Birds of Scotland, with other Poems, by James Grahame Born 1807

PREFACE.

In the first of the following poems, I have endeavoured to delineate the *manners and characters* of Birds. Their external appearance I have not attempted to describe, unless sometimes by very slight and hasty touches. What I have written is the result of my own observation. When I consulted books, my object was not information so much as correction; but as in these pages I have not often travelled beyond the limits of my own knowledge, and as

my attention, from my early years, has been insensibly directed to the subject, I may, without arrogance, assert, that when I did consult books, I very seldom found myself either corrected or informed.

Considered as objects of mere amusement and amenity to man, how interesting are the birds of the air! How various their appearances, their manners, and habits! How constantly do they present themselves to the eye, and to the ear! While the other wild animals are obliged to seek for safety in concealment, the wings of Birds are to them a strong tower of defence. To that defence are we indebted for the fearlessness with which they sit, displaying their beauteous plumes, and warbling their melodious notes: and what were the woods, without the woodland song, or the fields, uncheered by the aerial notes of the lark!

With the descriptions of Birds, I have interspersed delineations of the scenes which they frequent; and, under that head, I have hazarded some observations on the present mode of laying out grounds. Some opinions which I have shortly, and perhaps crudely, advanced, are copiously and feelingly discussed in a book which every landholder ought to peruse,—I mean, Price's "Essay on the Picturesque."

The Birds of Scotland (a title, the promise of which I am sensible is more extensive than the performance) I venture to lay before the Public, not as, by any means, a complete work. I offer it not as a treatise, but an essay. It is defective, I am aware, in the general plan, as well as in the different parts. Neither do I give it as a *scientific* performance: I have studied not so much to convey knowledge, as to please the imagination, and warm the heart.

In *The Biblical Pictures*, I have endeavoured to describe some of those scenes which painters have so successfully presented to the eye. I need hardly say, however, that, by the adoption of this title, I meant not to subject myself to the principles of the art of painting. I have not confined myself to the objects of sight, nor adhered to *one* point of time. I have often represented a series of incidents; and, in pourtraying characters, I have made them speak as well as act.

Some of the months in *The Rural Calendar*, appeared in a newspaper (the Kelso Mail) about nine or ten years ago. I have since made several additions and corrections; but I lay the poem before the Public, rather as a faithful sketch, than as a full or finished delineation of the progress of the year.

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THE

BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

Per virides passim ramos sua tecta volucres
Concelebrant, mulcentque vagis loca sola querelis.
BUCHANAN.

THE

BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

PART FIRST.

The woodland song, the various vocal quires,
That harmonize fair Scotia's streamy vales;
Their habitations, and their little joys;
The winged dwellers on the leas, and moors,
And mountain cliffs; the woods, the streams, themselves,
The sweetly rural, and the savage scene,—
Haunts of the plumy tribes,—be these my theme!

Come, Fancy, hover high as eagle's wing:
Bend thy keen eye o'er Scotland's hills and dales;
Float o'er her farthest isles; glance o'er the main;
Or, in this briary dale, flit with the wren,
From twig to twig; or, on the grassy ridge,
Low nestle with the LARK: Thou, simple bird,
Of all the vocal quire, dwell'st in a home
The humblest; yet thy morning song ascends
Nearest to heaven,—sweet emblem of his song,*
Who sung the wakening by the daisy's side!

With earliest spring, while yet the wheaten blade
Scarce shoots above the new-fallen shower of snow,
The skylark's note, in short excursion, warbles:
Yes! even amid the day-obscuring fall,
I've marked his wing winnowing the feathery flakes,
In widely-circling horizontal flight.
But, when the season genial smiles, he towers
In loftier poise, with sweeter fuller pipe,
Cheering the ploughman at his furrow end,—
The while he clears the share, or, listening, leans

* Burns.

Upon his paddle-staff, and, with raised hand,
Shadows his half-shut eyes, striving to scan
The songster melting in the flood of light.

On tree, or bush, no Lark was ever seen:
The daisied lea he loves, where tufts of grass
Luxuriant crown the ridge; there, with his mate,
He founds their lowly house, of withered bents,
And coarsest speargrass; next, the inner work
With finer, and still finer fibres lays,
Rounding it curious with his speckled breast.
How strange this untaught art! it is the gift,
The gift innate of Him, without whose will
Not even a sparrow falleth to the ground.

And now the assiduous dam her red-specked treasure,
From day to day increases, till complete
The wonted number, blythe, beneath her breast,
She cherishes from morn to eve,—from eve
To morn shields from the dew, that globuled lies
Upon her mottled plumes: then with the dawn
Upsprings her mate, and wakes her with his song.
His song full well she knows, even when the sun,

High in his morning course, is hailed at once
By all the lofty warblers of the sky:
But most his downward-veering song she loves;
Slow the descent at first, then, by degrees,
Quick, and more quick, till suddenly the note
Ceases; and, like an arrow-fledge, he darts,
And, softly lighting, perches by her side.

But now no time for hovering welkin high,
Or downward-gliding strain; the young have chipped,
Have burst the brittle cage, and gaping bills
Claim all the labour of the parent pair.
Ah, labour vain! the herd-boy long has marked
His future prize; the ascent, and glad return,
Too oft he viewed; at last, with prying eyes,
He found the spot, and joyful thought he held
The full-ripe young already in his hand,
Or bore them lightly to his broom-roofed bield:
Even now he sits, amid the rushy mead,
Half-hid, and warps the skep with willow rind,
Or rounds the lid, still adding coil to coil,
Then joins the osier hinge: the work complete
Surveying, oft he turns, and much admires,

Complacent with himself ; then hies away
With plundering intent. Ah, little think
The harmless family of love, how near
The robber treads ! he stoops, and parts the grass,
And looks with eager eye upon his prey.
Quick round and round the parents fluttering wheel,
Now high, now low, and utter shrill the plaint
Of deep distress.—But soon forgot *their* woe !
Not so with *man ;* year after year *he* mourns,
Year after year the mother weeps her son,
Torn from her struggling arms by ruffian grasp,
By robbery legalised.

Low in a glen,
Down which a little stream had furrowed deep,
'Tween meeting birchen boughs, a shelvy channel,
And brawling mingled with the western tide ;
Far up that stream, almost beyond the roar
Of storm-bulged breakers, foaming o'er the rocks
With furious dash, a lowly dwelling lurked,
Surrounded by a circlet of the stream.
Before the wattled door, a greensward plat,
With daisies gay, pastured a playful lamb ;
A pebbly path, deep-worn, led up the hill,

Winding among the trees, by wheel untouched,
Save when the winter fuel was brought home,—
One of the poor man's yearly festivals.
On every side it was a sheltered spot,
So high and suddenly the woody steeps
Arose. One only way, downward the stream,
Just o'er the hollow, 'tween the meeting boughs,
The distant wave was seen, with, now and then,
The glimpse of passing sail; but, when the breeze
Crested the distant wave, this little nook
Was all so calm, that, on the limberest spray,
The sweet bird chaunted motionless, the leaves
At times scarce fluttering. Here dwelt a pair,
Poor, humble, and content: one son alone,
Their William, happy lived at home to bless
Their downward years; he, simple youth,
With boyish fondness, fancied he would love
A seaman's life, and with the fishers sailed,
To try their ways, far 'mong the western isles,
Far as Saint Kilda's rock-walled shore abrupt,
O'er which he saw ten thousand pinions wheel
Confused, dimming the sky: These dreary shores
Gladly he left; he had a homeward heart:

No more his wishes wander to the waves.
But still he loves to cast a backward look,
And tell of all he saw, of all he learned ;
Of pillared Staffa, lone Iona's isle,
Where Scotland's kings are laid ; of Lewis, Sky,
And of the mainland mountain-circled lochs ;
And he would sing the rowers timing chaunt,
And chorus wild. Once on a summer's eve,
When low the sun behind the highland hills
Was almost set, he sung that song, to cheer
The aged folks : upon the inverted quern
The father sat ; the mother's spindle hung
Forgot, and backward twirled the half-spun thread ;
Listening with partial well-pleased look, she gazed
Upon her son, and inly blessed the Lord,
That he was safe returned : Sudden a noise
Bursts rushing through the trees ; a glance of steel
Dazzles the eye, and fierce the savage band
Glare all around, then single out their prey.
In vain the mother clasps her darling boy,
In vain the sire offers their little all :
William is bound ; they follow to the shore,

Implore, and weep, and pray; knee-deep they stand,
And view in mute despair the boat recede.

But let me quit this scene, and bend my way
Back to the inland vales, and up the heights,
(Erst by the plough usurped), where now the heath,
Thin scattered up and down, blooming begins
To re-appear: Stillness, heart-soothing, reigns,
Save, now and then, the PARTRIDGE's late call;
Featly athwart the ridge she runs, now seen,
Now in the furrow hid; then, screaming, springs,
Joined by her mate, and to the grass-field flies:
There, 'neath the blade, rudely she forms
Her shallow nest, humble as is the lark's,
But thrice more numerous her freckled store.
Careful she turns them to her breast, and soft,
With lightest pressure sits, scarce to be moved;
Yes, she will sit, regardless of the scythe,
That nearer, and still nearer, sweep by sweep,
Levels the swarth: Bold with a mother's fears,
She, faithful to the last, maintains her post,
And, with her blood, sprinkles a deeper red
Upon the falling blossoms of the field;—

While others, of her kind, content to haunt
The upland ferny braes, remote from man,
Behold a plenteous brood burst from the shell,
And run; but soon, poor helpless things, return,
And crowd beneath the fond inviting breast,
And wings outstretching, quivering with delight.
They grow apace; but still not far they range,
Till on their pinions plumes begin to shoot;
Then, by the wary parents led, they dare
To skirt the earing crofts; at last, full fledged,
They try their timorous wings, bending their flight
Home to their natal spot, and pant amid the ferns.
Oft by the side of sheep-fold, on the ground
Bared by the frequent hoof, they love to lie
And bask. O, I would never tire to look
On such a scene of peacefulness as this!
But nearer as I draw, with cautious step,
Curious to mark their ways, at once alarmed,
They spring; the startled lambs, with bickering haste,
Flee to their mothers' side, and gaze around:
Far o'er yon whins the covey wing their way,
And, wheeling round the broomy know, elude
My following eye. Fear not, ye harmless race,

In me no longer shall ye find a foe!
Even when each pulse beat high with bounding health,
Ere yet the stream of life, in sluggish flow,
Began to flag, and prematurely stop
With ever-boding pause, even then my heart
Was never in the sport; even then I felt,—
Pleasure from pain was pleasure much alloyed.

Alas, he comes! yes, yonder comes your foe,
With sure determined eye, and in his hand
The two-fold tube, formed for a double death.
Full soon his spaniel, ranging far and wide,
Will lead his footsteps to the very spot,
The covert thick, in which, falsely secure,
Ye lurking sit, close huddled, wing to wing:
Yes, near and nearer still the spaniel draws,
Retracing oft, and crossing oft his course,
Till, all at once, scent-struck, with pendent tongue,
And lifted paw, stiffened he panting stands.
Forward, encouraged by the sportsman's voice,
He hesitating creeps; when, flush, the game
Upsprings, and, from the levelled turning tubes,
The glance, once and again, bursts through the smoke.

Nor, 'mid the rigours of the wintry day,
Does savage man the enfeebled pinion spare;
Then not for sport, but bread, with hawk-like eye,
That needs no setter's aid, the fowler gaunt
Roams in the snowy fields, and downward looks,
Tracing the triple claw, that leads him on,
Oft looking forward, to some thawing spring,
Where, 'mid the withered rushes, he discerns
His destined prey; sidelong he stooping steps,
Wary, and, with a never-erring aim,
Scatters the flock wide fluttering in the snow;—
The purpled snow records the cruel deed.

With earliest spring, while yet in mountain cleughs
Lingers the frozen wreath, when yeanling lambs,
Upon the little heath-encircled patch
Of smoothest sward, totter,—the GORCOCK's call
Is heard from out the mist, high on the hill;
But not till when the tiny heather bud
Appears, are struck the spring-time leagues of love.
Remote from shepherd's hut, or trampled fold,
The new joined pair their lowly mansion pitch,
Perhaps beneath the juniper's rough shoots;

Or castled on some plat of tufted heath,
Surrounded by a narrow sable moat
Of swampy moss. Within the fabric rude,
Or e'er the new moon waxes to the full,
The assiduous dam eight spotted spheroids sees,
And feels beneath her heart, fluttering with joy.
Nor long she sits, till, with redoubled joy,
Around her she beholds an active brood
Run to and fro, or through her covering wings
Their downy heads look out; and much she loves
To pluck the heather crops, not for herself,
But for their little bills. Thus, by degrees,
She teaches them to find the food, which God
Has spread for them amid the desart wild,
And seeming barrenness. Now they essay
Their full-plumed wings, and, whirring, spurn the ground;
But soon alight fast by yon moss-grown cairn,
Round which the berries blae (a beauteous tint
Of purple, deeper dyed with darkest blue)
Lurk 'mid the small round leaves. Enjoy the hour,
While yet ye may, ye unoffending flock!
For not far distant now the bloody morn

When man's protection, selfishly bestowed,
Shall be withdrawn, and murder roam at will.

Low in the east, the purple tinge of dawn
Steals upward o'er the clouds that overhang
The welkin's verge. Upon the mountain side,
The wakening covey quit their mother's wing,
And spread around : Lost in the mist,
They hear her call, and, quick returning, bless
A mother's eye. Meantime, the sportsman keen
Comes forth ; and, heedless of the winning smile
Of infant day, pleading on mercy's side,
Anticipates, with eager joy, the sum
Of slaughter, that, ere evening hour, he'll boast
To have achieved ;—and many a gory wing,
Ere evening hour, exultingly he sees,
Drop, fluttering, 'mid the heath,—even 'mid the bush,
Beneath whose blooms the brooding mother sat,
Till round her she beheld her downy young.

At last mild twilight veils the insatiate eye,
And stops the game of death. The frequent shot
Resounds no more : Silence again resumes

Her lonely reign ; save that the mother's call
Is heard repeated oft, a plaintive note !
Mournful she gathers in her brood, dispersed
By savage sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings ; close nestling 'neath her breast,
They cherished cower amid the purple blooms.

While thus the heathfowl covey, day by day,
Is lessened, till, perhaps, one drooping bird
Survives,—the PLOVER safe her airy scream
Circling repeats, then to a distance flies,
And, querulous, still returns, importunate ;
Yet still escapes, unworthy of an aim.
Amid the marsh's rushy skirts, her nest
Is slightly strewn ; four eggs, of olive hue,
Spotted with black, she broods upon : her young,
Soon as discumbered of the fragile shell,
Run lively round their dam. She, if or dog,
Or man, intrude upon her bleak domain,
Skims, clamouring loud, close at their feet, with wing
Stooping, as if impeded by a wound ;
Meantime her young, among the rush-roots, lurk
Secure. Ill-omened bird ! oft in the times

When monarchs owned no sceptre but the sword.
Far in the heathy waste, that stretches wide
From Avendale to Loudon's high-coned hill,
Thou, hovering o'er the panting fugitive,
Through dreary moss and moor, hast screaming led
The keen pursuer's eye: oft hast thou hung,
Like a death flag, above the assembled throng,
Whose lips hymned praise, their right hands at their hilts;
Who, in defence of conscience, freedom, law,
Looked stern, with unaverted eyes, on death
In every form of horrour. Bird of woe!
Even to the tomb thy victims, by thy wing,
Were haunted; o'er the bier thy direful cry
Was heard, while murderous men rushed furious on,
Profaned the sacred presence of the dead,
And filled the grave with blood. At last, nor friend,
Nor father, brother, comrade, dares to join
The train, that frequent winds adown the heights.
By feeble female hands the bier is borne,
While on some neighbouring cairn the aged sire
Stands bent, his gray locks waving in the blast.
But who is she that lingers by the sod,
When all are gone? 'Tis one who was beloved

By him who lies below: Ill-omened bird!
She never will forget, never forget,
Thy dismal soughing wing, and doleful cry.

Amid these woodless wilds, a small round lake
I've sometimes marked, girt by a spungy sward
Of lively green, with here and there a flower
Of deep-tinged purple, firmly stalked, of form
Pyramidal,—the shores bristling with reeds,
That midway over wade, and, as they bend,
Disclose the water lily, dancing light
On waves soft-rippled by the July gale;
Hither the long and soft-billed SNIPE resorts,
By suction nourished; here her house she forms;
Here warms her fourfold offspring into life.
Alas, not long her helpless offspring feel
Her fostering warmth; though suddenly she mounts,
Her rapid rise, and vacillating flight,
In vain defend her from the fowler's aim.

But let me to the vale once more descend,
And mingle with the woodland choir, and join
Their various song, and celebrate with them

The woods, the rocks, the streams, the bosky bourne,
The thorny dingle, and the open glade;
For 'tis not in their song, nor in their plumes,
Nor in their wonderous ways, that all their charm
Consists; No, 'tis the grove, their dwelling place,
That lends them half their charm, that still is linked,
By strong association's half-seen chain,
With their sweet song, wherever it is sung.
And while this lovely, this congenial theme,
I slightly touch, O, may I ne'er forget,
Nature, thy laws! be this my steady aim
To vindicate simplicity; to drive
All affectation from the rural scene.

There are, who having seen some lordly pile,
Surrounded by a sea of lawn, attempt,
Within their narrow bounds, to imitate
The noble folly. Down the double row
Of venerable elms is hewn. Down crash,
Upon the grass, the orchard trees, whose sprays,
Enwreathed with blooms, and waved by gentlest gales,
Would lightly at the shaded window beat,
Breaking the morning slumbers with delight,

Vernal delight. The ancient moss-coped wall,
Or hedge impenetrable, interspersed
With holly evergreen, the domicile
Of many a little wing, is swept away ;
While, at respectful distance, rises up
The red brick-wall, with flues, and chimney tops,
And many a leafy crucifix adorned.
Extends the level lawn with dropping trees
New planted, dead at top, each to a post
Fast-collared, culprit like. The smooth expanse
Well cropt, and daily, as the owner's chin,
Not one irregularity presents,
Not even one grassy tuft, in which a lark
Might find a home, and cheer the dull domain :
Around the whole, a line vermicular,
Of melancholy fir, and leaning larch,
And shivering poplar, skirting the way side,
Is thinly drawn. But should the tasteful Power,
Pragmatic, which presides, with pencilling hand,
And striding compasses, o'er all this change,
Get in his thrall some hapless stream, that lurks
Wimpling through hazelly shaw, and broomy glen,
Instant the axe resounds through all the dale,

And many a pair, unhoused, hovering lament
The barbarous devastation : All is smoothed,
Save here and there a tree ; the hawthorn, briar,
The hazel bush, the bramble, and the broom,
The sloe-thorn, Scotia's myrtle, all are gone ;
And on the well sloped bank arise trim clumps,
Some round, and some oblong, of shrubs exotic,
A wilderness of poisons, precious deemed
In due proportion to their ugliness.

What though fair Scotland's vallies rarely vaunt
The oak majestical, whose aged boughs
Darken a roodbreadth! yet no where is seen,
More beauteously profuse, wild underwood ;
No where 'tis seen more beauteously profuse,
Than on thy tangling banks, well-wooded Esk,
And Borthwick thine, above that fairy nook
Formed by your blending streams. The hawthorn there,
With moss and lichen gray, dies of old age,
No steel profane permitted to intrude:
Up to the topmost branches climbs the rose,
And mingles with the fading blooms of May ;
While round the briar the honeysuckle wreaths

Entwine, and, with their sweet perfume, embalm
The dying rose : A never failing blow,
From spring to fall, expands ; the sloe-thorn white,
As if a flaky shower the leafless sprays
Had hung ; the hawthorn, May's fair diadem ;
The whin's rich dye ; the bonny broom ; the rasp
Erect ; the rose, red, white, and faintest pink ;
And long extending bramble's flowery shoots.

The bank ascend, an open height appears,
Between the double streams that wind below :
Look round ; behold a prospect wide and fair ;—
The Lomond hills, with Fife's town-skirted shore,
The intervening sea, Inchkeith's gray rocks,
With beacon-turret crowned ; Arthur's proud crest,
And Salisbury abrupt ; the Pentland range,
Now peaked, and now, with undulating swell,
Heaved to the clouds : More near, upon each hand,
The sloping woods, bulging into the glade,
Receding then with easy artless curve.
Behind, a grove, of ancient trees, surrounds
The ruins of a blood-cemented house,
Half prostrate laid, as ever ought to lie

The tyrant's dwelling. There no martin builds
Her airy nest ; not even the owl alights
On these unhallowed walls : The murderer's head
Was sheltered by these walls ; hands blood-embrued
Founded these walls,—MACKENZIE's purpled hands !—
Perfidious minion of a sceptred priest !
The huge enormity of crime on crime,
Accumulated high, but ill conceals
The reptile meanness of thy dastard soul ;
Whose favourite art was *lying* with address,
Whose hollow promise, helped the princely hand
To screw confessions from the tortured lips.
Base hypocrite ! thy character, pourtrayed
By modern history's too lenient touch,
Truth loves to blazon, with her real tints,
To limn, of new, thy half-forgotten name,
Inscribe with infamy thy time-worn tomb,
And make the memory hated as the man.

But better far truth loves to paint yon house
Of humbler wall, half stone, half turf ; with roof
Of mended thatch, the sparrow's warm abode ;
The wisp-wound chimney, with its rising wreath ;

The sloping garden, filled with useful herbs,
Yet not without its rose ; the patch of corn
Upon the brow ; the blooming vetchy ridge.
But most the aged man, now wandering forth,
I love to view ; for 'neath yon homely guise
Dwell worth, and simple dignity, and sense,
Politeness natural, that puts to shame
The world's grimmace, and kindness crowning all.
Why should the falsely great, the glittering names,
Engross the muse's praise ? My humble voice
They ne'er engrossed, and never shall : I claim
The title of the poor man's bard : I dare
To celebrate an unambitious name ;
And thine, KILGOUR, may yet some few years live,
When low thy reverend locks mix with the mould.

Even in a bird, the simplest notes have charms
For me : I even love the YELLOW-HAMMER'S song.
When earliest buds begin to bulge, his note,
Simple, reiterated oft, is heard
On leafless briar, or half-grown hedge-row tree ;
Nor does he cease his note till autumn's leaves
Fall fluttering round his golden head so bright.

Fair plumaged bird! cursed by the causeless hate
Of every schoolboy, still by me thy lot
Was pitied! never did I tear thy nest:
I loved thee, pretty bird! for 'twas thy nest
Which first, unhelped by older eyes, I found.
The very spot I think I now behold!
Forth from my low-roofed home I wandered blythe,
Down to thy side, sweet CART, where 'cross the stream
A range of stones, below a shallow ford,
Stood in the place of the now spanning arch;
Up from that ford a little bank there was,
With alder-copse and willow overgrown,
Now worn away by mining winter floods;
There, at a bramble root, sunk in the grass,
The hidden prize, of withered field-straws formed,
Well lined with many a coil of hair and moss,
And in it laid five red-veined spheres, I found.
The Syracusan's voice did not exclaim
The grand *Heureka*, with more rapturous joy,
Than at that moment fluttered round my heart.

How simply unassuming is that strain!
It is the REDBREAST'S song, the friend of man.

High is his perch, but humble is his home,
And well concealed. Sometimes within the sound
Of heartsome mill-clack, where the spacious door
White-dusted, tells him, plenty reigns around,—
Close at the root of briar-bush, that o'erhangs
The narrow stream, with shealings bedded white,—
He fixes his abode, and lives at will.
Oft near some single cottage, he prefers
To rear his little home; there, pert and spruce,
He shares the refuse of the goodwife's churn,
Which kindly on the wall for him she leaves:
Below her lintel oft he lights, then in
He boldly flits, and fluttering loads his bill,
And to his young the yellow treasure bears.

Not seldom does he neighbour the low roof
Where tiny elves are taught:—a pleasant spot
It is, well fenced from winter blast, and screened,
By high o'er-spreading boughs, from summer sun.
Before the door a sloping green extends
No farther than the neighbouring cottage-hedge,
Beneath whose boutree shade a little well
Is scooped, so limpid, that its guardian trout

(The wonder of the lesser stooping wights)
Is at the bottom seen.—At noontide hour,
The imprisoned throng, enlarged, blythsome rush forth
To sport the happy interval away;
While those from distance come, upon the sward,
At random seated, loose their little stores:
In midst of them poor Redbreast hops unharmed,
For they have read, or heard, and wept to hear,
The story of the Children in the Wood;
And many a crumb to Robin they will throw.
Others there are that love, on shady banks
Retired, to pass the summer days: their song,
Among the birchen boughs, with sweetest fall,
Is warbled, pausing, then resumed more sweet,
More sad; that, to an ear grown fanciful,
The babes, the wood, the man, rise in review,
And Robin still repeats the tragic line.
But should the note of flute, or human voice,
Sound through the grove, the madrigal at once
Ceases; the warbler flits from branch to branch,
And, stooping, sidelong turns his listening head.

Ye lovers of his song, the greenwood path
Each morn duly bestrew with a few crumbs:
His friendship thus ye'll gain; till, by degrees,
Alert, even from your hand, the offered boon
He'll pick, half trustingly. Yes, I have seen
Him, and his mate, attend, from tree to tree,
My passing step; and, from my open hand,
The morsel pick, timorous, and starting back,
Returning still, with confidence increased.

What little birds, with frequent shrillest chirp,
When honeysuckle flowers succeed the rose,
The inmost thicket haunt?—their tawny breasts,
Spotted with black, bespeak the youngling thrush.
Though less in size; it is the Redbreast's brood,
New flown, helpless, with still the downy tufts
Upon their heads. But soon their full fledged wings,
Long hesitating, quivering oft, they stretch:
At last, encouraged by the parent voice,
And leading flight, they reach the nearest bush,
Or, falling short, lie panting on the ground;
But, reassured, the destined aim attain.
Nor long this helpless state: Each day adds strength,

Adds wisdom, suited to their little sphere,
Adds independence, first of heavenly boons!

Released from all the duties, all the cares,
The keen, yet sweet solicitudes, that haunt
The parent's breast; again the Redbreast's song
Trills from the wood, or from the garden bough.
Each season in its turn he hails; he hails,
Perched on the naked tree, spring's earliest buds:
At morn, at chilly eve, when the March sun
Sinks with a wintry tinge, and Hesper sheds
A frosty light, he ceases not his strain:
And when staid Autumn walks with rustling tread,
He mourns the falling leaf. Even when each branch
Is leafless, and the harvest morn has clothed
The fields in white, he, on the hoar-plumed spray,
Delights, dear trustful bird! his future host.

But farewell lessening days, in summer smile
Arrayed. Dark winter's frown comes like a cloud,
Whose shadow sweeps a mountain side, and scowls
O'er all the land. Now warm stack-yards, and barns,
Busy with bouncing flails, are Robin's haunts.

Upon the barn's half-door he doubting lights,
And inward peeps. But truce, sweet social bird!
So well I love the strain, when thou'rt my theme,
That now I almost tread the winter snows,
While many a vernal song remains unsung.

When snowdrops die, and the green primrose leaves
Announce the coming flower, the MERLE's note,
Mellifluous, rich, deep-toned, fills all the vale,
And charms the ravished ear. The hawthorn bush,
New-budded, is his perch; there the gray dawn
He hails; and there, with parting light, concludes
His melody. There, when the buds begin
To break, he lays the fibrous roots; and, see,
His jetty breast embrowned; the rounded clay
His jetty breast has soiled: but now complete,
His partner, and his helper in the work,
Happy assumes possession of her home;
While he, upon a neighbouring tree, his lay,
More richly full, melodiously renews.
When twice seven days have run, the moment snatch,
That she has flitted off her charge, to cool
Her thirsty bill, dipt in the babbling brook,

Then silently, on tiptoe raised, look in,
Admire: Five cupless acorns, darkly specked,
Delight the eye, warm to the cautious touch.
In seven days more expect the fledgeless young,
Five gaping bills. With busy wing, and eye
Quick-darting, all alert, the parent pair
Gather the sustenance which heaven bestows.
But music ceases, save at dewy fall
Of eve, when, nestling o'er her brood, the dam
Has stilled them all to rest; or at the hour
Of doubtful dawning gray; then from his wing
Her partner turns his yellow bill, and chaunts
His solitary song of joyous praise.
From day to day, as blow the hawthorn flowers,
That canopy, this little home of love,
The plumage of the younglings shoots and spreads,
Filling with joy the fond parental eye.
Alas! not long the parents' partial eye
Shall view the fledging wing; ne'er shall they see
The timorous pinion's first essay at flight.
The truant schoolboy's eager, bleeding hand,
Their house, their all, tears from the bending bush;
A shower of blossoms mourns the ruthless deed!

The piercing anguished note, the brushing wing,
The spoiler heeds not; triumphing his way,
Smiling he wends: The ruined, hopeless pair,
O'er many a field follow his townward steps,
Then back return; and, perching on the bush,
Find nought of all they loved, but one small tuft
Of moss, and withered roots. Drooping they sit,
Silent: Afar at last they fly, o'er hill
And lurid moor, to mourn in other groves,
And soothe, in gentler grief, their hapless lot.

Meantime the younger victims, one by one,
Drop off, by care destroyed, and food unfit.
Perhaps one, hardier than the rest, survives,
And 'tween the wicker bars, with fading weeds
Entwined, hung at some lofty window, hops
From stick to stick his small unvaried round;
While opposite, but higher still, the lark
Stands fluttering, or runs o'er his narrow field,
A span-breadth turf, tawny and parched, with wings
Quivering, as if to fly; his carol gay
Lightening the pale mechanic's tedious task.
Poor birds, most sad the change! of daisied fields,

Of hawthorn blooming sprays, of boundless air,
With melody replete, for clouds of smoke,
Through which the daw flies cawing steeple high;
Or creak of grinding wheels, or skillet tongue,
Shrilly reviling, more discordant still!

But what *their* wretchedness, parents or young,
Compared to that which wrings the human breast,
Doomed to lament a loss, than death more dire,—
The robbery of a child! Aye, there is wretchedness!
Snatched playful from the rosy bank, by hands
Enured to crimes, the innocent is borne
Far, far away. Of all the varying forms
Of human woe, this the most dire! To think
He might have been now sporting at your side,
But that, neglected, he was left a prey
To pirate hands! To think how he will shudder,
To see a hideous, haggard face attempt
To smile away his tears, caressing him
With horrible embrace, the while he calls
Aloud, in vain to you! Nor does even time,—
Assuager of all other woes,—bring balm
To this: Each child, to boyish years grown up,

Reminds you of *your* boy! He might have been
Like this, fair, blooming, modest, looking down
With most engaging bashfulness: But now,
Instead of this, perhaps, with sable mask
Begrimed, he feebly totters 'neath a load,
More fitted to his cruel master's strength.
Perhaps, to manhood come, allured to sell
His life, his freedom, for some paltry pounds,
He now lies 'mong the numbered, nameless crowd,
That groan on gory fields, envying the dead!
Or, still more dreadful fate! dragged, trained, compelled,
To vice, to crimes, death-sentenced crimes, perhaps
Among those miserable names, which blot
The callendar of death, *his* is inscribed!

How much alike in habits, form, and size,
The merle and the MAVIS*! how unlike
In plumage, and in song! The thrush's song
Is varied as his plumes; and as his plumes
Blend beauteous, each with each, so run his notes
Smoothly, with many a happy rise and fall.
How prettily, upon his parded breast,

* Thrush.

The vividly contrasted tints unite
To please the admiring eye; so, loud and soft,
And high and low, all in his notes combine,
In alternation sweet, to charm the ear.

Full earlier than the blackbird he begins
His vernal strain. Regardless of the frown
Which winter casts upon the vernal day,
Though snowy flakes melt in the primrose cup,
He, warbling on, awaits the sunny beam,
That mild gleams down, and spreads o'er all the grove.
But now his song a partner for him gains;
And in the hazel bush, or sloe, is formed
The habitation of the wedded pair:
Sometimes below the never-fading leaves
Of ivy close, that overtwisting binds,
And richly crowns, with clustered fruit of spring,
Some riven rock, or nodding castle wall;
Sometimes beneath the jutting root of elm,
Or oak, among the sprigs, that overhang
A pebble-chiding stream, the loam-lined house
Is fixed, well hid from ken of hovering hawk,
Or lurking beast, or schoolboy's prowling eye;

Securely there the dam sits all day long,
While from the adverse bank, on topmost shoot
Of odour-breathing birch, her mate's blythe chaunt
Cheers her pent hours, and makes the wild woods ring.
Grudge not, ye owners of the fruited boughs,
That he should pay himself for that sweet music,
With which, in blossom time, he cheers your hearts!
Scare, if ye will, his timid wing away,
But, O, let not the leaden viewless shower,
Vollied from flashing tube, arrest his flight,
And fill his tuneful, gasping bill with blood!

These two, all others of the singing quires,
In size, surpass. A contrast now behold:
The little woodland dwarf, the tiny WREN,
That from the root-sprigs trills her ditty clear.
Of stature most diminutive herself,
Not so her wonderous house; for, strange to tell!
Her's is the largest structure that is formed
By tuneful bill and breast. 'Neath some old root,
From which the sloping soil, by wintry rains,
Has been all worn away, she fixes up
Her curious dwelling, close, and vaulted o'er,

And in the side a little gateway porch,
In which (for I have seen) she'll sit and pipe
A merry stave of her shrill roundelay.
Nor always does a single gate suffice
For exit, and for entrance to her dome;
For when (as sometimes haps) within a bush
She builds the artful fabric, then each side
Has its own portico. But, mark within!
How skilfully the finest plumes and downs
Are softly warped; how closely all around
The outer layers of moss! each circumstance
Most artfully contrived to favour warmth!
Here read the reason of the vaulted roof;
Here Providence compensates, ever kind,
The enormous disproportion that subsists
Between the mother and the numerous brood,
Which her small bulk must quicken into life.
Fifteen white spherules, small as moorland hare-bell,
And prettily bespecked like fox-glove flower,
Complete her number. Twice five days she sits,
Fed by her partner, never flitting off,
Save when the morning sun is high, to drink
A dewdrop from the nearest flowret cup.

But now behold the greatest of this train
Of miracles, stupendously minute;
The numerous progeny, clamant for food,
Supplied by two small bills, and feeble wings
Of narrow range; supplied, aye, duly fed,
Fed in the dark, and yet not one forgot!

When whinny braes are garlanded with gold,
And, blythe, the lamb pursues, in merry chase,
His twin around the bush; the LINNET, then,
Within the prickly fortress builds her bower,
And warmly lines it round, with hair and wool
Inwove. Sweet minstrel, may'st thou long delight
The whinny know, and broomy brae, and bank
Of fragrant birch! May never fowler's snare
Tangle thy struggling foot! Or, if thou'rt doomed
Within the narrow cage thy dreary days
To pine, may ne'er the glowing wire (oh, crime accursed!)
Quench, with fell agony, thy shrivelling eye!
Deprived of air and freedom, shall the light
Of day, thy only pleasure, be denied?
But thy own song will still be left; with it,
Darkling, thou'lt soothe the lingering hours away;

And thou wilt learn to find thy triple perch,
Thy seed-box, and thy beverage saffron-tinged.
Nor is thy lot more hard than that which they
(Poor linnets!) prove in many a storied pile*:
They see the light, 'tis true,—they see, and know
That light for *them* is but an implement
Of toil. In summer with the sun they rise
To toil, and with his setting beam they cease
To toil: nor does the shortened winter day
Their toil abridge; for, ere the cock's first crow,
Aroused to toil, they lift their heavy eyes,
And force their childish limbs to rise and *toil*;
And while the winter night, by cottage fire,
Is spent in homebred industry, relieved
By harmless glee, or tale of witch, or ghost,
So dreadful that the housewife's listening wheel
Suspends its hum, their toil protracted lasts:
Even when the royal birth, by wonderous grace,
Gives one *half* day to mirth, that shred of time
Must not be lost, but thriftily ekes out
To-morrow's and to-morrow's lengthened task.

* The allusion here is chiefly to Cotton-mills.

No joys, no sports have they: what little time,
The fragment of an hour, can be retrenched
From labour, is devoted to a show,
A boasted boon, of what the public gives,—
Instruction. Viewing all around the bliss
Of liberty, they feel its loss the more;
Freely through boundless air, they wistful see,
The wild bird's pinion past their prison flit;
Free in the air the merry lark they see
On high ascend; free on the swinging spray
The woodland bird is perched, and leaves at will
Its perch; the open quivering bill they see,
But no sweet note by them is heard, all lost,
Extinguished in the noise that ceaseless stuns the ear.

Here vice collected festers, and corrupts.
The female virtues fade; and, in their stead,
Springs up a produce rank of noxious weeds.
And, if such be the effects of that sad system,
Which, in the face of nature's law, would wring
Gain from the labouring hands of playful childhood;
If such the effects, where worth and sense direct
The living, intellectual machines,

What must not follow, when the power is lodged
With senseless, sordid, heartless avarice?

Where, fancy, hast thou led me? No, stern *truth*,
'Tis thou hast led me from the pleasant sight
Of blossomed furze, and bank of fragrant birch.
And now once more I turn me to the woods,
With willing step, and list, closing my eyes,
The lulling soothing sounds, that pour a balm
Into the rankled soul; the brooklet's murmur,
That louder to the ear, long listening, grows,
And louder still, like noise of many waters,
Yet not so loud but that the wild bee's buzz
Slung past the ear, and grasshopper's shrill chirp,
Are heard; for now the sultry hours unfurl
Each insect wing: the aimless butterflies,
In airy dance, cross and recross the mead;
The dragon-fly, in horizontal course,
Spins over-head, and fast eludes the sight.

At such a still and sultry hour as this,
When not a strain is heard through all the woods,

I've seen the SHILFA* light from off his perch,
And hop into a shallow of the stream,
Then, half afraid, flit to the shore, then in
Again alight, and dip his rosy breast
And fluttering wings, while dewlike globules coursed
The plumage of his brown-empurpled back.
The barefoot boy, who, on some slaty stone,
Almost too hot for touch, has watching stood,
Now thinks the well-drenched prize his own,
And rushes forward;—quick, though wet, the wing
Gains the first branches of some neighbouring tree,
And baulks the upward gazing hopeless eye.
The ruffling plumes are shook, the pens are trimmed,
And full and clear the sprightly ditty rings,
Cheering the brooding dam: she sits concealed
Within the nest deep-hollowed, well disguised
With lichens gray, and mosses gradual blent,
As if it were a knurle in the bough.

With equal art externally disguised,
But of internal structure passing far

* Chaffinch.

The feathered concaves of the other tribes,
The GOLDFINCH weaves, with willow down inlaid,
And cannach tufts, his wonderful abode.
Sometimes, suspended at the limber end
Of planetree spray, among the broad leaved shoots,
The tiny hammock swings to every gale;
Sometimes in closest thickets 'tis concealed;
Sometimes in hedge luxuriant, where the briar,
The bramble, and the plumtree branch,
Warp through the thorn, surmounted by the flowers
Of climbing vetch, and honeysuckle wild,
All undefaced by art's deforming hand.
But mark the pretty bird himself! how light,
And quick, his every motion, every note!
How beautiful his plumes! his red-ringed head;
His breast of brown; and see him stretch his wing,—
A fairy fan of golden spokes it seems.
Oft on the thistle's tuft he, nibbling, sits,
Light as the down; then, 'mid a flight of downs,
He wings his way, piping his shrillest call.
Proud Thistle! emblem dear to Scotland's sons!
Begirt with threatening points, strong in defence,
Unwilling to assault! By thee the arm

Of England was repelled; the rash attempt,
Oft did the wounded arm of England rue.
But fraud prevailed, where force had tried in vain:
Fraud undermined thy root, and laid thy head,
Thy crested head, low sullied in the dust.
BELHAVEN, FLETCHER, venerated shades!
Long shall your glorious names, your words of fire,
Spite of beledgered Trade's corrupting creed,
That estimates a country by its gold,
And balances surrendered freedom's self,—
The life-blood of a people!—with a show
Of columns crowded full of pounds and pence;
Long shall your names illume the historic page,
Inspire the poet's lay, kindle the glow
Of noble daring in the patriot's breast!

Deep-toned (a contrast to the goldfinch note)
The CUSHANT plains; nor is her changeless plaint
Unmusical, when with the general quire,
Of woodland harmony, it softly blends.

Her sprig-formed nest, upon some hawthorn branch,
Is laid so thinly, that the light of day

Is through it seen: So rudely is it formed,
That oft the simple boy, who counts the hours
By blowing off the dandelion downs,
Mistakes the witch-knots for the cushant's nest.
Sweet constant bird! the lover's favourite theme!
Protected by the love-inspiring lay
Seldom thou mov'st thy home; year after year,
The self-same tree beholds thy youngling pair
Matured to flight.—There is a hawthorn tree
With which the ivy arms have wrestled long;
'Tis old, yet vigorous: beneath its shade
A beauteous herb, so rare, that all the woods,
For far and near around, cannot produce
Its like, shoots upright; from the stalk
Four pointed leaves, luxuriant, smooth, diverge,
Crowned with a berry of deep purple hue.
Upon this aged thorn, a lovely pair
Of cushants wont to build: No schoolboy's hand
Would rob their simple nest; the constant coo,
That floated down the dell, softened his heart.
But, ah! the pirate of the rock, the hawk,
Hovering, discerned the prize: Soft blew the gale
Of May, and full the greenwood chorus rose,

All but the sweet dove's note: In vain the ear
Turned listening; strewn upon the ground,
The varying plumes, with drooping violets mixed,
Disclosed the death the beauteous bird had died.

Where are your haunts, ye helpless birds of song,
When winter's cloudy wing begins to shade
The emptied fields; when ripening sloes assume
Their deepest jet, and wild plums purple hang
Tempting, yet harsh till mellowed by the frost?
Ah, now ye sit crowding upon the thorns,
Beside your former homes, all desolate,
And filled with withered leaves; while FIELDFARE flocks
From distant lands alight, and, chirping, fly
From hedge to hedge, fearful of man's approach.

Of all the tuneful tribes, the Redbreast sole
Confides himself to man; others sometimes
Are driven within our lintel-posts by storms,
And, fearfully, the sprinkled crumbs partake:
He feels himself at home. When lours the year,
He perches on the village turfy copes,
And, with his sweet but interrupted trills,

Bespeaks the pity of his future host.
But long he braves the season, ere he change
The heaven's grand canopy for man's low home;
Oft is he seen, when fleecy showers bespread
The house tops white, on the thawed smiddy roof,
Or in its open window he alights,
And, fearless of the clang, and furnace glare,
Looks round, arresting the uplifted arm,
While on the anvil cools the glowing bar.
But when the season roughens, and the drift
Flies upward, mingling with the falling flakes
In whirl confused,—then on the cottage floor
He lights, and hops, and flits, from place to place,
Restless at first, till, by degrees, he feels
He is in safety: Fearless then he sings
The winter day; and when the long dark night
Has drawn the rustic circle round the fire,
Waked by the dinsome wheel, he trims his plumes,
And, on the distaff perched, chaunts soothingly
His summer song; or, fearlessly, lights down
Upon the basking sheep-dog's glossy fur;
Till, chance, the herd-boy, at his supper mess,

Attract his eye, then on the milky rim
Brisk he alights, and picks his little share.

Besides the Redbreast's note, one other strain,
One summer strain, on wintry days is heard.
Amid the leafless thorn the merry Wren,
When icicles hang dripping from the rock,
Pipes her perennial lay; even when the flakes,
Broad as her pinions, fall, she lightly flies
Athwart the shower, and sings upon the wing.

While thus the smallest of the plumy tribes
Defies the storm, others there are that fly,
Long ere the winter lours, to genial skies;
Nor this cold clime revisit, till the blooms
Of parting spring blow 'mid the summer buds.

THE

BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

PART SECOND.

How sweet the first sound of the CUCKOO's note!—
Whence is the magic pleasure of the sound?
How do we long recal the very tree,
Or bush, near which we stood, when on the ear
The unexpected note, *cuckoo!* again,
And yet again, came down the budding vale?
It is the voice of spring among the trees;
It tells of lengthening days, of coming blooms;
It is the symphony of many a song.

But, there, the stranger flies close to the ground,
With hawklike pinion, of a leaden blue.
Poor wanderer! from hedge to hedge she flies,
And trusts her offspring to another's care:
The sooty-plum'd hedge-sparrow frequent acts
The foster-mother, warming into life
The youngling, destined to supplant her own.
Meanwhile, the cuckoo sings her idle song,
Monotonous, yet sweet, now here, now there,
Herself but rarely seen; nor does she cease
Her changeless note, until the broom, full blown,
Give warning that her time for flight is come.
Thus, ever journeying on, from land to land,
She, sole of all the innumerous feathered tribes,
Passes a stranger's life, without a home.

Home! word delightful to the heart of man,
And bird, and beast!—small word, yet not the less
Significant:—Comprising all!
Whatever to affection is most dear,
Is all included in that little word,—
Wife, children, father, mother, brother, friend.
At mention of that word, the seaman, clinging

Upon the dipping yard-arm, sees afar
The twinkling fire, round which his children cow'r,
And speak of him, counting the months, and weeks.
That must pass dreary o'er, ere he return.
He sighs to view the seabird's rapid wing.

O, had I but the envied power to choose
My home, no sound of city bell should reach
My ear; not even the cannon's thundering roar.
Far in a vale, be there my low abode,
Embowered in woods where many a songster chaunts.
And let me now indulge the airy dream!
A bow-shot off in front a river flows,
That, during summer drought, shallow and clear,
Chides with its pebbly bed, and, murmuring,
Invites forgetfulness; half hid it flows,
Now between rocks, now through a bush-girt glade,
Now sleeping in a pool, that laves the roots
Of overhanging trees, whose drooping boughs
Dip midway over in the darkened stream;
While ever and anon, upon the breeze,
The dash of distant waterfall is borne.
A range of hills, with craggy summits crowned.

And furrowed deep with many a bosky cleugh,
Wards off the northern blast: There skims the hawk
Forth from her cliff, eyeing the furzy slope
That joins the mountain to the smiling vale.
Through all the woods the holly evergreen,
And laurel's softer leaf, and ivied thorn,
Lend winter shelter to the shivering wing.
No gravelled paths, pared from the smooth-shaved turf,
Wind through these woods; the simple unmade road,
Marked with the frequent hoof of sheep or kine,
Or rustic's studded shoe, I love to tread.
No threatening board forewarns the homeward hind,
Of man-traps, or of law's more dreaded gripe.
Pleasant to see the labourer homeward hie
Light hearted, as he thinks his hastening steps
Will soon be welcomed by his childrens' smile!
Pleasant to see the milkmaid's blythesome look,
As to the trysting thorn she gaily trips,
With steps that scarcely feel the elastic ground!
Nor be the lowly dwellings of the poor
Thrust to a distance, as unseemly sights.
Curse on the heartless taste that, proud, exclaims,
"Erase the hamlet, sweep the cottage off;

"Remove each stone, and only leave behind
"The trees that once embowered the wretched huts.
"What though the inmates old, who hoped to end
"Their days below these trees, must seek a home,
"Far from their native fields, far from the graves
"In which their fathers lie,—to city lanes,
"Darksome and close, exiled? It must be so;
"The wide extending lawn would else be marred,
"By objets so incongruous." Barbarous taste!
Stupidity intense! Yon straw-roofed cot,
Seen through the elms, it is a lovely sight!
That scattered hamlet, with its burn-side green,
On which the thrifty housewife spreads her yarn,
Or half-bleached web, while children busy play,
And paddle in the stream,—for every heart,
Untainted by pedantic rules, hath charms.

I love the neighbourhood of man and beast:
I would not place my stable out of sight.
No! close behind my dwelling, it should form
A fence, on one side, to my garden plat.
What beauty equals shelter, in a clime
Where wintry blasts with summer breezes blend,

Chilling the day! How pleasant 'tis to hear
December's winds, amid surrounding trees,
Raging aloud! how grateful 'tis to wake,
While raves the midnight storm, and hear the sound
Of busy grinders at the well filled rack;
Or flapping wing, and crow of chanticleer,
Long ere the lingering morn; or bouncing flails,
That tell the dawn is near! Pleasant the path
By sunny garden-wall, when all the fields
Are chill and comfortless; or barn-yard snug,
Where flocking birds, of various plume, and chirp
Discordant, cluster on the leaning stack,
From whence the thresher draws the rustling sheaves.

O, nature! all thy seasons please the eye
Of him who sees a Deity in all.
It is His presence that diffuses charms
Unspeakable, o'er mountain, wood, and stream.
To think that He, who hears the heavenly choirs,
Hearkens complacent to the woodland song;
To think that He, who rolls yon solar sphere,
Uplifts the warbling songster to the sky;
To mark His presence in the mighty bow,

That spans the clouds, as in the tints minute
Of tiniest flower; to hear His awful voice
In thunder speak, and whisper in the gale;
To know, and feel His care for all that lives;—
'Tis this that makes the barren waste appear
A fruitful field, each grove a paradise.
Yes! place me 'mid far stretching woodless wilds,
Where no sweet song is heard; the heath-bell there
Would soothe my weary sight, and tell of Thee!
There would my gratefully uplifted eye
Survey the heavenly vault, by day,—by night,
When glows the firmament from pole to pole;
There would my overflowing heart exclaim,
The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,
The firmament shews forth his handy work!

Less loud, but not less clear, His humbler works
Proclaim his power; the SWALLOW knows her time,
And, on the vernal breezes, wings her way,
O'er mountain, plain, and far-extending seas,
From Afric's torrid sands to Britain's shore.
Before the cuckoo's note, she, twittering, gay,
Skims 'long the brook, or o'er the brushwood tops,

When dance the midgy clouds in warping maze
Confused: 'tis thus, by her, the air is swept
Of insect myriads, that would else infest
The greenwood walk, blighting each rural joy:
For this,—if pity plead in vain,—O, spare
Her clay-built home! Her all, her young, she trusts,
Trusts to the power of man: fearful, *herself*
She never trusts; free, on the summer morn,
She, at his window, hails the rising sun.—
Twice seven days she broods; then on the wing,
From morn to dewy eve, unceasing plies,
Save when she feeds or cherishes her young;
And oft she's seen, beneath her little porch,
Clinging supine, to deal the air-gleaned food.

From her the husbandman the coming shower
Foretells: Along the mead closely she skiffs,
Or o'er the streamlet pool she skims, so near,
That, from her dipping wing, the wavy circlets
Spread to the shore; then fall the single drops,
Prelusive of the shower.

The MARTINS, too,
The dwellers in the ruined castle wall,

When low'rs the sky a flight less lofty wheel.
Presageful of the thunder peal, when deep
A boding silence broods o'er all the vale,
From airy altitudes they stoop, and fly
Swiftly, with shrillest scream, round and around
The rugged battlements; or fleetly dart
Through loopholes, whence the shaft was wont to glance;
Or thrid the window of the lofty bower,
Where hapless royalty, with care-closed eyes,
Woo'd sleep in vain, foreboding what befel,—
The loss of friends, of country, freedom, life!

Long ere the wintry gusts, with chilly sweep,
Sigh through the leafless groves, the swallow tribes,
Heaven-warned, in airy bevies congregate,
Or clustering sit, as if in deep consult
What time to launch; but, lingering, they wait,
Until the feeble of the latest broods
Have gathered strength, the sea-ward path to brave.
At last the farewell twitter spreading sounds,
Aloft they fly, and melt in distant air.
Far o'er the British sea, in westering course,
O'er the Biscayan mountain-waves they glide:

Then o'er Iberian plains, through fields of air,
Perfumed by orchard groves, where lowly bends
The orange bough beneath its juicy load,
And over Calpe's iron-fenced rock, their course,
To Mauritania's sunny plains, they urge.

There are who doubt this migratory voyage.
But wherefore, from the distance of the flight,
Should wonder verge on disbelief,—the bulk
So small, so large and strong the buoyant wing?

Behold the CORN-CRAIK; she, too, wings her way
To other lands: ne'er is she found immersed
In lakes, or buried torpid in the sand,
Though weak her wing contrasted with her bulk.
Seldom she rises from the grassy field,
And never till compelled; and, when upraised,
With feet suspended, awkwardly she flies;
Her flight a ridgebreath: suddenly she drops,
And, running, still eludes the following foot.

Poor bird, though harsh thy note, I love it well!
It tells of summer eves, mild and serene,

When through the grass, waist-deep, I wont to wade
In fruitless chace of thee; now here, now there,
Thy desultory call. Oft does thy call
The midnight silence break; oft, ere the dawn,
It wakes the slumbering lark; he upward wings
His misty way, and, viewless, sings and soars.

THE

BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

PART THIRD.

FAREWELL the greenwood, and the welkin song!
Farewell the harmless bill!—The o'erfolding beak,
Incurvated; the clutching pounce; the eye,
Ferocious, keen, full-orbed; the attitude
Erect; the skimming flight; the hovering poise;
The rapid sousing stroke;—these now I sing!

How fleet the FALCON's pinion in pursuit!
Less fleet the linnet's flight!—Alas, poor bird!
Weary and weak is now thy flagging wing,
While close and closer draws the eager foe.
Now up she rises, and, with arrowed pinions,
Impetuous souses; but in vain: With turn
Sudden, the linnet shuns the deadly stroke,
Throwing her far behind; but quick again
She presses on: Down drops the feeble victim
Into the hawthorn-bush, and panting sits.
The falcon, skimming round and round, espies
Her prey, and darts among the prickly twigs.
Unequal now the chace! struggling she strives,
Entangled in the thorny labyrinth,
While easily its way the small bird winds,
Regaining soon the centre of the grove.

But not alone the dwellers of the wood,
Tremble beneath the falcon's fateful wing.
Oft hovering o'er the barn-yard is she seen,
In early spring, when round their ruffling dam
The feeble younglings pick the pattering hail:
And oft she plunges low, and swiftly skims

The ground; as oft the bold and threatening mien
Of chanticleer, deters her from the prey.

Amid the mountain fells, or river cliffs
Abrupt, the falcon's eyry, perched on high,
Defies access: broad to the sun 'tis spread,
With withered sprigs hung o'er the dizzy brink.
What dreadful cliffs o'erhang this little stream!
So loftily they tower, that he who looks
Upward, to view their almost meeting summits,
Feels sudden giddiness, and instant grasps
The nearest fragment of the channel rocks,
Resting his aching eye on some green branch
That midway down shoots from the creviced crag.
Athwart the narrow chasm fleet flies the rack,
Each cloud no sooner visible than gone;
While 'tween these natural bulwarks, that deride
The art of man, murmurs the hermit brook,
And joins, with opened banks, the full-streamed Clyde.

How various are thy aspects, noble stream!
Now gliding silently by sloping banks,
Now flowing softly, with a silver sound,

Now rushing, tumbling, boiling, through the rocks.
Even on that bulging verge smooth flows thy stream,
Then spreads along a gentle ledge, then sweeps
Compressed by an abutting turn, till o'er
It pours tremendously; again it sweeps
Unpausing, till, again, with louder roar,
It mines into the boisterous wheeling gulph;
While high the boulted foam, at times, displays
An Iris arch, thrown light from rock to rock;
And oft the swallow through the misty cloud
Flits fearlessly, and drinks upon the wing.
O, what an amphitheatre surrounds
The abyss, in which the downward mass is plunged,
Stunning the ear! High as the falcon's flight,
The rocks precipitous ascend, and bound
The scene magnificent; deep, deep below,
The snowy surge spreads to a dark expanse.

These are the very rocks, on which the eye
Of WALLACE gazed, the music this he loved.
Oft has he stood upon the trembling brink,
Unstayed by tree or twig, absorbed in thought;
There would he trace, with eager eye, the oak,

Uprooted from its bank by ice-fraught floods,
And floating o'er the dreadful cataract:
There would he moralize upon its fate;—
It re-appears with scarce a broken bough,
It re-appears,—Scotland may yet be free!

High rides the moon amid the fleecy clouds,
That glisten, as they float athwart her disk;
Sweet is the glimpse that, for a moment, plays
Among these mouldering pinnacles:—but, hark!
That dismal cry! It is the wailing OWL.
Night long she mourns, perched in some vacant niche,
Or time-rent crevice: Sometimes to the woods
She bends her silent, slowly moving wing,
And on some leafless tree, dead of old age,
Sits watching for her prey; but should the foot
Of man intrude into her solemn shades,
Startled, he hears the fragile, breaking branch,
Crash as she rises:—farther in the gloom,
To deeper solitudes she wings her way.

Oft in the hurly of the wintry storm,
Housed in some rocking steeple, she augments

The horror of the night; or when the winds
Exhausted pause, she listens to the sound
Of the slow-swinging pendulum, till loud
Again the blast is up, and lightning gleams
Shoot 'thwart, and ring a faint and deadly toll.

On ancient oak, or elm, whose topmost boughs
Begin to fail, the RAVEN's twig-formed house
Is built; and, many a year, the self same tree
The aged solitary pair frequent.
But distant is their range; for oft at morn
They take their flight, and not till twilight gray
Their slow returning cry hoarse meets the ear.

Well does the raven love the sound of war.—
Amid those plains, where Danube darkly rolls,
The theatres, on which the kingly play
Of war is oftenest acted, there the peal
Of cannon-mouths, summons the sable flocks
To wait their death doomed prey; and they do wait:
Yes, when the glittering columns, front to front
Drawn out, approach in deep and awful silence,
The raven's voice is heard hovering between.

Sometimes upon the far-deserted tents,
She boding sits, and sings her fateful song.
But in the abandoned field she most delights,
When o'er the dead and dying slants the beam
Of peaceful morn, and wreaths of reeking mist
Rise from the gore-dewed sward: from corpse to corpse
She revels, far and wide; then, sated, flies
To some shot-shivered branch, whereon she cleans
Her purpled beak; and down she lights again,
To end her horrid meal: another, keen,
Plunges her beak deep in yon horse's side,
Till, by the hungry hound displaced, she flits
Once more to human prey.

Ah, who is he
At whose heart-welling wound she drinks,
Glutting her thirst! He was a lovely youth;
Fair Scotia was his home, until his sire
To swollen Monopoly resigned, heart-wrung,
The small demesne which his forefathers plowed:
Wide then dispersed the family of love.
One son betook him to the all-friendly main:
Another, with his aged parents, plied
The sickly trade, in city garret pent;

Their youngest born, the drum and martial show,—
Deluded half, and half despairing,—joined;
And soon he lay the food of bird and beast.
Long is his fate unknown; the horrid sum
Of dead is named, but sad suspense is left,
Enlabyrinthed in doubt, to please itself
With dark, misgiving hope. Ah, one there is,
Who fosters long the dying hope, that still
He may return: The live long summer day
She at the house end sits; and oft her wheel
Is stopt, while on the road, far-stretched, she bends
A melancholy, eye-o'erflowing look;
Or strives to mould the distant traveller
Into the form of him who's far away.
Hopeless, and broken hearted, still she loves
To sing, *When wild war's deadly blast was blawn.*

Alas! War riots with increasing rage.
Behold that field bestrewn with bleaching bones;
And, mark! the raven in the horse's ribs,
Gathering, encaged, the gleanings of a harvest
Almost forgotten now: Rejoice, ye birds of prey!
No longer shall ye *glean* your scanty meals;

Upon that field again long prostrate wreaths,
Death-mown, shall lie: I see the gory mound
Of dead, and wounded, piled, with here and there
A living hand, clutching in vain for help.

But what the horrors of the field of war,
To those, the sequel of the foiled attempt
Of fettered vengeance struggling to be free!—
Inhuman sons of Europe! not content
With dooms of death, your victim high ye hung
Encaged, to scorch beneath the torrid ray,
And feed, alive, the hungry fowls of heaven.
Around the bars already, see, they cling!
The vulture's head looks through; she strives in vain
To force her way: The lesser birds await
Till worn-out nature sinks; then on they pounce,
And tear the quivering flesh: in agony
The victim wakes, and rolls his wretched eyes,
And feebly drives the ravening flocks away.
Most dreadfully he groans: 'tis thirst, thirst, thirst.
Direst of human torments!—down again
He sinks;—again he feels the torturing beak.

England, such things have been, and still would be.
But that the glorious band, the stedfast friends
Of Afric's sons, stand ready to avenge
Their wrongs, and crush the tyrants low.

On distant waves, the raven of the sea,
The CORMORANT, devours her carrion food.
Along the blood-stained coast of Senegal,
Prowling, she scents the cassia-perfumed breeze
Tainted with death, and, keener, forward flies:
The towering sails, that waft the house of woe,
Afar she views: upon the heavy hulk,
Deep-logged with wretchedness, full fast she gains:
(Revolting sight! the flag of freedom waves
Above the stern-emblazoned words, that tell
The amount of crimes which Britain's boasted laws,
Within the narrow wooden walls, permit!)
And now she nighs the carnage-freighted keel,
Unscared by rattling fetters, or the shriek
Of mothers, o'er their ocean-buried babes.
Lured by the scent, unweariedly she flies,
And at the foamy dimples of the track
Darts sportively, or perches on a corpse.

From scenes like these, O, Scotland, once again
To thee my weary fancy fondly hies,
And, with the EAGLE, mountain-perched, alights.
Amid Lochaber's wilds, or dark Glencoe,
High up the pillared mountain's steepest side,
The eagle, from her eyry on the crag
Of over-jutting rock, beholds afar.
Viewing the distant flocks, with ranging eye
She meditates the prey; but waits the time
When seas of mist extend along the vale,
And, rising gradual, reach her lofty shore:
Up then to sunny regions of the air
She soars, and looks upon the white-wreathed summits
Of mountains, seeming ocean isles, then down
She plunges, stretching through the hazy deep;
Unseen she flies, and, on her playful quarry,
Pounces unseen: The shepherd knows his loss,
When high o'er-head he hears a passing bleat
Faint, and more faintly, dying far away.
And now aloft she bends her homeward course,
Loaded, yet light; and soon her youngling pair,
Joyful descry her buoyant wing emerge
And float along the cloud; fluttering they stoop

Upon the dizzy brink, as if they aimed
To try the abyss, and meet her coming breast;
But soon her coming breast, and outstretched wings,
Glide shadowing down, and close upon their heads.

It was upon the eagle's plundered store
That WALLACE fared, when hunted from his home,
A glorious outlaw! by the lawless power
Of freedom's foiled assassin, England's king.
Along the mountain cliffs, that ne'er were clomb
By other footstep than his own, 'twas there
His eagle-visioned genius, towering, planned
The grand emprise of setting Scotland free.
He longed to mingle in the storm of war;
And as the eagle dauntlessly ascends,
Revelling amid the elemental strife,
His mind sublimed prefigured to itself
Each circumstance of future hard-fought fields,—
The battle's hubbub loud; the forceful press,
That from his victim hurries him afar;
The impetuous close concentrated assault,
That, like a billow broken on the rocks,
Recedes, but forward heaves with doubled fury.

When low'rs the rack unmoving, high up-piled,
And silence deep foretells the thunder near,
The eagle upward penetrates the gloom,
And, far above the fire-impregnate wreaths,
Soaring surveys the ethereal volcanos;
Till, muttering low at first, begins the peal;
Then she descends,—she loves the thunder's voice,—
She wheels, and sports amid the rattling clouds,
Undazzled gazes on the sheeted blaze,
Darts at the flash, or, hung in hovering poise,
Delighted hears the music of the roar.
Nor does the wintry blast, the drifting fall,
Shrouded in night, and, with a death-hand grasp,
Benumming life, drive her to seek the roof
Of cave, or hollow cliff; firm on her perch,
Her ancient and accustomed rock, she sits,
With wing-couched head, and, to the morning light,
Appears a frost-rent fragment, coped with snow.

Yet her, invulnerable as she seems
By every change of elemental power,
The art of man, the general foe of man,

And bird, and beast, subdues; the leaden bolt,
Slung from the mimic lightning's nitrous wing,
Brings low her head; her close and mailed plumage
Avails her nought,—for higher than her perch
The clambering marksman lies, and takes his aim
Instant upon her flight, when every plume
Ruffling expands to catch the lifting gale.
She has the death; upward a little space
She springs, then plumb-down drops: The victor stands,
Long listening, ere he hear the fall; at last,
The crashing branches of the unseen wood,
Far down below, send echoing up the sound,
That faintly rises to his leaning ear.
But, woe to him! if, with the mortal wound,
She still retain strength to revenge the wrong:
Her bleeding wing she veers; her maddened eye
Discerns the lurking wretch; on him she springs;
One talon clutched, with life's last struggling throes
Convulsed, is buried at his heart; the other
Deep in his tortured eyeballs is transfixed:
Pleased she expires upon his writhing breast.

Of bulk more huge, and borne on broader vans,
The EAGLE OF THE SEA from Atlas soars,
Or Teneriffe's hoar peak, and stretches far
Above the Atlantic wave, contemning distance.
The watchful helmsman from the stern descries,
And hails her course, and many an eye is raised.
Loftier she flies than hundred times mast-height:
Onward she floats, then plunges from her soar
Down to the ship, as if she aimed to perch
Upon the mainmast pinnacle; but up again
She mounts Alp high, and, with her lowered head
Suspended, eyes the bulging sails, disdains
Their tardy course, outflies the hurrying rack,
And, disappearing, mingles with the clouds.

BIBLICAL PICTURES.

THE

FIRST SABBATH.

Six days the heavenly host, in circle vast,
Like that untouching cincture which enzones
The globe of Saturn, compassed wide this orb,
And with the forming mass floated along,
In rapid course, through yet untravelled space,
Beholding God's stupendous power,—a world
Bursting from Chaos at the omnific will,
And perfect ere the sixth day's evening star
On Paradise arose. Blessed that eve!
The Sabbath's harbinger, when all complete,
In freshest beauty from Jehovah's hand,

Creation bloomed; when Eden's twilight face
Smiled, like a sleeping babe: The voice divine
A holy calm breathed o'er the goodly work:
Mildly the sun, upon the loftiest trees,
Shed mellowly a sloping beam. Peace reigned,
And love, and gratitude: The human pair
Their orisons poured forth: love, concord, reigned;
The falcon, perched upon the blooming bough
With Philomela, listened to her lay;
Among the antlered herd the tiger couched,
Harmless; the lion's mane no terror spread
Among the careless ruminating flock.
Silence was o'er the deep; the noiseless surge,
The last subsiding wave,—of that dread tumult
Which raged, when Ocean, at the mute command,
Rushed furiously into his new-cleft bed,—
Was gently rippling on the pebbled shore;
While, on the swell, the sea-bird, with her head
Wing-veiled, slept tranquilly. The host of heaven,
Entranced in new delight, speechless adored;
Nor stopped their fleet career, nor changed their form
Encircular, till on that hemisphere,—
In which the blissful garden sweet exhaled

Its incense, odorous clouds,—the Sabbath dawn
Arose; then wide the flying circle oped,
And soared, in semblance of a mighty rainbow:
Silent ascend the choirs of Seraphim;
No harp resounds, mute is each voice; the burst
Of joy, and praise, reluctant they repress,—
For love and concord all things so attuned
To harmony, that Earth must have received
The grand vibration, and to the centre shook:
But soon as to the starry altitudes
They reached, then what a storm of sound, tremendous,
Swelled through the realms of space! The morning stars
Together sang, and all the sons of God
Shouted for joy! Loud was the peal; so loud,
As would have quite o'erwhelmed the human sense!
But to the Earth it came a gentle strain,
Like softest fall breathed from Æolian lute,
When 'mid the chords the evening gale expires.
Day of the Lord! creation's hallowed close!
Day of the Lord! (prophetical they sang)
Benignant mitigation of that doom,
Which must, ere long, consign the fallen race,
Dwellers in yonder star, to toil and woe!

THE

FINDING OF MOSES.

Slow glides the Nile: amid the margin flags,
Closed in a bulrush ark, the babe is left,
Left by a mother's hand. His sister waits
Far off; and pale, 'tween hope and fear, beholds
The royal maid, surrounded by her train,
Approach the river bank, approach the spot
Where sleeps the innocent: She sees them stoop
With meeting plumes; the rushy lid is oped,
And wakes the infant, smiling in his tears,—
As when along a little mountain lake,
The summer south-wind breathes with gentle sigh,
And parts the reeds, unveiling, as they bend,
A water-lily floating on the wave.

JEPHTHA'S VOW.

FROM conquest JEPHTHA came, with faultering step,
And troubled eye: His home appears in view;
He trembles at the sight. Sad he forebodes,—
His vow will meet a victim in his child:
For well he knows, that, from her earliest years,
She still was first to meet his homeward steps:
Well he remembers, how, with tottering gait,
She ran, and clasped his knees, and lisped, and looked
Her joy; and how, when garlanding with flowers

His helm, fearful, her infant hands would shrink
Back from the lion couched beneath the crest.
What sound is that, which, from the palm-tree grove.
Floats now with choral swell, now fainter falls
Upon the ear? It is, it is the song
He loved to hear,—a song of thanks and praise,
Sung by the patriarch for his ransomed son.
Hope from the omen springs: O, blessed hope!
It may not be her voice!—Fain would he think
'Twas not his daughter's voice, that still approached.
Blent with the timbrel's note. Forth from the grove
She foremost glides of all the minstrel band:
Moveless he stands; then grasps his hilt, still red
With hostile gore, but, shuddering, quits the hold;
And clasps, in agony, his hands, and cries,
"Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me low."—
The timbrel at her rooted feet resounds.

SAUL AND DAVID.

DEEP was the furrow in the royal brow,
When DAVID's hand, lightly as vernal gales
Rippling the brook of Kedron, skimmed the lyre:
He sung of JACOB's youngest born,—the child
Of his old age,—sold to the Ishmaelite;
His exaltation to the second power
In PHARAOH's realm; his brethren thither sent;
Suppliant they stood before his face, well known,
Unknowing,—till JOSEPH fell upon the neck
Of BENJAMIN, his mother's son, and wept.—

Unconsciously the warlike shepherd paused;
But when he saw, down the yet-quivering string,
The tear-drop trembling glide, abashed, he checked,
Indignant at himself, the bursting flood,
And, with a sweep impetuous, struck the chords:
From side to side his hands transversely glance,
Like lightning thwart a stormy sea; his voice
Arises 'mid the clang, and straightway calms
The harmonious tempest, to a solemn swell
Majestical, triumphant; for he sings
Of Arad's mighty host by Israel's arm
Subdued; of Israel through the desart led,
He sings; of him who was their leader, called,
By GOD himself, from keeping JETHRO's flock,
To be a ruler o'er the chosen race.
Kindles the eye of SAUL; his arm is poised;—
Harmless the javelin quivers in the wall.

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS.

Sore was the famine throughout all the bounds
Of Israel, when Elijah, by command
Of God, journeyed to Cherith's failing brook.
No rain-drop falls, no dew-fraught cloud, at morn,
Or closing eve, creeps slowly up the vale;
The withering herbage dies; among the palms,
The shrivelled leaves send to the summer gale
An autumn rustle; no sweet songster's lay
Is warbled from the branches; scarce is heard

The rill's faint brawl. The prophet looks around,
And trusts in GOD, and lays his silvered head
Upon the flowerless bank; serene he sleeps,
Nor wakes till dawning: Then, with hands enclasped,
And heavenward face, and eyelids closed, he prays
To Him who manna on the desert showered,
To Him who from the rock made fountains gush:
Entranced the man of God remains; till roused
By sound of wheeling wings, with grateful heart,
He sees the ravens fearless by his side
Alight, and leave the heaven-provided food.

THE

BIRTH OF JESUS ANNOUNCED.

Deep was the midnight silence in the fields
Of Bethlehem; hushed the folds; save that, at times,
Was heard the lamb's faint bleat: the shepherds, stretched
On the green sward, surveyed the starry vault:
The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,
The firmament shews forth thy handy work;
Thus they, their hearts attuned to the Most High.—
When, suddenly, a splendid cloud appeared,
As if a portion of the milky way
Descended slowly in a spiral course.
Near, and more near it draws; then, hovering, floats,

High as the soar of eagle, shedding bright,
Upon the folded flocks, a heavenly radiance,
From whence was uttered loud, yet sweet, a voice,—
Fear not, I bring good tidings of great joy;
For unto you is born this day a Saviour!
And this shall be a sign to you,—the babe,
Laid lowly in a manger, ye shall find.
The angel spake; when, lo! upon the cloud,
A multitude of Seraphim, enthroned,
Sang praises, saying, *Glory to the Lord*
On high, on earth be peace, good will to men.
With sweet response harmoniously they choired,
And while, with heavenly harmony, the song
Arose to God, more bright the buoyant throne
Illumed the land: The prowling lion stops,
Awe-struck, with mane upreared, and flattened head;
And, without turning, backward on his steps
Recoils, aghast, into the desart gloom.
A trembling joy the astonished shepherds prove,
As heavenward re-ascends the vocal blaze
Triumphantly; while, by degrees, the strain
Dies on the ear, that self-deluded listens,—
As if a sound so sweet could never die.

BEHOLD MY MOTHER,

AND

MY BRETHREN.

Who is my mother, or my brethren?—
He spake, and looked on them who sat around,
With a meek smile, of pity blent with love,
More melting than e'er gleamed from human face,—
As when a sun-beam, through a summer shower,
Shines mildly on a little hill-side flock;—
And with that look of love he said, Behold
My mother, and my brethren: for I say,
That whosoe'er shall do the will of God,
He is my brother, sister, mother, all.

BARTIMEUS RESTORED TO SIGHT.

BLIND, poor, and helpless, BARTIMEUS sate,
Listening the foot of the wayfaring man,
Still hoping that the next, and still the next,
Would put an alms into his trembling hand.
He thinks he hears the coming breeze faint rustle
Among the sycamores; it is the tread
Of thousand steps; it is the hum of tongues
Innumerable: But when the sightless man
Heard that the Nazarene was passing by,
He cried, and said, "JESUS, thou son of David,
"Have mercy upon me!" and, when rebuked,
He cried the more, "Have mercy upon me."—
Thy faith hath made thee whole; so JESUS spake,—
And straight the blind BEHELD THE FACE OF GOD.

LITTLE CHILDREN

BROUGHT TO JESUS.

Suffer that little children come to me,
Forbid them not: Emboldened by his words,
The mothers onward press; but, finding vain
The attempt to reach the Lord, they trust their babes
To strangers' hands: The innocents alarmed,
Amid the throng of faces all unknown,
Shrink trembling,—till their wandering eyes discern
The countenance of JESUS, beaming love
And pity; eager then they stretch their arms,
And, cowring, lay their heads upon his breast.

JESUS CALMS THE TEMPEST.

THE roaring tumult of the billowed sea
Awakes him not; high on the crested surge,
Now heaved, his locks flow streaming in the gale;
And, now descending, 'tween the sheltering waves,
The falling tresses veil the face divine:
Meek through that veil a momentary gleam,
Benignant, shines; he dreams that he beholds
The opening eyes,—that long hopeless had rolled
In darkness,—look around bedimmed with tears
Of joy; but, suddenly, the voice of fear
Dispelled the happy vision: Awful he rose,
Rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea,
Peace, be thou still! and straight there was a calm.
With terror-mingled gladness in their looks,
The mariners exclaim, *What man is this,*
That even the wind and sea obey his voice!

JESUS WALKS ON THE SEA,

AND

CALMS THE STORM.

Loud blew the storm of night; the thwarting surge
Dashed, boiling, on the labouring bark: Dismay,
From face to face reflected, spread around:—
When, lo! upon a towering wave is seen,
The semblance of a foamy wreath, upright,
Move onward to the ship: The helmsman starts,
And quits his hold; the voyagers appalled
Shrink from the fancied Spirit of the Flood:
But when the voice of Jesus, with the gale
Soft mingled, *It is I, be not afraid,*

Fear fled, and joy lightened from eye to eye.
Up he ascends, and, from the rolling side,
Surveys the tumult of the sea and sky
With transient look severe: The tempest awed
Sinks to a sudden calm; the clouds disperse;
The moon-beam trembles on the face divine,
Reflected mildly in the unruffled deep.

THE DUMB CURED.

His eyes uplifted, and his hands close clasped,
The dumb man, with a supplicating look,
Turned as the Lord passed by: Jesus beheld,
And on him bent a pitying look, and spake:
His moving lips are by the suppliant seen,
And the last accents of the healing sentence
Ring in that ear which never heard before.
Prostrate the man restored falls to the earth,
And uses first the gift, the gift sublime,
Of speech, in giving thanks to him, whose voice
Was never uttered but in doing good.

THE DEATH OF JESUS.

'Tis finished: he spake the words, and bowed
His head, and died.—Beholding him far off,
They, who had ministered unto him hope,—
'Tis his last agony: The Temple's veil
Is rent; revealing the most holy place,
Wherein the cherubims their wings extend,
O'ershadowing the mercy-seat of God.
Appalled, the leaning soldier feels the spear
Shake in his grasp; the planted standard falls
Upon the heaving ground: The sun is dimmed,
And darkness shrouds the body of the Lord.

THE RESURRECTION.

THE setting orb of night her level ray
Shed o'er the land, and, on the dewy sward,
The lengthened shadows of the triple cross
Were laid far stretched,—when in the east arose,
Last of the stars, day's harbinger: No sound
Was heard, save of the watching soldier's foot:
Within the rock-barred sepulchre, the gloom
Of deepest midnight brooded o'er the dead,
The holy one; but, lo! a radiance faint
Began to dawn around his sacred brow:
The linen vesture seemed a snowy wreath

Drifted by storms into a mountain cave:
Bright, and more bright the circling halo beamed
Upon that face, clothed in a smile benign,
Though yet exanimate. Nor long the reign
Of death; the eyes, that wept for human griefs,
Unclose, and look around with conscious joy;
Yes, with returning life, the first emotion
That glowed in JESUS' breast of love, was joy
At man's redemption now complete; at death
Disarmed; the grave transformed into the couch
Of faith; the resurrection, and the life.
Majestical he rose; trembled the earth;
The ponderous gate of stone was rolled away;
The keepers fell; the angel, awe-struck, shrunk
Into invisibility, while forth
The Saviour of the World walked, and stood
Before the sepulchre, and viewed the clouds
Empurpled glorious by the rising sun.

JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES.

THE evening of that day, which saw the Lord
Rise from the chambers of the dead was come.
His faithful followers assembled sang
A hymn low-breathed, a hymn of sorrow blent
With hope;—when in the midst sudden he stood.
The awe-struck circle backward shrink; he looks
Around with a benignant smile of love,
And says, *Peace be unto you:* faith and joy
Spread o'er each face, amazed:—as when the moon,
Pavilioned in dark clouds, mildly comes forth,
Silvering a circlet in the fleecy rack.

PAUL ACCUSED

BEFORE THE

TRIBUNAL OF THE AREOPAGUS.

Listen, that voice! upon the hill of Mars,
Rolling in bolder thunders, than e'er pealed
From lips that shook the Macedonian throne;
Behold his dauntless outstretched arm, his face
Illumed of heaven:—he knoweth not the fear
Of man, of principalities, of powers.
The Stoic's moveless frown; the vacant stare
Of Epicurus' herd; the scowl and gnash malign
Of Superstition, stopping both her ears;

The Areopagite tribunal dread,
From whence the doom of SOCRATES was uttered;—
This hostile throng dismays him not; he seems,
As if no worldly object could inspire
A terror in his soul;—as if the vision,
Which, when he journeyed to Damascus, shone
From heaven, still swam before his eyes,
Out-dazzling all things earthly; as if the voice,
That spake from out the effulgence, ever rang
Within his ear, inspiring him with words,
Burning, majestic, lofty, as his theme,—
The resurrection, and the life to come.

PAUL ACCUSED

BEFORE THE

ROMAN GOVERNOR OF JUDEA.

THE Judge ascended to the judgment-seat.
Amid a gleam of spears the Apostle stood.
Dauntless, he forward came; and looked around,
And raised his voice, at first, in accents low,
Yet clear; a whisper spread among the throng:—
So when the thunder mutters, still the breeze
Is heard, at times, to sigh; but when the peal,
Tremendous, louder rolls, a silence dead
Succeeds each pause,—moveless the aspen leaf.

Thus fixed, and motionless, the listening band
Of soldiers forward leant, as from the man,
Inspired of God, truth's awful thunders rolled.
No more he feels, upon his high raised arm,
The ponderous chain, than does the playful child
The bracelet, formed of many a flowery link.
Heedless of self, forgetful that his life
Is now to be defended by his words,
He only thinks of doing good to them
Who seek his life; and, while he reasons high
Of justice, temperance, and the life to come,
The Judge shrinks trembling at the prisoner's voice.

THE RURAL CALENDAR.

JANUARY.

Long ere the snow-veiled dawn, the bird of morn
His wings quick claps, and sounds his cheering call:
The cottage hinds the glimmering lantern trim,
And to the barn wade, sinking, in the drift;
The alternate flails bounce from the loosened sheaf.
Pleasant these sounds! they sleep to slumber change;
Pleasant to him, whom no laborious task
Whispers, *arise!*—whom neither love of gain,
Nor love of power, nor hopes, nor fears, disturb.

Late daylight comes at last, and the strained eye
Shrinks from the dazzling brightness of the scene,—
One wide expanse of whiteness uniform.
As yet no wandering footstep has defaced
The spotless plain, save where some wounded hare,
Wrenched from the springe, has left a blood-stained track.
How smooth are all the fields! sunk every fence;
The furrow, here and there, heaped to a ridge,
O'er which the sidelong plough-shaft scarcely peers.

Cold blows the north-wind o'er the dreary waste.—
O ye that shiver by your blazing fires,
Think of the inmates of yon hut, half sunk
Beneath the drift: from it no smoke ascends;
The broken straw-filled pane excludes the light,
But ill excludes the blast: The redbreast there
For shelter seeks, but short, ah! very short
His stay; no crumbs, strewn careless on the floor,
Attract his sidelong glance;—to warmer roofs
He flies; a welcome,—soon a fearless guest,
He cheers the winter day with summer songs.

Short is the reign of day, tedious the night.

The city's distant lights arrest my view,
And magic fancy whirls me to the scene.
There vice and folly run their giddy rounds;
There eager crowds are hurrying to the sight
Of feigned distress, yet have not time to hear
The shivering orphan's prayer. The flaring lamps
Of gilded chariots, like the meteor eyes
Of mighty giants, famed in legends old,
Illume the snowy street; the silent wheels
On heedless passenger steal unperceived,
Bearing the splendid fair to flutter round
Amid the flowery labyrinths of the dance.
But, hark! the merry catch: good social souls
Sing on, and drown dull care in bumpers deep;
The bell, snow-muffled, warns not of the hour;
For scarce the sentenced felon's watchful ear
Can catch the softened knell, by which he sums
The hours he has to live. Poor hopeless wretch!
His thoughts are horror, and his dreams despair;
And ever as he, on his strawy couch,
Turns heavily, his chains and fetters, grating,
Awake the inmates of some neighbouring cell,
Who bless their lot, that *debt* is all *their* crime.

FEBRUARY.

THE treacherous fowler, in the drifted wreath,
The snare conceals, and strews the husky lure,
Tempting the famished fowls of heaven to light:
They light; the captive strives in vain to fly,
Scattering around, with fluttering wing, the snow.
Amid the untrod snows, oft let me roam
Far up the lonely glen, and mark its change;
The frozen rill's hoarse murmur scarce is heard;
The rocky cleft, the fairy bourne smoothed up,
Repeat no more my solitary voice.

Now to the icy plain the city swarms.
In giddy circles, whirling variously,
The skater fleetly thrids the mazy throng,
While smaller wights the sliding pastime ply.
Unhappy he, of poverty the child!
Who, barefoot, standing, eyes his merry mates,
And, shivering, weeps, not for the biting cold,
But that he cannot join the slippery sport.

Trust not incautiously the smooth expanse;
For oft a treacherous thaw, ere yet perceived,
Saps by degrees the solid-seeming mass:
At last the long piled mountain snows dissolve,
Bursting the roaring river's brittle bonds;
The shattered fragments down the cataract shoot,
And, sinking in the boiling deep below,
At distance re-appear, then sweep along
Marking their height upon the half sunk trees.

No more the ploughman hurls the sounding quoit;
The loosened glebe demands the rusted share,
And slow the toiling team plods o'er the field.
But oft, ere half the winding task be done,

Returning frost again usurps the year,
Fixing the ploughshare in the unfinished fur;
And still, at times, the flaky shower descends,
Whitening the plain, save where the wheaten blade,
Peering, uplifts its green and hardy head,
As if just springing from a soil of snow.

While yet the night is long, and drear, and chill,
Soon as the slanting sun has sunk from view,
The sounding anvil cheerily invites
The weary hind to leave his twinkling fire,
And bask himself before the furnace glare;
Where, blest with unbought mirth, the rustic ring,
Their faces tinted by the yellow blaze,
Beguile the hours, nor envy rooms of state.

MARCH.

The ravaged fields, waste, colourless, and bleak,
Retreating Winter leaves, with angry frown,
And lingering on the distant snow-streaked hills,
Displays the motley remnants of his reign.

With shouldered spade, the labourer to the field
Hies, joyful that the softened glebe gives leave
To toil; no more his children cry for bread,
Or, shivering, crowd around the scanty fire;
No more he's doom'd, reluctant, to receive
The pittance, which the rich man proudly gives,
Who, when he gives, thinks heaven itself obliged.
Vain man! think not there's merit in the boon,
If, quitting not one comfort, not one joy,

The sparkling wine still circles round thy board,
Thy hearth still blazes, and the sounding strings,
Blent with the voice symphonious, charm thine ear.

The redbreast now, at morn, resumes his song,
And larks, high-soaring, wing their spiral flight,
While the light hearted plough-boy singing, blythe,
The broom, the bonny broom of Cowdenknows,
Fills with delight the wandering townsman's ear;
May be, though carolled rude in artless guise,
Sad Floddenfield, of Scotia's lays most sweet,
Most mournful, dims, with starting tear, his eye.
Nor silent are the upland leas; cheerily
The partridge now her tuneless call repeats,
Or, bursting unexpected from the brake,
Startles the milkmaid singing o'er the ridge.
Nor silent are the chilly leafless woods;
The thrush's note is heard amid the grove,
Soon as the primrose, from the withered leaves,
Smiling, looks out: Rash flowret! oft betrayed,
By summer-seeming days, to venture forth
Thy tender form,—the killing northern blast,
Will wrap thee lifeless in a hoar-frost shroud.

APRIL.

DESCEND, sweet April, from yon watery bow,
And, liberal, strew the ground with budding flowers,
With leafless crocus, leaf-veiled violet,
Auricula, with powdered cup, primrose
That loves to lurk below the hawthorn shade.
At thy approach health re-illumes the eye:
Even pale Consumption, from thy balmy breath,
Inhales delusive hope; and, dreaming still
Of length of days, basks in some sunny plat,
And decks her half-foreboding breast with flowers,—
With flowers, which else would have survived the hand
By which they're pulled. But they will bloom again:

The daisy, spreading on the greensward grave,
Fades, dies, and seems to perish, yet revives.
Shall man for ever sleep? Cruel the tongue!
That, with sophistic art, snatches from pain,
Disease, and grief, and want, that antidote,
Which makes the wretched smile, the hopeless hope.

Light now the western gale sweeps o'er the plain,
Gently it waves the rivulet's cascade;
Gently it parts the lock on beauty's brow,
And lifts the tresses from the snowy neck,
And bends the flowers, and makes the lily stoop,
As if to kiss its image in the wave;
Or curls, with softest breath, the glassy pool,
Aiding the treachery of the mimic fly;
While, warily, behind the half-leaved bush,
The angler screen'd, with keenest eye intent,
Awaits the sudden rising of the trout:
Down dips the feathery lure; the quivering rod
Bends low; in vain the cheated captive strives
To break the yielding line; exhausted soon,
Ashore he's drawn, and, on the mossy bank,
Weltering he dyes the primrose with his blood.

MAY.

On blythe May morning, when the lark's first note
Ascends, on viewless wing, veiled in the mist,
The village maids then hie them to the woods
To kiss the fresh dew from the daisy's brim;
Wandering in misty glades they lose their way,
And, ere aware, meet in their lovers' arms,
Like joining dew drops on the blushing rose.

Sweet month! thy locks with bursting buds bedecked,
With opening hyacinths, and hawthorn blooms,
Fair still thou art, though showers bedim thine eye;
The cloud soon quits thy brow, and, mild, the sun
Looks out with watery beam, looks out, and smiles.

Now from the wild flower bank the little bird
Picks the soft moss, and to the thicket flies;
And oft returns, and oft the work renews,
Till all the curious fabric hangs complete:
Alas, but ill concealed from schoolboy's eye,
Who, heedless of the warbler's saddest plaint,
Tears from the bush the toil of many an hour;
Then, thoughtless wretch! pursues the devious bee,
Buzzing from flower to flower: She wings her flight,
Far from his following eye, to walled parterres,
Where, undisturbed, she revels 'mid the beds
Of full-blown lilies, doomed to die unculled,
Save when the stooping fair (more beauteous flower!)
The bosom's rival brightness half betrays,
While choosing 'mong the gently bending stalks,
The snowy hand a sister blossom seems.

More sweet to me the lily's meekened grace,
Than gaudy hues, brilliant as summer clouds
Around the sinking sun: to me more sweet,
Than garish day, the twilight's softened grace,
When deepening shades obscure the dusky woods;
Then comes the silence of the dewy hour,

With songs of noontide birds, thrilling in fancy's ear,
While from yon elm, with water-kissing boughs
Along the moveless winding of the brook,
The smooth expanse is calmness, stillness all,
Unless the springing trout, with quick replunge,
Arousing meditation's downward look,
Ruffle, with many a gentle circling wave
On wave, the glassy surface undulating far.

JUNE.

SHORT is the reign of night, and almost blends
The evening twilight with the morning dawn.
Mild hour of dawn! thy wide-spread solitude,
And placid stillness, soothe even misery's sigh:
Deep the distress that cannot feel thy charm!—
As yet the thrush roosts on the bloomy spray,
With head beneath his dew-besprinkled wing,
When, roused by my lone tread, he lightly shakes
His ruffling plumes, and chaunts the untaught note.
Soon followed by the woodland choir, warbling
Melodiously the oft-repeated song,
Till noon-tide pour the torpor-shedding ray.

Then is the hour to seek the sylvan bank
Of lonely stream, remote from human haunt;
To mark the wild bee voyaging, deep-toned,
Low weighing down each floweret's tender stalk;
To list the grasshopper's hoarse creaking chirp;
And then to let excursive fancy fly
To scenes, where roaring cannon drown the straining voice,
And fierce gesticulation takes the place
Of useless words. May be some Alpine brook,
That served to part two neighbouring shepherds' flocks,
Is now the limit of two hostile camps.
Weak limit! to be filled, ere evening star,
With heaps of slain: Far down thy rocky course,
The midnight wolf, lapping the blood-stained flood,
Gluts his keen thirst, and oft, and oft returns,
Unsated, to the purple, tepid stream.

But let me fly such scenes, which, even when feigned,
Distress. To Scotia's peaceful glens I turn,
And rest my eyes upon her waving fields,
Where now the scythe lays low the mingled flowers.
Ah, spare, thou pitying swain! a ridge-breadth round
The partridge nest: so shall no new-come lord—

To ope a vista to some distant spire—
Thy cottage raze; but, when the toilsome day
Is done, still shall the turf-laid seat invite
Thy weary limbs; there peace and health shall bless
Thy frugal fare, served by the unhired hand,
That seeks no wages save a parent's smile.
Thus glides the eve, while round the strawy roof
Is heard the bat's wing in the deep-hushed air,
And from the little field the corncraik's harsh,
Yet not unpleasing note, the stillness breaks,
All the night long, till day-spring wake the lark.

JULY.

Slow move the sultry hours. O, for the shield
Of darkening boughs, or hollow rock grotesque!

The pool transparent to its pebbly bed,
With here and there a slowly gliding trout,
Invites the throbbing, half reluctant, breast
To plunge: The dash re-echoes from the rocks;
Smoothly, in sinuous course, the swimmer winds,
Now, with extended arms, rowing his way,
And now, with sunward face, he floating lies;
Till, blinded by the dazzling beam, he turns,
Then to the bottom dives, emerging soon
With stone, as trophy, in his waving hand:

Blythe days of jocund youth, now almost flown!
Meantime, far up the windings of the stream,
Where o'er the narrowed course the hazels meet,
The sportive shriek, shrill, mingled with the laugh,
The bushes hung with beauty's white attire,
Tempt, yet forbid, the intrusive eye's approach.

Unhappy he, who, in this season, pent
Within the darksome gloom of city lane,
Pines for the flowery paths, and woody shades,
From which the love of lucre, or of power,
Enticed his youthful steps. In vain he turns
The rich descriptive page of THOMSON's muse,
And strives to fancy that the lovely scenes
Are present: So the hand of childhood tries
To grasp the pictured bunch of fruit, or flowers,
But, disappointed, feels the canvas smooth:
So the caged lark, upon a withering turf,
Flutters from side to side, with quivering wings,
As if in act of mounting to the skies.

At noontide hour, from school, the little throng
Rush gaily, sporting o'er the enamelled mead.

Some strive to catch the bloom-perched butterfly,
And if they miss his mealy wings, the flower
From which he flies the disappointment soothes.
Others, so pale in look, in tattered garb,
Motley with half-spun threads and cotton flakes,
Trudge, drooping, to the many-storied pile,
Where thousand spindles whirling stun the ear,
Confused: There, prisoned close, they wretched moil.
Sweet age, perverted from its proper end!
When childhood toils, the field should be the scene,—
To tend the sheep, or drive the herd a-field,
Or, from the corn fields, scare the pilfering rooks,
Or to the mowers bear the milky pail.
But, Commerce, Commerce, Manufactures, still
Weary the ear; health, morals, all must yield
To pamper the monopolising few:—
'Twill make a wealthy, but a wretched state.
Blest be the generous band, that would restore
To honour due the long-neglected plough!
From it expect peace, plenty, virtue, health:
Compare with it, Britannia, all thine isles
Beyond the Atlantic wave! thy trade! thy ships
Deep-fraught with blood!

But let me quit such themes! and, peaceful, roam
The winding glen, where now the wild-rose pale,
And garish broom, strew, with their fading flowers,
The narrow greenwood path. To me more sweet
The greenwood path, half hid 'neath brake and briar,
Than pebbled walks so trim; more dear to me
The daisied plat, before the cottage door,
Than waveless sea of widely spreading lawn,
'Mid which some insulated mansion towers,
Spurning the humble dwellings from its proud domain.

AUGUST.

FAREWELL, sweet summer, and thy fading flowers!
Farewell, sweet summer, and thy woodland songs!
No woodland note is heard, save where the hawk,
High from her eyry, skims in circling flight,
With all her clamorous young, first venturing forth
On untried wing: At distance far, the sound
Alarms the barn-door flock; the fearful dam
Calls in her brood beneath her ruffling plumes;
With crowding feet they stand, and frequent peep
Through the half-opened wing. The partridge quakes
Among the rustling corn. Ye gentle tribes,
Think not your deadliest foe is now at hand.

To man, bird, beast, *man* is the deadliest foe;
'Tis he who wages universal war.
Soon as his murderous law gives leave to wound
The heathfowl, dweller on the mountain wild,
The sportsman, anxious, watching for the dawn,
Lies turning, while his dog, in happy dreams,
With feeble bark anticipates the day.
Some, ere the dawn steals o'er the deep blue lake,
The hill ascend: vain is their eager haste,—
The dog's quick breath is heard panting around,
But neither dog, nor springing game, is seen
Amid the floating mist; short interval
Of respite to the trembling dewy wing.
Ah, many a bleeding wing, ere mid-day hour,
Shall vainly flap the purple bending heath.—
Fatigued, at noon, the spoiler seeks the shade
Of some lone oak, fast by the rocky stream,—
The hunter's rest, in days of other years,
When sad the voice of Cona, in the gale,
Lamentingly the song of Selma sung.

How changeful, Caledonia, is thy clime!
Where is the sun-beam that but now so bright

Played on the dimpling brook? Dark o'er the heath
A deepening gloom is hung; from clouds high piled
On clouds, the sudden flash glances; the thunder
Rolls far, reverberated 'mong the cliffs;
Nor pause; but ere the echo of one peal
Has ceased, another, louder still, the ear appals.
The sporting lamb hastes to its mother's side;
The shepherd stoops into the mountain-cave,
At every momentary flash illumed
Back to its innermost recess, where gleams
The vaulted spar; the eagle, sudden smote,
Falls to the ground lifeless; beneath the wave
The sea-fowl plunges; fast the rain descends;
The whitened streams, from every mountain side,
Rush to the valley, tinging far the lake.

SEPTEMBER.

GRADUAL the woods their varied tints assume;
The hawthorn reddens, and the rowan-tree
Displays its ruby clusters, seeming sweet,
Yet harsh, disfiguring the fairest face.

At sultry hour of noon, the reaper band
Rest from their toil, and in the lusty stook
Their sickles hang. Around their simple fare,
Upon the stubble spread, blythesome they form
A circling groupe, while humbly waits behind
The wistful dog, and with expressive look,
And pawing foot, implores his little share.

The short repast, seasoned with simple mirth,
And not without the song, gives place to sleep.
With sheaf beneath his head, the rustic youth
Enjoys sweet slumbers, while the maid he loves
Steals to his side, and screens him from the sun.

But not by day alone the reapers toil:
Oft in the moon's pale ray the sickle gleams,
And heaps the dewy sheaf;—thy changeful sky,
Poor Scotland, warns to seize the hour serene.

The gleaners, wandering with the morning ray,
Spread o'er the new-reaped field. Tottering old age,
And lisping infancy, are there, and she
Who better days has seen.—
No shelter now
The covey finds; but, hark! the murderous tube.
Exultingly the deep-mouthed spaniel bears
The fluttering victim to his master's foot:
Perhaps another, wounded, flying far
Eludes the eager following eye, and drops
Among the lonely furze, to pine and die.

OCTOBER.

With hound and horn, o'er moor, and hill, and dale,
The chace sweeps on; no obstacle they heed,
Nor hedge, nor ditch, nor wood, nor river wide.
The clamorous pack rush rapid down the vale,
Whilst o'er yon brushwood tops, at times, are seen
The moving branches of the victim stag:
Soon far beyond he stretches o'er the plain.
O, may he safe elude the savage rout,
And may the woods be left to peace again!

Hushed are the faded woods; no bird is heard,
Save where the redbreast mourns the falling leaf.

At close of shortened day, the reaper, tired,
With sickle on his shoulder, homeward hies:
Night comes with threatening storm, first whispering low,
Sighing amid the boughs; then, by degrees,
With violence redoubled at each pause,
Furious it rages, scaring startled sleep.
The river roars. Long-wished, at last, the dawn,
Doubtful, peeps forth; the winds are hushed, and sleep
Lights on the eyes unsullied with a tear;
Nor flies, but at the ploughboy's whistle blythe,
Or hunter's horn, or sound of hedger's bill.
Placid the sun shoots through the half-stript grove;
The grove's sere leaves float down the dusky flood.

The happy schoolboy, whom the swollen streams,
Perilous to wight so small, give holiday,
Forth roaming, now wild berries pulls, now paints,
Artless, his rosy cheek with purple hue;
Now wonders that the nest, hung in the leafless thorn,
So full in view, escaped erewhile his search;
On tiptoe raised,—ah, disappointment dire!
His eager hand finds nought but withered leaves.

Night comes again; the cloudless canopy
Is one bright arch,—myriads, myriads of stars.
To him who wanders 'mong the silent woods,
The twinkling orbs beam through the leafless boughs,
Which erst excluded the meridian ray.

NOVEMBER.

LANGUID the morning beam slants o'er the lea;
The hoary grass, crisp, crackles 'neath the tread.

On the haw-clustered thorns, a motley flock
Of birds, of various plume, and various note,
Discordant chirp; the linnet, and the thrush,
With speckled breast, the blackbird yellow-beaked,
The goldfinch, fieldfare, with the sparrow, pert
And clamorous above his shivering mates,
While, on the house-top, faint the redbreast plains.

Where do ye lurk, ye houseless commoners,
When bleak November's sun is overcast;
When sweeps the blast fierce through the deepest groves,
Driving the fallen leaves in whirling wreaths;
When scarce the raven keeps her bending perch,
When dashing cataracts are backward blown?

A deluge pours; loud comes the river down:
The margin trees now insulated seem,
As if they in the midway current grew.
Oft let me stand upon the giddy brink,
And chace, with following gaze, the whirling foam,
Or woodland wreck: Ah me, that broken branch,
Sweeping along, may tempt some heedless boy,
Sent by his needy parents to the woods,
For brushwood gleanings for their evening fire,
To stretch too far his little arm; he falls,
He sinks. Long is he looked for, oft he's called:
His homeward whistle oft is fancied near:
His playmates find him on the oozy bank,
And, in his stiffened grasp, the fatal branch.

Short is the day; dreary the boisterous night:
At intervals the moon gleams through the clouds,
And, now and then, a star is dimly seen.

When daylight breaks, the woodman leaves his hut,
And oft the axe's echoing stroke is heard;
At last the yielding oak's loud crash resounds,
Crushing the humble hawthorn in its fall.
The husbandman slow plods from ridge to ridge,
Disheartened, and rebuilds his prostrate sheaves.

DECEMBER.

WHERE late the wild flower bloomed, the brown leaf lies;
Not even the snow-drop cheers the dreary plain:
The famished birds forsake each leafless spray,
And flock around the barn-yard's winnowing store.

Season of social mirth! of fireside joys!
I love thy shortened day, when, at its close,
The blazing tapers, on the jovial board,
Dispense o'er every care-forgetting face
Their cheering light, and round the bottle glides.

Now far be banished, from our social ring,
The party wrangle fierce, the argument
Deep, learned, metaphysical, and dull,
Oft dropt, as oft again renewed, endless:
Rather I'd hear stories twice ten times told,
Or vapid joke, filched from Joe Miller's page,
Or tale of ghost, hobgoblin dire, or witch;
Nor would I, with a proud fastidious frown,
Proscribe the laugh-provoking pun: absurd
Though't be, far-fetched, and hard to be discerned,
It serves the purpose, if it shake our sides.
Now let the circling wine inspire the song,
The catch, the glee; or list the melting lays
Of Scotia's pastoral vales,—they ever please.

Loud blows the blast; while, sheltered from its rage,
The social circle feel their joys enhanced.
Ah, little think they of the storm-tossed ship,
Amid the uproar of the winds and waves,
The waves unseen, save by the lightnings glare,
Or cannon's flash, sad signal of distress.
The trembling crew each moment think they feel
The shock of sunken rock;—at last they strike:

Borne on the blast their dying voices reach,
Faintly, the sea-girt hamlet; help is vain:
The morning light discloses to the view
The mast alternate seen and hid, as sinks
Or heaves the surge. The early village maid
Turns pale, like clouds when o'er the moon they glide;
She thinks of her true love, far, far at sea;
Mournful, the live long day she turns her wheel,
And ever and anon her head she bends,
While with the flax she dries the trickling tear.

TO

A REDBREAST,

THAT FLEW IN AT MY WINDOW.

From snowy plains, and icy sprays,
From moonless nights, and sunless days,
Welcome, poor bird! I'll cherish thee;
I love thee, for thou trustest me.
Thrice welcome, helpless, panting guest!
Fondly I'll warm thee in my breast:—
How quick thy little heart is beating!
As if its brother flutterer greeting.
Thou need'st not dread a captive's doom;
No! freely flutter round my room;

Perch on my lute's remaining string,
And sweetly of sweet summer sing.
That note, that summer note, I know;
It wakes, at once, and soothes my woe,—
I see those woods, I see that stream,
I see,—ah, still prolong the dream!
Still, with thy song, those scenes renew,
Though through my tears they reach my view.

No more now, at my lonely meal,
While thou art by, alone I'll feel;
For soon, devoid of all distrust,
Thou'lt, nibbling, share my humble crust;
Or on my finger, pert and spruce,
Thou'lt learn to sip the sparkling juice;
And when (our short collation o'er)
Some favourite volume I explore,
Be't work of poet or of sage,
Safe thou shalt hop across the page,
Unchecked, shalt flit o'er VIRGIL's groves,
Or flutter 'mid TIBULLUS' loves.
Thus, heedless of the raving blast,
Thou'lt dwell with me till winter's past;

And when the primrose tells, 'tis spring,
And when the thrush begins to sing,
Soon as I hear the woodland song,
I'll set thee free to join the throng.

EPITAPH

ON A BLACKBIRD, KILLED BY A HAWK.

WINTER was o'er, and spring-flowers decked the glade,
The Blackbird's note among the wild woods rung:
Ah, short-lived note! the songster now is laid
Beneath the bush, on which so sweet he sung.

Thy jetty plumes, by ruthless falcon rent,
Are now all soiled among the mouldering clay;
A primrosed turf is all thy monument,
And, for thy dirge, the Redbreast lends his lay.

TO ENGLAND,

ON THE SLAVE-TRADE.

Of all thy foreign crimes, from pole to pole,
None moves such indignation in my soul,
Such hate, such deep abhorrence, as thy *trade*
In human beings!
Thy ignorance thou dar'st to plead no more;
The proofs have thundered from the Afric shore.
Behold, behold, yon rows ranged over rows,
Of dead with dying linked in death's last throes.
Behold a single victim of despair,
Dragged upon deck to gasp the ocean air;
Devoid of fear, he hears the tempest rise,—
The ship descending 'tween the waves, he eyes

With eager hope; he thinks his woes shall end:
Sunk in despair he sees her still ascend.

What barbarous race are authors of his woes?
With freights of fetters, who the vessel stows?
Who manufactures thumb-screws? who the scourge?
Whose navies shield the pirates o'er the surge?
Who, from the mother's arms, the clinging child
Tears? It is England,—merciful and mild!
Most impious race, who brave the watery realm
In blood-fraught barks, with Murder at the helm!
Who trade in tortures, profit draw from pain,
And even whose mercy is but love of gain!
Whose human cargoes carefully are packt
By rule and square, *according to the Act!*—
And is that gore-drenched flag by you unfurled,
Champions of right, knights-errant of the world?
"Yes, yes," your Commons said, *Let such things be,*
"*If* OTHERS *rob and murder, why not* WE?
In the smoothed speech, and in the upraised hand,
I hear the lash, I hear the fierce command;
Each guilty *nay* ten thousand crimes decreed,
And English *mercy* said, Let millions bleed!

THE

THANKSGIVING

OFF CAPE TRAFALGAR.

Upon the high, yet gently rolling wave,
The floating tomb that heaves above the brave,
Soft sighs the gale, that late tremendous roared,
Whelming the wretched remnants of the sword.
And now the cannon's peaceful summons calls
The victor bands, to mount their wooden walls,
And from the ramparts, where their comrades fell,
The mingled strain of joy and grief to swell:
Fast they ascend, from stem to stern they spread,
And crowd the engines whence the lightnings sped:

The white-robed Priest his upraised hands extends,
Hushed is each voice, attention leaning bends;
Then from each prow the grand hosannas rise,
Float o'er the deep, and hover to the skies.
Heaven fills each heart; yet Home will oft intrude,
And tears of love, celestial joys exclude.
The wounded man, who hears the soaring strain,
Lifts his pale visage, and forgets his pain;
While parting spirits, mingling with the lay,
On halleluiahs wing their heavenward way.

NOTES.

NOTES

ON

THE BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

Sweet emblem of his song,
Who sung the wakening by the daisy's side.
P. 2. l. 9. 10.

"And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe, waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts, and sings, on fluttering wings,
A waeworn ghaist I hameward glide."—BURNS.

With earliest spring, &c.—P. 2. l. 11.

WHITE, in his Natural History of Selborne, though almost invariably correct, has fallen into a mistake as to the period of the skylark's song. He makes it commence in February, and so far he is right; but when he adds, *and on to October*, he

is, at least, not sufficiently explicit; for though larks do sing in October, their song ceases in the month of July, and only *recommences*, and that too but feebly and seldom, in October.

O'er which he saw ten thousand pinions wheel
Confused, dimming the sky.—P. 6. l. 21. 22.

Dr. HARVEY's description of the Bass is equally applicable, in the circumstance here noticed, to St. Kilda. He says, "The flocks of birds, in flight, are so prodigious as to darken the air like clouds."

Iona's isle,
Where Scotland's kings are laid.—P. 7. l. 4. 5.

"Ioana, or Icolmkill, one of the Hebrides; a small but celebrated island, "once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans, and roving barbarians, derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion*." There is in the island only one town, or rather village, consisting of about sixty houses. Beyond the town are the ruins of the nunnery of Austin canonesses, dedicated to St. Oran, and said to be founded by Columba. . . . . A Broad paved way leads hence to the cathedral; and on this way is a large handsome cross called *Macleane's*, the only one that remains of 360, which were demolished here at the Reformation. Reilig Ouran, or the burying-place of Oran, is the large inclosure where the kings of Scotland, Ireland, and of the isles, and their descendants, were buried in three sev-

* Johnson.

eral chapels. The Dean of the isles, who travelled over them 1549, and whose account has been copied by Buchanan, and published at Edinburgh 1784, says, that in his time, on one of these chapels (or "tombes of stain formit like little chapels, with ane braid gray marble, or quhin stain, on the gavil of ilk ane of the tombes," containing, as the chronicle says, the remains of forty eight Scotch monarches, from Fergus II. to Macbeth, sixteen of whom were pretended to be of the race of Alpin,) was inscribed, *Tumulus regum Scotiæ.* The next was inscribed, *Tumulus regum Hiberniæ*, and contained four Irish monarches: and the third inscribed, *Tumulus regum Norwegiæ*, contained eight Norwegian princes, or viceroys, of the Hebrides, while they were subject to the crown of Norway. Boetius says, that Fergus founded this abbey for the burial-place of his successors, and caused an office to be composed for the funeral ceremony. All that Mr. Pennant could discover here, were only slight remains, built in a ridged form, and arched within, but the inscriptions lost . . . . This once illustrious seat of learning and piety, has now no school for education, no temple for worship." *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

Featly athwart the ridge she *runs.*—P. 8. l. 9.

In referring the different birds to the one or the other sex, custom has been nearly arbitrary. Thus, the *partridge* is always spoken of in the feminine gender: The *lark*, on the other hand, is, generally, a male. The *wren* is always feminine, the *redbreast* masculine. The birds of prey are almost

always described as females. For this pre-eminence, indeed, there seems to be a good reason, namely, that the *females* of birds of prey are, in general, superior in size and strength to the *males*. Perhaps the appropriation of the one or the other gender to this or that species of birds, depends upon two points,—What is the most conspicuous characteristic quality of the species; and, In which of the sexes is that characteristic quality most strongly marked. The most striking and conspicuous characteristic of some species of birds is their power of *song*: This power exists almost exclusively in the male; and, accordingly, we find that most singing birds are spoken of in the masculine gender.

The GORCOCK's *call.*—P. 11. l. 16.

Red game, gorcock, moorcock.—PENNANT, BERWICK, &c.

Eight spotted spheroids sees.—P. 12. l. 5.

"These birds pair in the spring, and lay from six to ten eggs."—PENNANT.

She, if or dog,
Or man, intrude upon her bleak domain,
Skims clamouring.—P. 14. l. 17. 18. 19.

"Hence, around the head
Of wandering swain, the white winged plover wheels
Her sounding flight, and then directly on,
In long excursion, skims the level lawn,
To tempt him from her nest." THOMSON

When monarchs owned no sceptre but the sword.
P. 15. l. 1.

During the reigns of Charles II. and James VII., the cause of religion and liberty suffered a most hideous persecution in Scotland. Such of the people as did not comply with the tyranny of the times, were hunted down like wild beasts.

Whose lips hymned praise, their right hands at their lilts.
P. 15. l. 8.

The following passage, from Wodrow's History, will give the reader a pretty lively idea of a *conventicle*, as well as of the general state of the country.

"Claverhouse seized Mr. John King, preacher, in Hamiltoun, or, as some papers say, in a house, a little south-east from the town; and about fourteen more country men, either come with Mr. King, or going to the meeting to-morrow. There was some pretence to seize Mr King, being a vagrant preacher, and I think intercommuned; but their was no law for seizing the rest, they not being in arms, or any thing to be laid to their charge.

"When this was known, some who escaped, and the people near by, began to entertain thoughts of rescuing Mr. King; and some of them went toward Glasgow, acquainting their friends by the way; and hearing of the meeting towards Lowdonhill, went thither, expecting assistance from thence.

"Meanwhile Claverhouse was likewise advertised of that conventicle designed next day, and resolved to go and disperse them, and come from thence to Glasgow with his prisoners. I am told he was dissuaded, by some of his friends, from going thither, and assured there would be a good many resolute men in arms there; yet, trusting to his own troop, and some others of horse and dragoons he had with him, he would go.

"Accordingly, upon the Sabbath morning, June 1 (1679) he marched very early from Hamiltoun to Stratheven town, about five miles south, and carried his prisoners with him, which was happy for them. They were bound two and two of them together, and his men drove them before them like so many sheep. When they came to Stratheven, they had distinct accounts that Mr. Thomas Douglas was to preach that day near Lowdonhill, three or four miles westward from Stratheven: and thither Claverhouse resolves to march straight with his party and prisoners.

"Public worship was begun by Mr. Douglas, when the accounts came to them that Claverhouse and his men were coming upon them, and had Mr. King and others, their friends, prisoners. Upon this, finding evil was determined against them, all who had arms drew out from the rest of the meeting, and resolved to go and meet the soldiers, and prevent their dismissing the meeting; and, if possible, relieve Mr. King and the other prisoners.

"They got together about forty horse, and one hundred and fifty or two hundred foot, very ill provided with ammunition and untrained, but hearty and abundantly brisk for

action, and came up with Claverhouse and his party in a muir, near a place called Drumclog, from whence this rencounter hath its name.

"This little army of raw undisciplined country men, who had no experience in the business of fighting, neither had they officers of skill to lead them, very bravely stood Claverhouse's first fire, and returned it with much gallantry; and after a short, but very close and warm engagement, the soldiers gave way, were entirely defeat, and the prisoners rescued. Claverhouse and his men fled, and were pursued a mile or two.

"In the engagement and pursuit there were about twenty, some say forty, of the soldiers killed, and Claverhouse himself was in great hazard, had his horse shot under him, and very narrowly escaped. Several of the other officers were wounded, and some of the soldiers taken prisoners; whom, having disarmed, they dismissed without any farther injury, having no prison-house to put them in."—Vol. ii. p. 46.

With, here and there, a flower
Of deep-tinged purple, &c.—P. 16. l. 6. 7.

Pyrimidal Orchis.

Down the double row
Of venerable elms is hewn.—P. 17. l. 17. 18.

"The avenue has a most striking effect, from the very circumstance of its being strait; no other figure can give that image of a grand Gothic aisle with its natural columns

and vaulted roof, whose general mass fills the eye, while the particular parts insensibly steal from it in a long gradation of perspective*. The broad solemn shade adds a twilight calm to the whole, and makes it, above all other places, most suited to meditation. To that also its straitness contributes; for when the mind is disposed to turn inwardly on itself, any serpentine line would distract the attention.

"The destruction of so many of these venerable approaches, is a fatal consequence of the present excessive horror of strait lines. Sometimes, indeed, avenues do cut through the middle of very beautiful and varied ground, with which the stiffness of their form but ill accords, and where it were greatly to be wished they had never been planted, as other trees, in various positions and groups, would probably have sprung up, in and near the place they occupy: But, being there, it may often be doubtful whether they ought to be destroyed; for, whenever such a line of trees is taken away, there must be a long vacant space that will separate the grounds, with their old original trees, on each side of it; and young trees planted in the vacancy, will not, in half a century, connect the whole together. As to saving a few trees of the line itself for that purpose, I own I never saw it done, that it did not produce a contrary effect, and that the spot was not haunted by the ghost of the departed avenue." PRICE'S *Essay on the Picturesque*, Vol. i. 270.—274.

* "By *long* gradation I do not mean a great *length* of avenue; I perfectly agree with Mr. Burke, 'that colonades and avenues of trees, of a moderate length, are, without comparison, far grander, than when they are suffered to run to immense distances.'"

Down crash,
Upon the grass, the orchard trees, &c.—P. 17. l. 18. 19.

Price, after condemning the destruction of old gardens, adds, "I may perhaps have spoken more feelingly on this subject, from having done myself what I so condemn in others,—destroyed an old fashioned garden. It was not indeed in the high style of those I have described, but it had many of the same circumstances, and which had their effect. As I have long since perceived the advantage which I could have made of them, and how much I could have added to that effect; how well I could, in parts, have mixed the modern style, and have altered and concealed many of the stiff and glaring formalities, I have long regretted its destruction. I destroyed it, not from disliking it; on the contrary, it was a sacrifice I made, against my own sensations, to the prevailing opinion." Vol. ii. 142. 143.

Around the whole a line vermicular.—P. 18. l. 15.

"The next leading feature to the clump*, in this circular system, (and one which, in romantic situations, rivals it in the power of creating deformity), is the *belt*. Its sphere,

* "I remember hearing, that when Mr. Brown was High-sheriff, some facetious person observing his attendants straggling, called out to him, "*Clump your javlin men.*" What was intended merely as a piece of ridicule, might have served as a very instructive lesson to the object of it, and have taught Mr. Brown, that such figures should be confined to bodies of men drilled for the purposes of formal parade, and not extended to the loose and airy shapes of vegetation."

however, is more contracted: Clumps, placed like beacons on the summits of hills, alarm the picturesque traveller many miles off, and warn him of his approach to the enemy; the belt lies more in ambuscade, and the wretch who falls into it, and is obliged to walk the whole round in company with the improver, will allow, that a snake with its tail in its mouth is, comparatively, but a faint emblem of eternity. It has, indeed, all the sameness and formality of the avenue, to which it has succeeded, without any of its simple grandeur: For though, in an avenue, you see the same objects from beginning to end, and in the belt a new set every twenty yards, yet each successive part of this insipid circle is so like the preceding, that, though really different, the difference is scarcely felt; and there is nothing that so dulls, and, at the same time, so irritates the mind, as perpetual change without variety." *Ibid.* Vol. i. 269. 270.

Of melancholy fir, and leaning larch.—P. 18. l. 16.

The fashionable predilection of improvers for the *pinus* tribes, and, particularly, for the larch and fir, induces me to quote the following passages from the author already mentioned.

"The trees which principally shewed themselves were larches; and, from the multitude of their sharp points, the whole country appeared *en herisson*, and had much the same degree of resemblance to natural scenery, that one of the old military plans, with scattered platoons of spearmen, has to a print after Claude or Poussin.

"A planter very naturally wishes to produce some appearance of wood as soon as possible: He therefore sets his trees very close together; and so they generally remain, for his paternal fondness will seldom allow him to thin them sufficiently. They are consequently all drawn up together, nearly to the same height; and, as their heads touch each other, no variety, no distinction of form can exist, but the whole is one enormous, unbroken, unvaried mass of black. Its appearance is so uniformly dead and heavy, that instead of those cheering ideas which arise from the fresh and luxuriant foliage*, and the lighter tints of deciduous trees, it has something of that dreary image, that extinction of form and colour, which Milton felt from blindness; when he, who had viewed objects with a painter's eye, as he described them with a poet's fire, was

'Presented with an universal blank
Of nature's works.'

"It must be considered also, that the eye feels an impression from objects analagous to that of weight, as appears from the expression, a *heavy* colour, a *heavy* form; hence arises the necessity, in all landscapes, of preserving a prop-

* "Perhaps, in strict propriety, the term of *foliage* should never be applied to firs, as they have no leaves; and, I believe, it is partly to that circumstance, that they owe their want of cheerfulness. Those among the lower evergreens that have leaves, such as holly, laurel, arbutus, are much more cheerful than the juniper, cypress, arbor vite, &c. The leaves (if one may so call them) of the yew, have much the same character as some of the firs."

or balance of both; and this is a very principal part of the art of painting. If, in a picture, the one half were to be light and airy, both in the forms and in the tints, and the other half one black heavy lump, the most ignorant person would probably be displeased (though he might not know upon what principle) with the want of *balance*, and of harmony; for those harsh discordant effects not only act more forcibly from being brought together within a small compass, but also, because, in painting, they are not authorised by fashion, or rendered familiar by custom.

"The inside of these plantations fully answers to the dreary appearance of the outside. Of all dismal scenes it seems to me the most likely for a man to hang himself in: He would, however, find some difficulty in the execution; for, amidst the endless multitude of stems, there is rarely a single side-branch to which a rope could be fastened. The whole wood is a collection of tall naked poles, with a few ragged boughs near the top:—Above, one uniform rusty cope, seen through decayed and decaying sprays and branches; below, the soil parched and blasted with the baleful droppings; hardly a plant or a blade of grass; nothing that can give an idea of life or vegetation. Even its gloom is without solemnity; it is only dull and dismal; and what light there is, like that of hell,

> 'Serves only to discover scenes of woe,
> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades."

Get in his thrall some hapless stream that lurks, &c.
P. 18. l. 21.

"It is equally probable, that many an English gentleman may have felt deep regret when Mr. Brown had improved some charming trout stream into a piece of water; and that many a time afterwards, when disgusted with its glare and formality, he has been heavily plodding along its naked banks, he may have thought how beautifully fringed those of his little brook once had been; how it sometimes ran rapidly over the stones and shallows, and sometimes, in a narrower channel, stole silently beneath the overhanging boughs. Many rich natural groups of trees he might remember, now thinned and rounded into clumps; many sequestered and shady spots, which he loved when a boy, now all open and exposed, without shade or variety; and all these sacrifices made, not to his own taste, but to the fashion of the day, and against his natural feelings.

"A gentleman, whose taste and feeling, both for art and nature, rank as high as any man's, was lamenting to me the *extent* of Mr. Brown's operations: 'Former improvers,' said he, 'at least kept near the house; but this fellow crawls like a snail all over the grounds, and leaves his cursed slime behind him wherever he goes." *Ibid.* Vol. i. 373. 374.

MACKENZIE'S *purpled hands.*—P. 21. l. 5.

Sir George Mackenzie was king's advocate from the year 1674 to the year 1686; and was, of course, the prime mover in the inquisitorial, tyrannical, and sanguinary procedure

of the Supreme Criminal Courts, during the worst period of the persecution, which Charles II. and James VII. carried on against religion and liberty in Scotland.

Whose hollow promise helped the princely hand,
To screw confessions from expiring lips.
P. 21. l. 11. 12.

When the victims of persecution were brought before the Privy Council, and put to the torture, James himself frequently attended; and promises of pardon (never intended to be performed) were sometimes given, with the view of extracting a full confession. The procedure on these occasions, and the share which Sir George Mackenzie had in it, may be learned from one instance. The infliction of the torture on the Reverend Mr. William Carstairs, is thus described in the Privy Council Record.

"In the afternoon the same day, September 5. (1684) the Council called and interrogated Mr. Carstairs, 'If he would now answer the queries upon oath ingenuously?' He still shunned so to do, albeit the advocate declared, what the said Mr. Carstairs deponed should not militate or operate against him in any manner of way; whereunto the Council assented. The Council called for one of the Bailies of Edinburgh; and the executioner with the engines of torture being present, the Lord Chancellor commanded the Bailie to cause the executioner put him in the torture, by applying the thumb-screw to him; which being done, and he having, for the space of an hour, continued in the agony of torture, the screw being, by space and space, stretched

until he appeared near to faint; and being still obstinate and refractory to depone, the Lords thought fit to ease him of the torture for that time, but certified him, that to-morrow, at nine of the clock, he would be tortured by the boots, if he remained obstinate."

Mr. Carstairs's own account of the business is as follows: "After this communing, the king's smith was called in, to bring in a new instrument, to torture by the thumbkins, that had never been used before. For whereas the former was only to screw on two pieces of iron, above and below, with finger and thumb, these were made to turn about the screw with the whole hand.

"And under this torture I continued near an hour and an half. In the mean time the torturing by the boot was tried; but the hangman being newly come on, (because the former was in prison for some crime), he had no skill, and, therefore, it was put off till the next day." WODROW, Vol. ii. 389.

To sum up the character of Sir George Mackenzie, the following extract, from the Records of the Privy Council, will suffice.

"*December* 4, 1684.

"The advocate (*i. e.* Sir George Mackenzie) representing how ready Judge JEFFRIES was to join with the Council for support of the Government, it is recommended to him, (Sir George) to signify to the Judge, the great *resentments* (the *strong sentiments*) the Council had of his *kindness* towards this kingdom, in giving *concurrence* against such pernicious *rogues and villains, who disturb the public peace*; and desiring he

may cause apprehend the persons of hiding and fugitive Scotsmen, and deliver them securely on the Scots borner, to such as shall be appointed to receive them."

By modern history's too lenient touch.—P. 21. l. 14.

The picture which Hume has drawn of the times here alluded to has a *likeness*; but it is a profile portrait of a man who squints: The principal deformity cannot be discerned. Mr. Laing, in treating of the tyranny which preceded the Revolution, has dismissed that squeamish delicacy so often at variance with the frank and unaffected dignity of historical truth, and has described the royal brothers in terms of suitable reprobation. His character of the second Charles is a spirited painting. I cannot, however, help thinking, that the principal actor in the judicial tortures and murders of that reign, deserved a full length portrait as well as his master.

The Syracusan's voice.—P. 23. l. 18.

Archimedes discovered the exact quantity of silver, which an artificer had fraudulently mixed with the gold in a crown, made for Hiero, king of Syracuse. He had the hint of this discovery, from perceiving the water rise up the sides of the bath as he went into it, and was filled with such joy, that he ran naked out of the bath crying, *I have found it, I have found it!*

The moment snatch,
That she has flitted off her charge, to cool
Her thirsty bill, dipt in the babbling brook.
P. 28. l. 20. 21. 22.

The persevering constancy of birds in their incubation is a most astonishing phenomenon. "Neither (says Dr. Paley) ought it, under this head, to be forgotten, how much the instinct *costs* the animal which feels it; how much a bird, for example, gives up, by sitting upon her nest; how repugnant to her organization, her habits, and her pleasures. An animal, formed for liberty, submits to confinement, in the very season when every thing invites her abroad: What is more; an animal delighting in motion, made for motion, all whose motions are so easy and so free, hardly a moment, at other times, at rest, is, for many hours of many days together, fixed to her nest, as close as if her limbs were tied down by pins and wires. For my part, I never see a bird in that situation, but I recognise an invisible hand, detaining the contented prisoner from her fields and groves, for a purpose, as the event proves, the most worthy of the sacrifice, the most important, the most beneficial." *Natural Theology*, 346.

They see, and know
That light for them *is but an implement*
Of toil.—P. 37. l. 5. 6. 7.

In this passage I do not allude to any particular manufactory. The practice which I condemn is a *general*, and, I may say, a national vice. In those particular works which

I have had best access to know, the evil is mitigated, as much as such an evil can be mitigated, by the superintending intelligence and humanity of the owners. The legislature lately interposed with a statute for the protection of childhood; but I am sorry to say, that in Scotland, at least, the inferior judges seem to consider this enactment as a dead letter.

Belhaven, Fletcher.—P. 42. l. 6.

Lord Belhaven's speech in the expiring Parliament of Scotland, is a most noble monument of unsuccessful eloquence. The following extracts are a fair specimen of the whole.

"But above all, I see our ancient mother Caledonia, like Cæsar, sitting in the midst of our senate, looking mournfully around, covering herself with her royal garment, and breathing out her last words, *And thou too, my son!* while she attends the fatal blow from our hands. Patricide is worse than parricide; to offer violence to our country is worse than to our parents. But shall we, whose predecessors have founded and transmitted our monarchy and its laws entire, to us a free and independent kingdom, shall we be silent when our country is in danger, or betray what our progenitors have so dearly purchased? The English are a great and glorious nation. Their armies are every where victorious; their navy is the terror of Europe; their commerce encircles the globe; and their capital has become the emporium of the whole earth: But we are obscure, poor, and despised, though once a nation of better account; situate in a remote

corner of the world, without alliances, and without a name. What then can prevent us from burying our animosities, and uniting cordially together, since our very existence as a nation is at stake? The enemy is already at our gates! Hannibal is within our gates! Hannibal is at the foot of the throne, which he will soon demolish, seize upon these regalia, and dismiss us, never to return to this house again! Where are the Douglases, the Grahams, the Campbells, our peers and chieftains, who vindicated by their swords, from the usurpation of the English Edwards, the independence of their country, which their sons are about to forfeit by a single vote? I see the English constitution remaining firm: the same houses of Parliament; the same taxes, customs, and excise; the same trading companies, laws, and judicatures: whilst ours are either subjected to new regulations, or annihilated for ever. And for what? That we may be admitted to the honour of paying their old, *and presenting a few witnesses to attest the new debts which they are pleased to contract!* Good God! is this an entire surrender? My heart bursts with indignation and grief, at the triumph which the English will obtain to-day, over a fierce and warlike nation, that has struggled to maintain its independence so long! But if England should offer us our conditions, never will I consent to the surrender of our sovereignty; without which, unless the contracting parties remain independent, there is no security different from his, who stipulates for the preservation of his property when he becomes a slave." LAING's *History of Scotland*, Vol. iv. 349—351.

The character of Fletcher is ably drawn by the same historian.

"Fletcher was apparently the early pupil of Burhet; but his virtues were confirmed by mature study, foreign travel, persecution, and exile. When he withdrew from the oppressive government of the duke of York, he engaged as a volunteer in the Hungarian wars; and, rather than desert his friend, embarked in Monmouth's unhappy expedition, of which he disapproved. At the Revolution, he returned with the prince of Orange, whose service he declined when that prince was advanced to the throne. From the study of the ancients, and the observation of modern governments, he had imbibed the principles of a genuine republican. Disgusted at William's authority as inordinate, he considered the prince as the first and most dangerous magistrate of the state, to be severely restrained, not indulged in the free exercise, or abuse, of power. His mind was firm and independent, sincere and inflexible in his friendship and resentments, impatient of contradiction, obstinate in his resolves, but unconscious of a sordid motive, or an ungenerous desire. His countenance was stern, and his disposition unaccommodating, however affable to his friends; but his word was sacred: His probity was never sullied by the breath of suspicion; and equally tenacious of his dignity, and scrupulous in the observance of every point of honour, his spirit was proverbially brave as the sword he wore*. His

* "The same expression is used, without communication, by Lockhart and Mackay; but the last is peculiarly happy in his character of Fletcher: 'He is a gentleman steady in his principles, of nice honour,—brave as the sword he wears, and bold as a lion,—would lose his life readily to serve his country, and would not do a base thing to save it.'"

schemes were often eccentric and impracticable; but his genius was actuated by a sublime enthusiasm, and enriched by an extensive converse with books and men. His eloquence is characterised by a nervous and concise simplicity, always dignified, often sublime; and his speeches in Parliament may be classed among the best and purest specimens of oratory which the age produced. His free opinions were confined to no sect in religion, nor party in the state. The love of his country was the ruling passion of his breast, and the uniform principle of his whole life. In a corrupt age, and amidst the violence of contending factions, he appeared a rare example of the most upright and steady integrity, the purest honour, the most disinterested patriotism; and, while the characters of his venal, but more successful, competitors are consigned to infamy or oblivion, his memory is revered and cherished as the last of the Scots." Vol. iv. 296—298.

The CUSHAT *plains.*—P. 42. l. 17.

Scott, in the following fine passage, uses this word in preference to the English one:

"And now, in Branksome's good green wood,
As under the aged oak he stood,
The Baron's courser pricks his ears
As if a distant noise he hears.
The Dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,
And signs to the lovers to part and fly;
No time was then to vow or sigh.

Fair Margaret, through the hazel grove;
Flew like the startled *cushat-dove:*
The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein;
Vaulted the knight on his steed amain,
And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
Rode eastward through the hawthorns green."

Lay of the Last Minstrel, canto ii. 67. 68

Is laid so thinly, that the light of day
Is through it seen.—P. 42. l. 23.

The pigeon lays only two eggs. She is, besides, a large bird, and possesses an uncommon degree of animal heat. How differently she and the wren construct their respective nests!

Four pointed leaves luxuriant, &c.—P. 43. l. 15.

The herb *Paris.*

Amid the leafless thorn the merry wren.—P. 46. l. 5.

The wren "braves our severest winters, which it contributes to enliven by its sprightly note. . . . . It continues its song till late in the evening, and not unfrequently during a fall of snow."—Beilby *and* Bewick. The prints, in the work here quoted, are the most accurate, and, at the same time, lively representations of birds that I ever saw.

And trusts her offspring to another's care—P. 48. l. 4.

"The cuckoo visits us early in the spring. Its well-known

cry is generally heard about the middle of April, and ceases the latter end of June; its stay is short, the old cuckoos being said to quit this country early in July. Cuckoos never pair; they build no nest; and, what is more extraordinary, the female deposits her solitary egg in that of another bird, by whom it is hatched. The nest she chooses for this purpose is generally selected from the following, viz. the hedge-sparrow, the water-wagtail, the titlark, the yellow-hammer, the green linnet, or the winchat. Of these it has been observed, that she shews a much greater partiality to the hedge-sparrow than to any of the rest.

"We owe the following account of the economy of this singular bird in the disposal of its egg, to the accurate observations of Mr. Edward Jenner, communicated to the Royal Society, and published in the 78th volume of their Transactions, part ii. He observes, that during the time the hedge-sparrow is laying her eggs, which generally takes up four or five days, the cuckoo contrives to deposit her egg among the rest, leaving the future care of it entirely to the hedge-sparrow. This intrusion often occasions some discomposure, for the old hedge-sparrow, at intervals, whilst she is sitting, not only throws out some of her own eggs, but sometimes injures them in such a way, that they become addle; so that it frequently happens that not more than two or three of the parent-bird's eggs are hatched with that of the cuckoo; and, what is very remarkable, it has never been observed that the hedge-sparrow has either thrown out or injured the egg of the cuckoo. When the hedge-sparrow has sat her usual time, and has disengaged the young cuckoo and some of her

own offspring from the shell, her own young ones, and any of her eggs that remain unhatched, are soon turned out; the young cuckoo then remains in full possession of the nest, and is the sole object of the future care of the foster-parent. The young birds are not previously killed, nor the eggs demolished, but all are left to perish together, either entangled in the bush which contains the nest, or lying on the ground under it. Mr. Jenner next proceeds to account for this seemingly unnatural circumstance; and as what he has advanced is the result of his own repeated observations, we shall give it nearly in his own words. On the 18th June, 1787, Mr. J. examined the nest of a hedge-sparrow, which then contained a cuckoo's and three hedge-sparrow's eggs. On inspecting it the day following, the bird had hatched, but the nest then contained only a young cuckoo and one young hedge-sparrow. The nest was placed so near the extremity of a hedge, that he could distinctly see what was going forward in it; and, to his great astonishment, he saw the young cuckoo, though so lately hatched, in the act of turning out the young hedge-sparrow. The mode of accomplishing this was curious: The little animal, with the assistance of its rump and wings, contrived to get the bird upon its back, and making a lodgment for its burden, by elevating its elbows, clambered backwards with it up the side of the nest till it reached the top, where, resting for a moment, it threw off its load with a jerk, and quite disengaged it from the nest: After remaining a short time in this situation, and feeling about with the extremities of its wings, as if to be convinced that the business was properly

executed, it dropped into the nest again. Mr J. made several experiments in different nests, by repeatedly putting in an egg to the young cuckoo, which he always found to be disposed of in the same manner."—BEILBY *and* BEWICK, Vol. i. 105—107.

No threatening board forewarns the homeward hind.

P. 50. l. 12.

For the honour of humanity, there *are* minds, which require no other motive than what passes within. And here I cannot resist paying a tribute to the memory of a beloved uncle, and recording a benevolence towards all the inhabitants around him, that struck me from my earliest remembrance; and it is an impression I wish always to cherish. It seemed as if he had made his extensive walks as much for them as for himself; they used them as freely, and their enjoyment was his. The village bore as strong marks of his and of his brother's attentions (for in that respect they appeared to have but one mind) to the comforts and pleasures of its inhabitants. Such attentive kindnesses, are amply repaid by affectionate regard and reverence; and were they general throughout the kingdom, they would do much more towards guarding us against democratical opinions,

'Than twenty thousand soldiers armed in proof.'

"The cheerfulness of the scene I have mentioned, and all the interesting circumstances attending it (so different from those of solitary grandeur), have convinced me, that he who

destroys dwellings, gardens, and inclosures, for the sake of mere extent, and parade of property, only extends the bounds of monotony, and of dreary, selfish pride; but contracts those of variety, amusement, and humanity.

"I own it does surprise me, that in an age, and in a country where the arts are so highly cultivated, one single plan (and that but moderate) should have been so adopted; and that even the love of peculiarity, should not sometimes have checked this method of levelling all distinctions, of making all places alike, all equally tame and insipid.

"Few persons have been so lucky as never to have seen or heard the true *proser*, smiling, and distinctly uttering his flowing common-place nothings, with the same placid countenance, the same even-toned voice: He is the very emblem of serpentine walks, belts, and rivers, and all Mr. Brown's works; like him, they are smooth, flowing, even, and distinct; and, like him, they wear one's soul out."—PRICE's *Essay*, Vol. i. 379—382.

Nor be the lowly dwellings of the poor
Thrust to a distance, as unseemly sights.—P. 50. l. 20. 21.

"In all that relates to cottages, hamlets, and villages, to the grouping of them, and their mixture with trees and climbing plants, the best instruction may be gained from the works of the Dutch and Flemish masters; which perhaps afford a greater variety of useful hints to the generality of improvers, and such as might more easily be carried into practice, than those grander scenes which are exhibited in the higher schools of painting. All the splendid effects of

architecture, and of assemblages of magnificent buildings, whether in cities, or amidst rural scenery, can only be displayed by princes, and men of princely revenues: But it is in the power of men of moderate fortunes, by means of slight additions and alterations, to produce a very essential change in the appearance of farm buildings, cottages, &c. and in the grouping of them in villages; and such effects, though less splendid than those of regular architecture, are not less interesting. There is, indeed, no scene where such a variety of forms and embellishments may be introduced at so small an expence, and without any thing fantastic or unnatural, as that of a village; none where the lover of painting, and the lover of humanity, may find so many sources of amusement and interest."

"I could wish to turn the minds of improvers, from too much attachment to solitary parade, towards objects more connected with general habitation and embellishment. Where a mansion-house, and a place upon a large scale, happen to be situated as close to a village, as some of the most magnificent seats in the kingdom are to small towns, both styles of embellishment might be adopted: Far from interfering, they would add to each other's effect; and it may be truly said, that there is no way in which wealth can produce such natural unaffected variety, and such interest, as by adorning a real village, and promoting the comforts and enjoyments of its inhabitants.

"Goldsmith has most feelingly described (more, I trust, from the warmth of a poetical imagination and quick sensibility, than from real fact) the ravages of wealthy pride.

My aim is to shew, that they are no less hostile to real taste, than to humanity; and should I succeed, it is possible that those, whom all the affecting images and pathetic touches of Goldsmith would not have restrained from destroying a village, may even be induced to build one, in order to shew their taste in the decoration and disposition of village houses and cottages."

"As human vanity is very fond of new creations, it may not be useless to observe, that to build an entirely new village, is not only a more expensive undertaking than to add to an old one, but that it is, likewise, a much more difficult task to execute it with the same naturalness and variety of disposition; and that it is hardly possible so imitate those circumstances of long established habitation, which, at the same time that they suggest pleasing reflections to an observing mind, are sure to afford delight to the painter's eye. *Ibid.* Vol. ii. 399—404.

"There is, indeed, something despotic in the general system of improvement; all must be laid open, all that obstructs levelled to the ground,—houses, orchards, gardens, all swept away. Painting, on the contrary, tends to humanize the mind: Where a despot thinks every person an intruder who enters his domain, and wishes to destroy cottages, and pathways, and to reign alone; the lover of painting considers the dwellings, the inhabitants, and the marks of their intercourse, as ornaments to the landscape *." *Ibid.* Vol. i. 378. 379.

* "Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that when he and Wilson, the landscape painter, were looking at the view from Richmond terrace,

Pleasant the path
By sunny garden wall.—P. 52. l. 8. 9.

"It has been justly observed, that the love of seclusion and safety is not less natural to man, than that of liberty; and our ancestors have left strong proofs of the truth of that observation. In many old places, there are almost as many walled compartments without, as apartments within doors; and though there is no defending the beauty of brick-walls, yet still that appearance of seclusion and safety, when it can be so contrived as not to interfere with general beauty, is a point well worth obtaining; and no man is more ready than myself to allow, that *the comfortable* is a principle which should never be neglected. On that account, all walled gardens and compartments near a house; all warm, sheltered, sunny walks, under walls planted with fruit-trees, are greatly to be wished for; and should be preserved, if possible, when once established." *Ibid.* Vol. ii. 145. 446.

There are who doubt this migratory voyage.—P. 56. l. 6.

"The migration of the swallow tribe has been noticed by almost every writer on the natural history of birds, and various opinions have been formed respecting their disappear-

Wilson was pointing out some particular part; and in order to direct his eye to it, 'There,' said he, 'near those houses: there, where the *figures* are.' 'Though a painter,' said Sir Joshua, 'I was puzzled. I thought he meant statues, and was looking upon the *tops* of the houses; for I did not at first conceive, that the men and women we plainly saw walking about, were, by him, only thought of as figures in the landscape."

ance, and the state in which they subsist during that interval. Some naturalists suppose, that they do not leave this island at the end of autumn, but that they lie in a torpid state, till the beginning of summer, in the banks of rivers, in the hollows of decayed trees, in holes and crevices of old buildings, in sand banks, and the like: Some have even asserted, that swallows pass the winter immersed in the waters of lakes and rivers, where they have been found in clusters, mouth to mouth, wing to wing, foot to foot, and that they retire to these places in autumn, and creep down the reeds to their subaqueous retreats. In support of this opinion, Mr. Klein very gravely asserts, on the credit of some countrymen, that swallows sometimes assemble in numbers, clinging to a reed till it breaks, and sinks with them to the bottom; that their immersion is preceded by a song or dirge, which lasts more than a quarter of an hour; that sometimes they lay hold on a straw with their bills, and plunge down in society; and that others form a large mass, by clinging together by the feet, and in this manner commit themselves to the deep. It requires no great depth of reasoning to refute such palpable absurdities, or to shew the physical impossibility of a body, specifically lighter than water, employing another body lighter than itself for the purpose of immersion: But, admitting the possibility of this curious mode of immersion, it is by no means probable that swallows, or any other animal in a torpid state, can exist for any length of time in an element to which they have never been accustomed, and are besides totally unprovided by nature with organs suited to such a mode of subsistence.

"The celebrated Mr. John Hunter informs us, 'That he had dissected many swallows, but found nothing in them different from other birds as to the organs of respiration;' and, therefore, concludes, that it is highly absurd to suppose, that terrestrial animals can remain any long time under water without being drowned. It must not, however, be denied, that swallows have been sometimes found in a torpid state during the winter months; but such instances are by no means common, and will not support the inference, that if any of them can survive the winter in that state, the whole species is preserved in the same manner*. That

* "There are various instances on record, which bear the strongest marks of veracity, of swallows having been taken out of water, and of their having been so far recovered by warmth as to exhibit evident signs of life, so as even to fly about for a short space of time. But whilst we admit the fact, we are not inclined to allow the conclusion generally drawn from it, viz. that swallows, at the time of their disappearance, frequently immerse themselves in seas, lakes, and rivers, and, at the proper season, emerge and reassume the ordinary functions of life and animation; for, it should be observed, that in those instances which have been the best authenticated, [See Forster's Translation of Kalm's *Travels into North America*, 140. note.] it appears, that the swallows so taken up were generally found entangled amongst reeds and rushes, by the sides, or in the shallowest parts, of the lakes or rivers where they happened to be discovered, and that, having been brought to life so far as to fly about, they all of them died in a few hours after. From the facts thus stated, we would infer, that at the time of the disappearance of swallows, the reedy grounds by the sides of rivers and standing waters are generally dry, and that these birds, especially the latter hatchings, which frequent such places for the sake of food, retire to them at the proper season, and lodge themselves among the roots, or

other birds have been found in a torpid state, may be inferred from the following curious fact, which was communicated to us by a gentleman who saw the bird, and had the account from the person who found it. A few years ago, a young cuckoo was found in the thickest part of a close furze bush; when taken up it presently discovered signs of life, but was quite destitute of feathers; being kept warm, and carefully fed, it grew and recovered its coat of feathers: In the spring following it made its escape, and in flying across the river Tyne it gave its usual call. We have observed a single swallow, so late as the latter end of October. Mr. White, in his Natural History of Selborne, mentions having seen a house martin flying about in November, long after the general migration had taken place. Many more instances might be given of such late appearances, which, added to the well authenticated accounts of swallows having been actually found in a torpid state, leave us no room to doubt, that such young birds as have been late hatched, and consequently not strong enough to undertake a long voyage to the coast of Africa, are left behind, and remain concealed in hiding places till the return of spring. On the other hand, that actual migrations of the swallow tribe do take

in the thickest parts of the rank grass which grows there; that, during their state of torpidity, they are liable to be covered with water, from the rains which follow, and are sometimes washed into the deeper parts of the lake or river, where they have been accidentally taken up; and that, probably, the transient signs of life, which they have discovered on such occasions, have given rise to a variety of vague and improbable accounts of their immersion, &c."

place, has been fully proved from a variety of well attested facts, most of which have been taken from the observations of navigators, who were eye-witnesses of their flights, and whose ships have sometimes afforded a resting place to the weary travellers."—BEILBY *and* BEWICK. Introduction, xv.—xvii.

Behold the CORN-CRAIK *; she, too, wings her way*
To other lands, &c.—P. 56. l. 10. 11.

"It makes its appearance about the same time as the quail, and frequents the same places, whence it is called, in some countries, 'the king of the quails.' Its well known cry is first heard as soon as the grass becomes long enough to shelter it, and continues till the grass is cut; but the bird is seldom seen, for it constantly skulks among the thickest part of the herbage, and runs so nimbly through it, winding and doubling in every direction, that it is difficult to come near it; when hard pushed by the dog, it sometimes stops short, and squats down, by which means its too eager pursuer overshoots the spot, and loses the trace. It seldom springs but when driven to extremity, and generally flies with its legs hanging down, but never to a great distance: As soon as it alights, it runs off, and before the fowler has reached the spot, the bird is at a considerable distance. The corn-craik leaves this island in winter, and repairs to other countries in search of food, which consists of worms, slugs, and insects; it likewise feeds on seeds of various kinds: It is very common in Ireland, and is seen in great numbers in the island of Anglesea, in its passage to that

country. On its first arrival in England it is so lean as to weigh less than six ounces, from whence one would conclude, that it must have come from distant parts; before its departure, however, it has been known to exceed eight ounces, and is then very delicious eating. The female lays ten or twelve eggs, on a nest made of a little moss or dry grass carelessly put together; they are of a pale ash colour, marked with rust-coloured spots. The young craiks run as soon as they have burst the shell, following the mother; they are covered with a black down, and soon find the use of their legs." *Ibid.* 312. 313.

Struggling she strives,
Entangled in the thorny labyrinth,
While easily its way the small bird winds.

P. 60. l. 13. 14. 15.

The uses of prickles on shrubs are thus enumerated by Ray,—"to secure them from the browsing of beasts; as also to shelter others that grow under them. Moreover, they are hereby rendered very useful to man, as if designed by nature to make both quick and dead hedges and fences." The uses which Pliny enumerates are, "Ne se depascat avida quadrupes, ne procaces manus rapiant, ne neglecta vestigia obterant, ne insidens ales infringat:" lest the greedy quadruped should browse upon them, the hand wantonly seize them, the careless footstep tread upon them, or the perching bird* break them. I think both these great na-

* *Ales* properly signifies, a large bird.

uralists have omitted one of the uses of thorny shrubs;—the protection of the small birds against the attacks of their stronger neighbours.

What dreadful cliffs o'erhang this little stream!
P. 61. l. 7.

The *water of Mouss* runs for about half a mile between Cartlane craigs. These lofty precipices are so abrupt, and take their rise so close to the stream, that the very channel is the only place from which they can be properly seen. The caves of Cartlane craigs are famous as the lurking places of William Wallace.

"While that WALLACE into the wood was past,
Then Cartlane craig persued they full fast."
Blind Harry.

Even on that bulging verge, &c.—P. 62. l. 2.

I have here attempted a description of the *Cora Linn.* I think it the finest of the falls of Clyde; though the fall of Stonebyres is, I believe, more generally admired.

And, many a year, the self same tree
The aged solitary pair frequent.—P. 64. l. 8. 9.

"In the centre of this grove there stood an oak, which, though shapely and tall on the whole, bulged out into a large excrescence about the middle of the stem. On this a

pair of ravens had fixed their residence for such a series of years, that the oak was distinguished by the title of, *The Raven-tree.*" *Natural History of Selborne*, 6.

Amid those plains where Danube darkly rolls,—
The theatres, on which the kingly play
Of war is oftenest acted.—P. 64. l. 14. 15. 16.

"Milder yet thy snowy breezes
Pour on yonder tented shores,
Where the Rhine's broad billow freezes,
Or the dark brown Danube roars.
O, winds of winter, list ye there,
To many a deep and dying groan!
Or start, ye demons of the midnight air,
At shrieks and thunders louder than your own!—
Alas! even your unhallowed breath
May spare the victim, fallen low;
But man will ask no truce to death,
No bounds to human woe."

CAMPBELL'S *Ode to Winter.*

On distant waves, the raven of the sea,
The CORMORANT, *devours her carrion food.*
Along the blood-stained coast of Senegal, &c.
P. 68. l. 5. 6. 7.

The *Cormorant* is an inhabitant of Scotland, and is accordingly ranked by Pennant, and other ornithologists, among *British birds.* Her sphere of action I have placed at

a distance from Scotland; and this I thought a very allowable liberty. The synonymous word in some of the northern languages is, *strand raven.*

Above the stern-emblazoned words, that tell
The amount of crimes which Britain's boasted laws
Within the narrow wooden walls permit.
P. 68. l. 14. 15. 16.

By act of Parliament, there must be painted on the stern of every slave-ship, in large characters such as are to be seen on the sign-boards of persons licensed to let post-horses, a notification of the number of slaves which the ship is licensed, that is to say, *authorised*, by a *British* statute to carry.

The eagle, from her eyry on the crag
Of overjutting rock, beholds afar.—P. 69. l. 6. 7.

"Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?

"She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

"From thence she seeketh her prey, and her eyes behold afar off." *Job*, c. xxxix. 27—29.

"The golden eagle weighs about twelve pounds; its length is three feet; the extent of its wings seven feet four inches; the bill is three inches long, and of a deep blue col-

our; the cere is yellow; the irides of a hazel colour: the sight and sense of smelling are very acute; *her eyes behold afar off*: the head and neck are clothed with narrow sharp-pointed feathers, and of a deep brown colour, bordered with tawny; but those on the crown of the head, in very old birds, turn grey. The whole body, above as well as beneath, is of a dark brown; and the feathers on the back are finely clouded with a deeper shade of the same: the wings, when closed, reach to the end of the tail: the quill feathers are of a chocolate colour, the shafts white: the tail is of a deep brown, irregularly barred and blotched with an obscure ash colour, and usually white at the roots of the feathers: the legs are yellow, short, and very strong, being three inches in circumference, and are feathered to the very feet: the toes are covered with large scales, and armed with most formidable claws, the middle of which are two inches long.

"Eagles, in general, are very destructive to fawns, lambs, kids, and all kinds of game; particularly in the breeding season, when they bring a vast quantity of prey to their young. Smith, in his History of Kerry, relates, that a poor man in that county got a comfortable subsistence for his family, during a summer of famine, out of an eagle's nest, by robbing the eaglets of the food the old ones brought, whose attendance he protracted beyond the natural time, by clipping the wings and retarding the flight of the former. It is very unsafe to leave infants in places where eagles frequent; there being instances, in Scotland, of two being carried off by them; but, fortunately,

"Illæsum unguibus hæsit onus,"

the theft was discovered in time, and the children restored unhurt, out of the eagles' nests, to the affrighted parents. In order to extirpate these pernicious birds, there is a law in the Orkney isles, which entitles any person that kills an eagle to an hen out of every house in the parish in which it was killed.

"Eagles are remarkable for their longevity, and for their power of sustaining a long abstinence from food. One of this species, which has now been nine years in the possession of Owen Holland, Esq. of Conway, lived thirty-two years with the gentleman who made him a present of it; but what its age was when the latter received it from Ireland is unknown. The same bird also furnishes a proof of the truth of the other remark; having once, through the neglect of servants, endured hunger for twenty-one days, without any sustenance whatsoever." PENNANT, Vol. ii. 122—124.

Along the mountain cliffs, that ne'er were clomb
By other footstep than his own, &c.—P. 70. l. 9. 10.

"Is enim, cum magna vi corporis, atque animi esset, adhuc adolescens, nobilem juvenem Anglum superbe sibi insultantem occidit. Ob id facinus, profugus domo, et latitans, fugæ locum subinde mutando, annos aliquot transegit. Hac vitæ consuetudine, corpus adversus omnes fortunæ injurias duravit, et animum sæpe subeundis periculis ad majora audenda confirmavit." BUCHANAN. *Hist. rer. Scot. lib. octav.*

Such was the commencement of Wallace's career. Buchanan narrates the manner of his death, and sums up his character as follows :

" Vallas a Ioanne Mentetho familiari suo, per Anglos pecunia corrupto, in agro Glascuensi, ubi tum latebat, captus, et Lundinum missus, Eduardi jussu fœde laniatus interiit : membra ad aliorum terrorem, in locis celebrioribus Angliæ et Scotiæ suspensa. Hunc finem vitæ habuit vir sui temporis longe præstantissimus ; in suscipiendis perculis animi magnitudine, in rebus gerendis fortitudine et consilio, clarissimis veterum ducibus facile comparandus ; caritate in patriam nemini secundus ; qui servientibus cæteris solus liber, neque præmiis adduci, neque metu cogi potuit, ut causam publicam semel susceptam desereret : Cujus mors eo miserabilior est visa, quod ab hoste invictus, a quibus minime debuit, fuit proditus." *Ibid.*

The EAGLE OF THE SEA *from Atlas soars,*
Or Teneriffe's hoar peak.—P. 73. l. 2. 3.

This bird, though I have placed her at a distance, is an inhabitant of Scotland.

" This species is found in Ireland, and several parts of Great Britain ; the specimen we took our description from, was shot in the county of Galway. Mr. Willoughby tells us, there was an eyry of them in Whinfield-park, Westmoreland ; and the eagle soaring in the air with a cat in its talons, which Barlow drew from the very fact which he saw in Scotland, is of this kind. The cat's resistance, brought both animals to the ground ; when Barlow took them up,

and afterwards caused the event to be engraved in the thirty-sixth plate of his collection of prints. Turner says, that, in his days, it was too well known in England, for it made horrible destruction among the fish; he adds, that fishermen were fond of anointing their baits with the fat of this bird, imagining that it had a peculiar alluring quality: they were superstitious enough to believe, that whenever the sea eagle hovered over a piece of water, the fish (as if charmed) would rise to the surface with their bellies upwards; and in that manner present themselves to him. No writer since Clusius has described the sea eagle: Though no uncommon species, it seems at present to be but little known; being generally confounded with the golden eagle, to which it bears some resemblance. The colours of the head, neck, and body, are the same with the latter, but much lighter, the tawny part in this predominating: In size it is far superior; the bill is larger, more hooked, and more arched; underneath grow several short, but strong hairs or bristles, forming a sort of beard. This gave occasion to some writers to suppose it to be the *aquila barbata*, or bearded eagle of Pliny. The interior sides, and the tips of the feathers of the tail, are of a deep brown; the exterior sides of some are ferruginous, in others blotched with white. The legs are yellow, strong, and thick, and feathered but little below the knees; which is an invariable specific difference between this and our first species. This nakedness of the legs is, besides, no small convenience to a bird who preys among the waters. The claws are of a deep and shining black, exceeding large and strong, and hooked into a perfect semicircle.

"All writers agree, that this eagle feeds principally on fish; which it takes as they are swimming near the surface, by darting itself down on them; not by diving or swimming, as several authors have invented, who furnish it, for that purpose, with one webbed foot to swim with, and another divided foot to take its prey with. Pliny, with his usual elegance, describes the manner of its fishing: 'Superest haliæetos, clarissima oculorum acie, librans ex alto sese, visoque in mari pisce, præceps in eo ruens, et discussis pectore aquis rapiens." PENNANT, Vol. ii. 126—128.

NOTES

ON

BIBLICAL PICTURES.

Like that untouching *cincture, which enzones*
The globe of Saturn.—P. 77. l. 2. 3.

"It is difficult (says Dr Paley) to bring the imagination to conceive, (what yet, to judge tolerably of the matter, it is necessary to conceive), how *loose*, if we may so express it, the heavenly bodies are. Enormous globes, held by nothing, confined by nothing, are turned into free and boundless space, each to seek its course by the virtue of an invisible principle; but a principle, one, common, and the same in all, and ascertainable. To preserve such bodies from being lost, from running together in heaps, from hindering and distracting one another's motions, in a degree inconsistent with any continuing order: *i. e.* to cause them to

form planetary systems, systems that, when formed, can be upheld, and, most especially, systems accommodated to the organized and sensitive natures, which the planets sustain, as we know to be the case, where alone we can know what the case is, upon our earth : All this requires an intelligent interposition, because it can be demonstrated concerning it, that it requires an adjustment of force, distance, direction, and velocity, out of the reach of chance to have produced; an adjustment, in its view to utility, similar to that which we see in ten thousand subjects of nature which are nearer to us; but in power, and in the extent of space through which that power is exerted, stupendous." *Natural Theology*, Chap. xxii.

" Saturn, when viewed through a good telescope, makes a more remarkable appearance than any of the other planets. Galileo first discovered his uncommon shape, which he thought to be like two small globes, one on each side of a large one : and he published his discovery in a Latin sentence ; the meaning of which was, that he had seen him appear with three bodies; though, in order to keep the discovery a secret, the letters were transposed. Having viewed him for two years, he was surprised to see him become quite round without these appendages, and then, after some time, to assume them as before. These adjoining globes were what are now called the *ansæ* of his ring, the true shape of which was first discovered by Huygens, about forty years after Galileo first with a telescope of twelve feet, and then with one of twenty-three feet, which magnified objects an hundred times. From the discoveries made by him and other astronomers, it

appears, that this planet is surrounded by a broad thin ring, the edge of which reflects little or none of the sun's light to us, but the planes of the ring reflect the light in the same manner that the planet itself does; and if we suppose the diameter of Saturn to be divided into three equal parts, the diameter of the ring is about seven of these parts. The ring is detached from the body of Saturn in such a manner, that the distance between the innermost part of the ring and the body is equal to its breadth. If we had a view of the planet and is ring, with our eyes perpendicular to one of the planes of the latter, we should see them as in fig. 80.: but our eye is never so much elevated above either plane as to have the visual ray stand at right angles to it, nor indeed is it ever elevated more than about thirty degrees above it; so that the ring, being commonly viewed at an oblique angle, appears of an oval form, and, through very good telescopes, double, as represented fig. 18. and 153. Both the outward and inward rim is projected into an ellipsis, more or less oblong according to the different degrees of obliquity with which it is viewed. Sometimes our eye is in the plane of the ring, and then it becomes invisible; either because the outward edge is not fitted to reflect the sun's light, or more probably because it is too thin to be seen at such a distance. As the plane of this ring keeps always parallel to itself, that is, its situation in one part of the orbit is always parallel to that in any other part, it disappears twice in every revolution of the planet, that is, about once in fifteen years; and he sometimes appears quite round for nine months together. At other times, the distance betwixt the body of the planet

and the ring is very perceptible; insomuch, that Mr. Whiston tells us of Dr. Clarke's father having seen a star through the opening, and supposed him to have been the only person who ever saw a sight so rare; as the opening, though certainly very large, appears very small to us. When Saturn appears round, if our eye be in the plane of the ring, it will appear as a dark line across the middle of the planet's disk; and if our eye be elevated above the plane of the ring, a shadowy belt will be visible, caused by the shadow of the ring, as well as by the interposition of part of it betwixt the eye and the planet. The shadow of the ring is broadest when the sun is most elevated, but its obscure parts appear broadest when our eye is most elevated above the plane of it. When it appears double, the ring next the body of the planet appears brightest; when the ring appears of an elliptical form, the parts about the ends of the largest axis are called the *ansæ*, as has been already mentioned. *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

And with the forming mass floated along.—P. 77. l. 4.

May we not suppose, that the mass of the earth, while yet forming, received its progressive and rotatory motions?

In rapid course.—P. 77. l. 5.

"In astronomy, the great thing is, to raise the imagination to the subject, and that oftentimes in opposition to the impression made upon the senses. An illusion, for example, must be got over, arising from the distance at which we view

the heavenly bodies, viz. the apparent *slowness* of their motions. The moon shall take some hours in getting half a yard from a star which it touched. A motion so deliberate, we may think easily guided. But what is the fact ? The moon, in fact, is all this while driving through the heavens at the rate of considerably more than two thousand miles in an hour; which is more than double of that with which a ball is shot off from the mouth of a cannon. Yet is this prodigious rapidity as much under government, as if the planet proceeded ever so slowly, or were conducted in its course inch by inch." PALEY'S *Natural Theology*, Chap. xxii.

And perfect, ere the sixth day's evening star
On Paradise arose.—P. 77. l. 8. 9.

" And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

" Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." *Genesis*, c. i. v. 31. c. ii. v. 1.

Amid the margin flags,
Closed in a bulrush ark, the babe is left.
P. 80. l. 1. 2.

" And when she could no longer hide him, she tookf or him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime, and with pitch, and put the child therein ; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink." *Exodus*, c. ii. v. 3.

His sister waits
Far off.—P. 80. l. 3. 4.

" And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him." V. 4.

The royal maid, surrounded by her train.—P. 80. l. 5.

" And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river, and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it." V. 5.

The rushy lid is oped,
And wakes the infant, smiling in his tears.
P. 80. l. 8. 9.

" And when she had opened it, she saw the child; and behold the babe wept." V. 6.

Jephtha's vow.—P. 81.

" And Jephtha vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering." *Judges*, xc. i. v. 30. 31.

Forth from the grove
She foremost glides of all the minstrel band.
P. 82. l. 11. 12.

" And Jephtha came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels, and with dances; and she was his only child: besides her he had neither son nor daughter." V. 34.

" *Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me low.*"
P. 82. l. 16.

" And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, 'Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back." V. 35.

Deep was the furrow in the royal brow,
When David's hand, &c.—P. 83. l. 1. 2.

" And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." 1 *Samuel*, c. xvi. v. 23.

Kindles the eye of Saul; his arm is poised;—
Harmless the javelin quivers in the wall.
P. 84. l. 16. 17.

" And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David

played with his hand. And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night." 1 *Samuel*, c. xix. v. 9. 10.

Cowley has some *curious* lines on this subject.

" In treacherous haste he's sent for to the king,
And with him bid his charmful lyre to bring.
The king, they saw, lies raging in a fit,
Which does no cure, but sacred tunes, admit;
" And true it was soft music did appease
Th' obscure fantastic rage of Saul's disease."

After a dissertation on music, there follows the psalm which David sung. The first stanza describes the passage through the Red Sea. The second proceeds thus:

Old Jordan's waters to their spring
Start back, with sudden fright;
The spring, amazed at sight,
Asked, what news from sea they bring?
The mountains shook; and, to the mountains' side,
The little hills leapt round, themselves to hide.

As young affrighted lambs,
When they aught dreadful spy,
Run trembling to their helpless dams;
The mighty sea, and river by,
Were glad, for their excuse, to see the hills to fly
. . . . . .

Thus sung the great musician to his lyre,
And Saul's black rage grew softly to retire;
But envy's serpent still with him remained,
And the wise charmer's healthful voice disdained.
'Th' unthankful king, cured truly of his fit,
Seems to be drowned and buried still in it.
From his past madness draws this wicked use,
To sin disguised, and murder with excuse:
For whilst the fearless youth his cure pursues,
And the soft medicine, with art, renews,
The barbarous patient casts at him his spear,
(The usual sceptre that rough hand did bear)
Casts it with violent strength; but, into th' room,
An arm more sure and strong than his was come,—
An angel, whose unseen and easy might
Put by the weapon, and misled it right."

COWLEY'S *Davideis*.

When Elijah, by command
Of God, journeyed to Cherith's failing brook.
P. 85. l. 2. 3.

"So he went, and did according to the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan." 1 *Kings*, c. xvii. v. 5.

No rain drop falls.—P. 85. l. 4.

"And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." V. 7.

The shepherds, stretched
On the green sward, surveyed the starry vault.
P. 87. l. 3. 4.

"And there were, in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." *Luke*, c. ii. v. 8.

Shedding bright,
Upon the folded flocks, a heavenly radiance.
P. 88. l. 1. 2.

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." V. 9.

When, lo! upon the cloud,
A multitude of Seraphim, enthroned,
Sang praises, &c.—P. 88. l. 8. 9. 10.

"And, suddenly, there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." V. 13. 14.

Who is my mother, or my brethren?—P. 89. l. 1.

"And the multitude sat about him; and they said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them

which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother, and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." *Mark*, c. iii. v. 32—35.

Blind, poor, and helpless, Bartimeus sate.—P. 90. l. 1.

"And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway-side begging." *Mark*, c. x. v. 46.

Heard that the Nazarene was passing by,
He cried, &c.—P. 90. l. 9. 10.

"And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered, and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." V. 47—52.

Suffer that little children come to me,
Forbid them not.—P. 91. l. 1. 2.

"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." V. 13—16.

The roaring tumult of the billowed sea
Awakes him not.—P. 92. l. 1. 2.

"And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? C. iv. v. 37. 38.

Rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea,
Peace, be thou still!—P. 92. l. 12. 13.

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind; and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." V. 39.

Upon a towering wave is seen
The semblance of a foamy wreath upright.
P. 93. l. 4. 5.

"And he saw them toiling in rowing: (for the wind was contrary unto them:) and, about the fourth watch of the night, he cometh unto them walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them." C. vi. v. 48.

The voyagers appalled,
Shrink from the fancied Spirit of the Flood.
P. 93. l. 7. 8.

"But, when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: (for they all saw him, and were troubled:) and immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." V. 49. 50.

Up he ascends, &c.—P. 94. l. 2.

"And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered." V. 51.

The dumb cured.—P. 95.

This miracle, the reality of which the Pharisees could not deny, (Matth. c. ix. v. 34.) is one of a higher order than those which consisted in healing diseases. Dumbness implies, in general, not only a defect in the organs of speech, or of hearing, or of both, but *ignorance of language*. Here, then, was a miracle performed on the mind.

'Tis finished.—P. 96. l. 1.

"He said, it is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." *John*, c. xix. v. 30.

Beholding him far off,
They, who had ministered unto him.—P. 96. l. 2. 3.

"And many women were there (beholding afar off) which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him." *Matthew*, c. xxvii. v. 55.

The temple's veil
Is rent.—P. 96. l. 4. 5.

"And, behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake."—V. 51.

Appalled, the leaning soldier feels the spear
Shake in his grasp; the planted standard falls
Upon the heaving ground.—P. 96. l. 8. 9. 10.

"Now when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earth quake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the son of God." V. 54.

The sun is dimmed,
And darkness shrouds the body of the Lord.
P. 96. l. 10. 11.

"Now, from the sixth hour, there was darkness over all the land, unto the ninth hour." V. 45.

No sound
Was heard, save of the watching soldier's foot.
P. 97. l. 5. 6.

"Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way; make it as sure as you can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure; sealing the stone, and setting a watch." *Matthew*, c. xxvii. v. 65. 66.

Within the rock-barred sepulchre, &c.—P. 97. l. 7.

"And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre that was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre." *Mark*, c. xv. v. 46.

Trembled the earth;
The ponderous gate of stone was rolled away.
P. 98. l. 12. 13.

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." *Matthew*, c. xxviii. v. 2.

His faithful followers, assembled, sang
A hymn low-breathed, &c.—P. 99. l. 3. 4.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood

in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." *John*, c. xx. v. 19.

Listen that voice! upon the hill of Mars,
Rolling in bolder thunders, &c.—P. 100. l. 1. 2.

"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars-hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." *Acts*, c. xvii. v. 22.

The Stoic's moveless frown; the vacant stare
Of Epicurus' herd, &c.—P. 100. l. 7. 8.

"Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him: And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest strange things unto our ears: we would know, therefore, what these things mean." *Acts*, c. xvii. v. 18—20.

The Areopagite tribunal dread,
From whence the doom of Socrates was uttered.
P. 101. l. 1. 2.

The highest court of criminal jurisdiction in Athens. It was held on the hill of Mars. By its sentence Socrates was condemned to death, for attempting to substitute a pure and rational system of religion for the absurd and extravagant superstition which then prevailed.

The Judge ascended to the judgment-seat.—P. 102. l. 1.

This representation of Paul I have not founded on the circumstances of any *one* of his appearances before the Roman governors. I have alluded to facts, which happened at his apprehension, as well as at his arraignments before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa.

No more he feels, upon his high-raised arm,
The ponderous chain.—P. 103. l. 4. 5.

" And Paul said, I would to God that not only thou, but all that hear me this day, were both, almost, and altogether, such as I am, *except these bonds.*" *Acts*, c. xxvi. v. 29.

And while he reasons high
Of justice, temperance, and the life to come,
The Judge shrinks trembling at the prisoner's voice,
P. 103. l. 10. 11. 12.

" And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." *Acts*, c. xxiv. v. 25.

Like joining dew-drops on the blushing rose.
P. 117. l. 7.

I have seen the same thought in a recent publication of Mr. Southey's; but the above line was written by me about ten years ago, and inserted, very soon after it was written, in the *Kelso Mail.*

I love thee, for thou trustest me.—P. 141. l. 4.

In winter 1798-99 I had several birds for my guests,—a redbreast, a hedge-sparrow, and a female shilfa. The redbreast remained three or four weeks with me: The other two only a few days, for the severity of the storm relaxed very soon.

Who trade in tortures.—P. 146. l. 11.

"Some refuse sustenance and die. In the ships of Surgeons Falconbridge, Wilson, and Trotter, and of Messrs. Millar and Town, are instances of their starving themselves to death. In all these they were compelled, some by whipping, and others by the thumb-screw *, and other means, to take their food; but all punishment was *ineffectual*, they *were determined to die.* In the very act of chastisement, Mr. Wilson says, they *have looked up at him*, and said, *with a smile*, '*Presently we shall be no more.*" *Abridgment of the Evidence, relative to the Slave-trade*, 13. 14.

Whose human cargoes carefully are packt
By rule and square, according to the Act!
P. 146. l. 13. 14.

The act of Parliament, by which a certain space is allotted to each slave, has, no doubt, alleviated the miseries of

* "To shew the severity of this punishment, Mr. Dove says, that, while two slaves were thumb-screwed, the sweat ran down their faces, and they trembled as under a violent ague fit. Mr. Ellison has known them to die, a mortification having taken place in their thumbs, in consequence of these screws."

what is called the middle passage. I doubt, however, if the penalty of L. 30, for each slave beyond the complement, be a punishment sufficiently severe.

As to the present state of the slaves in the West Indies, and the spirit which pervades the Colonial Assemblies, a pretty accurate notion may be formed from the following extracts of letters from the governor of Barbadoes.

During the session of Parliament 1804, the following extract of a letter from Lord Seaforth, the governor of Barbadoes, to Lord Hobart, dated at Barbadoes, the 18th of March 1802, was laid on the table of the House of Commons. "Your Lordship will observe, in the last day's proceedings of the Assembly, that the *majority of the house had taken considerable offence at a message of mine, recommending an act to be passed, to make the murder of a slave felony. At present the fine for the crime is only fifteen pounds currency*, or ELEVEN POUNDS FOUR SHILLINGS sterling."

On the 13th of November, 1804, his Lordship thus writes to Earl Camden. "I inclose four papers, containing, from different quarters, reports on the horrid murders I mentioned in some former letters. *They are selected from a great number*, among which there is not one in contradiction of the horrible facts, though several of the letters are very concise and defective. The truth is, that nothing has given me more trouble than to get at the bottom of these businesses, *so horribly absurd are the prejudices of the people.* However, a great part of my object is answered, by the alarm my interference has excited, and the attention it has called to the business. Bills are already prepared to make murder felony; *but I fear they will be thrown out for*

the present in the Assembly. The Council are unanimous on the side of humanity."

In a subsequent letter, dated the 7th of January, 1805, Lord Seaforth thus writes: "I inclose the Attorney-General's letter to me on the subject of the negroes *so most wantonly murdered.* I am sorry to say, SEVERAL OTHER INSTANCES OF THE SAME BARBARITY have occurred, with which I have not troubled your Lordship, as *I only wished to make you acquainted with the subject in general.*"

General Prevost, the governor of Dominica, states, "That the legislature of the island of Dominica is distinguished by the laws it has passed for the encouragement, protection, and government of slaves;" but, he adds, "*I am sorry I cannot say, that they are as religiously observed as you could wish.*"

In a subsequent letter, dated the 17th of January, 1805, Governor Prevost thus writes: "The act of the legislature, entitled, 'An Act for the Encouragement, Protection, and better Government of Slaves,' *appears to have been considered, from the day it was passed until this hour,* AS A POLITICAL MEASURE, *to avert the interference of the mother-country in the management of slaves.* Having said this, your Lordship will not be surprised to learn, that CLAUSE SEVENTH OF THAT BILL HAS BEEN WHOLLY NEGLECTED."

Your COMMONS *said,* "*let such things be.*"

P. 146. l. 17.

These lines were written in the year 1795, soon after the rejection of the bill introduced by Mr. Wilberforce. The late rejection was brought about by a manœuvre of the friends of the *trade.*

GLOSSARY.

[*I have, now and then, used a Scotch or an old English word, where a modern English synonime, equally emphatic, did not present itself. I am no friend to those* phrases *which are commonly, though often erroneously, called* Scotticisms, *or to any innovation which would tend to destroy the* idiom *of the English language; but I could never see any good sense in that indiscriminating anathema, which would proscribe every* word *that happens to be unknown, or little known, on the south side of the Tweed.*"]

Bield, shelter; a small rudely formed bower, or hut.
Skep, a basket of coiled straw, or rushes, of a size to hold a nest; also, a bee-hive.
Quern, the hollow stone of a hand-mill.
Know, knoll.
Cleugh, the cleft of a hill; a recess.

Blae, a deep purplish blue.

Soughing, producing a sound like the wind through trees, or a wand moved quickly through the air.

Shaw, a small copse wood.

Heartsome, chearful.

Boutree, elder-tree.

Skillet, a rattle, or bell, used by common-criers.

Cannach, a plant that grows in moorish and marshy places, with a leafless stalk, and a silky white tuft at the top.

Smiddy, smithy.

Blawn, blown.

Rowan-tree, mountain-ash.

FINIS.