm a-kimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"

"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—"a tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self
important man in the cocked hat restored order; and having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking. The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbours, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder? why he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tomb-stone in the church-yard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony-Point—others say he was drowned in the squall, at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away, at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony-Point!—he had no courage to ask
after anymore friends, but cried out in despair, "does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else, got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The by-standers began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief; at the very suggestion of which, the self-important man with the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman passed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little
fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, his name was Rip Van Winkle; it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

Oh, she too had died but a short time since: she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New-England pedlar.

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle!"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself. Welcome home again, old neighbour—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty
years had been to him but as one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the firstdiscoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon, being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.
To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced a hereditary disposition to attend to any thing else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favour.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can do nothing with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench, at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned,
RIP VAN WINKLE.

and that was—petticoat government. Happily, that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was doubtless owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood, but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day, they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.
NOTE.

The foregoing tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart* and the Kypphauser mountain; the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity.

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvellous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice, and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt."
ENGLISH WRITERS
ON
AMERICA.

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her endazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam."

MILTON ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

It is with feelings of deep regret that I observe the literary animosity daily growing up between England and America. Great curiosity has been awakened of late with respect to the United States, and the London press has teemed with volumes of travels through the Republic; but they seem intended to diffuse error rather than knowledge; and so successful have they been, that, notwithstanding the constant intercourse between the nations, there is no people concerning whom the great mass of the British public have less pure information, or entertain more numerous prejudices.

English travellers are the best and the worst in the world. Where no motives of pride or interest intervene, none can equal them for profound and philosophical views of society, or faithful and graphical descriptions of external objects; but when either interest or reputation of their own country comes in collision with that of another, they go to the op-
posite extreme, and forget their usual probity and
candour, in the indulgence of splenetic remark, and
an illiberal spirit of ridicule.

Hence, their travels are more honest and accurate,
the more remote the country described. I would
place implicit confidence in an Englishman's descrip-
tion of the regions beyond the cataracts of the Nile;
of unknown islands in the Yellow Sea; of the inte-
rior of India; or of any other tract which other
travellers might be apt to picture out with the illu-
sions of their fancies. But I would cautiously receive
his account of his immediate neighbours, and of those
nations with which he is in habits of most frequent
intercourse. However I might be disposed to trust
his probity, I dare not trust his prejudices.

It has also been the peculiar lot of our country to
be visited by the worst kind of English travellers.
While men of philosophical spirit and cultivated minds
have been sent from England to ransack the poles,
to penetrate the deserts, and to study the manners
and customs of barbarous nations, with which she
can have no permanent intercourse of profit or plea-
ure; it has been left to the broken-down tradesman,
the scheming adventurer, the wandering mechanic,
the Manchester and Birmingham agent, to be her
oracles respecting America. From such sources she
is content to receive her information respecting a
country in a singular state of moral and physical de-
velopement; a country in which one of the greatest
political experiments in the history of the world is
now performing, and which presents the most pro-
found and momentous studies to the statesman and the philosopher.

That such men should give prejudiced accounts of America, is not a matter of surprise. The themes it offers for contemplation, are too vast and elevated for their capacities. The national character is yet in a state of fermentation: it may have its frothiness and sediment, but its ingredients are sound and wholesome: it has already given proofs of powerful and generous qualities; and the whole promises to settle down into something substantially excellent. But the causes which are operating to strengthen and ennoble it, and its daily indications of admirable properties, are all lost upon these purblind observers; who are only affected by the little asperities incident to its present situation. They are capable of judging only of the surface of things; of those matters which come in contact with their private interests and personal gratifications. They miss some of the snug conveniences and petty comforts which belong to an old, highly-finished, and over-populous state of society; where the ranks of useful labour are crowded, and many earn a painful and servile subsistence, by treading the very caprices of appetite and self-indulgence. These minor comforts, however, are all-important in the estimation of narrow minds; which either do not perceive, or will not acknowledge, that they are more than counterbalanced among us, by real and generally diffused blessings.

They may, perhaps, have been disappointed in some unreasonable expectation of sudden gain. They
may have pictured America to themselves an El Dorado, where gold and silver abounded, and the natives were lacking in sagacity; and where they were to become strangely and suddenly rich, in some unforeseen but easy manner. The same weakness of mind that indulges absurd expectations, produces petulance in disappointment. Such persons become embittered against the country on finding that there, as everywhere else, a man must sow before he can reap, must win wealth by industry and talent; and must contend with the common difficulties of nature, and the shrewdness of an intelligent and enterprising people.

Perhaps, through mistaken or ill-directed hospitality, or from the prompt disposition to cheer and countenance the stranger, prevalent among my countrymen, they may have been treated with unwonted respect in America; and, having been accustomed all their lives to consider themselves below the surface of good society, and brought up in a servile feeling of inferiority, they become arrogant on the common boon of civility; they attribute to the lowliness of others their own elevation; and underrate a society where there are no artificial distinctions, and where by any chance, such individuals as themselves can rise to consequence.

One would suppose, however, that information coming from such sources, on a subject where the truth is so desirable, would be received with caution by the censors of the press; that the motives of these men, their veracity, their opportunities of inquiry and
ervation, and their capacities for judging correctly,uld be rigorously scrutinized, before their evidence admitted, in such sweeping extent, against a kind nation. The very reverse, however, is the case, it furnishes a striking instance of human incon
mcy. Nothing can surpass the vigilance with ch English critics will examine the credibility of traveller who publishes an account of some dis,
, and comparatively unimportant, country. How ily will they compare the measurements of a pyr-
d, or the description of a ruin; and how sternly they censure any inaccuracy in these contribu-
s of merely curious knowledge; while they will give, with eagerness and unhesitating faith, the misrepresentations of coarse and obscure writ-
, concerning a country with which their own is ed in the most important and delicate relations. r, they will even make these apocryphal volumes 
books, on which to enlarge, with a zeal and an ity worthy of a more generous cause.
shall not, however, dwell on this irksome and kneyed topic; nor should I have adverted to it, for the undue interest apparently taken in it by countrymen, and certain injurious effects which prehend it might produce upon the national feel-
. We attach too much consequence to these at-
. They cannot do us any essential injury. The ne of misrepresentations attempted to be wove
 and us, are like cobwebs woven round the limbs in infant giant. Our country continually outgrows m. One falsehood after another falls off of itself.
We have but to live on, and every day we live a whole volume of refutation. All the writers of England united, if we could for a moment suppose their great minds stooping to so unworthy a combination, could not conceal our rapidly growing importance and matchless prosperity. They could not conceal that these are owing, not merely to physical and local, but also to moral causes;—to the political liberty, the general diffusion of knowledge, the prevalence of sound, moral, and religious principles, which give force and sustained energy to the character of a people; and which, in fact, have been the acknowledged and wonderful supporters of their own national power and glory.

But why are we so exquisitely alive to the aspersions of England? Why do we suffer ourselves to be so affected by the contumely she has endeavoured to cast upon us? It is not in the opinion of England alone that honour lives, and reputation has its being. The world at large is the arbiter of a nation’s fame: with its thousand eyes it witnesses a nation’s deeds, and from their collective testimony is national glory or national disgrace established.

For ourselves, therefore, it is comparatively of but little importance whether England does us justice or not: it is, perhaps, of far more importance to herself. She is instilling anger and resentment into the bosom of a youthful nation, to grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. If in America, as some of her writers are labouring to convince her, she is hereafter to find an invidious rival, and a gi
gantic foe, she may thank those very writers for having provoked rivalship, and irritated hostility. Everyone knows the all-pervading influence of literature at the present day, and how much the opinions and passions of mankind are under its control. The mere contests of the sword are temporary; their wounds are but in the flesh, and it is the pride of the generous to forgive and forget them; but the slanders of the pen pierce to the heart; they rankle longest in the noblest spirits; they dwell ever present in the mind, and render it morbidly sensitive to the most trifling collision. It is but seldom that any one overt act produces hostilities between two nations; there exists, most commonly, a previous jealousy and ill-will, a predisposition to take offence. Trace these to their cause, and how often will they be found to originate in the mischievous effusions of mercenary writers; who, secure in their closets, and for ignominious bread, concoct and circulate the venom that is to inflame the generous and the brave.

I am not laying too much stress upon this point; for it applies most emphatically to our particular case. Over no nation does the press hold a more absolute control than over the people of America; for the universal education of the poorest classes makes every individual a reader. There is nothing published in England on the subject of our country, that does not circulate through every part of it. There is not a calumny dropt from an English pen, nor an unworthy sarcasm uttered by an English statesman, that does not go to blight good-will, and add to the
mass of latent resentment. Possessing, then, as England does, the fountain-head from whence the literature of the language flows, how completely is it in her power, and how truly is it her duty, to make it the medium of amiable and magnanimous feeling—a stream where the two nations might meet together and drink in peace and kindness. Should she, however, persist in turning it to waters of bitterness, the time may come when she may repent her folly. The present friendship of America may be of but little moment to her; but the future destinies of that country do not admit of a doubt: over those of England, there lower some shadows of uncertainty. Should, then, a day of gloom arrive—should those reverses overtake her, from which the proudest empires have not been exempt—she may look back with regret at her infatuation, in repulsing from her side a nation she might have grappled to her bosom, and thus destroying her only chance for real friendship beyond the boundaries of her own dominions.

There is a general impression in England, that the people of the United States are inimical to the parent country. It is one of the errors which has been diligently propagated by designing writers. There is, doubtless, considerable political hostility, and a general soreness at the illiberality of the English press; but, collectively speaking, the prepossessions of the people are strongly in favour of England. Indeed, at one time they amounted, in many parts of the Union, to an absurd degree of bigotry. The bare name of Englishman was a passport to the confidence
nd hospitality of every family, and too often gave a
ransient currency to the worthless and the ungrate-
ul. Throughout the country, there was something
of enthusiasm connected with the idea of England.
We looked to it with a hallowed feeling of tenderness
and veneration, as the land of our forfcathers—the
august repository of the monuments and antiques
ities of our race—the birth-place and mausoleum of the
sages and heroes of our paternal history. After our
own country, there was none in whose glory we more
delighted—none whose good opinion we were more
anxious to possess—none toward which our hearts
yearned with such throbings of warm consanguinity.
Even during the late war, whenever there was the
least opportunity for kind feelings to spring forth, it
was the delight of the generous spirits of our country
to show, that in the midst of hostilities, they still kept
alive the sparks of future friendship.

Is all this to be at an end? Is this golden band of
kindred sympathies, so rare between nations, to be
broken for ever?—Perhaps it is for the best—it may
dispel an illusion which might have kept us in mental
vassalage; which might have interfered occasionally
with our true interests, and prevented the growth of
proper national pride. But it is hard to give up the
kindred tie!—and there are feelings dearer than in-
terest—closer to the heart than pride—that will still
make us cast back a look of regret as we wander
farther and farther from the paternal roof and lament
the waywardness of the parent that would repel the
affections of the child.
Short-sighted and injudicious, however, as the conduct of England may be in this system of aspersion, recrimination on our part would be equally ill-judged. I speak not of a prompt and spirited vindication of our country, or the keenest castigation of her slanderers—but I allude to a disposition to retaliate in kind, to retort sarcasm and inspire prejudice, which seems to be spreading widely among our writers. Let us guard particularly against such a temper; for it would double the evil, instead of redressing the wrong. Nothing is so easy and inviting as the retort of abuse and sarcasm; but it is a paltry and unprofitable contest. It is the alternative of a morbid mind, fretted into petulance, rather than warmed into indignation. If England is willing to permit the mean jealousies of trade, or the rancorous animosities of politics, to deprave the integrity of her press, and poison the fountain of public opinion, let us beware of her example. She may deem it her interest to diffuse error, and engender antipathy, for the purpose of checking emigration; we have no purpose of the kind to serve. Neither have we any spirit of national jealousy to gratify; for as yet, in all our rivalships with England, we are the rising and the gaining party. There can be no end to answer, therefore, but the gratification of resentment—a mere spirit of retaliation; and even that is impotent. Our retorts are never republished in England; they fall short, therefore, of their aim; but they foster a querulous and peevish temper among our writers; they sour the sweet flow of our early literature, and sow thorns and brambles among its
blossoms. What is still worse, they circulate through our own country, and, as far as they have effect, excite virulent national prejudices. This last is the evil most especially to be deprecated. Governed, as we are, entirely by public opinion, the utmost care should be taken to preserve the purity of the public mind. Knowledge is power, and truth is knowledge; whoever, therefore, knowingly propagates a prejudice, wilfully saps the foundation of his country's strength.

The members of a republic, above all other men, should be candid and dispassionate. They are, individually, portions of the sovereign mind and sovereign will, and should be enabled to come to all questions of national concern with calm and unbiased judgments. From the peculiar nature of our relations with England, we must have more frequent questions of a difficult and delicate character with her, than with any other nation; questions that affect the most acute and excitable feelings: and as, in the adjusting of these, our national measures must ultimately be determined by popular sentiment, we cannot be too anxiously attentive to purify it from all latent passion or prepossession.

Opening too, as we do, an asylum for strangers from every portion of the earth, we should receive all with impartiality. It should be our pride to exhibit an example of one nation, at least, destitute of national antipathies, and exercising, not merely the overt acts of hospitality, but those more rare and noble courtesies which spring from liberality of opinion.

What have we to do with national prejudices?
They are the inveterate diseases of old countries, contracted in rude and ignorant ages, when nations knew but little of each other, and looked beyond their own boundaries with distrust and hostility. We, on the contrary, have sprung into national existence in an enlightened and philosophic age, when the different parts of the habitable world, and the various branches of the human family, have been indefatigably studied and made known to each other; and we forego the advantages of our birth, if we do not shake off the national prejudices, as we would the local superstitions, of the old world.

But above all, let us not be influenced by any angry feelings, so far as to shut our eyes to the perception of what is really excellent and amiable in the English character. We are a young people, necessarily an imitative one, and must take our examples and models, in a great degree, from the existing nations of Europe. There is no country more worthy of our study than England. The spirit of her constitution is most analogous to ours. The manners of her people—their intellectual activity—their freedom of opinion—their habits of thinking on those subjects which concern the dearest interests and most sacred charities of private life, are all congenial to the American character; and, in fact, are all intrinsically excellent: for it is in the moral feeling of the people that the deep foundations of British prosperity are laid; and however the superstructure may be time-worn, or overrun by abuses, there must be something solid in the basis, admirable in the materials, and stable in the structure
disfice that so long has towered unshaken amidst
pests of the world.

it be the pride of our writers, therefore, dis-
g all feelings of irritation, and disdaining to re-
the illiberality of British authors, to speak of
ghlish nation without prejudice, and with deter-
candour. While they rebuke the indiscriminat-
gory with which some of our countrymen ad-
and imitate every thing English, merely because
ghlish, let them frankly point out what is really
y of approbation. We may thus place England
us as a perpetual volume of reference, wherein
orded sound deductions from ages of experi-
and while we avoid the errors and absurdities
ay have crept into the page, we may draw
golden maxims of practical wisdom, wherewith
ngthen and to embellish our national character.
RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND.

Oh! friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
Domestic life in rural pleasures past!

Cowper.

The stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character, must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farm-houses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens; along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend wakes and fairs, and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions, and all their habits and humours.

In some countries, the large cities absorb the wealth and fashion of the nation; they are the only fixed abodes of elegant and intelligent society, and the country is inhabited almost entirely by boorish peasantry. In England, on the contrary, the metropolis is a mere gathering place, or general rendezvous, of the polite classes, where they devote a small portion of the year to a hurry of gayety and dissipation, and having indulged this kind of carnival, return again to the apparently more congenial habits of rural life. The various orders of society are therefore diffused over the whole surface of the kingdom, and the most retired
bourhoods afford specimens of the different

e English, in fact, are strongly gifted with the
feeling. They possess a quick sensibility to the
nes of nature, and a keen relish for the pleasures
mployments of the country. This passion seems
nt in them. Even the inhabitants of cities, born
ught up among brick walls and bustling streets,
ith facility into rural habits, and evince a tact
al occupation. The merchant has his snug re-
 the vicinity of the metropolis, where he often
ys as much pride and zeal in the cultivation of
wer-garden, and the maturing of his fruits, as he
n the conduct of his business, and the success
mmercial enterprise. Even those less fortu-
dividuals, who are doomed to pass their lives
midst of din and traffic, contrive to have some-
that shall remind them of the green aspect of
. In the most dark and dingy quarters of the
he drawing-room window resembles frequently
k of flowers; every spot capable of vegetation
s grass-plot and flower-bed; and every square
mic park, laid out with picturesque taste, and
ing with refreshing verdure.
ose who see the Englishman only in town, are
form an unfavourable opinion of his social
cter. He is either absorbed in business, or dis-
d by the thousand engagements that dissipate
ught, and feeling, in this huge metropolis
s, therefore, too commonly, a look of hurry and
ction. Wherever he happens to be, he is on
cherishing and training of some trees; the careful pruning of others; the nice distribution of flowers and plants of tender and graceful foliage; the judicious management of a green slope of velvet turf; the opening to a peep of blue distance, or silver strand of water—all these are managed with a delicate and pervading yet quiet assiduity, like the magic things with which a painter finishes up a favourite picture.

The residence of people of fortune and refinement in the country, has diffused a degree of taste and elegance in rural economy, that descends to the humblest class. The very labourer, with his thatched cottage and narrow slip of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grass-plot before the door, the little flower-bed bordered with sweet-scented woodbine trained up against the wall, and hanging its blossoms about the lattice; the pot of flowers in the window; the holly, providently planted by the house, to cheat winter of its dreariness, and throw in a semblance of green summer to the fireside:—all these bespeak the influence of a flowing down from high sources, and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind. If ever Lyric poets sing, delights to visit a cottage, it must be a cottage of an English peasant.

The fondness for rural life among the higher classes of the English, has had a great and salutary influence upon the national character. I do not know what race of men than the English gentlemen. Instead of the softness and effeminacy which characterises
men of rank in most countries, they exhibit an union of elegance and strength, a robustness of frame and freshness of complexion, which I am inclined to attribute to their living so much in the open air, and pursuing so eagerly the invigorating recreations of the country. The hardy exercises produce also a healthful tone of mind and spirits, and a manliness and simplicity of manners, which even the follies and dissipations of the town cannot easily pervert, and can never entirely destroy. In the country, too, the different orders of society seem to approach more freely, to be more disposed to blend and operate favourably upon each other. The distinctions between them do not appear to be so marked and impassable, as in the cities. The manner in which property has been distributed into small estates and farms, has established a regular gradation from the noblemen, through the classes of gentry, small landed proprietors, and substantial farmers, down to the labouring peasantry; and while it has thus banded the extremes of society together, has infused into each intermediate rank a spirit of independence. This, it must be confessed, is not so universally the case at present as it was formerly; the larger estates having, in late years of distress, absorbed the smaller, and, in some parts of the country, almost annihilated the sturdy race of small farmers. These, however, I believe, are but casual breaks in the general system I have mentioned.

In rural occupation, there is nothing mean and debasing. It leads a man forth among scenes of natural
grandeur and beauty; it leaves him to the workings of his own mind, operated upon by the purest and most elevating of external influences. Such a man may be simple and rough, but he cannot be vulgar. The man of refinement, therefore, finds nothing revolting in an intercourse with the lower orders in rural life, as he does when he casually mingles with the lower orders of cities. He lays aside his distance and reserve, and is glad to waive the distinctions of rank, and to enter into the honest, heart-felt enjoyments of common life. Indeed, the very amusements of the country bring men more and more together; and the sound of hound and horn blend all feelings into harmony. I believe this is one great reason why the nobility and gentry are more popular among the inferior orders in England, than they are in any other country; and why the latter have endured so many excessive pressures and extremities, without repining more generally at the unequal distribution of fortune and privilege.

To this mingling of cultivated and rustic society, may also be attributed the rural feeling that runs through British literature; the frequent use of illustrations from rural life; those incomparable descriptions of Nature, that abound in the British poets—that have continued down from "the Flower and the Leaf" of Chaucer, and have brought into our closets all the freshness and fragrance of the dewy landscape. The pastoral writers of other countries appear as if they had paid Nature an occasional visit, and become acquainted with her general charms; but the British
poets have lived and revelled with her—they have wooed her in her most secret haunts—they have watched her minutest caprices. A spray could not tremble in the breeze—a leaf could not rustle to the ground—a diamond drop could not patter in the stream—a fragrance could not exhale from the humble violet, nor a daisy unfold its crimson tints to the morning, but it has been noticed by these impassioned and delicate observers, and wrought up into some beautiful morality.

The effect of this devotion of elegant minds to rural occupations, has been wonderful on the face of the country. A great part of the island is rather level, and would be monotonous, were it not for the charms of culture; but it is studded and gemmed, as it were, with castles and palaces, and embroidered with parks and gardens. It does not abound in grand and sublime prospects, but rather in little home scenes of rural repose and sheltered quiet. Every antique farm-house and moss-grown cottage is a picture; and as the roads are continually winding, and the view is shut in by groves and hedges, the eye is delighted by a continual succession of small landscapes of captivating loveliness.

The great charm, however, of English scenery, is the moral feeling that seems to pervade it. It is associated in the mind with ideas of order, of quiet, of sober well-established principles, of hoary usage and reverend custom. Every thing seems to be the growth of ages of regular and peaceful existence. The old church, of remote architecture, with its low massive
portal; its gothic tower; its windows, rich with tracery and painted glass, in scrupulous preservation—its stately monuments of warriors and worthies of the olden time, ancestors of the present lords of the soil—its tombstones, recording successive generations of sturdy yeomanry, whose progeny still plough the same fields, and kneel at the same altar—the parsonage, a quaint irregular pile, partly antiquated, but repaired and altered in the tastes of various ages and occupants—the stile and footpath leading from the churchyard, across pleasant fields, and along shady hedges, rows, according to an immemorable right of way—the neighbouring village, with its venerable cottages, its public green, sheltered by trees, under which the forefathers of the present race have sported—the antique family mansion, standing apart in some little rural domain, but looking down with a protecting air on the surrounding scene—all these common features of English landscape evince a calm and settled security, a hereditary transmission of home-bred virtues and local attachments, that speak deeply and touchingly for the moral character of the nation.

It is a pleasing sight, of a Sunday morning, when the bell is sending its sober melody across the quiet fields, to behold the peasantry in their best finery, with ruddy faces, and modest cheerfulness, thronging tranquilly along the green lanes to church; but it is still more pleasing to see them in the evenings, gathering about their cottage doors, and appearing to exult in the humble comforts and embellishments which their own hands have spread around them.
IN ENGLAND.

It is this sweet home feeling, this settled repose of affection in the domestic scene, that is, after all, the parent of the steadiest virtues and purest enjoyments; and I cannot close these desultory remarks better, than by quoting the words of a modern English poet who has depicted it with remarkable felicity.

Through each gradation, from the castled hall,
The city dome, the villa crowned with shade,
But chief from modest mansions numberless,
In town or hamlet, shelt'ring middle life,
Down to the cottaged vale, and straw-roof'd shed,
This western isle has long been famed for scenes
Where bliss domestic finds a dwelling-place:
Domestic bliss, that like a harmless dove,
(Honour and sweet endearment keeping guard,)
Can centre in a little quiet nest
All that desire would fly for through the earth;
That can, the world eluding, be itself
A world enjoyed; that wants no witnesses
But its own sharers, and approving Heaven.
That, like a flower deep hid in rocky cleft,
Smiles, though 'tis looking only at the sky.*

*From a poem on the death of the Princess Charlotte, by the Reverend Rann Kennedy, A. M.
THE BROKEN HEART.

I never heard
Of any true affection, but 't was nipt
With care, that, like the caterpillar, eats
The leaves of the spring's sweetest book, the rose.

MIDDLETON.

It is a common practice with those who have outlived the susceptibility of early feeling, or have been brought up in the gay heartlessness of dissipated life, to laugh at all love stories, and to treat the tales of romantic passion as mere fictions of novelists and poets. My observations on human nature have induced me to think otherwise. They have convinced me, that however the surface of the character may be chilled and frozen by the cares of the world, or cultivated into mere smiles by the arts of society, still there are dormant fires lurking in the depths of the coldest bosom, which, when once enkindled, become impetuous, and are sometimes desolating in their effects. Indeed, I am a true believer in the blind deity, and go to the full extent of his doctrines. Shall I confess it!—I believe in broken hearts, and the possibility of dying of disappointed love! I do not, however, consider it a malady often fatal to my own sex; but I firmly believe that it withers down many a lovely woman into an early grave.
THE BROKEN HEART.

Man is the creature of interest and ambition. His nature leads him forth into the struggle and bustle of the world. Love is but the embellishment of his early life, or a song piped in the intervals of the acts. He seeks for fame, for fortune, for space in the world's thought, and dominion over his fellow-men. But a woman's whole life is a history of the affections. The heart is her world; it is there her ambition strives for empire—it is there her avarice seeks for hidden treasures. She sends forth her sympathies on adventure; she embarks her whole soul in the traffic of affection; and if shipwrecked, her case is hopeless—for it is a bankruptcy of the heart.

To a man, the disappointment of love may occasion some bitter pangs: it wounds some feelings of tenderness—it blasts some prospects of felicity; but he is an active being; he may dissipate his thoughts in the whirl of varied occupation, or may plunge into the tide of pleasure; or, if the scene of disappointment be too full of painful associations, he can shift his abode at will, and taking, as it were, the wings of the morning, can "fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, and be it rest."

But woman's is comparatively a fixed, a secluded, and a meditative life. She is more the companion of her own thoughts and feelings; and if they are turned to ministers of sorrow, where shall she look for consolation? Her lot is to be wooed and won; and if unhappy in her love, her heart is like some fortress that has been captured, and sacked, and abandoned, and left désolate.
How many bright eyes grow dim—how many soft cheeks grow pale—how many lovely forms fade away into the tomb, and none can tell the cause that blighted their loveliness! As the dove will clasp its wings to its side, and cover and conceal the arrow that is piercing on its vitals—so is it the nature of woman, to hide from the world the pangs of wounded affection. The love of a delicate female is always shy and silent. Even when fortunate, she scarcely breathes it to herself; but when otherwise, she buries it in the recesses of her bosom, and there lets it cower and brood among the ruins of her peace. With her, the desire of her heart has failed—the great charm of existence is at an end. She neglects all the cheerful exercises which gladden the spirits, quicken the pulses, and send the tide of life in healthful currents through the veins. Her rest is broken—the sweet refreshment of sleep is poisoned by melancholy dreams—"dry sorrow drinks her blood," until her enfeebled frame sinks under the slightest external injury. Look for her, after a little while, and you find friendship weeping over her untimely grave, and wondering that one, who but lately glowed with all the radiance of health and beauty, should so speedily be brought down to "darkness and the worm." You will be told of some wintry chill, some casual indisposition, that laid her low—but no one knows the mental malady that previously sapped her strength, and made her so easy a prey to the spoiler.

She is like some tender tree, the pride and beauty of the grove: graceful in its form, bright in its foliage,
ut with the worm preying at its heart. We find it
uddenly withering, when it should be most fresh and
uxuriant. We see it drooping its branches to the
arth, and shedding leaf by leaf; until, wasted and
perished away, it falls even in the stillness of the for-
et; and as we muse over the beautiful ruin, we strive
in vain to recollect the blast or thunderbolt that could
have smitten it with decay.

I have seen many instances of women running to
waste and self-neglect, and disappearing gradually
from the earth, almost as if they had been exhaled to
heaven; and have repeatedly fancied, that I could
trace their deaths through the various declensions of
consumption, cold, debility, languor, melancholy, un-
til I reached the first symptom of disappointed love.
But an instance of the kind was lately told to me; the
circumstances are well known in the country where
they happened, and I shall but give them in the man-
ner in which they were related.

Every one must recollect the tragical story of young
E——, the Irish patriot: it was too touching to be
soon forgotten. During the troubles in Ireland he was
tried, condemned, and executed, on a charge of trea-
son. His fate made a deep impression on public sym-
pathy. He was so young——so intelligent——so generous
——so brave——so every thing that we are apt to like in
a young man. His conduct under trial, too, was so
lofty and intrepid. The noble indignation with which
he repelled the charge of treason against his country
—the eloquent vindication of his name—and his pa-
thetic appeal to posterity, in the hopeless hour of con-
demnation—all these entered deeply into every generous bosom, and even his enemies lamented the stern policy that dictated his execution.

But there was one heart, whose anguish it would be impossible to describe. In happier days and fairer fortunes, he had won the affections of a beautiful and interesting girl, the daughter of a late celebrated Irish barrister. She loved him with the disinterested favour of a woman's first and early love. When every worldly maxim arrayed itself against him; when blasted in fortune, and disgrace and danger darkened around his name, she loved him the more ardently for his very sufferings. If, then, his fate could awaken the sympathy even of his foes, what must have been the agony of her, whose whole soul was occupied by his image? Let those tell who have had the portals of the tomb suddenly closed between them and the being they most loved on earth—who have sat at its threshold, as one shut out in a cold and lonely world, from whence all that was most lovely and loving had departed.

But then the horrors of such a grave!—so frightful, so dishonoured! There was nothing for memory to dwell on that could soothe the pang of separation—none of those tender, though melancholy circumstances, that endear the parting scene—nothing to melt sorrow into those blessed tears, sent, like the dews of heaven, to revive the heart in the parting hour of anguish.

To render her widowed situation more desolate, she had incurred her father's displeasure by her un-
fortunate attachment, and was an exile from the paternal roof. But could the sympathy and kind offices of friends have reached a spirit so shocked and driven in by horror, she would have experienced no want of consolation, for the Irish are a people of quick and generous sensibilities. The most delicate and cherishing attentions were paid her, by families of wealth and distinction. She was led into society, and they tried by all kinds of occupation and amusement to dissipate her grief, and wean her from the tragical story of her loves. But it was all in vain. There are some strokes of calamity that scathe and scorch the soul—that penetrate to the vital seat of happiness—and blast it, never again to put forth bud or blossom. She never objected to frequent the haunts of pleasure, but she was as much alone there, as in the depths of solitude. She walked about in a sad reverie, apparently unconscious of the world around her. She carried with her an inward wo that mocked at all the blandishments of friendship, and "heeded not the song of the charmer, charm he never so wisely."

The person who told me her story had seen her at a masquerade. There can be no exhibition of far-gone wretchedness more striking and painful than to meet it in such a scene. To find it wandering like a spectre, lonely and joyless, where all around is gay—to see it dressed out in the trappings of mirth, and looking so wan and wo-begone, as if it had tried in vain to cheat the poor heart into a momentary forgetfulness of sorrow. After strolling through the splendid rooms and giddy crowd with an air of utter ab-

Vol. I.
straction, she sat herself down on the steps of an orchestra, and looking about for some time with a vacant air, that showed her insensibility to the garish scene, she began, with the capriciousness of a sickly heart, to warble a little plaintive air. She had an exquisite voice; but on this occasion it was so simple, so touching—it breathed forth such a soul of wretchedness—that she drew a crowd, mute and silent, around her, and melted every one into tears.

The story of one so true and tender could not but excite great interest in a country remarkable for enthusiasm. It completely won the heart of a brave officer, who paid his addresses to her, and thought that one so true to the dead, could not but prove affectionate to the living. She declined his attentions, for her thoughts were irrecoverably engrossed by the memory of her former lover. He, however, persisted in his suit. He solicited not her tenderness, but her esteem. He was assisted by her conviction of his worth, and her sense of her own destitute and dependent situation, for she was existing on the kindness of friends. In a word, he at length succeeded in gaining her hand, though with the solemn assurance, that her heart was unalterably another's.

He took her with him to Sicily, hoping that a change of scene might wear out the remembrance of early woes. She was an amiable and exemplary wife, and made an effort to be a happy one; but nothing could cure the silent and devouring melancholy that had entered into her very soul. She wasted
way in a slow, but hopeless decline, and at length
sink into the grave, the victim of a broken heart.

It was on her that Moore, the distinguished Irish
poet, composed the following lines:

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And lovers around her are sighing;
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild song of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking—
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking!

He had lived for his love—for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him—
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him!

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the west,
From her own loved island of sorrow!
THE
ART OF BOOK-MAKING.

"If that severe doom of Synesius be true—'it is a greater
offence to steal dead men's labours than their clothes,'—what
shall become of most writers?"
Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.

I have often wondered at the extreme secundity
of the press, and how it comes to pass that so many
heads, on which Nature seems to have inflicted the
curse of barrenness, yet teem with voluminous pro-
ductions. As a man travels on, however, in the jour-
ney of life, his objects of wonder daily diminish, and
he is continually finding out some very simple cause
for some great matter of marvel. Thus have I chanced,
in my peregrinations about this great metropolis, to
blunder upon a scene which unfolded to me some of
the mysteries of the book-making craft, and at once
put an end to my astonishment.

I was one summer's day loitering through the great
saloons of the British Museum, with that listlessness
with which one is apt to saunter about a room in
warm weather; sometimes lolling over the glass cases
of minerals, sometimes studying the hieroglyphics on
an Egyptian mummy, and sometimes trying, with
nearly equal success, to comprehend the allegorical
paintings on the lofty ceilings. While I was gazing
about in this idle way, my attention was attracted to
a distant floor, at the end of a suite of apartments. It was closed, but every now and then it would open, and some strange-favoured being, generally clothed in black, would steal forth, and glide through the rooms, without noticing any of the surrounding objects. There was an air of mystery about this that piqued my languid curiosity, and I determined to attempt the passage of that strait, and to explore the unknown regions that lay beyond. The door yielded to my hand, with all that facility with which the portals of enchanted castles yield to the adventurous knight-errant. I found myself in a spacious chamber, surrounded with great cases of venerable books. Above the cases, and just under the cornice, were arranged a great number of quaint black-looking portraits of ancient authors. About the room were placed long tables, with stands for reading and writing, at which sat many pale, cadaverous personages, poring intently over dusty volumes, rummaging among mouldy manuscripts, and taking copious notes of their contents. The most hushed stillness reigned through this mysterious apartment, excepting that you might hear the racing of pens over sheets of paper, or, occasionally, the deep sigh of one of these sages, as he shifted his position to turn over the page of an old folio; doubtless arising from that hollowness and flatulency incident to learned research.

Now and then one of these personages would write something on a small slip of paper, and ring a bell, whereupon a familiar would appear, take the paper in profound silence, glide out of the room, and return
shortly loaded with ponderous tomes, upon which the other would fall, tooth and nail, with famished voracity. I had no longer a doubt that I had happened upon a body of magi, deeply engaged in the study of occult sciences. The scene reminded me of an old Arabian tale, of a philosopher, who was shut up in an enchanted library, in the bosom of a mountain, that opened only once a year; where he made the spirits of the place obey his commands, and bring him books of all kinds of dark knowledge, so that at the end of the year, when the magic portal once more swung open on its hinges, he issued forth so versed in forbidden lore, as to be able to soar above the heads of the multitude, and to control the powers of Nature.

My curiosity being now fully aroused, I whispered to one of the familiars, as he was about to leave the room, and begged an interpretation of the strange scene before me. A few words were sufficient for the purpose:—I found that these mysterious personages, whom I had mistaken for magi, were principally authors, and were in the very act of manufacturing books. I was, in fact, in the reading-room of the great British Library, an immense collection of volumes of all ages and languages, many of which are now forgotten, and most of which are seldom read. To these sequestered pools of obsolete literature, therefore, do many modern authors repair, and draw buckets full of classic lore, or "pure English, undefiled," wherewith to swell their own scanty rills of thought.

Being now in possession of the secret, I sat down in a corner, and watched the process of this book
manufactory. I noticed one lean, bilious-looking wight, who sought none but the most worm-eaten volumes, printed in black-letter. He was evidently constructing some work of profound erudition, that would be purchased by every man who wished to be thought learned, placed upon a conspicuous shelf of his library, or laid open upon his table— but never read. I observed him, now and then, draw a large fragment of biscuit out of his pocket, and gnaw; whether it was his dinner, or whether he was endeavouring to keep off that exhaustion of the stomach, produced by much pondering over dry works, I leave to harder students than myself to determine.

There was one dapper little gentleman in bright coloured clothes, with a chirping gossiping expression of countenance, who had all the appearance of an author on good terms with his bookseller. After considering him attentively, I recognised in him a diligent getter-up of miscellaneous works, which bustled off well with the trade. I was curious to see how he manufactured his wares. He made more stir and show of business than any of the others; dipping into various books, fluttering over the leaves of manuscripts, taking a morsel out of one, a morsel out of another, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." The contents of his book seemed to be as heterogeneous as those of the witches' cauldron in Macbeth. It was here a finger and there a thumb, toe of frog and blind worm's sting, with his own gossip poured in like "baboon's blood," to make the medley "slab and good."
After all, thought I, may not this pilfering disposition be implanted in authors for wise purposes? may it not be the way in which Providence has taken care that the seeds of knowledge and wisdom shall be preserved from age to age, in spite of the inevitable decay of the works in which they were first produced? We see that Nature has wisely, though whimsically provided for the conveyance of seeds from clime to clime, in the maws of certain birds; so that animals, which, in themselves, are little better than carrion, and apparently the lawless plunderers of the orchard and the corn-field, are, in fact, Nature's carriers to disperse and perpetuate her blessings. In like manner, the beauties and fine thoughts of ancient and obsolete writers are caught up by these flights of predatory authors, and cast forth, again to flourish and bear fruit in a remote and distant tract of time. Many of their works, also, undergo a kind of metempsychosis, and spring up under new forms. What was formerly a ponderous history, revives in the shape of a romance—an old legend changes into a modern play—and a sober philosophical treatise furnishes the body for a whole series of bouncing and sparkling essays. Thus it is in the clearing of our American woodlands; where we burn down a forest of stately pines, a progeny of dwarf oaks start up in their place; and we never see the prostrate trunk of a tree, mouldering into soil, but it gives birth to a whole tribe of fungi.

Let us not, then, lament over the decay and oblivion into which ancient writers descend; they do but sub
mit to the great law of Nature, which declares that all sublunary shapes of matter shall be limited in their duration, but which decrees, also, that their elements shall never perish. Generation after generation, both in animal and vegetable life, passes away, but the vital principle is transmitted to posterity, and the species continue to flourish. Thus, also, do authors beget authors, and having produced a numerous progeny, in a good old age they sleep with their fathers; that is to say, with the authors who preceded them—and from whom they had stolen.

Whilst I was indulging in these rambling fancies, I had leaned my head against a pile of reverend folios. Whether it was owing to the soporific emanations from these works; or to the profound quiet of the room; or to the lassitude arising from much wandering; or to an unlucky habit of napping at improper times and places, with which I am grievously afflicted, so it was, that I fell into a doze. Still, however, my imagination continued busy, and indeed the same scene remained before my mind’s eye, only a little changed in some of the details. I dreamt that the chamber was still decorated with the portraits of ancient authors, but the number was increased. The long tables had disappeared, and in place of the sage magi, I beheld a ragged, threadbare throng, such as may be seen plying about the great repository of cast-off clothes, Monmouth-street. Whenever they seized upon a book, by one of those incongruities common to dreams, methought it turned into a garment of foreign or antique fashion, with which they
proceeded to equip themselves. I noticed, however, that no one pretended to clothe himself from any particular suit, but took a sleeve from one, a cape from another, a skirt from a third, thus decking himself out piecemeal, while some of his original rags would peep out from among his borrowed finery.

There was a portly, rosy, well-fed parson, whom I observed ogling several mouldy polemical writers through an eye-glass. He soon contrived to slip on the voluminous mantle of one of the old fathers, and having purloined the gray beard of another, endeavoured to look exceedingly wise; but the smirking commonplace of his countenance set at nought all the trappings of wisdom. One sickly looking gentleman was busied embroidering a very flimsy garment with gold thread drawn out of several old court-dresses of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Another had trimmed himself magnificently from an illuminated manuscript, had stuck a nosegay in his bosom, culled from "The Paradise of Dainty Devices," and having put Sir Philip Sidney's hat on one side of his head, strutted off with an exquisite air of vulgar elegance. A third, who was but of puny dimensions, had bolstered himself out bravely with the spoils from several obscure tracts of philosophy, so that he had a very imposing front, but he was lamentably tattered in rear, and I perceived that he had patched his small clothes with scraps of parchment from a Latin author.

There were some well-dressed gentlemen, it is true, who only helped themselves to a gem or so, which sparkled among their own ornaments, without eclips-
ing them. Some, too, seemed to contemplate the costumes of the old writers, merely to imbibe their principles of taste, and to catch their air and spirit; but I grieve to say, that too many were apt to array themselves, from top to toe, in the patch-work manner I have mentioned. I should not omit to speak of one genius, in drab breeches and gaiters, and an Arcadian hat, who had a violent propensity to the pastoral, but whose rural wanderings had been confined to the classic haunts of Primrose Hill, and the solitudes of the Regent's Park. He had decked himself in wreaths and ribands from all the old pastoral poets, and hanging his head on one side, went about with a fantastical, lack-a-daisical air, "babbling about green fields." But the personage that most struck my attention, was a pragmatical old gentleman, in clerical robes, with a remarkably large and square, but bald head. He entered the room wheezing and puffing, elbowed his way through the throng, with a look of sturdy self-confidence, and having laid hands upon a thick Greek quarto, clapped it upon his head, and swept majestically away in a formidable frizzled wig.

In the height of this literary masquerade, a cry suddenly resounded from every side, of "thieves! thieves!" I looked, and lo! the portraits about the walls became animated! The old authors thrust out first a head, then a shoulder, from the canvas, looked down curiously, for an instant, upon the motley throng, and then descended, with fury in their eyes, to claim their rifled property. The scene of scampering and hubbub that ensued baffles all description. The un-
happy culprits endeavoured in vain to escape with their plunder. On one side might be seen half-dozen old monks, stripping a modern professor; on another, there was sad devastation carried into the ranks of modern dramatic writers. Beaumont and Fletcher, side by side, raged round the field like Castor and Pollux, and sturdy Ben Jonson enacted more wonders than when a volunteer with the army in Flanders. As to the dapper little compiler of farragos, mentioned some time since, he had arrayed himself in as many patches and colours as Harlequin, and there was as fierce a contention of claimants about him, as about the dead body of Patroclus. I was grieved to see many men, whom I had been accustomed to look upon with awe and reverence, fain to steal off with scarce a rag to cover their nakedness. Just then my eye was caught by the pragmatical old gentleman in the Greek grizzled wig, who was scrambling away in sore affright with half a score of authors in full cry after him. They were close upon his haunches; in a twinkling off went his wig; at every turn some strip of raiment was peeled away; until in a few moments, from his domineering pomp, he shrunk into a little pursy, "chopp'd bald shot," and made his exit with only a few tags and rags fluttering at his back.

There was something so ludicrous in the catastrophe of this learned Theban, that I burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, which broke the whole illusion. The tumult and the scuffle were at an end. The chamber resumed its usual appearance. The old authors shrunk back into their picture-frames, and
hung in shadowy solemnity along the walls. In short, I found myself wide awake in my corner, with the whole assemblage of bookworms gazing at me with astonishment. Nothing of the dream had been real but my burst of laughter, a sound never before heard in that grave sanctuary, and so abhorrent to the ears of wisdom, as to electrify the fraternity.

The librarian now stepped up to me, and demanded whether I had a card of admission. At first I did not comprehend him, but I soon found that the library was a kind of literary "preserve," subject to game laws, and that no one must presume to hunt there without special license and permission. In a word, I stood convicted of being an arrant poacher, and was glad to make a precipitate retreat, lest I should have a whole pack of authors let loose upon me.

Vol. I. K
A ROYAL POET.

Though your body be confined
And soft love a prisoner bound,
Yet the beauty of your mind
Neither check nor chain hath found.
Look out nobly, then, and dare
Even the fetters that you wear.

FLETCHER.

On a soft sunny morning in the genial month of May, I made an excursion to Windsor Castle. It is a place full of storied and poetical associations. The very external aspect of the proud old pile is enough to inspire high thought. It rears its irregular walls and massive towers, like a mural crown around the brow of a lofty ridge, waves its royal banner in the clouds, and looks down with a lordly air upon the surrounding world.

On this morning, the weather was of this voluptuous vernal kind which calls forth all the latent romance of a man's temperament, filling his mind with music, and disposing him to quote poetry and dream of beauty. In wandering through the magnificent saloons and long echoing galleries of the castle, I passed with indifference by whole rows of portraits of warriors and statesmen, but lingered in the chamber where hang the likenesses of the beauties that graced the gay court of Charles the Second; and as I gazed upon them, depicted with amorous half-dis-
bevelled tresses, and the sleepy eye of love, I blessed
the pencil of Sir Peter Lely, which had thus enabled
me to bask in the reflected rays of beauty. In trav-
ering also the "large green courts," with sunshine
beaming on the gray walls and glancing along the
velvet turf, my mind was engrossed with the image
of the tender, the gallant, but hapless Surrey, and his
account of his loiterings about them in his stripling
days, when enamoured of the Lady Geraldine—

"With eyes cast up unto the maiden's tower,
With easie sighs, such as men draw in love."

In this mood of mere poetical susceptibility, I visit-
ed the ancient keep of the castle, where James the
First of Scotland, the pride and theme of Scottish
poets and historians, was for many years of his youth
detained a prisoner of state. It is a large gray tower,
that has stood the brunt of ages, and is still in good
preservation. It stands on a mound which elevates
it above the other parts of the castle, and a great flight
of steps leads to the interior. In the armoury, which
is a Gothic hall, furnished with weapons of various
kinds and ages, I was shown a coat of armour hanging
against the wall, which I was told had once belonged
to James. From hence I was conducted up a stair-
case to a suite of apartments of faded magnificence,
hung with storied tapestry, which formed his prison,
and the scene of that passionate and fanciful amour,
which has woven into the web of his story the
magical hues of poetry and fiction.

The whole history of this amiable but unfortunate
prince is highly romantic. At the tender age of eleven, he was sent from home by his father, Robert III., and destined for the French court, to be reared under the eye of the French monarch, secure from the treachery and danger that surrounded the royal house of Scotland. It was his mishap, in the course of his voyage, to fall into the hands of the English, and he was detained a prisoner by Henry IV., notwithstanding that a truce existed between the two countries.

The intelligence of his capture, coming in the train of many sorrows and disasters, proved fatal to his unhappy father.

"The news," we are told, "was brought to him while at supper, and did so overwhelm him with grief, that he was almost ready to give up the ghost into the hands of the servants that attended him. But being carried to his bed-chamber, he abstained from all food, and in three days died of hunger and grief, at Rothesay."*

James was detained in captivity above eighteen years; but, though deprived of personal liberty, he was treated with the respect due to his rank. Care was taken to instruct him in all the branches of useful knowledge cultivated at that period, and to give him those mental and personal accomplishments deemed proper for a prince. Perhaps in this respect, his imprisonment was an advantage, as it enabled him to apply himself the more exclusively to his improvement, and quietly to imbibe that rich fund of knowledge, and to

* Buchanan.
cherish those elegant tastes, which have given such a lustre to his memory. The picture drawn of him in early life, by the Scottish historians, is highly captivating, and seems rather the description of a hero of romance, than of a character in real history. He was well learnt, we are told, "to fight with the sword, to joust, to tournay, to wrestle, to sing and dance; he was an expert mediciner, right crafty in playing both of lute and harp, and sundry other instruments of music, and was expert in grammar, oratory, and poetry."*

With this combination of manly and delicate accomplishments, fitting him to shine both in active and elegant life, and calculated to give him an intense relish for joyous existence, it must have been a severe trial, in an age of bustle and chivalry, to pass the spring-time of his years in monotonous captivity. It was the good fortune of James, however, to be gifted with a powerful poetic fancy, and to be visited in his prison by the choicest inspirations of the muse. Some minds corrode, and grow inactive, under the loss of personal liberty; others grow morbid and irritable; but it is the nature of the poet to become tender and imaginative in the loneliness of confinement. He banquets upon the honey of his own thoughts, and, like the captive bird, pours forth his soul in melody.

* Ballenden’s translation of Hector Boyce,
Even there her charming melody doth prove
That all her boughs are trees, her cage a grove.*

Indeed, it is the divine attribute of the imagination,
that it is irrepressible, unconfinable; that when the
real world is shut out, it can create a world for itself,
and, with necromantic power, can conjure up glorious
shapes and forms, and brilliant visions, to make soli-
tude populous, and irradiate the gloom of the dungeon.
Such was the world of pomp and pageant that lived
round Tasso in his dismal cell at Ferrara, when he
conceived the splendid scenes of his Jerusalem; and
we may conceive the "King’s Quair,"† composed by
James during his captivity at Windsor, as another of
those beautiful breakings forth of the soul from the
restraint and gloom of the prison-house.

The subject of his poem is his love for the lady
Jane Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and
a princess of the blood-royal of England, of whom he
became enamoured in the course of his captivity.
What gives it peculiar value, is, that it may be con-
sidered a transcript of the royal bard’s true feelings,
and the story of his real loves and fortunes. It is not
often that sovereigns write poetry, or that poets deal
in fact. It is gratifying to the pride of a common
man, to find a monarch thus suing, as it were, for ad-
mission into his closet, and seeking to win his favour
by administering to his pleasures. It is a proof of the
honest equality of intellectual competition, which
strips off all the trappings of factitious dignity, brings

* Roger L’Estrange.  † Quair, an old term for Book.
the candidate down to a level with his fellow-men, and obliges him to depend on his own native powers for distinction. It is curious, too, to get at the history of a monarch’s heart, and to find the simple affections of human nature throbbing under the ermine. But James had learnt to be a poet before he was a king; he was schooled in adversity, and reared in the company of his own thoughts. Monarchs have seldom time to parley with their hearts, or to meditate their minds into poetry; and had James been brought up amidst the adulation and gayety of a court, we should never, in all probability, have had such a poem as the Quair.

I have been particularly interested by those parts of the poem which breathe his immediate thoughts concerning his situation, or which are connected with the apartment in the Tower. They have thus a personal and local charm, and are given with such circumstantial truth, as to make the reader present with the captive in his prison, and the companion of his meditations.

Such is the account which he gives of his weariness of spirit, and of the incident that first suggested the idea of writing the poem. It was the still mid-watch of a clear moonlight night; the stars, he says, were twinkling as the fire in the high vault of heaven, and “Cynthia rinsing her golden locks in Aquarius”—he lay in bed wakeful and restless, and took a book to beguile the tedious hours. The book he chose was Boetius’ Consolations of Philosophy, a work popular among the writers of that day, and which had been
translated by his great prototype Chaucer. From the high eulogium in which he indulges, it is evident this was one of his favourite volumes while in prison; and indeed, it is an admirable text-book for meditation under adversity. It is the legacy of a noble and enduring spirit, purified by sorrow and suffering, bequeathing to its successors in calamity the maxims of sweet morality, and the trains of eloquent but simple reasoning, by which it was enabled to bear up against the various ills of life. It is a talisman which the unfortunate may treasure up in his bosom, or, like the good King James, lay upon his nightly pillow.

After closing the volume, he turns its contents over in his mind, and gradually falls into a fit of musing on the fickleness of fortune, the vicissitudes of his own life, and the evils that had overtaken him even in his tender youth. Suddenly he hears the bell ringing to matins, but its sound chiming in with his melancholy fancies, seems to him like a voice exhorting him to write his story. In the spirit of poetic errantry, he determines to comply with this intimation; he therefore takes pen in hand, makes with it a sign of the cross, to implore a benediction, and sallies forth into the fairy land of poetry. There is something extremely fanciful in all this, and it is interesting, as furnishing a striking and beautiful instance of the simple manner in which whole trains of poetical thought are sometimes awakened, and literary enterprises suggested to the mind.

In the course of his poem, he more than once bewails the peculiar hardness of his fate, thus doomed
to lonely and inactive life, and shut up from the freedom and pleasure of the world, in which the meanest animal indulges unrestrained. There is a sweetness, however, in his very complaints; they are the lamentations of an amiable and social spirit, at being denied the indulgence of its kind and generous propensities; there is nothing in them harsh or exaggerated; they flow with a natural and touching pathos, and are perhaps rendered more touching by their simple brevity. They contrast finely with those elaborate and iterated repinings which we sometimes meet with in poetry, the effusions of morbid minds, sickening under miseries of their own creating, and venting their bitterness upon an unoffending world. James speaks of his privations with acute sensibility; but having mentioned them, passes on, as if his manly mind disdained to brood over unavoidable calamities. When such a spirit breaks forth into complaint, however brief, we are aware how great must be the suffering that extorts the murmur. We sympathize with James, a romantic, active, and accomplished prince, cut off in the lusthhood of youth from all the enterprise, the noble uses and vigorous delights of life, as we do with Milton, alive to all the beauties of nature and glories of art, when he breathes forth brief but deep-toned lamentations over his perpetual blindness.

Had not James evinced a deficiency of poetic artifice, we might almost have suspected that these lowerings of gloomy reflection were meant as preparative to the brightest scene of his story, and to contrast with that effulgence of light and loveliness, that ex-
hilarating accompaniment of bird, and song, and foliage, and flower, and all the revel of the year, with which he ushers in the lady of his heart. It is this scene in particular which throws all the magic of romance about the old castle keep. He had risen, he says, at day-break, according to custom, to escape from the dreary meditations of a sleepless pillow. "Bewailing in his chamber thus alone," despairing of all joy and remedy, "for, tired of thought, and woe-begone," he had wandered to the window to indulge the captive's miserable solace, of gazing wistfully upon the world from which he is excluded. The window looked forth upon a small garden which lay at the foot of the tower. It was a quiet, sheltered spot, adorned with arbours and green alleys, and protected from the passing gaze by trees and hawthorn hedges.

Now was there made fast by the tower's walk
A garden faire, and in the corners set,
An arbour green with wandis long and small
Railed about, and so with leaves beset
Was all the place, and hawthorn hedges knet,
That lyf* was none, walkynge there forbye,
That might within scarce any wight espye.

So thick the branches and the leves grene,
Beshaded all the alleys that there were,
And midst of every arbour might be seen
The sharpe, grene, swete juniper,
Growing so faire with branches here and there,
That as it seemed to a lyf without,
The boughs did spread the arbour all about.

* Lyf; person.
A ROYAL POET.

And on the small green twistis* set
The lytel swete nyghtingales, and sung
So loud and clere, the hymnis consecrate
Of lovis use, now soft, now loud among,
That all the garden and the wallis rung
Rygght of their song——-

It was the month of May, when every thing was in
loom, and he interprets the song of the nightingale
into the language of his enamoured feeling:

Worship all ye that lovers be this May;
For of your bliss the kalends are begun,
And sing with us, away, winter. away,
Come, summer, come, the sweet season and sun.

As he gazes on the scene, and listens to the notes
of the birds, he gradually lapses into one of those
ender and undefinable reveries, which fill the youth-
ful bosom in this delicious season. He wonders what
his love may be, of which he has so often read, and
which thus seems breathed forth in the quickening
breath of May, and melting all nature into ecstasy
and song. If it really be so great a felicity, and if it
be a boon thus generally dispensed to the most insig-
ificant of beings, why is he alone cut off from its en-
joyments?

Oft would I think, O Lord, what may this be,
That love is of such noble myght and kynde?
Loving his folk, and such prosperitee,
Is it of him, as we in books do find;
May he oure hertes settyn† and unbynd:

* Twistis, small boughs or twigs.       † Setten, incline.

Note.—The language of the quotations is generally modernised.
Hath he upon oure hertes such maistrye?
Or is all this but seynit fantasye?

For giff he be of so grete excelence
That he of every wight hath care and charge,
What have I giff* to him, or done offense,
That I am thrall'd and birdis go at large?

In the midst of his musing, as he casts his eyes downward, he beholds “the fairest and the freshest young floure” that ever he had seen. It is the lovely Lady Jane, walking in the garden to enjoy the beauty of that “fresh May morrowe.” Breaking thus suddenly upon his sight in a moment of loneliness and excited susceptibility, she at once captivates the fancy of the romantic prince, and becomes the object of his wandering wishes, the sovereign of his ideal world.

There is in this charming scene an evident resemblance to the early part of Chaucer’s Knight’s Tale, where Palamon and Arcite fall in love with Emilia, whom they see walking in the garden of their prison. Perhaps the similarity of the actual fact to the incident which he had read in Chaucer, may have induced James to dwell on it in his poem. His description of the Lady Jane is given in the picturesque and minute manner of his master, and being, doubtless, taken from the life, is a perfect portrait of a beauty of that day. He dwells with the fondness of a lover on every article of her apparel, from the net of pearl, splendent with emeralds and sapphires, that confined her golden hair, even to the “goodly chaine of small

* Giff: what injury have I done, &c.
Orfeverye** about her neck, whereby there hung a ruby in shape of a heart, that seemed, he says, like a spark of fire burning upon her white bosom. Her dress of white tissue was looped up, to enable her to walk with more freedom. She was accompanied by two female attendants, and about her sported a little hound decorated with bells, probably the small Italian hound, of exquisite symmetry, which was a parlour favourite and pet among the fashionable dames of ancient times. James closes his description by a burst of general eulogium:

In her was youth, beauty with humble port,
   Bountee, riches, and womanly feature,
God better knows than my pen can report,
   Wisdom, largesse,† estate,‖ and cunning§ sure.
In every point so guided her measure,
   In word, in deed, in shape, in countenance,
That nature might no more her child advance.

The departure of the Lady Jane from the garden puts an end to this transient riot of the heart. With her departs the amorous illusion that had shed a temporary charm over the scene of his captivity, and he relapses into loneliness, now rendered tenfold more intolerable by this passing beam of unattainable beauty. Through the long and weary day he repines at his unhappy lot, and when evening approaches and Phoebus, as he beautifully expresses it, had "bad farewell to every leaf and flower," he still lingers at the window, and, laying his head upon the cold stone,

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* Wrought gold.
† Largesse, bounty.
‖ Estate, dignity.
§ Cunning, discretion.

Vol. I. L
gives vent to a mingled flow of love and sorrow, until gradually lulled by the mute melancholy of the twilight hour, he lapses, "half sleeping, half swoon," into a vision, which occupies the remainder of the poem, and in which is allegorically shadowed out the history of his passion.

When he wakes from his trance, he rises from his stony pillow, and pacing his apartment full of dreary reflections, questions his spirit whether it has been wandering; whether, indeed, all that has passed before his dreaming fancy has been conjured up by preceding circumstances, or whether it is a vision intended to comfort and assure him in his despondency. If the latter, he prays that some token may be sent to confirm the promise of happier days, given him in his slumbers.

Suddenly a turtle-dove of the purest whiteness comes flying in at the window, and alights upon his hand, bearing in her bill a branch of red gilliflower, on the leaves of which is written in letters of gold, the following sentence:

Awake! awake! I bring, lover, I bring
The news is glad, that blissful is and sure,
Of thy comfort; now laugh, and play, and sing,
For in the heaven decrepit is thy cure.

He receives the branch with mingled hope and dread; reads it with rapture, and this he says was the first token of his succeeding happiness. Whether this is a mere poetic fiction, or whether the Lady Jane did actually send him a token of her favour in this romantic way, remains to be determined according
to the faith or fancy of the reader. He concludes his poem by intimating that the promise conveyed in the vision, and by the flower, is fulfilled by his being restored to liberty, and made happy in the possession of the sovereign of his heart.

Such is the poetical account given by James of his love adventures in Windsor Castle. How much of it is absolute fact, and how much the embellishment of fancy, it is fruitless to conjecture; do not, however, let us always consider whatever is romantic as incompatible with real life, but let us sometimes take a poet at his word. I have noticed merely such parts of the poem as were immediately connected with the tower, and have passed over a large part which was in the allegorical vein, so much cultivated at that day. The language of course is quaint and antiquated, so that the beauty of many of its golden phrases will scarcely be perceived at the present day; but it is impossible not to be charmed with the genuine sentiment, the delightful artlessness and urbanity, which prevail throughout it. The descriptions of Nature, too, with which it is embellished, are given with a truth, a discrimination, and a freshness, worthy of the most cultivated period of the arts.

As an amatory poem, it is edifying, in these days of coarser thinking, to notice the nature, refinement, and exquisite delicacy which pervade it, banishing every gross thought, or immodest expression, and presenting female loveliness clothed in all its chivalrous attributes of almost supernatural purity and grace.

James flourished nearly about the time of Chaucer
and Gower, and was evidently an admirer and studier of their writings. Indeed, in one of his stanzas he acknowledges them as his masters, and in some parts of his poem we find traces of similarity to their productions, more especially to those of Chaucer. There are always, however, general features of resemblance in the works of cotemporary authors, which are not so much borrowed from each other as from the times. Writers, like bees, toll their sweets in the wide world; they incorporate with their own conceptions, the anecdotes and thoughts which are current in society, and thus each generation has some features in common, characteristic of the age in which it lives. James in fact belongs to one of the most brilliant eras of our literary history, and establishes the claims of his country to a participation in its primitive honours. Whilst a small cluster of English writers are constantly cited as the fathers of our verse, the name of their great Scottish compere is apt to be passed over in silence; but he is evidently worthy of being enrolled in that little constellation of remote, but never-failing luminaries, who shine in the highest firmament of literature, and who, like morning stars, sang together at the bright dawning of British poesy.

Such of my readers as may not be familiar with Scottish history, (though the manner in which it has of late been woven with captivating fiction has made it a universal study,) may be curious to learn something of the subsequent history of James, and the fortunes of his love. His passion for the Lady Jane, as it was the solace of his captivity, so it facilitated
his release, it being imagined by the Court, that a connexion with the blood-royal of England would attach him to its own interests. He was ultimately restored to his liberty and crown, having previously espoused the Lady Jane, who accompanied him to Scotland, and made him a most tender and devoted wife.

He found his kingdom in great confusion, the feudal chieftains having taken advantage of the troubles and irregularities of a long interregnum, to strengthen themselves in their possessions, and place themselves above the power of the laws. James sought to found the basis of his power in the affections of his people. He attached the lower orders to him by the reformation of abuses, the temperate and equable administration of justice, the encouragement of the arts of peace, and the promotion of every thing that could diffuse comfort, competency, and innocent enjoyment, through the humblest ranks of society. He mingled occasionally among the common people in disguise; visited their firesides; entered into their cares, their pursuits, and their amusements; informed himself of the mechanical arts, and how they could best be patronized and improved; and was thus an all-pervading spirit, watching with a benevolent eye over the meanest of his subjects. Having in this generous manner made himself strong in the hearts of the common people, he turned himself to curb the power of the factious nobility; to strip them of those dangerous immunities which they had usurped; to punish such as had been guilty of flagrant offences; and to bring
the whole into proper obedience to the crown. For some time they bore this with outward submission, but with secret impatience and brooding resentment. A conspiracy was at length formed against his life, at the head of which was his own uncle, Robert Stewart, Earl of Athol, who, being too old himself for the perpetration of the deed of blood, instigated his grandson, Sir Robert Stewart, together with Sir Robert Graham, and others of less note, to commit the deed. They broke into his bed-chamber at the Dominican convent near Perth, where he was residing, and barbarously murdered him by oft-repeated wounds. His faithful queen, rushing to throw her tender body between him and the sword, was twice wounded in the ineffectual attempt to shield him from the assassin; and it was not until she had been forcibly torn from his person, that the murder was accomplished.

It was the recollection of this romantic tale of former times, and of the golden little poem, which had its birth-place in this tower, that made me visit the old pile with more than common interest. The suit of armour hanging up in the hall, richly gilt and embellished, as if to figure in the tournay, brought the image of the gallant and romantic prince vividly before my imagination. I paced the deserted chambers where he had composed his poem; I leaned upon the window, and endeavoured to persuade myself it was the very one where he had been visited by his vision; I looked out upon the spot where he had first seen the Lady Jane. It was the same genial and
joyous month: the birds were again vying with each other in strains of liquid melody: every thing was bursting into vegetation, and budding forth the tender promise of the year. Time, which delights to obliterate the sterner memorials of human pride, seems to have passed lightly over this little scene of poetry and love, and to have withheld his desolating hand. Several centuries have gone by, yet the garden still flourishes at the foot of the tower. It occupies what was once the moat of the keep, and though some parts have been separated by dividing walls, yet others have still their arbours and shaded walks, as in the days of James; and the whole is sheltered, blooming, and retired. There is a charm about the spot that has been printed by the footsteps of departed beauty, and consecrated by the inspirations of the poet, which is heightened, rather than impaired, by the lapse of ages. It is, indeed, the gift of poetry, to hallow every place in which it moves; to breathe round nature an odour more exquisite than the perfume of the rose, and to shed over it a tint more magical than the blush of morning.

Others may dwell on the illustrious deeds of James as a warrior and a legislator; but I have delighted to view him merely as the companion of his fellow-men, the benefactor of the human heart, stooping from his high estate to sow the sweet flowers of poetry and song in the paths of common life. He was the first to cultivate the vigorous and hardy plant of Scottish genius, which has since been so prolific of the most wholesome and highly flavoured fruit. He carried with him into
the sterner regions of the north, all the fertilizing arts of southern refinement. He did every thing in his power to win his countrymen to the gay, the elegant, and gentle arts which soften and refine the character of a people, and wreathe a grace round the loftiness of a proud and warlike spirit. He wrote many poems, which, unfortunately for the fulness of his fame, are now lost to the world; one, which is still preserved, called "Christ's Kirk of the Green," shows how diligently he had made himself acquainted with the rustic sports and pastimes, which constitute such a source of kind and social feeling among the Scottish peasantry; and with what simple and happy humour he could enter into their joys. He contributed greatly to improve the national music; and traces of his tender sentiment and elegant taste are said to exist in those witching airs, still piped among the wild mountains and lonely glens of Scotland. He has thus connected his image with whatever is most gracious and endearing in the national character; he has embalmed his memory in song, and floated his name down to after-ages in the rich stream of Scottish melody. The recollection of these things was kindling at my heart, as I paced the silent scene of his imprisonment. I have visited Vaucluse with as much enthusiasm as a pilgrim would visit the shrine at Loretto; but I have never felt more poetical devotion than when contemplating the old tower and the little garden at Windsor, and musing over the romantic loves of the Lady Jane, and the Royal Poet of Scotland.
THE
COUNTRY CHURCH.

A gentleman!
What o’ the woolpack? or the sugar-chest?
Or lists of velvet? which is t, pound, or yard,
You vend your gentry by?

BEGGAR’S BUSH.

There are few places more favourable to the study of character, than an English country church. I was once passing a few weeks at the seat of a friend, who resided in the vicinity of one, the appearance of which particularly struck my fancy. It was one of those rich morsels of quaint antiquity, which give such a peculiar charm to English landscape. It stood in the midst of a county filled with ancient families, and contained, within its cold and silent aisles, the congre-gated dust of many noble generations. The interior walls were encrusted with monuments of every age and style. The light streamed through windows dimmed with armorial bearings, richly emblazoned in stained glass. In various parts of the church were tombs of knights, and high-born dames, of gorgeous workmanship, with their effigies in coloured marble. On every side, the eye was struck with some instance of aspiring mortality; some haughty memorial which human pride had erected over its kindred dust, in this temple of the most humble of all religions.
The congregation was composed of the neighbouring people of rank, who sat in pews sumptuously lined and cushioned, furnished with richly-gilded prayer-books, and decorated with their arms upon the pew doors; of the villagers and peasantry, who filled the back seats, and a small gallery beside the organ; and of the poor of the parish, who were ranged on benches in the aisles.

The service was performed by a snuffling, well-fed vicar, who had a snug dwelling near the church. He was a privileged guest at all the tables of the neighbourhood, and had been the keenest fox-hunter in the country, until age and good living had disabled him from doing anything more than ride to see the hounds throw off, and make one at the hunting dinner.

Under the ministry of such a pastor, I found it impossible to get into the train of thought suitable to the time and place; so having, like many other feeble Christians, compromised with my conscience, by laying the sin of my own delinquency at another person's threshold, I occupied myself by making observations on my neighbours.

I was as yet a stranger in England, and curious to notice the manners of its fashionable classes. I found, as usual, that there was the least pretension where there was the most acknowledged title to respect. I was particularly struck, for instance, with the family of a nobleman of high rank, consisting of several sons and daughters. Nothing could be more simple and unassuming than their appearance. They generally
came to church in the plainest equipage, and often on foot. The young ladies would stop and converse in the kindest manner with the peasantry, caress the children, and listen to the stories of the humble cottagers. Their countenances were open and beautifully fair, with an expression of high refinement, but at the same time, a frank cheerfulness, and engaging affability. Their brothers were tall, and elegantly formed. They were dressed fashionably, but simply; with strict neatness and propriety, but without any mannerism or foppishness. Their whole demeanour was easy and natural, with that lofty grace, and noble frankness, which bespeak free-born souls that have never been checked in their growth by feelings of inferiority. There is a healthful hardness about real dignity, that never dreads contact and communion with others, however humble. It is only spurious pride that is morbid and sensitive, and shrinks from every touch. I was pleased to see the manner in which they would converse with the peasantry about those rural concerns and field sports, in which the gentlemen of this country so much delight. In these conversations, there was neither haughtiness on the one part, nor servility on the other; and you were only reminded of the difference of rank by the habitual respect of the peasant.

In contrast to these, was the family of a wealthy citizen, who had amassed a vast fortune, and, having purchased the estate and mansion of a ruined noble man in the neighbourhood, was endeavouring to assume all the style and dignity of a hereditary lord.
of the soil. The family always came to church as prince. They were rolled majestically along in a carriage emblazoned with arms. The crest glittered in silver radiance from every part of the harness where a crest could possibly be placed. A fat coachman in a three-cornered hat, richly laced, and a flaxen wig, curling close round his rosy face, was seated on the box, with a sleek Danish dog beside him. Two footmen in gorgeous liveries, with huge bouquets, and gold-headed canes, lolled behind. The carriage rose and sunk on its long springs with a peculiar stateliness of motion. The very horses champed their bits, arched their necks, and glanced their eyes more proudly than common horses; either because they had got a little of the family feeling, or were reined up more tightly than ordinary.

I could not but admire the style with which this splendid pageant was brought up to the gate of the churchyard. There was a vast effect produced at the turning of an angle of the wall;—a great smacking of the whip; straining and scrambling of the horses; glistening of harness, and flashing of wheels through gravel. This was the moment of triumph and vain-glory to the coachman. The horses were urged and checked, until they were fretted into a foam. They threw out their feet in a prancing trot, dashing about pebbles at every step. The crowd of villagers sauntering quietly to church, opened precipitately to the right and left, gaping in vacant admiration. On reaching the gate, the horses were pulled up with a
suddenness that produced an immediate stop, and almost threw them on their haunches.

There was an extraordinary hurry of the footmen to alight, open the door, pull down the steps, and prepare every thing for the descent on earth of this august family. The old citizen first emerged his round red face from out the door, looking about him with the pompous air of a man accustomed to rule on change, and shake the stock-market with a nod. His consort, a fine, fleshy, comfortable dame, followed him. There seemed, I must confess, but little pride in her composition. She was the picture of broad, honest, vulgar enjoyment. The world went well with her; and she liked the world. She had fine clothes, a fine house, a fine carriage, fine children, every thing was fine about her: it was nothing but driving about, and visiting and feasting. Life was to her a perpetual revel; it was one long Lord Mayor's day.

Two daughters succeeded to this goodly couple. They certainly were handsome; but had a supercilious air that chilled admiration, and disposed the spectator to be critical. They were ultra-fashionables in dress, and, though no one could deny the richness of their decorations, yet their appropriateness might be questioned amidst the simplicity of a country church. They descended loftily from the carriage, and moved up the line of peasantry with a step that seemed dainty of the soil it trod on. They cast an excursive glance around, that passed coldly over the burly faces of the peasantry, until they met the eyes

Vol. I

M
of the nobleman's family, when their countenances immediately brightened into smiles, and they made the most profound and elegant courtesies, which were returned in a manner that showed they were but slight acquaintances.

I must not forget the two sons of this aspiring citizen, who came to church in a dashing curricle, with outriders. They were arrayed in the extremity of the mode, with all that pedantry of dress which marks the man of questionable pretensions to style. They kept entirely by themselves, eyeing every one askance that came near them, as if measuring his claims to respectability; yet they were without conversation, except the exchange of an occasional cant phrase. They even moved artificially, for their bodies, in compliance with the caprice of the day, had been disciplined into the absence of all ease and freedom. Art had done every thing to accomplish them as men of fashion, but Nature had denied them the nameless grace. They were vulgarly shaped, like men formed for the common purposes of life, and had that air of supercilious assumption which is never seen in the true gentleman.

I have been rather minute in drawing the pictures of these two families, because I considered them specimens of what is often to be met with in this country—the unpretending great, and the arrogant little. I have no respect for titled rank, unless it be accompanied by true nobility of soul; but I have remarked, in all countries where these artificial distinctions exist, that the very highest classes are always
THE COUNTRY CHURCH.

The most courteous and unassuming. Those who are well assured of their own standing, are least apt to trespass on that of others: whereas, nothing is so offensive as the aspirings of vulgarity, which thinks to elevate itself by humiliating its neighbour.

As I have brought these families into contrast, I must notice their behaviour in church. That of the nobleman’s family was quiet, serious, and attentive. Not that they appeared to have any fervour of devotion, but rather a respect for sacred things, and sacred places, inseparable from good-breeding. The others, on the contrary, were in a perpetual flutter and whisper; they betrayed a continual consciousness of finery, and a sorry ambition of being the wonders of a rural congregation.

The old gentleman was the only one really attentive to the service. He took the whole burden of family devotion upon himself; standing bolt upright, and uttering the responses with a loud voice that might be heard all over the church. It was evident that he was one of these thorough church and king men, who connect the idea of devotion and loyalty; who consider the Deity, some how or other, of the government party, and religion “a very excellent sort of thing, that ought to be countenanced and kept up.”

When he joined so loudly in the service, it seemed more by way of example to the lower orders, to show them, that though so great and wealthy, he was not above being religious; as I have seen a turtle-fed alderman swallow publicly a basin of charity soup,
smacking his lips at every mouthful, and pronouncing it "excellent food for the poor."

When the service was at an end, I was curious to witness the several exits of my groups. The noblemen and their sisters, as the day was fine, preferred strolling home across the fields, chattering to the country people as they went. The others left as they came, in grand parade. Again we saw the equipages wheeled up to the gate. There was the smacking of whips, the clattering of hooves, the glittering of harness. The horses started almost at a bound; the villagers again hurried left and right; the wheels threw up a cloud of dust; the aspiring family was wrapt out of sight in a whirlwind.
THE
WIDOW AND HER SON.

Pittie olde-age, within whose silver haires
Honour and reverence evermore have raigned.

Marlowe's Tamburlaine.

During my residence in the country, I used frequently to attend at the old village church. Its shadowy aisles, its mouldering monuments, its dark oaken panelling, all reverend with the gloom of departed years, seemed to fit it for the haunt of solemn meditation. A Sunday, too, in the country, is so holy in its repose—such a pensive quiet reigns over the face of Nature, that every restless passion is charmed down, and we feel all the natural religion of the soul gently springing up within us.

"Sweet day, so pure, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky!"

I cannot lay claim to the merit of being a devout man; but there are feelings that visit me in a country church, amid the beautiful serenity of Nature, which I experience nowhere else; and if not a more religious, I think I am a better man on Sunday, than on any other day of the seven.

But in this church I felt myself continually thrown back upon the world, by the frigidity and pomp of the poor worms around me. The only being that seemed...
thoroughly to feel the humble and prostrate piety of a true Christian, was a poor decrepit old woman, bending under the weight of years and infirmities. She bore the traces of something better than abject poverty. The lingerings of decent pride were visible in her appearance. Her dress, though humble in the extreme, was scrupulously clean. Some trivial respect, too, had been awarded her, for she did not take her seat among the village poor, but sat alone on the steps of the altar. She seemed to have survived all love, all friendship, all society; and to have nothing left her but the hopes of heaven. When I saw her feebly rising and bending her aged form in prayer; habitually conning her prayer-book, which her palsied hand and failing eyes could not permit her to read, but which she evidently knew by heart; I felt persuaded that the faltering voice of that poor woman arose to heaven far before the responses of the clerk, the swell of the organ, or the chanting of the choir.

I am fond of loitering about country churches; and this was so delightfully situated, that it frequently attracted me. It stood on a knoll, round which a small stream made a beautiful bend, and then wound its way through a long reach of soft meadow scenery. The church was surrounded by yew trees, which seemed almost coeval with itself. Its tall Gothic spire shot up lightly from among them, with rooks and crows generally wheeling about it. I was seated there one still sunny morning, watching two labourers who were digging a grave. They had chosen one of the most remote and neglected corners of the
churchyard, where, by the number of nameless graves around, it would appear that the indigent and friendless were huddled into the earth. I was told that the new-made grave was for the only son of a poor widow. While I was meditating on the distinctions of worldly rank, which extend thus down into the very dust, the toll of the bell announced the approach of the funeral. They were the obsequies of poverty, with which pride had nothing to do. A coffin of the plainest materials, without pall or other covering, was borne by some of the villagers. The sexton walked before with an air of cold indifference. There were no mock mourners in the trappings of affected wo, but there was one real mourner who feebly tottered after the corpse. It was the aged mother of the deceased—the poor old woman whom I had seen seated on the steps of the altar. She was supported by an humble friend, who was endeavouring to comfort her. A few of the neighbouring poor had joined the train, and some children of the village were running hand in hand, now shouting with unthinking mirth, and now pausing to gaze, with childish curiosity, on the grief of the mourner.

As the funeral train approached the grave, the parson issued from the church porch, arrayed in the surplice, with prayer-book in hand, and attended by the clerk. The service, however, was a mere act of charity. The deceased had been destitute, and the survivor was penniless. It was shuffled through, therefore, in form, but coldly and unfeelingly. The well-fed priest moved but a few steps from the church
door; his voice could scarcely be heard at the grave; and never did I hear the funeral service, that sublime and touching ceremony, turned into such a frigid mummerly of words.

I approached the grave. The coffin was placed on the ground. On it were inscribed the name and age of the deceased—"George Somers, aged 36 years." The poor mother had been assisted to kneel down at the head of it. Her withered hands were clasped, as if in prayer; but I could perceive, by a feeble rocking of the body, and a convulsive motion of the lips, that she was gazing on the last relics of her son with the yearnings of a mother's heart.

Preparations were made to deposit the coffin in the earth. There was that bustling stir, which breaks so harshly on the feelings of grief and affection: directions given in the cold tones of business; the striking of spades into sand and gravel; which, at the grave of those we love, is of all sounds the most withering. The bustle around seemed to waken the mother from a wretched reverie. She raised her glazed eyes, and looked about with a faint wildness. As the men approached with cords to lower the coffin into the grave, she wrung her hands, and broke into an agony of grief. The poor woman who attended her, took her by the arm, endeavoured to raise her from the earth, and to whisper something like consolation—"Nay now—nay, now—don't take it so sorely to heart." She could only shake her head, and wring her hands, as one not to be comforted.

As they lowered the body into the earth, the creak-
ng of the cords seemed to agonize her; but when, on some accidental obstruction, there was a jostling of the coffin, all the tenderness of the mother burst forth; as if any harm could come to him who was far beyond the reach of worldly suffering.

I could see no more—my heart swelled into my throat—my eyes filled with tears—I felt as if I were acting a barbarous part in standing by and gazing idly on this scene of maternal anguish. I wandered to another part of the churchyard, where I remained until the funeral train had dispersed.

When I saw the mother slowly and painfully quitting the grave, leaving behind her the remains of all that was dear to her on earth, and returning to silence and destitution, my heart ached for her. What, thought I, are the distresses of the rich? They have friends to soothe—pleasures to beguile—a world to divert and dissipate their griefs. What are the sorrows of the young? Their growing minds soon close above the wound—their elastic spirits soon rise beneath the pressure—their green and ductile affections soon twine around new objects. But the sorrows of the poor, who have no outward appliances to soothe—the sorrows of the aged, with whom life at best is but a wintry day, and who can look for no after-growth of joy—the sorrows of a widow, aged, solitary, destitute, mourning over an only son, the last solace of her years;—these are indeed sorrows which make us feel the impotency of consolation.

It was some time before I left the churchyard. On my way homeward, I met with the woman who had
acted as comforter: she was just returning from accompanying her mother to her lonely habitation, and I drew from her some particulars connected with the affecting scene I had witnessed.

The parents of the deceased had resided in the village from childhood. They had inhabited one of the neatest cottages, and by various rural occupations, and the assistance of a small garden, had supported themselves creditably and comfortably, and led a happy and a blameless life. They had one son, who had grown up to be the staff and pride of their age.—“Oh, sir!” said the good woman, “he was such a comely lad, so sweet-tempered, so kind to every one around him, so dutiful to his parents! It did one’s heart good to see him of a Sunday, drest out in his best, so tall, so straight, so cheery, supporting his old mother to church—for she was always fonder of leaning on George’s arm, than on her good man’s; and, poor soul, she might well be proud of him, for a finer lad there was not in the country round.”

Unfortunately, the son was tempted, during a year of scarcity and agricultural hardship, to enter into the service of one of the small craft that plied on a neighbouring river. He had not been long in this employ, when he was entrapped by a press-gang, and carried off to sea. His parents received tidings of his seizure, but beyond that they could learn nothing. It was the loss of their main prop. The father, who was already infirm, grew heartless and melancholy, and sunk into his grave. The widow, left lonely in her age and feebleness, could no longer support her
self, and came upon the parish. Still there was a kind of feeling toward her throughout the village, and a certain respect as being one of the oldest inhabitants. As no one applied for the cottage in which she had passed so many happy days, she was permitted to remain in it, where she lived solitary and almost helpless. The few wants of nature were chiefly supplied from the scanty productions of her little garden, which the neighbours would now and then cultivate for her. It was but a few days before the time at which these circumstances were told me, that she was gathering some vegetables for her repast, when she heard the cottage-door which faced the garden suddenly opened. A stranger came out, and seemed to be looking eagerly and wildly around. He was dressed in seamen's clothes, was emaciated and ghastly pale, and bore the air of one broken by sickness and hardships. He saw her, and hastened toward her, but his steps were faint and faltering; he sank on his knees before her, and sobbed like a child. The poor woman gazed upon him with a vacant and wandering eye—"Oh my dear, dear mother! don't you know your son? your poor boy George?" It was, indeed, the wreck of her once noble lad; who, shattered by wounds, by sickness, and foreign imprisonment, had, at length, dragged his wasted limbs homeward, to repose among the scenes of his childhood.

I will not attempt to detail the particulars of such a meeting, where sorrow and joy were so completely blended: still he was alive!—he was come home!—he might yet live to comfort and cherish her old age!
Nature, however, was exhausted in him; and if any thing had been wanting to finish the work of fate, the desolation of his native cottage would have been sufficient. He stretched himself on the pallet on which his widowed mother had passed many a sleepless night, and he never rose from it again.

The villagers, when they heard that George Somers had returned, crowded to see him, offering every comfort and assistance that their humble means afforded. He was too weak, however, to talk—he could only look his thanks. His mother was his constant attendant; and he seemed unwilling to be helped by any other hand.

There is something in sickness that breaks down the pride of manhood; that softens the heart, and brings it back to the feelings of infancy. Who that has languished, even in advanced life, in sickness and despondency; who that has pined on a weary bed in the neglect and loneliness of a foreign land; but has thought on the mother “that looked on his childhood,” that smoothed his pillow, and administered to his helplessness? Oh! there is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to a son, that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame, and exult in his prosperity; —and, if misfortune overtake him, he will be the dearer to her from misfortune; and if disgrace settle
upon his name, she will still love and cherish him in spite of his disgrace; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

Poor George Somers had known what it was to be in sickness, and none to soothe—lonely and in prison, and none to visit him. He could not endure his mother from his sight; if she moved away, his eye would follow her. She would sit for hours by his bed, watching him as he slept. Sometimes he would start from a feverish dream, and looking anxiously up until he saw her bending over him, when he would take her hand, lay it on his bosom, and fall asleep with the tranquillity of a child. In this way he died.

My first impulse, on hearing this humble tale of affliction, was to visit the cottage of the mourner, and administer pecuniary assistance, and, if possible, comfort. I found, however, on inquiry, that the good feelings of the villagers had prompted them to do every thing that the case admitted; and as the poor know best how to console each other’s sorrows, I did not venture to intrude.

The next Sunday I was at the village church; when, to my surprise, I saw the poor old woman tottering down the aisle to her accustomed seat on the steps of the altar.

She had made an effort to put on something like mourning for her son; and nothing could be more touching than this struggle between pious affection and utter poverty: a black riband or so—a faded black handkerchief—and one or two more such humble attempts to express by outward signs that grief
which passes show.—When I looked round upon the storied monuments, the stately hatchments, the cold marble pomp, with which grandeur mourned magnificently over departed pride, and turned to this poor widow, bowed down by age and sorrow at the altar of her God, and offering up the prayers and praises of a pious, though a broken heart, I felt that this living monument of real grief was worth them all.

I related her story to some of the wealthy members of the congregation, and they were moved by it. They exerted themselves to render her situation more comfortable, and to lighten her afflictions. It was, however, but smoothing a few steps to the grave. In the course of a Sunday or two after, she was missed from her usual seat at church, and before I left the neighbourhood, I heard, with a feeling of satisfaction, that she had quietly breathed her last, and had gone to rejoin those she loved, in that world where sorrow is never known, and friends are never parted.
THE

BOAR'S HEAD TAVERN,

EASTCHEAP.

A SHAKSPERIAN RESEARCH.

"A tavern is the rendezvous, the exchange, the staple of good fellow. I have heard my great-grandfather tell, how his great-great-grandfather should say, that it was an old proverb when his great-grandfather was a child, that 'it was a good wind that blew a man to the wine.'"

Mother Romie.

It is a pious custom, in some Catholic countries, to honour the memory of saints by votive lights burnt before their pictures. The popularity of a saint, therefore, may be known by the number of these offerings. One, perhaps, is left to moulder in the darkness of his little chapel; another may have a solitary lamp to throw its blinking rays athwart his effigy; while the whole blaze of adoration is lavished at the shrine of some beatified father of renown. The wealthy devotee brings his huge luminary of wax; the eager zealot, his seven-branched candlestick; and even the mendicant pilgrim is by no means satisfied that sufficient light is thrown upon the deceased, unless he hangs up his little lamp of smoking oil. The consequence is, in the eagerness to enlighten, they are often apt to obscure; and I have occasionally seen
an unlucky saint almost smoked out of countenance by the officiousness of his followers.

In like manner has it fared with the immortal Shakspere. Every writer considers it his bounden duty, to light up some portion of his character or works, and to rescue some merit from oblivion. The commentator, opulent in words, produces vast tomes of dissertations; the common herd of editors send up mists of obscurity from their notes at the bottom of each page; and every casual scribbler brings his farthing rush-light of eulogy or research, to swell the cloud of incense and of smoke.

As I honour all established usages of my brethren of the quill, I thought it but proper to contribute my mite of homage to the memory of the illustrious bard. I was for some time, however, sorely puzzled in what way I should discharge this duty. I found myself anticipated in every attempt at a new reading; every doubtful line had been explained a dozen different ways, and perplexed beyond the reach of elucidation; and as to fine passages, they had all been amply praised by previous admirers: nay, so completely had the bard, of late, been overlarded with panegyric by a great German critic, that it was difficult now to find even a fault that had not been argued into a beauty.

In this perplexity, I was one morning turning over his pages, when I casually opened upon the comic scenes of Henry IV. and was, in a moment, completely lost in the madcap revelry of the Boar's Head Tavern. So vividly and naturally are these scenes of humour depicted, and with such force and consistency are the
characters sustained, that they become mingled up in the mind with the facts and personages of real life. To few readers does it occur, that these are all ideal creations of a poet's brain, and that, in sober truth, no such knot of merry roysters ever enlivened the dull neighbourhood of Eastcheap.

For my part, I love to give myself up to the illusions of poetry. A hero of fiction that never existed, is just as valuable to me as a hero of history that existed a thousand years since: and, if I may be excused such an insensibility to the common ties of human nature, I would not give up fat Jack for half the great men of ancient chronicle. What have the heroes of yore done for me, or men like me? They have conquered countries of which I do not enjoy an acre; or they have gained laurels of which I do not inherit a leaf; or they have furnished examples of hair-brained prowess, which I have neither the opportunity nor the inclination to follow. But old Jack Falstaff!—kind Jack Falstaff!—sweet Jack Falstaff! has enlarged the boundaries of human enjoyment; he has added vast regions of wit and good-humour, in which the poorest man may revel; and has bequeathed a never-failing inheritance of jolly laughter, to make mankind merrier and better to the latest posterity.

A thought suddenly struck me: "I will make a pilgrimage to Eastcheap," said I, closing the book, "and see if the old Boar's Head Tavern still exists. Who knows but I may light upon some legendary traces of Dame Quickly and her guests; at any rate, there will be a kindred pleasure, in treading the halls once
vocal with their mirth, to that the toper enjoys in smelling to the empty cask, once filled with generous wine."

The resolution was no sooner formed than put in execution. I forbear to treat of the various adventures and wonders I encountered in my travels, of the haunted regions of Cock-lane; of the faded glories of Little Britain, and the parts adjacent; what perils I ran in Cateaton-street and Old Jewry; of the renowned Guildhall and its two stunted giants, the pride and wonder of the city, and the terror of all unlucky urchins; and how I visited London Stone, and struck my staff upon it, in imitation of that arch-rebel, Jack Cade.

Let it suffice to say, that I at length arrived in merry Eastcheap, that ancient region of wit and wassail, where the very names of the streets relished of good cheer, as Pudding-lane bears testimony even at the present day. For Eastcheap, says old Stow, "was always famous for its convivial doings. The cookes cried hot ribbes of beef roasted, pies well baked, and other victuals; there was clattering of pewter pots, harpe, pipe, and sawtrie." Alas! how sadly is the scene changed since the roaring days of Falstaff and old Stow! The madcap royster has given place to the plodding tradesman; the clattering of pots and the sound of "harpe and sawtrie," to the din of carts and the accurst dinging of the dustman's bell; and no song is heard, save, haply, the strain of some syren from Billingsgate, chanting the eulogy of deceased mackerel.
I sought, in vain, for the ancient abode of Dame Quickly. The only relic of it is a boar's head, carved in relief stone, which formerly served as the sign, but, at present, is built into the parting line of two houses which stand on the site of the renowned old tavern.

For the history of this little empire of good fellowship, I was referred to a tallow-chandler's widow, opposite, who had been born and brought up on the spot, and was looked up to, as the indisputable chronicler of the neighbourhood. I found her seated in a little back parlour, the window of which looked out upon a yard about eight feet square, laid out as a flower-garden; while a glass door opposite afforded a distant peep of the street, through a vista of soap and tallow candles; the two views, which comprised, in all probability, her prospects in life, and the little world in which she had lived, and moved, and had her being, for the better part of a century.

To be versed in the history of Eastcheap, great and little, from London Stone even unto the Monument, was, doubtless, in her opinion, to be acquainted with the history of the universe. Yet, with all this, she possessed the simplicity of true wisdom, and that liberal, communicative disposition, which I have generally remarked in intelligent old ladies, knowing in the concerns of their neighbourhood.

Her information, however, did not extend far back into antiquity. She could throw no light upon the history of the Boar's Head, from the time that Dame Quickly espoused the valiant Pistol, until the great fire of London, when it was unfortunately burnt down.
It was soon rebuilt, and continued to flourish under the old name and sign, until a dying landlord, struck with remorse for double scores, bad measures, and other iniquities which are incident to the sinful race of publicans, endeavoured to make his peace with Heaven, by bequeathing the tavern to St. Michael's church, Crooked-lane, toward the supporting of a chaplain. For some time the vestry meetings were regularly held there; but it was observed that the old Boar never held up his head under church government. He gradually declined, and finally gave his last gasp about thirty years since. The tavern was then turned into shops; but she informed me that a picture of it was still preserved in St. Michael's church, which stood just in the rear. To get a sight of this picture was now my determination; so, having informed myself of the abode of the sexton, I took my leave of the venerable chronicler of Eastcheap, my visit having doubtless raised greatly her opinion of her legendary lore, and furnished an important incident in the history of her life.

It cost me some difficulty, and much curious inquiry, to ferret out the humble hanger-on to the church. I had to explore Crooked-lane, and divers little alleys, and elbows, and dark passages, with which this old city is perforated, like an ancient cheese, or a worm-eaten chest of drawers. At length I traced him to a corner of a small court, surrounded by lofty houses, where the inhabitants enjoy about as much of the face of heaven, as a community of frogs at the bottom of a well. The sexton was a meek, acquiescing little
man, of a bowing, lowly habit; yet he had a pleasant twinkle in his eye, and if encouraged, would now and then venture a small pleasantry; such as a man of his low estate might venture to make in the company of high church wardens, and other mighty men of the earth. I found him in company with the deputy organist, seated apart, like Milton's angels; dis cour sing, no doubt, on high doctrinal points, and settling the affairs of the church over a friendly pot of ale; for the lower classes of English seldom deliberate on any weighty matter, without the assistance of a cool tankard to clear their understandings. I arrived at the moment when they had finished their ale and their argument, and were about to repair to the church to put it in order; so, having made known my wishes, I received their gracious permission to accompany them.

The church of St. Michael's, Crooked-lane, standing a short distance from Billingsgate, is enriched with the tombs of many fishmongers of renown; and as every profession has its galaxy of glory, and its constellation of great men, I presume the monument of a mighty fishmonger of the olden time is regarded with as much reverence by succeeding generations of the craft, as poets feel on contemplating the tomb of Virgil, or soldiers the monument of a Marlborough or Turenne.

I cannot but turn aside, while thus speaking of illustrious men, to observe that St. Michael's, Crooked lane, contains also the ashes of that doughty champion, William Walworth, Knight, who so manfully clove down the sturdy wight, Wat Tyler, in Smith-
field; a hero worthy of honourable blazon, as almost the only Lord Mayor on record famous for deeds of arms; the sovereigns of Cockney being generally renowned as the most pacific of all potentates.*

Adjoining the church, in a small cemetery, immediately under the back windows of what was once the Boar's Head, stands the tombstone of Robert Preston, whilome drawer at the tavern. It is now nearly a century since this trusty drawer of good liquor closed his bustling career, and was thus quietly

* The following was the ancient inscription on the monument of this worthy, which, unhappily, was destroyed in the great conflagration.

Hereunder lyth a man of fame,
William Walworth callyd by name;
Fishmonger he was in lyftime here,
And twise Lord Maior, as in books appeare;
Who, with courage stout and manly myght,
Slew Jack Straw in Kyng Richard's sight,
For which act done, and trew entent,
The Kyng made him knyght incontinent;
And gave him armes, as here you see,
To declare his fact and chivalrie:
He left this lyff the year of our God
Thirteen hondred fourscore and three odd.

An error in the foregoing inscription has been corrected by the venerable Stow: “Whereas,” saith he, “It hath been far spread abroad by vulgar opinion, that the rebel smitten down so manfully by Sir William Walworth, the then worthy Lord Maior, was named Jack Straw, and not Wat Tyler, I thought good to reconcile this rash conceived doubt by such testimony as I find in ancient and good records. The principal leaders, or captains, of the commons, were Wat Tyler, as the first man; the second was John, or Jack, Straw, &c. &c.”

Stow's London.
deposited within call of his customers. As I was
Clearing away the weeds from his epitaph, the little
Exton drew me on one side with a mysterious air,
and informed me, in a low voice, that once upon a
time, on a dark wintry night, when the wind was un-
ruly, howling and whistling, banging about doors and
windows, and twirling weathercocks, so that the liv-
ing were frightened out of their beds, and even the
dead could not sleep quietly in their graves, the ghost
of honest Preston, which happened to be airing itself
in the churchyard, was attracted by the well-known
call of “waiter,” from the Boar’s Head, and made
its sudden appearance in the midst of a roaring club,
just as the parish clerk was singing a stave from the
“mirrie garland of Captain Death;” to the discom-
fiture of sundry train-band captains, and the conver-
sion of an infidel attorney, who became a zealous
Christian on the spot, and was never known to twist
the truth afterwards, except in the way of business.

I beg it may be remembered, that I do not pledge
myself for the authenticity of this anecdote; though
it is well known that the churchyards and bye-corners
of this old metropolis are very much infested with
perturbed spirits; and every one must have heard
of the Cock-lane ghost, and the apparition that guards
the regalia in the Tower, which has frightened so
many bold sentinels almost out of their wits.

Be all this as it may, this Robert Preston seems to
have been a worthy successor to the nimble-tongued
Francis, who attended upon the revels of Prince Hal;
to have been equally prompt with his “anon, anon,
sir," and to have transcended his predecessor in honesty; for Falstaff, the veracity of whose taste no man will venture to impeach, flatly accuses Francis of putting lime in his sack; whereas, honest Preston's epitaph lauds him for the sobriety of his conduct, the soundness of his wine, and the fairness of his measure.* The worthy dignitaries of the church, however, did not appear much captivated by the sober virtues of the tapster: the deputy organist, who had a moist look out of the eye, made some shrewd remark on the abstemiousness of a man brought up among full hogheads; and the little sexton corroborated his opinion by a significant wink, and a dubious shake of the head.

Thus far my researches, though they threw much light on the history of tapsters, fishmongers, and Lord Mayors, yet disappointed me in the great object of my quest, the picture of the Boar's Head Tavern. No such painting was to be found in the church of

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* As this inscription is rife with excellent morality, I transcribe it for the admonition of delinquent tapsters. It is, no doubt, the production of some choice spirit, who once frequented the Boar's Head.

Bacchus, to give the tooping world surprise,
Produced one sober son, and here he lies.
Though rear'd among full hogheads, he defied
The charms of wine, and every one beside.
O reader, if to justice thou 'rt inclined,
Keep honest Preston daily in thy mind.
He drew good wine, took care to fill his pots,
Had sundry virtues that excused his faults.
You that on Bacchus have the like dependence,
Pray copy Bob, in measure and attendance.
St. Michael's. "Marry and amen!" said I, "here endeth my research!" So I was giving the matter up, with the air of a baffled antiquary, when my friend the sexton, perceiving me to be curious in every thing relative to the old tavern, offered to show me the choice vessels of the vestry, which had been handed down from remote times, when the parish meetings were held at the Boar's Head. These were deposited in the parish club-room, which had been transferred, on the decline of the ancient establishment, to a tavern in the neighbourhood.

A few steps brought us to the house, which stands No. 12, Mile-lane, bearing the title of The Mason's Arms, and is kept by Master Edward Honeyball, the "bully-rock" of the establishment. It is one of those little taverns which abound in the heart of the city, and form the centre of gossip and intelligence of the neighbourhood. We entered the bar-room, which was narrow and darkling; for in these close lanes but few rays of reflected light are enabled to struggle down to the inhabitants, whose broad day is at best but a tolerable twilight. The room was partitioned into boxes, each containing a table spread with a clean white cloth, ready for dinner. This showed that the guests were of the good old stamp, and divided their day equally, for it was but just one o'clock. At the lower end of the room was a clear coal fire, before which a breast of lamb was roasting. A row of bright brass candlesticks and pewter mugs glistened along the mantelpiece, and an old-fashioned clock ticked in one corner. There was something primitive
in this medley of kitchen, parlour, and hall, that car-
ried me back to earlier times, and pleased me. The
place, indeed, was humble, but every thing had that
look of order and neatness which bespeaks the super-
intendence of a notable English housewife. A group
of amphibious looking beings, who might be either
fishermen or sailors, were regaling themselves in one
of the boxes. As I was a visiter of rather higher pre-
tensions, I was ushered into a little misshapen back
room, having at least nine corners. It was lighted by
a sky-light, furnished with antiquated leathern chairs,
and ornamented with the portrait of a fat pig. It was
evidently appropriated to particular customers, and I
found a shabby gentleman, in a red nose, and oil-cloth
hat, seated in one corner, meditating on a half-empty
pot of porter.

The old sexton had taken the landlady aside, and
with an air of profound importance imparted to her
my errand. Dame Honeyball was a likely, plump,
bustling little woman, and no bad substitute for that
paragon of hostesses, Dame Quickly. She seemed
delighted with an opportunity to oblige; and hurrying
up stairs to the archives of her house, where the pre-
cious vessels of the parish club were deposited, she
returned, smiling and courtesying with them in her
hands.

The first she presented me was a japanned iron
tobacco-box, of gigantic size, out of which, I was told,
the vestry had smoked at their stated meetings, since
time immemorial; and which was never suffered to
be profaned by vulgar hands, or used on common oc-
casious. I received it with becoming reverence; but what was my delight, at beholding on its cover the identical painting of which I was in quest! There was displayed the outside of the Boar’s Head Tavern, and before the door was to be seen the whole convivial group, at table, in full revel, pictured with that wonderful fidelity and force, with which the portraits of renowned generals and commodores are illustrated on tobacco-boxes, for the benefit of posterity. Lest, however, there should be any mistake, the cunning limner had warily inscribed the names of Prince Hal and Falstaff on the bottoms of their chairs.

On the inside of the cover was an inscription, nearly obliterated, recording that this box was the gift of Sir Richard Gore, for the use of the vestry meetings at the Boar’s Head Tavern, and that it was “repaired and beautified by his successor, Mr. John Packard, 1767.” Such is a faithful description of this august and venerable relic, and I question whether the learned Scriblerius contemplated his Roman shield, or the Knights of the Round Table the long-sought sangreal, with more exultation.

While I was meditating on it with enraptured gaze, Dame Honeyball, who was highly gratified by the interest it excited, put in my hands a drinking cup or goblet, which also belonged to the vestry, and was descended from the old Boar’s Head. It bore the inscription of having been the gift of Francis Wythers, Knight, and was held, she told me, in exceeding great value, being considered very “antyke.” This last opinion was strengthened by the shabby gentleman
with the red nose, and oil-cloth hat, and whom I strongly suspected of being a lineal descendant from the valiant Bardolph. He suddenly aroused from his meditation on the pot of porter, and casting a knowing look at the goblet, exclaimed, “Ay, ay, the head don’t ache now that made that there article.”

The great importance attached to this memento of ancient revelry by modern churchwardens, at first puzzled me; but there is nothing sharpens the apprehension so much as antiquarian research; for I immediately perceived that this could be no other than the identical “parcel-gilt goblet” on which Falstaff made his loving, but faithless vow to Dame Quickly; and which would, of course, be treasured up with care among the regalia of her domains, as a testimony of that solemn contract.*

Mine hostess, indeed, gave me a long history how the goblet had been handed down from generation to generation. She also entertained me with many particulars concerning the worthy vestrymen who have seated themselves thus quietly on the stools of the ancient roysters of Eastcheap, and, like so many commentators, utter clouds of smoke in honour of Shakespeare. These I forbear to relate, lest my readers

* Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin Chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the Prince broke thy head for likening his father to a singing man of Windsor; thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady, thy wife. Canst thou deny it?—

_Henry IV. part 2._
should not be as curious in these matters as myself. Suffice it to say, the neighbours, one and all, about Eastcheap, believe that Falstaff and his merry crew actually lived and revelled there. Nay, there are several legendary anecdotes concerning him still extant among the oldest frequenters of the Mason's Arms, which they give as transmitted down from their forefathers; and Mr. M'Kash, an Irish hair-dresser, whose shop stands on the site of the old Boar's Head, has several dry jokes of Fat Jack's, not laid down in the books, with which he makes his customers ready to die of laughter.

I now turned to my friend the sexton to make some farther inquiries, but I found him sunk in pensive meditation. His head had declined a little on one side; a deep sigh heaved from the very bottom of his stomach, and, though I could not see a tear trembling in his eye, yet a moisture was evidently stealing from a corner of his mouth. I followed the direction of his eye through the door which stood open, and found it fixed wistfully on the savoury breast of lamb, roasting in dripping richness before the fire.

I now called to mind, that in the eagerness of my recondite investigation, I was keeping the poor man from his dinner. My bowels yearned with sympathy, and putting in his hand a small token of my gratitude and good-will, I departed with a hearty benediction on him, Dame Honeyball, and the parish club of Crooked-lane—not forgetting my shabby, but sententious friend, in the oil-cloth hat and copper nose.
Thus have I given a "tedious brief" account of interesting research; for which, if it prove and unsatisfactory, I can only plead my inexperience in this branch of literature, so deservedly praised in the present day. I am aware that a more skilful investigator of the immortal bard would have swept all materials I have touched upon, to a good and ample bulk, comprising the biographies of Will Shakespeare, Jack Straw, and Robert Preston; some of the eminent fishmongers of St. Michael's; the history of Eastcheap, great and little; private adventures of Dame Honeyball and her pretty daughter; a host of things not even mentioned: to say nothing of tendering the breast of lamb, (and whom, by the way, I remarked to be a comely lass, with a neat ankle;)—the whole enlivened by the riot of Tyler, and illuminated by the great fire of... All this I leave as a rich mine, to be wrought upon by future commentators; nor do I despair of some tobacco-box, and the "parcel-gilt goblet," which have thus brought to light, the subject of future gravings, and almost as fruitful of voluminous specifications and disputes as the shield of Achilles, the far-famed Portland vase.
THE

MUTABILITY OF LITERATURE.

A COLLOQUIY IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

I know that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought,
In time’s great periods shall return to nought.
I know that all the muses’ heavenly layes,
With toil of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds of few or none are sought,
That there is nothing lighter than mere praise.

DUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

There are certain half-dreaming moods of mind,
which we naturally steal away from noise and
ere, and seek some quiet haunt, where we may in-
lege our reveries, and build our air castles undis-
bled. In such a mood, I was loitering about the
gray cloisters of Westminster Abbey, enjoying that
cury of wandering thought which one is apt to dig-
y with the name of reflection; when suddenly an
ption of madcap boys from Westminster school,
aying at foot-ball, broke in upon the monastic still-
ss of the place, making the vaulted passages and
oulder ing tombs echo with their merriment. I sought
take refuge from their noise by penetrating still
eper into the solitudes of the pile, and applied to
one of the vergers for admission to the library. He conducted me through a portal rich with the crumbling sculpture of former ages, which opened upon a gloomy passage leading to the Chapter-house, and the chamber in which Doomsday Book is deposited. Just within the passage is a small door on the left. To this the verger applied a key; it was double locked, and opened with some difficulty, as if seldom used. We now ascended a dark narrow staircase, and passing through a second door, entered the library.

I found myself in a lofty antique hall, the roof supported by massive joists of old English oak. It was soberly lighted by a row of Gothic windows at a considerable height from the floor, and which apparently opened upon the roofs of the cloisters. An ancient picture of some reverend dignitary of the church in his robes hung over the fire-place. Around the hall and in a small gallery were the books, arranged in carved oaken cases. They consisted principally of old polemical writers, and were much more worn by time than use. In the centre of the library was a solitary table, with two or three books on it, an ink-stand without ink, and a few pens parched by long disuse. The place seemed fitted for quiet study and profound meditation. It was buried deep among the massive walls of the abbey, and shut up from the tumult of the world. I could only hear now and then the shouts of the schoolboys faintly swelling from the cloisters, and the sound of a bell tolling for prayers, that echoed soberly along the roofs of the abbey. By degrees the shouts of merriment grew fainter and
fainter, and at length died away. The bell ceased
to toll, and a profound silence reigned through the
dusky hall.

I had taken down a little thick quarto, curiously
bound in parchment, with brass clasp, and seated
myself at the table in a venerable elbow chair. In-
stead of reading, however, I was beguiled by the
solemn monastic air and lifeless quiet of the place,
into a train of musing. As I looked around upon the
old volumes in their mouldering covers, thus ranged
on the shelves, and apparently never disturbed in
their repose, I could not but consider the library a
kind of literary catacomb, where authors, like mum-
mies, are piously entombed, and left to blacken and
moulder in dusty oblivion.

How much, thought I, has each of these volumes,
now thrust aside with such indifference, cost some
aching head—how many weary days! how many
sleepless nights! How have their authors buried
themselves in the solitude of cells and cloisters; shut
themselves up from the face of man, and the still more
blessed face of nature; and devoted themselves to
painful research and intense reflection! And all for
what? to occupy an inch of dusty shelf—to have the
titles of their works read now and then in a future age,
by some drowsy churchman, or casual straggler like
myself; and in another age to be lost even to remem-
brance. Such is the amount of this boasted immor-
ality. A mere temporary rumour, a local sound;
ike the tone of that bell which has just tolled among
these towers, filling the ear for a moment—lingering
transiently in echo—and then passing away, like a thing that was not!

While I sat half murmuring, half meditating these unprofitable speculations, with my head resting on my hand, I was thrumming with the other hand upon the quarto, until I accidentally loosened the clasps; when, to my utter astonishment, the little book gave two or three yawns, like one awaking from a deep sleep; then a husky hem, and at length began to talk. At first its voice was very hoarse and broken, being much troubled by a cobweb which some studious spider had woven across it; and having probably contracted a cold from long exposure to the chills and damp of the abbey. In a short time, however, it became more distinct, and I soon found it an exceedingly fluent conversable little tome. Its language, to be sure, was rather quaint and obsolete, and its pronunciation what in the present day would be deemed barbarous; but I shall endeavour, as far as I am able, to render it in modern parlance.

It began with railings about the neglect of the world—about merit being suffered to languish in obscurity, and other such commonplace topics of literary repining, and complained bitterly that it had not been opened for more than two centuries;—that the Dean only looked now and then into the library, sometimes took down a volume or two, trifled with them for a few moments, and then returned them to their shelves. "What a plague do they mean," said the little quarto, which I began to perceive was somewhat choleric, "what a plague do they mean by keep-
OF LITERATURE.

The young several thousand volumes of us shut up here, and caught by a set of old vergers, like so many beauties in a harem, merely to be looked at now and then the Dean? Books were written to give pleasure and to be enjoyed; and I would have a rule passed at the Dean should pay each of us a visit at least once a year; or if he is not equal to the task, let them once in a while turn loose the whole school of Westminster among us, that at any rate we may now and then have an airing."

"Softly, my worthy friend," replied I, "you are not aware how much better you are off than most books of your generation. By being stored away in this ancient library, you are like the treasured remains of those saints and monarchs which lie enshrined in the adjoining chapels; while the remains of their contemporary mortals, left to the ordinary course of nature, have long since returned to dust."

"Sir," said the little tome, ruffling his leaves and looking big, "I was written for all the world, not for the bookworms of an abbey. I was intended to circulate from hand to hand, like other great contemporary works; but here have I been clasped up for more than two centuries, and might have silently fallen a prey to these worms that are playing the very vengeance with my intestines, if you had not by chance given me an opportunity of uttering a few last words before I go to pieces."

"My good friend," rejoined I, "had you been left to the circulation of which you speak, you would longer this have been no more. To judge from your
physiognomy, you are now well stricken in years; very few of your contemporaries can be at present in existence; and those few owe their longevity to being immured like yourself in old libraries; which, suffer me to add, instead of likening to harems, you might more properly and gratefully have compared to those infirmaries attached to religious establishments, for the benefit of the old and decrepit, and where, by quiet fostering and no employment, they often endure to an amazingly good-for-nothing old age. You talk of your contemporaries as if in circulation—where do we meet with their works?—what do we hear of Robert Groteste of Lincoln? No one could have toiled harder than he for immortality. He is said to have written nearly two hundred volumes. He built, as it were, a pyramid of books to perpetuate his name: but, alas! the pyramid has long since fallen, and only a few fragments are scattered in various libraries, where they are scarcely disturbed even by the antiquarian. What do we hear of Giraldus Cambrensis, the historian, antiquary, philosopher, theologian, and poet? He declined two bishoprics, that he might shut himself up and write for posterity; but posterity never inquires after his labours. What of Henry of Huntingdon, who, besides a learned history of England, wrote a treatise on the contempt of the world, which the world has revenged by forgetting him? What is quoted of Joseph of Exeter, styled the miracle of his age in classical composition? Of his three great heroic poems, one is lost for ever, excepting a mere fragment; the others are known only to a few of the curious in
literature; and as to his love verses and epigrams, they have entirely disappeared. What is in current use of John Wallis, the Franciscan, who acquired the name of the tree of life?—of William of Malmsbury; of Simeon of Durham; of Benedict of Peterborough; of John Hanvill of St. Albans; of——"

"Prithee, friend," cried the quarto in a testy tone, "how old do you think me? You are talking of authors that lived long before my time, and wrote either in Latin or French, so that they in a manner expatriated themselves, and deserved to be forgotten;* but I, sir, was ushered into the world from the press of the renowned Wynkyn de Worde. I was written in my own native tongue, at a time when the language had become fixed; and, indeed, I was considered a model of pure and elegant English."

[I should observe that these remarks were couched in such intolerably antiquated terms, that I have had infinite difficulty in rendering them into modern phraseology.]

"I cry you mercy," said I, "for mistaking your age; but it matters little; almost all the writers of your time have likewise passed into forgetfulness; and De Worde's publications are mere literary rarities among book-collectors. The purity and stability of

* In Latin and French hath many soueraine wittes had great delyte to endyte, and have many noble things fulfisde, but certes there ben some that spoken their poysye in French, of which specche the Frenchmen have as good a fantasye as we have in hearing of Frenchmen's Englishe.

CHAUCER's Testament of Love.

VOL. I.
language, too, on which you found your claims to perpetuity, have been the fallacious dependence of authors of every age, even back to the times of the worthy Robert of Gloucester, who wrote his history in rhymes of mongrel Saxon.* Even now, many talk of Spenser's 'well of pure English undefiled,' as if the language ever sprang from a well or fountain-head, and was not rather a mere confluence of various tongues, perpetually subject to changes and intermixtures. It is this which has made English literature so extremely mutable, and the reputation built upon it so fleeting. Unless thought can be committed to something more permanent and unchangeable than such a medium, even thought must share the fate of every thing else, and fall into decay. This should serve as a check upon the vanity and exultation of the most popular writer. He finds the language in which he has embarked his fame gradually altering, and subject to the dilapidations of time and the caprice of fashion. He looks back, and beholds the early authors of his country, once the favourites of their day, supplanted by modern writers: a few short ages have covered them with obscurity, and their merits can only be relished

*Holinshead, in his Chronicle, observes, "afterwards, also, by diligent travell of Geffry Chaucer and John Gowrie, in the time of Richard the Second, and after them of John Scogan and John Lydgate, monke of Berrie, our said toong was brought to an excellent passe, notwithstanding that it never came unto the type of perfection until the time of Queen Elizabeth, wherein John Jewell, Bishop of Sarum, John Fox, and sundrie learned and excellent writers, have fully accomplished the ornament of the same, to their great praise and immortal commendation."
by the quaint taste of the bookworm. And such, he anticipates, will be the fate of his own work, which, however it may be admired in its day, and held up as a model of purity, will, in the course of years, grow antiquated and obsolete, until it shall become almost as unintelligible in its native land as an Egyptian obelisk, or one of those Runic inscriptions, said to exist in the deserts of Tartary. "I declare," added I, with some emotion, "when I contemplate a modern library, filled with new works in all the bravery of rich gilding and binding, I feel disposed to sit down and weep; like the good Xerxes, when he surveyed his army, pranked out in all the splendour of military array, and reflected that in one hundred years not one of them would be in existence!"

"Ah," said the little quarto, with a heavy sigh, "I see how it is; these modern scribblers have superseded all the good old authors. I suppose nothing is read now-a-days but Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, Sackville's stately plays and Mirror for Magistrates, or the fine-spun euphuisms of the 'unparallel'd John Lyly.'"

"There you are again mistaken," said I; "the writers whom you suppose in vogue, because they happened to be so when you were last in circulation, have long since had their day. Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, the immortality of which was so fondly predicted by his admirers,* and which, in truth, was full

*"Live ever sweete booke; the simple image of his gentle witt, and the golden pillar of his noble courage; and ever
of noble thoughts, delicate images, and graceful turns of language, is now scarcely ever mentioned. Sackville has strutted into obscurity; and even Lyly, though his writings were once the delight of a court, and apparently perpetuated by a proverb, is now scarcely known even by name. A whole crowd of authors who wrote and wrangled at the time, have likewise gone down with all their writings and their controversies. Wave after wave of succeeding literature has rolled over them, until they are buried so deep, that it is only now and then that some industrious diver after fragments of antiquity brings up a specimen for the gratification of the curious.

"For my part," I continued, "I consider this mutability of language a wise precaution of Providence for the benefit of the world at large, and of authors in particular. To reason from analogy: we daily behold the varied and beautiful tribes of vegetables springing up, flourishing, adorning the fields for a short time, and then fading into dust, to make way for their successors. Were not this the case, the secundity of nature would be a grievance instead of a blessing: the earth would groan with rank and excessive vegetation, and its surface become a tangled wilderness.

notify unto the world that thy writer was the secretary of eloquence, the breath of the muses, the honey bee of the daintiest flowers of wit and arte, the pith of morale and the intellectual virtues, the arme of Bellona in the field, the tongue of Suda in the chamber, the spirite of Practise in esse, and the paragon of excellency in print."

Harvey's Pierce's Supererogation.
In like manner, the works of genius and learning de-
cline and make way for subsequent productions. 
Language gradually varies, and with it fade away the 
 writings of authors who have flourished their allotted 
time; otherwise the creative powers of genius would 
overstock the world, and the mind would be com-
pletely bewildered in the endless mazes of literature. 
Formerly there were some restraints on this excessive 
multiplication: works had to be transcribed by hand, 
which was a slow and laborious operation; they were 
written either on parchment, which was expensive, so 
that one work was often erased to make way for an-
other; or on papyrus, which was fragile and extreme-
ly perishable. Authorship was a limited and unprofit-
able craft, pursued chiefly by monks in the leisure 
and solitude of their cloisters. The accumulation of 
manuscripts was slow and costly, and confined almost 
entirely to monasteries. To these circumstances it 
may, in some measure, be owing that we have not 
been inundated by the intellect of antiquity; that the 
fountains of thought have not been broken up, and 
modern genius drowned in the deluge. But the in-
ventions of paper and the press have put an end to 
all these restraints: they have made every one a 
writer, and enabled every mind to pour itself into 
print, and diffuse itself over the whole intellectual 
world. The consequences are alarming. The stream 
of literature has swollen into a torrent—augmented into 
a river—expanded into a sea. A few centuries since, 
five or six hundred manuscripts constituted a great 
library; but what would you say to libraries, such as
actually exist, containing three or four hundred thousand volumes; legions of authors at the same time busy; and a press going on with fearfully increasing activity, to double and quadruple the number? Unless some unforeseen mortality should break out among the progeny of the Muse, now that she has become so prolific, I tremble for posterity. I fear the mere fluctuation of language will not be sufficient. Criticism may do much; it increases with the increase of literature, and resembles one of those salutary checks on population spoken of by economists. All possible encouragement, therefore, should be given to the growth of critics, good or bad. But I fear all will be in vain; let criticism do what it may, writers will write, printers will print, and the world will inevitably be overstocked with good books. It will soon be the employment of a lifetime merely to learn their names. Many a man of passable information at the present day reads scarcely any thing but reviews, and before long a man of erudition will be little better than a mere walking catalogue."

"My very good sir," said the little quarto, yawning most drearily in my face, "excuse my interrupting you, but I perceive you are rather given to prose. I would ask the fate of an author who was making some noise just as I left the world. His reputation, however, was considered quite temporary. The learned shook their heads at him, for he was a poor half-educated varlet, that knew little of Latin, and nothing of Greek, and had been obliged to run the country
for deer-stealing. I think his name was Shakspere. I presume he soon sunk into oblivion."

"On the contrary," said I, "it is owing to that very man that the literature of his period has experienced a duration beyond the ordinary term of English literature. There arise authors now and then, who seem proof against the mutability of language, because they have rooted themselves in the unchanging principles of human nature. They are like gigantic trees that we sometimes see on the banks of a stream, which, by their vast and deep roots, penetrating through the mere surface, and laying hold on the very foundations of the earth, preserve the soil around them from being swept away by the overflowing current, and hold up many a neighbouring plant, and, perhaps, worthless weed, to perpetuity. Such is the case with Shakspere, whom we behold, defying the encroachments of time, retaining in modern use the language and literature of his day, and giving duration to many an indifferent author merely from having flourished in his vicinity. But even he, I grieve to say, is gradually assuming the tint of age, and his whole form is overrun by a profusion of commentators, who, like clambering vines and creepers, almost bury the noble plant that upholds them."

Here the little quarto began to heave his sides and chuckle, until at length he broke out into a plethoric fit of laughter that had well nigh choked him, by reason of his excessive corpulency. "Mighty well!" cried he, as soon as he could recover breath, "mighty
well! and so you would persuade me that the literature of an age is to be perpetuated by a vagabond deer-stealer! by a man without learning! by a poet! forsooth—a poet!" And here he wheezed forth another fit of laughter.

I confess that I felt somewhat nettled at this rudeness, which, however, I pardoned on account of his having flourished in a less polished age. I determined, nevertheless, not to give up my point.

"Yes," resumed I positively, "a poet; for of all writers he has the best chance for immortality. Others may write from the head, but he writes from the heart, and the heart will always understand him. He is the faithful portrayer of Nature, whose features are always the same, and always interesting. Prose writers are voluminous and unwieldy; their pages crowded with commonplaces, and their thoughts expanded into tediousness. But with the true poet every thing is terse, touching, or brilliant. He gives the choicest thoughts in the choicest language. He illustrates them by every thing that he sees most striking in nature and art. He enriches them by pictures of human life, such as it is passing before him. His writings, therefore, contain the spirit, the aroma, if I may use the phrase, of the age in which he lives. They are caskets which inclose within a small compass the wealth of the language—its family jewels, which are thus transmitted in a portable form to posterity. The setting may occasionally be antiquated, and require now and then to be renewed, as in the
OF LITERATURE.

... of Chaucer; but the brilliancy and intrinsic value he gems continue unaltered. Cast a look back the long reach of literary history. What vast eys of dulness, filled with monkish legends and semical controversies! What bogs of theological culations! What dreary wastes of metaphysics e and there only do we behold the heaven-illu ed bards, elevated like beacons on their widely-rated heights, to transmit the pure light of poet-intelligence from age to age."

was just about to launch forth into eulogiums n the poets of the day, when the sudden opening he door caused me to turn my head. It was the yer, who came to inform me that it was time to e the library. I sought to have a parting word the quarto, but the worthy little tome was silent; clasps were closed; and it looked perfectly un- scious of all that had passed. I have been to the rty two or three times since, and have endeavour-

* Thorow earth, and waters deepe,
The pen by skill doth passe:
And fealty nyps the worldes abuse,
And shoes us in a glasse,
The vertu and the vice
Of every wight alyve;
The honey combe that bee doth make,
Is not so sweet in hyve,
As are the golden leves
That drops from poet's head;
Which doth surmount our common talke,
As farre as dross doth lead.

CHURCHYARD.
ed to draw it into further conversation, but in v
and whether all this rambling colloquy actually
place, or whether it was another of those odd
dreams to which I am subject, I have never, to
moment, been able to discover.
RURAL FUNERALS.

Here's a few flowers! but about midnight more:
A herbs that have on them cold dew o' the night
A strewings fitt'st for graves——
U were as flowers now withered: even so
See herb'lets shall, which we upon you strow.

Cymbeline.

Among the beautiful and simple-hearted customs
Of life which still linger in some parts of England,
Are those of strewing flowers before the funerals
Anting them at the graves of departed friends.
It is said, are the remains of some of the rites
Of the primitive church; but they are of still higher
Virtue, having been observed among the Greeks
Romans, and frequently mentioned by their
Ancestral, the spontaneous tributes
Betokening affection, originating long before art had
Itself to modulate sorrow into song, or story it
In monument. They are now only to be met
In the most distant and retired places of the
Isle, where fashion and innovation have not been
So thronged in, and trampled out all the curious and
Existing traces of the olden time.
In Glamorganshire, we are told, the bed whereon the corpse lies is covered with flowers, a custom alluded to in one of the wild and plaintive ditties of Ophelia

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
Larded all with sweet flowers;
Which be-wep't to the grave did go,
With true love showers.

There is also a most delicate and beautiful rite observed in some of the remote villages of the south, at the funeral of a female who has died young and unmarried. A chaplet of white flowers is borne before the corpse by a young girl, nearest in age, size, and resemblance, and is afterwards hung up in the church over the accustomed seat of the deceased. These chaplets are sometimes made of white paper, in imitation of flowers, and inside of them is generally a part of white gloves. They are intended as emblems of the purity of the deceased, and the crown of glory which she has received in heaven.

In some parts of the country, also, the dead are carried to the grave with the singing of psalms and hymns; a kind of triumph, "to show," says Bourn, "that they have finished their course with joy, and are become conquerors." This, I am informed, is observed in some of the northern counties, particularly in Northumberland, and it has a pleasing, though melancholy effect, to hear, of a still evening, in some lonely country scene, the mournful melody of a funeral dirge swelling from a distance, and to see the train slowly moving along the landscape.
RURAL FUNERALS.

Thus, thus, and thus, we compass round
Thy harmless and unhaunted ground,
And as we sing thy dirge, we will
The Daffodill
And other flowers lay upon
The altar of our love, thy stone.—Herrick.

There is also a solemn respect paid by the traveller
to the passing funeral, in these sequestered places; for
such spectacles, occurring among the quiet abodes of
Nature, sink deep into the soul. As the mourning
train approaches, he pauses, uncovered, to let it go
by; he then follows silently in the rear; sometimes
quite to the grave, at other times for a few hundred
yards, and having paid this tribute of respect to the
deceased, turns and resumes his journey.

The rich vein of melancholy which runs through
the English character, and gives it some of its most
touching and ennobling graces, is finely evidenced in
these pathetic customs, and in the solicitude shown
by the common people for an honoured and a peace-
ful grave. The humblest peasant, whatever may be
his lowly lot while living, is anxious that some little
respect may be paid to his remains. Sir Thomas
Overbury, describing the “faire and happy milk-
maid,” observes, “thus lives she, and all her care is,
that she may die in the spring time, to have store of
flowers stucke upon her winding-sheet.” The poets,
too, who always breathe the feeling of a nation, con-
tinually advert to this fond solicitude about the grave.
In “The Maid’s Tragedy,” by Beaumont and Fletcher,
there is a beautiful instance of the kind, describing the
capricious melancholy of a broken-hearted girl,
When she sees a bank
Stuck full of flowers, she, with a sigh, will tell
Her servants, what a pretty place it were
To bury lovers in; and make her maids
Pluck 'em, and strew her over like a corse.

The custom of decorating graves was once universally prevalent: osiers were carefully bent over them to keep the turf uninjured, and about them were planted evergreens and flowers. "We adorn their graves," says Evelyn, in his Sylva, "with flowers and redolent plants, just emblems of the life of man, which has been compared in Holy Scriptures to those fading beauties, whose roots being buried in dishonour, rise again in glory." This usage has now become extremely rare in England; but it may still be met with in the churchyards of retired villages, among the Welch mountains: and I recollect an instance of it at the small town of Ruthven, which lies at the head of the beautiful vale of Clewyd. I have been told also by a friend, who was present at the funeral of a young girl in Glamorganshire, that the female attendants had their aprons full of flowers, which, as soon as the body was interred, they stuck about the grave.

He noticed several graves which had been decorated in the same manner. As the flowers had been merely stuck in the ground, and not planted, they had soon withered, and might be seen in various states of decay; some drooping, others quite perished. They were afterwards to be supplanted by holly, rosemary, and other evergreens; which on some graves had grown to great luxuriance, and overshadowed the tombstones.
There was formerly a melancholy fancifulness in the arrangement of these rustic offerings, that had something in it truly poetical. The rose was sometimes blended with the lily, to form a general emblem of frail mortality. "This sweet flower," said Evelyn, "borne on a branch set with thorns, and accompanied with the lily, are natural hieroglyphics of our fugitive, umbratible, anxious, and transitory life, which, making so fair a show for a time, is not yet without its thorns and crosses." The nature and colour of the flowers, and of the ribands with which they were tied, had often a particular reference to the qualities or story of the deceased, or were expressive of the feelings of the mourner. In an old poem, entitled "Corydon's Doleful Knell," a lover specifies the decorations he intends to use:

A garland shall be framed
By Art and Nature's skill,
Of sundry-coloured flowers,
In token of good will.
And sundry-coloured ribands
On it I will bestow;
But chiefly blacke and yellowe
With her to grave shall go.
I'll deck her tomb with flowers
The rarest ever seen;
And with my tears as showers
I'll keep them fresh and green.

The white rose, we are told, was planted at the grave of a virgin; her chaplet was tied with white ribands, in token of her spotless innocence; though sometimes black ribands were intermingled, to be-
RURAL FUNERALS.

speak the grief of the survivors. The red rose, occasionally used, in remembrance of such as had been remarkable for benevolence; but roses in general were appropriated to the graves of lovers. Evelyn tells us that the custom was not altogether extinct in his time, near his dwelling in the county of Sur

“where the maidens yearly planted and decked the graves of their defunct sweethearts with rose-bushes.”

And Camden likewise remarks, in his Britannia:

“Here is also a certain custom, observed time out of mind, of planting rose-trees upon the graves, especially by the young men and maids who have lost their loves; so that this churchyard is now full of them.”

When the deceased had been unhappy in their loves, emblems of a more gloomy character were used, such as the yew and cypress; and if flowers were strewn, they were of the most melancholy colours. Thus, in poems by Thomas Stanley, (published in 1651,) is the following stanza:

Yet strew

Upon my dismall grave
Such offerings as you have,
Forsaken cypresse and yewe; For kinder flowers can take no birth Or growth from such unhappy earth.

In “The Maid’s Tragedy,” a pathetic little air introduced, illustrative of this mode of decorating funerals of females who had been disappointed in love:

Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew,
Maidens willow branches wear,
Say I died true.
RURAL FUNERALS.

My love was false, but I was firm,
From my hour of birth,
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth.

The natural effect of sorrow over the dead is to refine and elevate the mind; and we have a proof of it in the purity of sentiment, and the unaffected elegance of thought, which pervaded the whole of these funeral observances. Thus, it was an especial precaution, that none but sweet-scented evergreens and flowers should be employed. The intention seems to have been to soften the horrors of the tomb, to beguile the mind from brooding over the disgraces of perishing mortality, and to associate the memory of the deceased with the most-delicate and beautiful objects in Nature. There is a dismal process going on in the grave, ere dust can return to its kindred dust, which the imagination shrinks from contemplating; and we seek still to think of the form we have loved, with those refined associations which it awakened when blooming before us in youth and beauty. "Lay her i' the earth," says Laertes of his virgin sister,

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring.

Herrick, also, in his "Dirge of Jephtha," pours forth a fragrant flow of poetical thought and image, which in a manner embalms the dead in the recollections of the living.

Sleep in thy peace, thy bed of spice,
And make this place all Paradise:

Q 2
May sweets grow here! and smoke from hence
Fat frankincense.
Let balme and cassia send their scent
From out thy maiden monument.

May all shie maids at wonted hours
Come forth to strew thy tombe with flowers!
May virgins, when they come to mourn
Male incense burn
Upon thine altar! then return
And leave thee sleeping in thy urn.

I might crowd my pages with extracts from the older British poets, who wrote when these rites were more prevalent, and delighted frequently to allude to them; but I have already quoted more than is necessary. I cannot, however, refrain from giving a passage from Shakspeare, even though it should appear trite, which illustrates the emblematical meaning often conveyed in these floral tributes, and at the same time possesses that magic of language and appositeness of imagery for which he stands pre-eminent.

With fairest flowers,
Whilst summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave; thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor
The azured harebell like thy veins; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine; whom not to slander,
Outsweetened not thy breath.

There is certainly something more affecting in these prompt and spontaneous offerings of nature, than in the most costly monuments of art; the hand strews the flower while the heart is warm, and the tear falls on the grave as affection is binding the osier round
the sod; but pathos expires under the slow labour of
the chisel, and is chilled among the cold conceits of
sculptured marble.

It is greatly to be regretted, that a custom so truly
elegant and touching has disappeared from general
use, and exists only in the most remote and insignifi-
cant villages. But it seems as if poetical custom
always shuns the walks of cultivated society. In
proportion as people grow polite, they cease to be
poetical. They talk of poetry, but they have learnt
to check its free impulses, to distrust its sallying emo-
tions, and to supply its most affecting and picturesque
usages, by studied form and pompous ceremonial.
Few pageants can be more stately and frigid than an
English funeral in town. It is made up of show and
gloomy parade: mourning carriages, mourning horses,
mourning plumes, and hireling mourners, who make a
mockery of grief. "There is a grave digged," says
Jeremy Taylor, "and a solemn mourning, and a great
talk in the neighbourhood, and when the daies are
finished, they shall be, and they shall be remembered
no more." The associate in the gay and crowded
city is soon forgotten; the hurrying succession of new
intimates and new pleasures effaces him from our
minds, and the very scenes and circles in which he
moved are incessantly fluctuating. But funerals in
the country are solemnly impressive. The stroke of
death makes a wider space in the village circle, and
is an awful event in the tranquil uniformity of rural
life. The passing bell tolls its knell in every ear; it
steals with its pervading melancholy over hill and vale, and saddens all the landscape.

The fixed and unchanging features of the country, also, perpetuate the memory of the friend with whom we once enjoyed them; who was the companion of our most retired walks, and gave animation to every lonely scene. His idea is associated with every charm of Nature: we hear his voice in the echo which he once delighted to awaken; his spirit haunts the grove which he once frequented; we think of him in the wild upland solitude, or amidst the pensive beauty of the valley. In the freshness of joyous morning, we remember his beaming smiles and bounding gayety; and when sober evening returns, with its gathering shadows and subduing quiet, we call to mind many a twilight hour of gentle talk and sweet-souled melancholy.

Each lonely place shall him restore,
For him the tear be duly shed,
Beloved, till life can charm no more,
And mourn’d till pity’s self be dead.

Another cause that perpetuates the memory of the deceased in the country, is, that the grave is more immediately in sight of the survivors. They pass it on their way to prayer; it meets their eyes when their hearts are softened by the exercise of devotion; they linger about it on the Sabbath, when the mind is dis-engaged from worldly cares, and most disposed to turn aside from present pleasures and present loves, and to sit down among the solemn momentos of the past.
In North Wales, the peasantry kneel and pray over the graves of their deceased friends for several Sundays after the interment; and where the tender rite of strewing and planting flowers is still practised, it is always renewed on Easter, Whitsuntide, and other festivals, when the season brings the companion of former festivity more vividly to mind. It is also invariably performed by the nearest relatives and friends; no menials nor hirelings are employed, and if a neighbour yields assistance, it would be deemed an insult to offer compensation.

I have dwelt upon this beautiful rural custom, because, as it is one of the last, so is it one of the holiest offices of love. The grave is the ordeal of true affection. It is there that the divine passion of the soul manifests its superiority to the instinctive impulse of mere animal attachment. The latter must be continually refreshed and kept alive by the presence of its object; but the love that is seated in the soul can live on long remembrance. The mere inclinations of sense languish and decline with the charms which excited them, and turn with shuddering and disgust from the dismal precincts of the tomb; but it is thence that truly spiritual affection rises purified from every sensual desire, and returns, like a holy flame, to illumine and sanctify the heart of the survivor.

The sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be divorced. Every other wound we seek to heal—every other affliction to forget; but his wound we consider it a duty to keep open—this
affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude. Where is the mother who would willingly forget the infant that perished like a blossom from her arms, though every recollection is a pang? Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender of parents, though to remember be but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend over whom he mourns? Who, even when the tomb is closing upon the remains of her he most loved; when he feels his heart, as it were, crushed in the closing of its portal; would accept of consolation that must be bought by forgetfulness?—No, the love which survives the tomb is one of the noblest attributes of the soul. If it has its woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection—when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved, is softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was in the days of its loveliness—who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud over the bright hour of gayety, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom; yet who would exchange it even for the song of pleasure, or the burst of revelry? No, there is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song. There is a remembrance of the dead, to which we turn even from the charms of the living. Oh, the grave!—the grave!—It buries every error—covers every defect—extinguishes every resentment! From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections.
Who can look down upon the grave even of an enemy and not feel a compunctionous throb, that he should ever have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies mouldering before him?

But the grave of those we loved—what a place for meditation! There it is that we call up in long review the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us almost unheeded in the daily intercourse of intimacy;—there it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, awful tenderness of the parting scene. The bed of death, with all its stifled griefs—its noiseless attendance—its mute, watchful assiduities. The last testimonies of expiring love! The feeble, fluttering, thrilling, oh! how thrilling!—pressure of the hand. The last fond look of the glazing eye, turning upon us even from the threshold of existence. The faint, faltering accents, struggling in death to give one more assurance of affection!

Ay, go to the grave of buried love, and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience for every past benefit unrequited, every past endearment unregarded, of that departed being, who can never—never—never return to be soothed by thy contrition!

If thou art a child, and hast ever added a sorrow to the soul, or a furrow to the silvered brow of an affectionate parent—if thou art a husband, and hast ever caused the fond bosom that ventured its whole happiness in thy arms, to doubt one moment of thy kindness or thy truth—if thou art a friend, and hast ever wronged, in thought, or word, or deed, the spirit
that generously confided in thee—if thou art a lover
and hast ever given one unmerited pang to that true
heart which now lies cold and still beneath thy feet;
then be sure that every unkind look, every ungracious
word, every ungentle action, will come thronging
back upon thy memory, and knocking dolefully at thy
soul—then be sure that thou wilt lie down sorrowing
and repentant on the grave, and utter the unheard
groan, and pour the unavailing tear—more deep,
more bitter, because unheard and unavailing.

Then weave thy chaplet of flowers, and strew the
beauties of nature about the grave; console thy
broken spirit, if thou canst, with these tender, yet
futile tributes of regret;—but take warning by the
bitterness of this thy contrite affliction over the dead,
and henceforth be more faithful and affectionate in
the discharge of thy duties to the living.

In writing the preceding article, it was not intended
to give a full detail of the funeral customs of the Eng-
lish peasantry, but merely to furnish a few hints and
quotations illustrative of particular rites, to be ap-
ended, by way of note, to another paper, which has
been withheld. The article swelled insensibly into
its present form, and this is mentioned as an apology
for so brief and casual a notice of these usages, after
they have been amply and learnedly investigated in
other works.

I must observe, also, that I am well aware that this
custom of adorning graves with flowers, prevails in other countries besides England. Indeed, in some it is much more general, and is observed even by the rich and fashionable; but it is then apt to lose its simplicity, and to degenerate into affectation. Bright, in his travels in Lower Hungary, tells of monuments of marble, and recesses formed for retirement, with seats placed among bowers of green-house plants; and that the graves generally are covered with the gayest flowers of the season. He gives a casual picture of finality, which I cannot but describe, for I trust it is as useful as it is delightful to illustrate the amiable virtues of the sex. "When I was at Berlin," says he, "I followed the celebrated Iffland to the grave. Mingled with some pomp, you might trace much real feeling. In the midst of the ceremony, my attention was attracted by a young woman who stood on a mound of earth, newly covered with turf, which she anxiously protected from the feet of the passing crowd. It was the tomb of her parent; and the figure of this affectionate daughter presented a monument more striking than the most costly work of art."

I will barely add an instance of sepulchral decoration that I once met with among the mountains of Switzerland. It was at the village of Gersau, which stands on the borders of the lake of Luzerne, at the foot of Mount Rigi. It was once the capital of a miniature republic, shut up between the Alps and the lake, and accessible on the land side only by footpaths. The whole force of the republic did not exceed six hundred fighting men; and a few miles of
circumference, scooped out, as it were, from the bosom of the mountains, comprised its territory. The village of Gersau seemed separated from the rest of the world, and retained the golden simplicity of a purer age. It had a small church, with a burying ground adjoining. At the heads of the graves were placed crosses of wood or iron. On some were affixed miniatures, rudely executed, but evidently attempts at likenesses of the deceased. On the crosses were hung chaplets of flowers, some withering, others fresh, as if occasionally renewed. I paused with interest at this scene; I felt that I was at the source of poetical description, for these were the beautiful, but unaffected offerings of the heart, which poets are fain to record. In a gayer and more populous place, I should have suspected them to have been suggested by fictitious sentiment, derived from books; but the good people of Gersau knew little of books; there was not a novel nor a love poem in the village; and I question whether any peasant of the place dreamt, while he was twining a fresh chaplet for the grave of his mistress, that he was fulfilling one of the most fanciful rites of poetical devotion, and that he was practically a poet.
THE INN KITCHEN.

Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?  

Falstaff.

During a journey that I once made through the therlands, I had arrived one evening at the Pomme hr, the principal inn of a small Flemish village. It 3 after the hour of the table d'hote, so that I was iged to make a solitary supper from the relics of ampler board. The weather was chilly; I was ted alone in one end of a great gloomy dining-m, and my repast being over, I had the prospect ore me of a long dull evening, without any visible ans of enlivening it. I summoncd mine host, and quested something to read; he brought me the whole rary stock of his household, a Dutch family bible, almanac in the same language, and a number of Paris newspapers. As I sat dozing over one of latter, reading old news and stale criticisms, my was now and then struck with bursts of laughter ich seemed to proceed from the kitchen. Every that has travelled on the Continent must know vourite a resort the kitchen of a country inn o the middle and inferior order of travellers; par-

icularly in that equivocal kind of weather when a becomes agreeable toward evening. I threw aside
the newspaper, and explored my way to the kitchen, to take a peep at the group that appeared to be so merry. It was composed partly of travellers who had arrived some hours before in a diligence, and partly of the usual attendants and hangers-on of inns. They were seated round a great burnished stove, that might have been mistaken for an altar, at which they were worshipping. It was covered with various kitchen vessels of resplendent brightness; among which steamed and hissed a huge copper tea-kettle. A large lamp threw a strong mass of light upon the group, bringing out many odd features in strong relief. Its yellow rays partially illumined the spacious kitchen, dying duskily away into remote corners; except where they settled in mellow radiance on the broad side of a fitch of bacon, or were reflected back from well-scoured utensils that gleamed from the midst of obscurity. A strapping Flemish lass, with long golden pendants in her ears, and a necklace with a golden heart suspended to it, was the presiding priestess of the temple.

Many of the company were furnished with pipes, and most of them with some kind of evening potation. I found their mirth was occasioned by anecdotes which a little swarthy Frenchman, with a dry weazen face and large whiskers, was giving of his love adventures; at the end of each of which there was one of those bursts of honest unceremonious laughter, in which a man indulges in that temple of true liberty, an inn.

As I had no better mode of getting through a tedi
ous blustering evening, I took my seat near the stove, and listened to a variety of traveller’s tales, some very extravagant, and most very dull. All of them, however, have faded from my treacherous memory, except one, which I will endeavour to relate. I fear, however, it derived its chief zest from the manner in which it was told, and the peculiar air and appearance of the narrator. He was a corpulent old Swiss, who had the look of a veteran traveller. He was dressed in a tarnished green travelling-jacket, with a broad belt round his waist, and a pair of overalls with buttons from the hips to the ankles. He was of a full, rubicund countenance, with a double chin, aquiline nose, and a pleasant twinkling eye. His hair was light, and curled from under an old green velvet travelling-cap, stuck on one side of his head. He was interrupted more than once by the arrival of guests, or the remarks of his auditors; and paused, now and then, to replenish his pipe; at which times he had generally a roguish leer, and a sly joke, for the buxom kitchen maid.

I wish my reader could imagine the old fellow lolling in a huge arm-chair, one arm a-kimbo, the other holding a curiously twisted tobacco-pipe, formed of genuine écume de mer, decorated with silver chain and silken tassel—his head cocked on one side, and a whimsical cut of the eye occasionally, as he related the following story:

R 2
THE

SPECTRE BRIDEGROOM.

A TRAVELLER'S TALE

He that supper for is dight,
He lyes full cold, I trow, this night!
Yestreen to chamber I him led,
This night Gray-steel has made his bed!

SIR EGER, SIR GRAHAME, AND SIR GRAY-STEEL

On the summit of one of the heights of the Odenwalt, a wild and romantic tract of Upper Germany, that lies not far from the confluence of the Maine and the Rhine, there stood, many, many years since, the Castle of the Baron Von Landshort. It is now quite fallen to decay, and almost buried among beech trees and dark firs; above which, however, its old watchtower may still be seen struggling, like the former possessor I have mentioned, to carry a high head, and look down upon the neighbouring country.

The Baron was a dry branch of the great family of Katzenellenbogen,* and inherited the relics of the

* The erudite reader, well versed in good-for-nothing lore, will perceive that the above Tale must have been suggested to the old Swiss by a little French anecdote, of a circumstance said to have taken place at Paris.

† i.e. Cat's Elbow—the name of a family of those parts,
property, and all the pride, of his ancestors. Though the warlike disposition of his predecessors had much impaired the family possessions, yet the Baron still endeavoured to keep up some show of former state. The times were peaceable, and the German nobles, in general, had abandoned their inconvenient old castles, perched like eagle’s nests among the mountains, and had built more convenient residences in the valleys; still the Baron remained proudly drawn up in his little fortress, cherishing with hereditary inveteracy all the old family feuds; so that he was on ill terms with some of his nearest neighbours, on account of disputes that had happened between their great-great-grandfathers.

The Baron had but one child, a daughter; but Nature, when she grants but one child, always compensates by making it a prodigy; and so it was with the daughter of the Baron. All the nurses, gossips, and country cousins, assured her father that she had not her equal for beauty in all Germany; and who should know better than they? She had, moreover, been brought up with great care, under the superintendence of two maiden aunts, who had spent some years of their early life at one of the little German courts, and were skilled in all the branches of knowledge necessary to the education of a fine lady. Under their instructions, she became a miracle of accomplishments. By the time she was eighteen she could very powerful in former times. The appellation, we are told, was given in compliment to a peerless dame of the family, celebrated for a fine arm.
embroider to admiration, and had worked whole stories of the saints in tapestry, with such strength of expression in their countenances, that they looked like so many souls in purgatory. She could read without great difficulty, and had spelled her way through several church legends, and almost all the chivalric wonders of the Heldenbuch. She had even made considerable proficiency in writing, could sign her own name without missing a letter, and so legibly, that her aunts could read it without spectacles. She excelled in making little good-for-nothing lady-like knicknacks of all kinds; was versed in the most abstruse dancing of the day; played a number of airs on the harp and guitar; and knew all the tender ballads of the Minnie-lieder by heart.

Her aunts, too, having been great flirts and coquettes in their younger days, were admirably calculated to be vigilant guardians and strict censors of the conduct of their niece; for there is no duenna so rigidly prudent, and inexorably decorous, as a superannuated coquette. She was rarely suffered out of their sight; never went beyond the domains of the castle, unless well attended, or rather well watched; had continual lectures read to her about strict decorum and implicit obedience; and, as to the men—pah! she was taught to hold them at such distance and distrust, that, unless properly authorized, she would not have cast a glance upon the handsomest cavalier in the world—no, not if he were even dying at her feet.

The good effects of this system were wonderfully
The young lady was a pattern of docility and correctness. While others were wasting their sweetness in the glare of the world, and liable to be plucked and thrown aside by every hand, she was shyly blooming into fresh and lovely womanhood under the protection of those immaculate spinsters, like a rose-bud blushing forth among guardian thorns. Her aunts looked upon her with pride and exultation, and vaunted that though all the other young ladies in the world might go astray, yet, thank Heaven, nothing of the kind could happen to the heiress of Katzenellenbogen.

But however scantily the Baron Von Landshort might be provided with children, his household was by no means a small one, for Providence had enriched him with abundance of poor relations. They, one and all, possessed the affectionate disposition common to humble relatives; were wonderfully attached to the Baron, and took every possible occasion to come in swarms and enliven the castle. All family festivals were commemorated by these good people at the Baron’s expense; and when they were filled with good cheer, they would declare that there was nothing on earth so delightful as these family meetings, these jubilees of the heart.

The Baron, though a small man, had a large soul, and it swelled with satisfaction at the consciousness of being the greatest man in the little world about him. He loved to tell long stories about the stark old warriors whose portraits looked grimly down from the walls around, and he found no listeners equal
to those who fed at his expense. He was much given to the marvellous, and a firm believer in all those supernatural tales with which every mountain and valley in Germany abounds. The faith of his guests even exceeded his own: they listened to every tale of wonder with open eyes and mouth, and never failed to be astonished, even though repeated for the hundredth time. Thus lived the Baron Von Landshott, the oracle of his table, the absolute monarch of his little territory, and happy, above all things, in the persuasion that he was the wisest man of the age.

At the time of which my story treats, there was a great family-gathering at the castle, on an affair of the utmost importance:—it was to receive the destined bridegroom of the Baron’s daughter. A negotiation had been carried on between the father and an old nobleman of Bavaria, to unite the dignity of their houses by the marriage of their children. The preliminaries had been conducted with proper punctilio. The young people were betrothed without seeing each other, and the time was appointed for the marriage ceremony. The young Count Von Altenburg had been recalled from the army for the purpose, and was actually on his way to the Baron’s to receive his bride. Missives had even been received from him, from Wurtzburg, where he was accidentally detained, mentioning the day and hour when he might be expected to arrive.

The castle was in a tumult of preparation to give him a suitable welcome. The fair bride had been decked out with uncommon care. The two aunts
had superintended her toilet, and quarrelled the whole
morning about every article of her dress. The young
lady had taken advantage of their contest to follow
the bent of her own taste; and fortunately it was a
good one. She looked as lovely as youthful bride-
groom could desire; and the flutter of expectation
heightened the lustre of her charms.

The suffusions that mantled her face and neck, the
gentle heaving of the bosom, the eye now and then
lost in reverie, all betrayed the soft tumult that was
going on in her little heart. The aunts were con-
tinually hovering around her; for maiden aunts are
apt to take great interest in affairs of this nature: they
were giving her a world of staid counsel how to de-
port herself, what to say, and in what manner to re-
ceive the expected lover.

The Baron was no less busied in preparations. He
had, in truth, nothing exactly to do; but he was
naturally a fuming, bustling little man, and could not
remain passive when all the world was in a hurry.
He worried from top to bottom of the castle, with an
air of infinite anxiety; he continually called the ser-
vants from their work to exhort them to be diligent,
and buzzed about every hall and chamber, as idly
restless and importunate as a blue-bottle fly of a warm
summer's day.

In the mean time, the fatted calf had been killed;
the forests had rung with the clamour of the hunts-
men; the kitchen was crowded with good cheer; the
cellars had yielded up whole oceans of Rhein-wein
and Ferne-wein, and even the great Heidelberg tun
had been laid under contribution. Every thing was ready to receive the distinguished guest with Saus und Braus in the true spirit of German hospitality—but the guest delayed to make his appearance. Hour rolled after hour. The sun that had poured his downward rays upon the rich forests of the Odenwald, now just gleamed along the summits of the mountain. The Baron mounted the highest tower, and strained his eyes in hopes of catching a distant sight of the Count and his attendants. Once he thought he beheld them; the sound of horns came floating from the valley, prolonged by the mountain echoes: a number of horsemen were seen far below, slowly advancing along the road; but when they had nearly reached the foot of the mountain, they suddenly struck off in a different direction. The last ray of sunshine departed—the bats began to flit by in the twilight—the road grew dimmer and dimmer to the view; and nothing appeared stirring in it, but now and then a peasant lagging homeward from his labour.

While the old castle of Landshort was in this state of perplexity, a very interesting scene was transacting in a different part of the Odenwald.

The young Count Von Altenburg was tranquilly pursuing his route in that sober jog-trot way in which a man travels toward matrimony when his friends have taken all the trouble and uncertainty of courtship off his hands, and a bride is waiting for him, as certainly as a dinner, at the end of his journey. He had encountered at Wurtzburg a youthful companion in arms, with whom he had seen some service on the
frontiers; Herman Von Starkenfaust, one of the stoutest hands and worthiest hearts of German chivalry, who was now returning from the army. His father's castle was not far distant from the old fortress of Landshart, although a hereditary feud rendered the families hostile, and strangers to each other.

In the warm-hearted moment of recognition, the young friends related all their past adventures and fortunes, and the Count gave the whole history of his intended nuptials with a young lady whom he had never seen, but of whose charms he had received the most enrapturing descriptions.

As the route of the friends lay in the same direction, they agreed to perform the rest of their journey together; and that they might do it more leisurely, set off from Wurtzburg at an early hour, the Count having given directions for his retinue to follow and overtake him.

They beguiled their wayfaring with recollections of their military scenes and adventures; but the Count was apt to be a little tedious, now and then, about the reputed charms of his bride, and the felicity that awaited him.

In this way they had entered among the mountains of the Odenwald, and were traversing one of its most lonely and thickly wooded passes. It is well known that the forests of Germany have always been as much infested with robbers as its castles by spectres; and, at this time, the former were particularly numerous, from the hordes of disbanded soldiers wandering about the country. It will not appear extraordinary, therefore, that the cavaliers were attacked by a gang.
of these stragglers, in the midst of the forest. They defended themselves with bravery, but were nearly overpowered, when the Count's retinue arrived to their assistance. At sight of them the robbers fled, but not until the Count had received a mortal wound. He was slowly and carefully conveyed back to the city of Wurtzburg, and a friar summoned from a neighbouring convent, who was famous for his skill in administering to both soul and body. But half of his skill was superfluous; the moments of the unfortunate Count were numbered.

With his dying breath he entreated his friend to repair instantly to the castle of Landshart, and explain the fatal cause of his not keeping his appointment with his bride. Though not the most ardent of lovers, he was one of the most punctilious of men, and appeared earnestly solicitous that this mission should be speedily and courteously executed. "Unless this is done," said he, "I shall not sleep quietly in my grave!" He repeated these last words with peculiar solemnity. A request, at a moment so impressive, admitted no hesitation. Starkenfaust endeavoured to soothe him to calmness; promised faithfully to execute his wish, and gave him his hand in solemn pledge. The dying man pressed it in acknowledgment, but soon lapsed into delirium—raved about his bride—his engagements—his plighted word; ordered his horse, that he might ride to the castle of Landshart, and expired in the fancied act of vaulting into the saddle.

Starkenfaust bestowed a sigh, and a soldier's tear
on the untimely fate of his comrade; and then pondered on the awkward mission he had undertaken. His heart was heavy, and his head perplexed; for he was to present himself an unbidden guest among hostile people, and to damp their festivity with tidings fatal to their hopes. Still there were certain whisperings of curiosity in his bosom to see this far-famed beauty of Katzenellenbogen, so cautiously shut up from the world; for he was a passionate admirer of the sex, and there was a dash of eccentricity and enterprise in his character, that made him fond of all singular adventure.

Previous to his departure, he made all due arrangements with the holy fraternity of the convent for the funeral solemnities of his friend, who was to be buried in the cathedral of Wurtzburg, near some of his illustrious relatives; and the mourning retinue of the Count took charge of his remains.

It is now high time that we should return to the ancient family of Katzenellenbogen, who were impatient for their guest, and still more for their dinner; and to the worthy little Baron, whom we left airing himself on the watch-tower.

Night closed in, but still no guest arrived. The Baron descended from the tower in despair. The banquet, which had been delayed from hour to hour, could no longer be postponed. The meats were already overdone; the cook in an agony; and the whole household had the look of a garrison that had been reduced by famine. The Baron was obliged reluctantly to give orders for the feast without the
presence of the guest. All were seated at table just on the point of commencing, when the sound of a horn from without the gate gave notice of the approach of a stranger. Another long blast filled the old courts of the castle with its echoes, and was answered by the warder from the walls. The Baron hastened to receive his future son-in-law.

The drawbridge had been let down, and the stranger was before the gate. He was a tall gallant cavalier, mounted on a black steed. His countenance was pale, but he had a beaming, romantic eye, and an air of stately melancholy. The Baron was a little mollified that he should have come in this simple, solitary style. His dignity for a moment was ruffled, and he felt disposed to consider it a want of proper respect for the important occasion, and the important family with which he was to be connected. He pacified himself, however, with the conclusion that it must have been youthful impatience which had induced him thus to spur on sooner than his attendants.

"I am sorry," said the stranger, "to break in upon you thus unseasonably——"

Here the Baron interrupted him with a world of compliments and greetings; for, to tell the truth, he prided himself upon his courtesy and his eloquence. The stranger attempted, once or twice, to stem the torrent of words, but in vain; so he bowed his head and suffered it to flow on. By the time the Baron had come to a pause, they had reached the inner court of the castle; and the stranger was again about to speak, when he was once more interrupted by the
appearance of the female part of the family, leading forth the shrinking and blushing bride. He gazed on her for a moment as one entranced; it seemed as if his whole soul beamed forth in the gaze, and rested upon that lovely form. One of the maiden aunts whispered something in her ear; she made an effort to speak; her moist blue eye was timidly raised, gave a shy glance of inquiry on the stranger, and was cast again to the ground. The words died away; but there was a sweet smile playing about her lips, and a soft dimpling of the cheek, that showed her glance had not been unsatisfactory. It was impossible for a girl of the fond age of eighteen, highly predisposed for love and matrimony, not to be pleased with so gallant a cavalier.

The late hour at which the guest had arrived, left no time for parley. The Baron was peremptory, and deferred all particular conversation until the morning, and led the way to the untasted banquet.

It was served up in the great hall of the castle. Around the walls hung the hard-favoured portraits of the heroes of the house of Katzenellenbogen, and the trophies which they had gained in the field and in the chase. Hacked croslets, splintered jousting spears, and tattered banners, were mingled with the spoils of sylvan warfare: the jaws of the wolf, and the tusks of the boar, grinned horribly among cross-bows and battle-axes, and a huge pair of antlers branched immediately over the head of the youthful bridegroom.
The cavalier took but little notice of the company or the entertainment. He scarcely tasted the banquet, but seemed absorbed in admiration of his bride. He conversed in a low tone, that could not be overheard—for the language of love is never loud; but where is the female ear so dull that it cannot catch the softest whisper of the lover? There was a mingled tenderness and gravity in his manner, that appeared to have a powerful effect upon the young lady. Her colour came and went, as she listened with deep attention. Now and then she made some blushing reply, and when his eye was turned away, she would steal a sidelong glance at his romantic countenance, and heave a gentle sigh of tender happiness. It was evident that the young couple were completely enamoured. The aunts, who were deeply versed in the mysteries of the heart, declared that they had fallen in love with each other at first sight.

The feast went on merrily, or at least noisily, for the guests were all blessed with those keen appetites that attend upon light purses and mountain air. The Baron told his best and longest stories, and never had he told them so well, or with such great effect. If there was any thing marvellous, his auditors were lost in astonishment; and if any thing facetious, they were sure to laugh exactly in the right place. The Baron, it is true, like most great men, was too dignified to utter any joke but a dull one: it was always enforced, however, by a bumper of excellent Hoch-heimer; and even a dull joke, at one's own table, served up with jolly old wine, is irresistible. Many good things
were said by poorer and keener wits, that would not bear repeating, except on similar occasions; many sly speeches whispered in ladies' ears, that almost convulsed them with suppressed laughter; and a song or two roared out by a poor, but merry and broad-faced cousin of the Baron, that absolutely made the maiden aunts hold up their fans.

Amidst all this revelry, the stranger guest maintained a most singular and unseasonable gravity. His countenance assumed a deeper cast of dejection as the evening advanced, and, strange as it may appear, even the Baron's jokes seemed only to render him the more melancholy. At times he was lost in thought, and at times there was a perturbed and restless wandering of the eye that bespoke a mind but ill at ease. His conversation with the bride became more and more earnest and mysterious. Lowering clouds began to steal over the fair serenity of her brow, and tremors to run through her tender frame.

All this could not escape the notice of the company. Their gayety was chilled by the unaccountable gloom of the bridegroom; their spirits were infected; whispers and glances were interchanged, accompanied by shrugs and dubious shakes of the head. The song and the laugh grew less and less frequent: there were dreary pauses in the conversation, which were at length succeeded by wild tales, and supernatural legends. One dismal story produced another still more dismal, and the Baron nearly frightened some of the ladies into hysterics with the history of the goblin horseman that carried away the fair Leonora—
a dreadful, but true story, which has since been put into excellent verse, and is read and believed by all the world.

The bridegroom listened to this tale with profound attention. He kept his eyes steadily fixed on the Baron, and as the story drew to a close, began gradually to rise from his seat, growing taller and taller, until, in the Baron's entranced eye, he seemed almost to tower into a giant. The moment the tale was finished, he heaved a deep sigh, and took a solemn farewell of the company. They were all amazement. The Baron was perfectly thunderstruck.

"What! going to leave the castle at midnight? why, everything was prepared for his reception; a chamber was ready for him if he wished to retire."

The stranger shook his head mournfully, and mysteriously; "I must lay my head in a different chamber to-night!"

There was something in this reply, and the tone in which it was uttered, that made the Baron's heart misgave him; but he rallied his forces, and repeated his hospitable entreaties. The stranger shook his head silently, but positively, at every offer; and waving his farewell to the company, stalked slowly out of the hall. The maiden aunts were absolutely petrified—the bride hung her head, and a tear stole to her eye.

The Baron followed the stranger to the great court of the castle, where the black charger stood pawing the earth, and snorting with impatience. When they had reached the portal, whose deep archway was dimly lighted by a cresset, the stranger paused, and
addressed the Baron in a hollow tone of voice, which the vaulted roof rendered still more sepulchral. "Now that we are alone," said he, "I will impart to you the reason of my going. I have a solemn, an indispensable engagement——"

"Why," said the Baron, "cannot you send someone in your place?"

"It admits of no substitute—I must attend it in person—I must away to Wurtzburg cathedral——"

"Ay," said the Baron, plucking up spirit, "but not until to-morrow—to-morrow you shall take your bride there."

"No! no!" replied the stranger, with ten-fold solemnity, "my engagement is with no bride—the worms! the worms expect me! I am a dead man—I have been slain by robbers—my body lies at Wurtzburg—at midnight I am to be buried—the grave is waiting for me—I must keep my appointment!"

He sprang on his black charger, dashed over the drawbridge, and the clattering of his horse's hoofs was lost in the whistling of the night-blast.

The Baron returned to the hall in the utmost consternation, and related what had passed. Two ladies fainted outright; others sickened at the idea of having banqueted with a spectre. It was the opinion of some, that this might be the wild huntsman famous in German legend. Some talked of mountain sprites, of wood-demons, and of other supernatural beings, with which the good people of Germany have been so grievously harassed since time immemorial. One of the poor relatives ventured to suggest that it might be some sportive
evasion of the young cavalier, and that the very gloom-
iness of the caprice seemed to accord with so melan-
choly a personage. This, however, drew on him the
indignation of the whole company, and especially of
the Baron, who looked upon him as little better than
an infidel; so that he was fain to abjure his heresy as
speedily as possible, and come into the faith of the
true believers.

But, whatever may have been the doubts entertain-
ed, they were completely put to an end by the arrival,
next day, of regular missives, confirming the intelli-
gence of the young Count's murder, and his interment
in Wurtzburg cathedral.

The dismay at the castle may well be imagined. The
Baron shut himself up in his chamber. The
guests who had come to rejoice with him, could not
think of abandoning him in his distress. They wan-
dered about the courts, or collected in groups in the
hall, shaking their heads and shrugging their shoulders,
at the troubles of so good a man; and sat longer than
ever at table, and ate and drank more stoutly than
ever, by way of keeping up their spirits. But the
situation of the widowed bride was the most pitiable.
To have lost a husband before she had even embraced
him—and such a husband! if the very spectre could
be so gracious and noble, what must have been the
living man? She filled the house with lamentations.

On the night of the second day of her widowhood,
she had retired to her chamber, accompanied by one
of her aunts, who insisted on sleeping with her. The
aunt, who was one of the best tellers of ghost stories
in all Germany, had just been recounting one of her longest, and had fallen asleep in the very midst of it. The chamber was remote, and overlooked a small garden. The niece lay pensively gazing at the beams of the rising moon, as they trembled on the leaves of an aspen tree before the lattice. The castle clock had just told midnight, when a soft strain of music stole up from the garden. She rose hastily from her bed, and stepped lightly to the window. A tall figure stood among the shadows of the trees. As it raised its head, a beam of moonlight fell upon the countenance. Heaven and earth! she beheld the Spectre Bridegroom! A loud shriek at that moment burst upon her ear, and her aunt, who had been awakened by the music, and had followed her silently to the window, fell into her arms. When she looked again, the spectre had disappeared.

Of the two females, the aunt now required the most soothing, for she was perfectly beside herself with terror. As to the young lady, there was something, even in the spectre of her lover, that seemed endearing. There was still the semblance of manly beauty; and though the shadow of a man is but little calculated to satisfy the affections of a love-sick girl, yet, where the substance is not to be had, even that is consoling. The aunt declared she would never sleep in that chamber again; the niece, for once, was refractory, and declared as strongly that she would sleep in no other in the castle: the consequence was that she had to sleep in it alone; but she drew a promise from her aunt not to relate the story of the
spectre, lest she should be denied the only melancholy pleasure left her on earth—that of inhabiting the chamber over which the guardian shade of her lover kept its nightly vigils.

How long the good old lady would have observed this promise is uncertain, for she dearly loved to talk of the marvellous, and there is a triumph in being the first to tell a frightful story; it is, however, still quoted in the neighbourhood, as a memorable instance of female secrecy, that she kept it to herself for a whole week; when she was suddenly absolved from all farther restraint, by intelligence brought to the breakfast-table one morning that the young lady was not to be found. Her room was empty—the bed had not been slept in—the window was open—and the bird had flown!

The astonishment and concern with which the intelligence was received, can only be imagined by those who have witnessed the agitation which the mishaps of a great man cause among his friends. Even the poor relations paused for a moment from the indefatigable labours of the trencheder; when the aunt, who had at first been struck speechless, wrung her hands and shrieked out, “the goblin! the goblin! she’s carried away by the goblin!”

In a few words she related the fearful scene of the garden, and concluded that the spectre must have carried off his bride. Two of the domestics corroborated the opinion, for they had heard the clattering of a horse’s hoofs down the mountain about midnight, and had no doubt that it was the spectre on his black
charger, bearing her away to the tomb. All present were struck with the direful probability; for events of the kind are extremely common in Germany, as many well-authenticated histories bear witness.

What a lamentable situation was that of the poor Baron! What a heart-rending dilemma for a fond father, and a member of the great family of Katzenellenbogen! His only daughter had either been wrapt away to the grave, or he was to have some wood-demon for a son-in-law, and, perchance, a troop of goblin grand-children. As usual, he was completely bewildered, and all the castle in an uproar. The men were ordered to take horse, and scour every road and path and glen of the Odenwald. The Baron himself had just drawn on his jack-boots, girded on his sword, and was about to mount his steed to sally forth on the doubtful quest, when he was brought to a pause by a new apparition. A lady was seen approaching the castle, mounted on a palfrey attended by a cavalier on horseback. She galloped up to the gate, sprang from her horse, and falling at the Baron's feet embraced his knees. It was his lost daughter, and her companion—the Spectre Bridegroom! The Baron was astounded. He looked at his daughter, then at the Spectre, and almost doubted the evidence of his senses. The latter, too, was wonderfully improved in his appearance, since his visit to the world of spirits. His dress was splendid, and set off a noble figure of manly symmetry. He was no longer pale and melancholy. His fine countenance was flushed
with the glow of youth, and joy rioted in his large
dark eye.

The mystery was soon cleared up. The cavalier
(for in truth, as you must have known all the while,
he was no goblin) announced himself as Sir Herman
Von Starkenfaust. He related his adventure with the
young Count. He told how he had hastened to the
castle to deliver the unwelcome tidings, but that the
elocution of the Baron had interrupted him in every
attempt to tell his tale. How the sight of the bride
had completely captivated him, and that to pass a few
hours near her, he had tacitly suffered the mistake to
continue. How he had been sorely perplexed in what
way to make a decent retreat, until the Baron’s goblin
stories had suggested his eccentric exit. How, fearing
the feudal hostility of the family, he had repeated his
visits by stealth—had haunted the garden beneath the
young lady’s window—had wooed—had won—had
borne away in triumph—and, in a word, had wedded
the fair.

Under any other circumstances, the Baron would
have been inflexible, for he was tenacious of paternal
authority, and devoutly obstinate in all family feuds;
but he loved his daughter; he had lamented her as
lost; he rejoiced to find her still alive; and, though
her husband was of a hostile house, yet, thank Heaven,
he was not a goblin. There was something, it must
be acknowledged, that did not exactly accord with
his notions of strict veracity, in the joke the knight
had passed upon him of his being a dead man; but
several old friends present, who had served in the wars, assured him that every stratagem was excusable in love, and that the cavalier was entitled to especial privilege, having lately served as a trooper.

Matters, therefore, were happily arranged. The Baron pardoned the young couple on the spot. The revels at the castle were resumed. The poor relations overwhelmed this new member of the family with loving kindness; he was so gallant, so generous—and so rich. The aunts, it is true, were somewhat scandalized that their system of strict seclusion, and passive obedience, should be so badly exemplified, but attributed it all to their negligence in not having the windows grated. One of them was particularly mortified at having her marvellous story marred, and that the only spectre she had ever seen should turn out a counterfeit; but the niece seemed perfectly happy at having found him substantial flesh and blood—and so the story ends.
WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

When I behold, with deep astonishment,
To famous Westminster how there resorte,
Living in brasse or stony monument,
The princes and the worthies of all sorte;
Doe not I see reformde nobilitie,
Without contempt, or pride, or ostentation,
And looke upon offenselss majesty,
Naked of pomp or earthy domination?
And how a play-game of a painted stone
Contents the quiet now and silent sprites,
Whome all the world which late they stood upon,
Could not content nor quench their appetites.
Life is a frost of cold felicitie,
And death the thaw of all our vanitie.

Christolero's Epigrams, by T. B. 1598.

In one of those sober and rather melancholy days,
the latter part of autumn, when the shadows of
ning and evening almost mingle together, and
ow a gloom over the decline of the year, I passed
eral hours in rambling about Westminster Abbey.
ere was something congenial to the season in the
urnful magnificence of the old pile; and as I passed
reshold, it seemed like stepping back into the
ions of antiquity, and losing myself among the
des of former ages.
I entered from the inner court of Westminster school, through a long, low, vaulted passage, that had an almost subterranean look, being dimly lighted in one part by circular perforations in the massive walls. Through this dark avenue I had a distant view of the cloisters, with the figure of an old verger, in his black gown, moving along their shadowy vaults, and seeming like a spectre from one of the neighbouring tombs.

The approach to the abbey through these gloomy monastic remains, prepares the mind for its solemn contemplation. The cloister still retains something of the quiet and seclusion of former days. The gray walls are discoloured by dams, and crumbling with age; a coat of hoary moss has gathered over the inscriptions of the mural monuments, and obscured the death's heads, and other funeral emblems. The sharp touches of the chisel are gone from the rich tracery of the arches; the roses which adorned the key-stones have lost their leafy beauty; every thing bears marks of the gradual dilapidations of time, which yet has something touching and pleasing in its very decay.

The sun was pouring down a yellow autumnal ray into the square of the cloisters; beaming upon a scanty plot of grass in the centre, and lighting up an angle of the vaulted passage with a kind of dusty splendour. From between the arcades, the eye glanced up to a bit of blue sky, or a passing cloud; and beheld the sun-gilt pinnacles of the abbey towering into the azure heaven.

As I paced the cloisters, sometimes contemplating this mingled picture of glory and decay, and sometimes
endeavouring to decipher the inscriptions on the tombstones, which formed the pavement beneath my feet, my eyes were attracted to three figures, rudely carved in relief, but nearly worn away by the footsteps of many generations. They were the effigies of three of the early abbots; the epitaphs were entirely effaced; the names alone remained, having no doubt been renewed in later times; (Vitalis. Abbas. 1082, and Gislebertus Crispinus. Abbas. 1114, and Laurentius. Abbas. 1176.) I remained some little while, musing over these casual relics of antiquity, thus left like wrecks upon this distant shore of time, telling no tale but that such beings had been and had perished; teaching no moral but the futility of that pride which hopes still to exact homage in its ashes, and to live in an inscription. A little longer, and even these faint records will be obliterated, and the monument will cease to be a memorial. Whilst I was yet looking down upon the gravestones, I was roused by the sound of the abbey clock, reverberating from buttress to buttress, and echoing among the cloisters. It is almost startling to hear this warning of departed time sounding among the tombs, and telling the lapse of the hour, which, like a billow, has rolled us onward towards the grave.

I pursued my walk to an arched door opening to the interior of the abbey. On entering here, the magnitude of the building breaks fully upon the mind, contrasted with the vaults of the cloisters. The eye gazes with wonder at clustered columns of gigantic dimensions, with arches springing from them to such
an amazing height; and man wandering about their bases, shrunk into insignificance in comparison with his own handy-work. The spaciousness and gloom of this vast edifice produce a profound and mysterious awe. We step cautiously and softly about, as if fearful of disturbing the hallowed silence of the tomb; while every footfall whispers along the walls, and chatters among the sepulchres, making us more sensible of the quiet we have interrupted.

It seems as if the awful nature of the place presses down upon the soul, and hushes the beholder into noiseless reverence. We feel that we are surrounded by the congregated bones of the great men of past times, who have filled history with their deeds, and the earth with their renown. And yet it almost provokes a smile at the vanity of human ambition, to see how they are crowded together, and justled in the dust; what parsimony is observed in doling out a scanty nook—a gloomy corner—a little portion of earth, to those whom, when alive, kingdoms could not satisfy: and how many shapes, and forms, and artifices, are devised to catch the casual notice of the passenger, and save from forgetfulness, for a few short years, a name which once aspired to occupy ages of the world's thought and admiration.

I passed some time in Poet's Corner, which occupies an end of one of the transepts or cross aisles of the abbey. The monuments are generally simple; for the lives of literary men afford no striking themes for the sculptor. Shakspeare and Addison have statues erected to their memories; but the greater part
have busts, medallions, and sometimes mere inscriptions. Notwithstanding the simplicity of these memorials, I have always observed that the visitors to the abbey remain longest about them. A kinder and fonder feeling takes place of that cold curiosity or vague admiration with which they gaze on the splendid monuments of the great and the heroic. They linger about these as about the tombs of friends and companions; for indeed there is something of companionship between the author and the reader. Other men are known to posterity only through the medium of history, which is continually growing faint and obscure; but the intercourse between the author and his fellow men is ever new, active, and immediate. He has lived for them more than for himself; he has sacrificed surrounding enjoyments, and shut himself up from the delights of social life, that he might the more intimately commune with distant minds and distant ages. Well may the world cherish his renown; for it has been purchased, not by deeds of violence and blood, but by the diligent dispensation of pleasure. Well may posterity be grateful to his memory; for he has left it an inheritance, not of empty names and sounding actions, but whole treasures of wisdom, bright gems of thought, and golden veins of language.

From Poet's Corner I continued my stroll towards that part of the abbey which contains the sepulchres of the kings. I wandered among what once were chapels, but which are now occupied by the tombs and monuments of the great. At every turn, I met with some
illustrious name, or the cognizance of some powerful house renowned in history. As the eye darts into these dusky chambers of death, it catches glimpses of quaint effigies: some kneeling in niches, as if in devotion; others stretched upon the tombs, with hands piously pressed together; warriors in armour, as if reposing after battle; prelates, with crosiers and mitres; and nobles in robes and coronets, lying as it were in state. In glancing over this scene, so strangely populous, yet where every form is so still and silent, it seems almost as if we were treading a mansion of that fabled city, where every being had been suddenly transmuted into stone.

I paused to contemplate a tomb on which lay the effigy of a knight in complete armour. A large buckler was on one arm; the hands were pressed together in supplication upon the breast; the face was almost covered by the morion; the legs were crossed in token of the warrior's having been engaged in the holy war. It was the tomb of a crusader; of one of those military enthusiasts, who so strangely mingled religion and romance, and whose exploits form the connecting link between fact and fiction—between the history and the fairy tale. There is something extremely picturesque in the tombs of these adventurers, decorated as they are with rude armorial bearings and Gothic sculpture. They comport with the antiquated chapels in which they are generally found; and in considering them, the imagination is apt to kindle with the legendary associations, the romantic fictions, the chivalrous pomp and pageantry, which poetry has
spread over the wars for the Sepulchre of Christ. They are the relics of times utterly gone by; of beings passed from recollection; of customs and manners with which our’s have no affinity. They are like objects from some strange and distant land, of which we have no certain knowledge, and about which all our conceptions are vague and visionary. There is something extremely solemn and awful in those effigies on Gothic tombs, extended as if in the sleep of death, or in the supplication of the dying hour. They have an effect infinitely more impressive on my feelings than the fanciful attitudes, the over-wrought conceits, and allegorical groups, which abound on modern monuments. I have been struck, also, with the superiority of many of the old sepulchral inscriptions. There was a noble way, in former times, of saying things simply, and yet saying them proudly: and I do not know an epitaph that breathes a loftier consciousness of family worth and honourable lineage, than one which affirms, of a noble house, that “all the brothers were brave, and all the sisters virtuous.”

In the opposite transept to Poet’s Corner, stands a monument which is among the most renowned achievements of modern art; but which, to me, appears horrible rather than sublime. It is the tomb of Mrs. Nightingale, by Roubillac. The bottom of the monument is represented as throwing open its marble doors, and a sheeted skeleton is starting forth. The shroud is falling from his fleshless frame as he lanches his dart at his victim. She is sinking into her affrighted husband’s arms, who strives, with vain and
frantic effort, to avert the blow. The whole is executed with terrible truth and spirit; we almost fancy we hear the gibbering yell of triumph, bursting from the distended jaws of the spectre.—But why should we thus seek to clothe death with unnecessary terrors and to spread horrors round the tomb of those we love? The grave should be surrounded by every thing that might inspire tenderness and veneration for the dead; or that might win the living to virtue. It is the place, not of disgust and dismay, but of sorrow and meditation.

While wandering about these gloomy vaults and silent aisles, studying the records of the dead, the sound of busy existence from without occasionally reaches the ear:—the rumbling of the passing equipage; the murmur of the multitude; or perhaps the light laugh of pleasure. The contrast is striking with the deathlike repose around; and it has a strange effect upon the feelings, thus to hear the surges of active life hurrying along and beating against the very walls of the sepulchre.

I continued in this way to move from tomb to tomb, and from chapel to chapel. The day was gradually wearing away; the distant tread of loiterers about the abbey grew less and less frequent; the sweet-tongued bell was summoning to evening prayers; and I saw at a distance the choristers, in their white surplices, crossing the aisle and entering the choir. I stood before the entrance to Henry the Seventh’s chapel. A flight of steps leads up to it, through a deep and gloomy, but magnificent arch. Great gates of brass,
richly and delicately wrought, turn heavily upon their hinges, as if proudly reluctant to admit the feet of common mortals into this most gorgeous of sepulchres.

On entering, the eye is astonished by the pomp of architecture, and the elaborate beauty of sculptured detail. The very walls are wrought into universal ornament, encrusted with tracery, and scooped into niches, crowded with the statues of saints and martyrs. Stone seems, by the cunning labour of the chisel, to have been robbed of its weight and density, suspended aloft, as if by magic, and the fretted roof achieved with the wonderful minuteness and airy security of a cobweb.

Along the sides of the chapel are the lofty stalls of the Knights of the Bath, richly carved of oak, though with the grotesque decorations of Gothic architecture. On the pinnacles of the stalls are affixed the helmets and crests of the knights, with their scarfs and swords; and above them are suspended their banners, emblazoned with armorial bearings, and contrasting the splendour of gold and purple and crimson, with the cold gray fretwork of the roof. In the midst of this grand mausoleum stands the sepulchre of its founder,—his effigy, with that of his queen, extended on a sumptuous tomb, and the whole surrounded by a superbly wrought brazen railing.

There is a sad dreariness in this magnificence; this strange mixture of tombs and trophies; these emblems of living and aspiring ambition, close beside mementos which show the dust and oblivion in which all must sooner or later terminate. Nothing impresses the
mind with a deeper feeling of loneliness, than to tread the silent and deserted scene of former throng and pageant. On looking round on the vacant stalls of the knights and their esquires, and on the rows of dusty but gorgeous banners that were once borne before them, my imagination conjured up the scene when this hall was bright with the valour and beauty of the land; glittering with the splendour of jewelled rank and military array; alive with the tread of many feet, and the hum of an admiring multitude. All had passed away; the silence of death had settled again upon the place; interrupted only by the casual chirping of birds, which had found their way into the chapel, and built their nests among its friezes and pendants—sure signs of solitariness and desertion. When I read the names inscribed on the banners, they were those of men scattered far and wide about the world; some tossing upon distant seas; some under arms in distant lands; some mingling in the busy intrigues of courts and cabinets: all seeking to deserve one more distinction in this mansion of shadowy honours—the melancholy reward of a monument.

Two small aisles on each side of this chapel present a touching instance of the equality of the grave, which brings down the oppressor to a level with the oppressed, and mingles the dust of the bitterest enemies together. In one is the sepulchre of the haughty Elizabeth; in the other is that of her victim, the lovely and unfortunate Mary. Not an hour in the day, but some ejaculation of pity is uttered over the fate of the latter, mingled with indignation at her oppressor. The
walls of Elizabeth's sepulchre continually echo with the sighs of sympathy heaved at the grave of her rival.

A peculiar melancholy reigns over the aisle where Mary lies buried. The light struggles dimly through windows darkened by dust. The greater part of the place is in deep shadow, and the walls are stained and tinted by time and weather. A marble figure of Mary is stretched upon the tomb, round which is an iron railing, much corroded, bearing her national emblem—the thistle. I was weary with wandering, and sat down to rest myself by the monument, revolving in my mind the chequered and disastrous story of poor Mary.

The sound of casual footsteps had ceased from the abbey. I could only hear, now and then, the distant voice of the priest repeating the evening service, and the faint responses of the choir; these paused for a time, and all was hushed. The stillness, the desertion and obscurity that were gradually prevailing around, gave a deeper and more solemn interest to the place:

For in the silent grave no conversation,  
No joyful tread of friends, no voice of lovers,  
No careful father's counsel—nothing's heard,  
For nothing is, but all oblivion,  
Dust, and an endless darkness.

Suddenly the notes of the deep-labouring organ burst upon the ear, falling with doubled and redoubled intensity, and rolling, as it were, huge billows of sound. How well do their volume and grandeur accord with this mighty building! With what pomp do they swell through its vast vaults, and breathe their awful har-
mony through these caves of death, and make the silent sepulchre vocal!—And now they rise in triumphant acclamation, heaving higher and higher their accordant notes, and piling sound on sound.—And now they pause, and the soft voices of the choir break out into sweet gushes of melody; they soar aloft, and warble along the roof, and seem to play about these lofty vaults like the pure airs of heaven. Again the pealing organ heaves its thrilling thunders, compressing air into music, and rolling it forth upon the soul. What long-drawn cadences! What solemn sweeping concords! It grows more and more dense and powerful—it fills the vast pile, and seems to jar the very walls—the ear is stunned—the senses are overwhelmed. And now it is winding up in full jubilee—it is rising from the earth to heaven—the very soul seems rapt away, and floated upwards on this swelling tide of harmony!

I sat for some time lost in that kind of reverie which a strain of music is apt sometimes to inspire: the shadows of evening were gradually thickening around me; the monuments began to cast deeper and deeper gloom; and the distant clock again gave token of the slowly waning day.

I rose, and prepared to leave the abbey. As I descended the flight of steps which lead into the body of the building, my eye was caught by the shrine of Edward the Confessor, and I ascended the small staircase that conducts to it, to take from thence a general survey of this wilderness of tombs. The shrine is elevated upon a kind of platform, and close around it
are the sepulchres of various kings and queens. From this eminence the eye looks down between pillars and funeral trophies to the chapels and chambers below, crowded with tombs; where warriors, prelates, cour- tiers, and statesmen, lie mouldering in "their beds of darkness." Close by me stood the great chair of cor- onation, rudely carved of oak, in the barbarous taste of a remote and Gothic age. The scene seemed almost as if contrived, with theatrical artifice, to pro- duce an effect upon the beholder. Here was a type of the beginning and the end of human pomp and power; here it was literally but a step from the throne to the sepulchre. Would not one think that these incongruous mementos had been gathered together as a lesson to living greatness?—to show it, even in the moment of its proudest exaltation, the neglect and dishonour to which it must soon arrive? how soon that crown which encircles its brow must pass away; and it must lie down in the dust and disgraces of the tomb, and be trampled upon by the feet of the meanest of the multitude? For, strange to tell, even the grave is here no longer a sanctuary. There is a shocking levity in some natures, which leads them to sport with awful and hallowed things; and there are base minds, which delight to revenge on the illustrious dead the abject homage and grovelling servility which they pay to the living. The coffin of Edward the Confes- sor has been broken open, and his remains despoiled of their funeral ornaments; the sceptre has been stolen from the hand of the imperious Elizabeth, and the effigy of Henry the Fifth lies headless. Not a royal
monument but bears some proof how false and fugitive is the homage of mankind. Some are plundered; some mutilated; some covered with ribaldry and insult—all more or less outraged and dishonoured!

The last beams of day were now faintly streaming through the painted windows in the high vaults above me: the lower parts of the abbey were already wrapped in the obscurity of twilight. The chapels and aisles grew darker and darker. The effigies of the kings faded into shadows; the marble figures of the monuments assumed strange shapes in the uncertain light; the evening breeze crept through the aisles like the cold breath of the grave; and even the distant footfall of a verger, traversing the Poet's Corner, had something strange and dreary in its sound. I slowly retraced my morning's walk, and as I passed out at the portal of the cloisters, the door, closing with a jarring noise behind me, filled the whole building with echoes.

I endeavoured to form some arrangement in my mind of the objects I had been contemplating, but found they were already falling into indistinctness and confusion. Names, inscriptions, trophies, had all become confounded in my recollection, though I had scarcely taken my foot from off the threshold. What, thought I, is this vast assemblage of sepulchres but a treasury of humiliation; a huge pile of reiterated homilies on the emptiness of renown, and the certainty of oblivion? It is, indeed, the empire of Death; his great shadowy palace; where he sits in state, mocking at the relics of human glory, and spreading dust and
forgetfulness on the monuments of princes. How idle a boast, after all, is the immortality of a name! Time is ever silently turning over his pages; we are too much engrossed by the story of the present, to think of the characters and anecdotes that gave interest to the past; and each age is a volume thrown aside to be speedily forgotten. The idol of to-day pushes the hero of yesterday out of our recollection; and will, in turn, be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow.

"Our fathers," says Sir Thomas Brown, "find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors." History fades into fable; fact becomes clouded with doubt and controversy; the inscription moulders from the tablet; the statue falls from the pedestal. Columns, arches, pyramids, what are they but heaps of sand—and their epitaphs, but characters written in the dust? What is the security of the tomb, or the perpetuity of an embalment? The remains of Alexander the Great have been scattered to the wind, and his empty sarcophagus is now the mere curiosity of a museum. "The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth; Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams."*

What then is to insure this pile, which now towers above me, from sharing the fate of mightier mausoleums? The time must come when its gilded vaults, which now spring so loftily, shall lie in rubbish beneath the feet; when, instead of the sound of melody and

* Sir Thomas Brown.
praise, the wind shall whistle through the branches, and the owl hoot from the shattered tower, when the garish sunbeam shall break into these gloomy mansions of death; and the ivy twine round the column; and the fox-glove hang its blossoms about the nameless urn, as if in mockery of the dead. Man passes away; his name perishes from record and recollection; his history is as a tale that is told, his very monument becomes a ruin.

END OF VOL. I.